

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Community Survey Results Show Concern About Housing and Homelessness

Every two years, the City of Bend commissions a Community Survey, which serves as one of many inputs to City Councilors as they embark on their two-year goal setting process. Council goals provide direction to City staff and influence the City's two-year budget.

Bend residents like living in Bend—strong majorities have positive things to say about their quality of life in the city: seven in 10 respondents rate the city as a good or excellent place to live. At the same time, residents have become less positive about the quality of life in Bend over the past two years, which DHM Research said is not unique to Bend and reflects the mood in communities across the state.

Recent survey respondents in Bend said addressing homelessness and increasing the availability of affordable housing were top concerns they want to see addressed. Transportation has receded as an issue since the last biennial survey, with relatively strong levels of satisfaction about road conditions and fewer concerns about congestion.



Residents are still feeling the pressure of population growth, according to the survey responses. They prioritize long-term planning and want to see planning that addresses housing affordability, transportation and community safety.

“The Community Survey is one of several important inputs that we hear as we embark on setting goals for the next two years,” said Mayor Melanie Kebler. “All feedback is useful. This survey feedback is consistent with what we’ve heard across the board. It’s no surprise housing affordability is a top issue.”

Homelessness is a newly dominant issue for Bend residents. These concerns are driven by visible homelessness. Residents want the City to address mental health and substance abuse issues they can see on the street.

“The number of people experiencing homelessness has risen year over year in our region for almost a decade, and in the past year, our community has been concerned by increased visible encampments in our city,” Kebler said, referencing to the **Point in Time Count**, which shows that in 2022, 785 adults and children were homeless in Bend (and 1,286 Deschutes County). “We have a very high percentage of people living unsheltered, which is an unacceptable situation and one that we need to continue to address with urgency.”

When it comes to homelessness, survey respondents said they wanted a multi-faceted approach to the issue: more affordable housing and also social services such as counseling, financial education and life skills.

“The survey results indicate that public health services are seen as a key to working with our homeless community. The City of Bend stands ready to support Deschutes County in its duty to provide behavioral and addiction support,” said Mayor Pro Tem Megan Perkins. “We also will continue to work with the State to advocate for more funding and ways to streamline resources and funding for public health services in our community.”

“Council goals provide a two-year strategy for the City, but this Council is poised to plan for a healthy Bend far into the community’s future,” said Mayor Kebler. “We hear the community’s frustration related to growing homelessness and lack of housing affordability and we see flickers of hope. Our work over the past biennium to provide shelters and to transition people to more permanent solutions shows we’ve already taken actionable steps toward a better future.”

DHM Research of Portland conducted the phone and text-to-online survey of 400 Bend residents in early December. The survey is intended to assess satisfaction with City services, benchmark attitudes to previous years, gather feedback on emerging priorities and help the Council plan strategic goals for the next biennium. DHM Research took measures to ensure survey responses accurately represented



all geographic areas and the demographics of the Bend community. The survey was available in English and Spanish.

For the entire results, visit the [2022 Community Survey Results](#), the [2022 Community Survey Presentation](#) and the [2022 Online Community Survey Results](#).

Past year surveys can be found at this webpage: [Community Surveys | City of Bend \(bendoregon.gov\)](#)



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities

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