



WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE JANUARY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

*Community Relations and Engagement
January 2024*



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We humbly acknowledge that the land on which we live, learn, work and play is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional and ancestral lands of the Cree, Dene, and unceded territory of the Métis.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

This report contains the feedback that residents shared with facilitators at the January community engagements. These include the pop-up at the Wood Buffalo Regional Library Family Literacy Day and the Downtown Neighbourhood Engagement Series held at the Golden Years Society.

The Neighbourhood Engagement Series features ongoing municipal engagements held in alternating urban neighborhoods on a regular basis. These sessions focus on building meaningful relationships by encouraging open and honest input and feedback from residents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the community engagements in January 2024, the Public Engagement team of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) aimed to foster relationships and integrate community perspectives by actively seeking resident input on neighborhood issues and municipal services.

The Neighbourhood Engagement Series made a stop Downtown to hear what matters most to residents. Additionally, we collaborated with the Family Literacy Day event hosted by the Wood Buffalo Regional Library.

PARTICIPANTS

Residents from across Fort McMurray are invited to attend community engagements. At the January Downtown Neighbourhood Engagement Series participants identified that they were from Beacon Hill, Downtown and Timberlea.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- ✓ Social media
- ✓ Facebook event page
- ✓ Linked In event page.
- ✓ Electronic traffic signs
- ✓ Lawn signs
- ✓ Mac Calendar
- ✓ [Rmwb.ca/participate](https://rmwb.ca/participate)
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ Schools shared an RMWB social media post to their pages
- ✓ Keyano emailed students an invitation
- ✓ YouTube ad

ENGAGEMENT TACTICS



- In-person open space meeting
- Community lunch
- Dotmocracy
- Table discussions



AWARE
29,464 times

people saw communications and advertisements.

INFORMED
187 times

people learned more about these projects.

ENGAGED
121 times

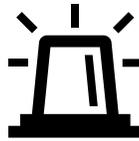
people took action to provide feedback on these engagements.

FINDINGS

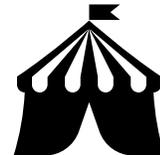
Participants brought forward the following themes through conversations.



**ROADS &
MAINTENANCE**



**SAFETY &
ENFORCEMENT**



**COMMUNITY
PROGRAMMING**

OVERVIEW

POP-UP AT FAMILY LITERACY DAY



In-person engagement: We popped-up at the Wood Buffalo Regional Library at their Family Literacy Day event. We were able to connect with residents on what is impacting them in their neighbourhoods and gain feedback for the Abasand skatepark rebuild.

At the event we spoke with 208 residents, and heard their concerns and priorities regarding safety, parks, playgrounds, and winter maintenance.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGAGEMENT



In-person engagement: Participants were welcomed into the event space at the Golden Years Society and encouraged to share feedback on the multiple Municipal campaigns. Participants had a Participate Bingo card dabbed as they met with RMWB staff and shared their feedback on different topics. This was a drop-in event featuring onsite subject matter experts and a community lunch. There was no formal presentation.

We were joined by 67 residents from across Fort McMurray Wood Buffalo. These participants included a diverse range of individuals, such as new arrivals to the country and region, Keyano students, local downtown businesses, and older adults. Topics discussed included the Abasand Skate Park, Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program, the older adult engagement strategy, and what matters most to them in their neighbourhood.



WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT

- What matters most to you in your neighbourhood?
- Abasand skatepark rebuild
- Downtown Revitalization Incentives Program
- Older adult engagement strategy
- RCMP joined us to talk about safety



WHAT WE HEARD

Thank you to all residents who participated and shared perspectives on what is impacting you and your neighbourhoods. All the feedback from residents listed below has been shared with Council and the appropriate departments in the RMWB for their review and consideration. The feedback below is grouped by topic and includes information about some of the main points raised by residents.

To learn more about how feedback shaped the Abasand Skate Park, Downtown Revitalization Incentive Program, you can visit rmwb.ca/participate to watch for the What We Heard report and follow the project pages for specific project updates”

First, let's start with some positive feedback

- The RMWB is doing a good job of changing from a young community to a family one. (one additional vote on this idea)
- Very good neighbourhood.
- Very happy with my neighbourhood. I feel safe.

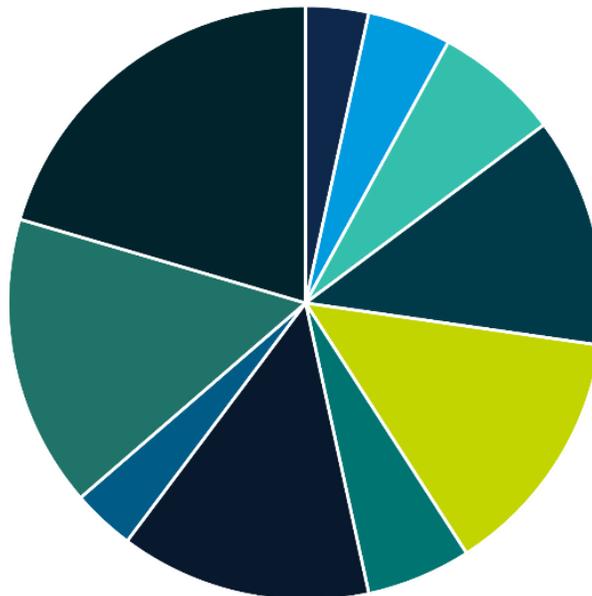
Next, a couple of general comments about improving our community

- “Where can we write for a local newsletter?”
- “Lack of part-time jobs for Keyano College students / Student jobs.” (2 votes)



Older adult engagement strategy feedback

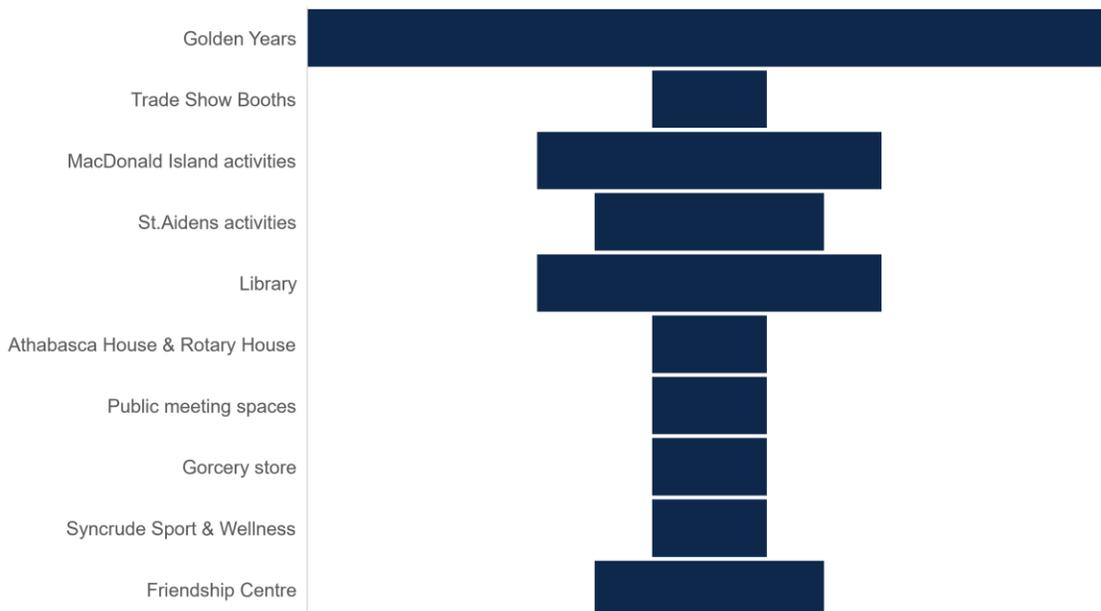
How can we enhance your engagement experience?



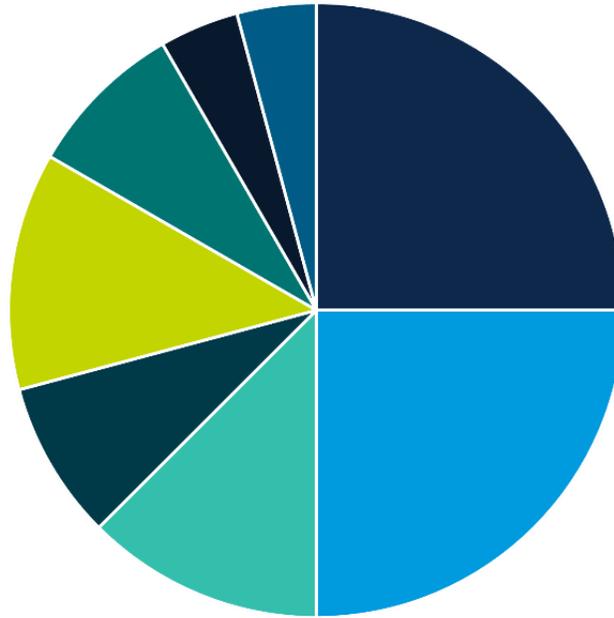
- Virtual Engagements
- Paper Polls/Surveys
- Group Conversation
- Tours or Field Trips
- In person public meetings
- Online Polls/Surveys
- 1:1 Conversation
- Join a Council appointed Board or Committee
- Symposia
- Workshops

Other comments: "Coffee is a must!", "Prizes are bonus.", "Socializing with friends."

What are the current opportunities to meet older adults where they are?



What communication methods do older adults use?



- Social media: Facebook, Instagram
- Golden Years Society communication
- Word of mouth
- St. Aidans communication
- Emails
- Zoom
- Electronic/bus buildboards
- Phone Calls

PARKS

Parks & Trails

Visit the Municipality online to explore [the parks, trails and facilities](#) maintained by the RMWB or find answers to [frequently asked questions](#).

- “Really love Lions Park trail.”
- “Love Kiyam Park.”
- “Benches – Reflections Park; they should be facing the park & forest, not the road.”
- “Beautification for Beacon Hill – entrance; can we get a canoe – multiple flowers instead of 1 flower at entrance – better upkeep of the flowers.”
- “Can Beacon Hill get a public art bench like downtown, Saprae Creek & Anzac.”
- “We should get a fragrance garden downtown by the Snye. Wheelchair accessible.”
- “More family events and upgrade EYCS (Elsie Yannik Catholic School) and Dave McNealy (Public School) Park.”
- “Fencing along roads by playgrounds.”
- “More baby swings at parks.”
- “Toddler friendly play structures at parks.”
- “A wading pool for toddlers.”
- “More toddler friendly parks.”
- “School playground.”
- “Update of windmill park.”

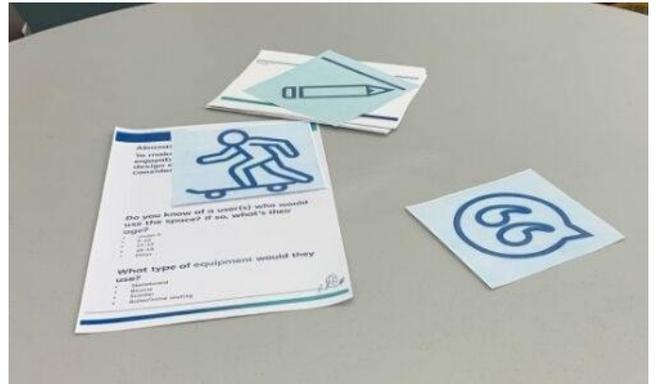


- “Bus routes should be prioritized for winter maintenance.”
- “Snow clearing on black paths in Parsons Creek.”
- “We seniors need ways better snow & ice removal on sidewalks.” (2 votes)
- “Snow Clearing.” (3 votes)

TRANSIT

New transit route updates came into effect on December 1, 2023. Find your route using the Transit App or Google Maps. For full route maps and schedules, visit rmwb.ca/transit. Have a question about transit? Check out [the frequently asked questions](#).

- “Bus service/routes/connections.” (4 votes)
- “Transit should be free for college students.”
- “Smart bus cost – appreciate the service, even \$2 adds up / Accessible transportation & scheduling that works.” (2 votes)
- “Poor design on bus stop locations. Mid-block is dangerous.”
- “Transit Stops.”
- “Bus to Hindu temple (Abraham’s Landing) – one 1 bus downtown to temple – can a stop be added on the route from Thickwood to Timberlea (Route 12) – Benefit all denominations represented there – Hindu, Muslim, Christian.”
- “Bus Shelters – heating system maintenance, clean them up.”
- “Safety at bus shelters (specifically Hardin & Fraser).”
- “Shuttles to Gregoire Lake & Vista Ridge.”



BYLAW & ENFORCEMENT

The [Municipal Government Act](#) allows the RMWB to create and enforce bylaws that address the safety, issues, and concerns of residents. All bylaws are passed by Council. If you wish to report a bylaw violation, call Pulse at 780-743-7000.

If you would like to learn more about local bylaws, please visit [Bylaw and Animal Services](#).

- “Drug use/properties downtown.”
- “No OHV (off-highway vehicles) in neighbourhood and trails>”
- “Safety for me and my family.”
- “Making sure we’re safe.”
- “Bylaw: Enforce parking laws by bus stops in Prairie Creek; Prospect & Rainbow Creek.”



- “More patrol in Parsons Creek. Lots of people run stop signs/crosswalks. Dangerous to walk with kids.”
- “Dog Park – OK, but there are often too aggressive dogs!”
- “Living downtown allows for more independence, but safety & bussing are big concerns. “
- “Neighbourhood security / Crime free / safety.” (3 votes)
- “I see lots of infractions; I call but it takes ages to get results. There is a dog (a shepherd mix) running loose very often at Main & Fraser. We’ve called many times, but nothing happens.”
- “Being informed of incidents in communities (i.e. Crime notices) – want to hear, what can residents do to increase safety, neighbourhood watch, block parent program.”

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

Many of the community programming suggestions below are not services provided by the Municipality.

If you would like to learn more about community programming offered by the Municipality you can visit [MacCalendar](#). Additionally, you can subscribe to receive alerts of all upcoming [municipal events and opportunities for involvement](#).



- “Lots of opportunities to socialize / Wednesday lunch at Golden Years Society / Activities for seniors/socialization / having a place to connect during cold winter days.” (6 additional votes for this comment)
- “RMWB to provide more funding to organizations for activities & programming.”
- “Walking at MacDonald Island (with \$1 coffee).” (3 votes)
- “Block parties – to get to know neighbours / Neighbourhood Potluck.” (2 votes)
- “Community event calendar w/ all the events.”
- “More weekend activities for toddlers; aka Hub or toddler time style.”
- “Activities – Community events.”
- “Weekly farmers markets in the summer.”
- “More family events and upgrade EYCS (Elsie Yannik Catholic School) and Dave McNealy (Public School) Park.” (2 votes)
- “Activities have stopped due to lack of funding – Eagle Ridge YMCA, SSWC.”
- “Chair yoga & meditation.”
- “Increase affordable recreational drop-in options.”



GARBAGE AND RECYCLING SERVICES

Visit the [garbage and recycling services page](#) to learn more about curbside collection and other garbage and recycling programs in our region.

- “Recycling.”
- “Water – Less Chlorine.”
- “There should be MASSIVE recycling programs here. I cannot find anywhere to recycle glass containers. All recycling should be optimized. They recently closed down the recycling over by FRESHCO!!!”
- “Water & Sewage Services – good.”
- “Garbage Collection – good, we need much more recycling.”
- “Landfill – Offer more free bin days, recycling options for furniture & items that can be re-used.”

FACILITIES

- “Steps – Depth perception, wooden, markers? on edge of all public steps.”
- “Automatic door openers @ police station – Timberlea @ wheelchair height.”
- “Golden Years Society – Council should sell/give the land to the society so they can qualify for DRIP grants – should modify qualifications for program (i.e. non-profit property on municipal land).”

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Do you have questions about land development? Municipal development plans can be found [here](#). For more information on municipal permits, please visit rmwb.ca/permits.

- “Go up in building, we can build playground under parkades and bridges.”

PROCUREMENT

All municipal bid and tender opportunities, including the associated documents, are available online on [bids&tenders](#) and [Alberta Purchasing Connection](#). You can also view [procurement’s frequently asked questions](#).

- “Corporations that are getting tenders should give back to the community.”
- “Who is responsible for not following the 2019 CBC News article?”
- “Procurement local first.”

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

- “Services and documents available in multiple languages.”
- “Very active in public engagement (want to see action afterwards), need something to happen following engagements, too much turnover in staff, engagement – it’s not our first rodeo (want to see more action).”



PUBLIC ART

- “Public Art – enjoy foxes, murals, etc. – more murals on buildings.”
- “Functional art benches, hard to sit on.”

NEXT STEPS

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) would like to thank participants for their valuable input. Engagement findings will be shared with the public, Administration and Council. If you would like to be among the first to know about engagement opportunities in the region you can subscribe to the public engagement newsletter at rmwb.ca/participate.

Have questions or concerns? You can reach out to the public engagement team directly at participate@rmwb.ca or submit a Pulse inquiry at rmwb.ca/pulse. Pulse inquiries are tracked and sent to the team members that can support you with answers, explain process and request maintenance.

We encourage you to continue using your voice to make our region even better by learning about all current projects. Visit participate.rmwb.ca to stay connected. Thank you for participating!



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