TOWN OF BEDFORD VA

LIFE. LIBERTY. HAPPINESS.

Our Goal - Bedford 2045

Comprehensive Plan

Adopted April 21, 2026



TOWN OF BEDFORD, VIRGINIA
TOWN COUNCIL
ACTION FORM

ITEM: Resolution – Adoption of the Bedford 2045 Comprehensive Plan

DATE OF COUNCIL MEETING: April 21, 2026 **DATE:** April 10, 2026

PRESENTATION:

All localities in the Commonwealth are required to adopt a comprehensive plan prepared through the Planning Commission (Code of Virginia §15.2-2223). The Town Planning Commission has been contemplating a revision to the 2017 Comprehensive Plan since late 2022, awaiting incorporation of new land with the second phase of the boundary adjustment agreement through Reversion. After a competitive bidding process, Town Council authorized a contract with EPR, PC in May 2024 for planning services.

Work was carried out over several months and included numerous opportunities for public engagement during the drafting of the plan. "Our Goal – Bedford 2045" is a long-range policy guide for growth and development for the Town of Bedford through the year 2045. It provides a foundation for decision-making on land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, and community facilities, so that future development aligns with the community's goals. The plan combines technical data and trend analysis with extensive community input to paint a clear picture of where Bedford stands today and where it aspires to go. The plan also references various other planning efforts undertaken in the past, including those by the Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Economic Development Authority.
The Virginia Department of Transportation is required to review local comprehensive plans. VDOT found the plan to be consistent with State transportation plans on February 2, 2026.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 2, 2026. No citizens spoke. Commissioners discussed the best chapter for pocket parks in the plan, and a paragraph about the potential recreational opportunities on the reservoir property (page 84). The Commission decided to leave the reservoir information in for Town Council to choose how to address that based on recent Council action. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend the plan to Town Council for their action to adopt the Bedford 2045 Comprehensive Plan as required in the Code of Virginia.

ACTION REQUESTED:
Town Council is asked to adopt the "Our Goal – Bedford 2045" Comprehensive Plan as recommended by the Planning Commission.

ACTION TAKEN:

A Resolution was adopted by Town Council adopting the "Our Goal – Bedford 2045" Comprehensive Plan.

DATE 4/21/26

APPROVED (✓)
DENIED ( )
DEFERRED TO:
_____

	YES	NO	OTHER
EVANS	(✓)	( )	( )
FOREMAN	(✓)	( )	( )
FOSTER	(✓)	( )	( )
HAILEY	(✓)	( )	( )
IPPOLITO	(✓)	( )	( )
STANLEY	(✓)	( )	( )
UPDIKE	(✓)	( )	( )

ROUTING

TOWN ATTY.	( )	I.T.	( )
COMM. DEV.	(✓)	POLICE	( )
ELECTRIC	( )	PUBLIC SERV.	( )
ENGINEERING	( )	OTHER _____	( )
FINANCE	( )		
FIRE DEPT.	( )		
H.R.	( )		

RESOLUTION

ADOPTING THE TOWN OF BEDFORD, VIRGINIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN "OUR GOAL – BEDFORD 2045"

WHEREAS, § 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended (the "Code") requires the local planning commission of each locality to prepare and recommend a Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction, and further requires every governing body to adopt a Comprehensive Plan for the territory under its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, in the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan revision, the Bedford Town planning commission made careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants with input from its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan meets the requirements of the § 15.2-2223 of the Code, including review by the Virginia Department of Transportation for consistency of the transportation plan with designated state plans and programs; and

WHEREAS, the Town Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 2, 2026 and recommended the Plan to Town Council at that meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has held a public hearing after notice was published twice in the *Bedford Bulletin* as required by § 15.2-2204 of the Code; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds that the Comprehensive Plan was effectively made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the Town of Bedford that will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF BEDFORD, VIRGINIA that the "Our Goal – Bedford 2045" Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted. The Zoning Administrator is authorized and directed to post it to the website as required by law.

CERTIFICATE OF VOTES

The record of the roll-call vote by the members of the Town Council of the Town of Bedford, Virginia, on the foregoing Resolution, duly adopted by the Council upon a roll-call vote at its regular public meeting held on April 21, 2026, as follows:

Name	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Dwight Evans	✓			
Todd Foreman	✓			
David Foster	✓			
Stacey L. Hailey	✓			
Jaithan Ippolito	✓			
C. G. Stanley	✓			
Darryl A. Updike	✓			

Dated: April 21, 2026

By: Debra B. Anderson

Debra B. Anderson, Clerk of Council

Acknowledgements

This plan was prepared by EPR, P.C., with assistance from the Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC) on elements of the transportation chapter. We extend our sincere appreciation to Town of Bedford staff, elected officials, and community stakeholders for their guidance and support throughout the planning process.

Town of Bedford Staff

***Bart Warner**, Town Manager*
***Mary Zirkle**, Director of Planning & Community Development*
***Cathy D. Johnson**, Administrative Assistant, Planning & Community Development*

Town Council

***C. G. Stanley**, Mayor*
***Darryl A. Updike**, Vice Mayor*
***Stacey Hailey**, Council Member*
***Todd Foreman**, Council Member*
***Jai Ippolito**, Council Member*
***Dave Foster**, Council Member*
***Dwight Evans**, Council Member*

Planning Commission

***Jason L. Horne**, Chairman*
***Lonne R. Bailey**, Vice Chair*
***Frances Coles**, Secretary*
***Cynthia Gunnoe**, Member*
***Philip Thompson**, Member*
***Brock Malcolm**, Member*
***Darryl A. Updike**, Council Representative*
***Georgiann Watts**, Member*

Stakeholders

We also thank the many stakeholders who offered valuable input and support. Key contributors included representatives from:

Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce
Bedford Boys Tribute Center
Bedford Community Health Foundation
Bedford County Fire & Rescue
Bedford County Sheriff's Office
Bedford Domestic Violence Coalition
Bedford Economic Development Authority
Bedford Ride
Bedford Volunteer Fire Department
Bedford-Franklin Regional Rail Initiative
Blue Ridge Community College
Bower Center for the Arts
Centra Bedford Memorial Hospital
Destination Bedford
National D-Day Memorial Foundation
Otter Bus
Town of Bedford Economic Development
Town of Bedford Public Works Department
Virginia Department of Transportation

Each of these organizations provided important perspectives during workshops, interviews, and surveys. Their collaboration has greatly enriched this plan.

We also extend our sincere thanks to Bedford residents and business owners who participated in the community survey and contributed their time and perspectives through other public engagement activities throughout the planning process.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....6
Chapter 2: Key Issues and Opportunities 12
Chapter 3: Demographics 18
Chapter 4: Economy.....27
Chapter 5: Housing 36
Chapter 6: Community Facilities and Services 43
Chapter 7: Infrastructure.....52
Chapter 8: Transportation 60
Chapter 9: Parks and Recreation.....82
Chapter 10: Community Identity and Partnerships.....89
Chapter 11: Land Use and Growth Management 95
Chapter 12: Implementation 105
Appendix: Public Engagement Report.....112



Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of the Plan 6
Local Setting and Community Context 7
Brief History of Bedford 8
Plan Process 9
Capital Improvement Plan 11

Purpose of the Plan

Our Goal – Bedford 2045 is a long-range policy guide for growth and development for the Town of Bedford through 2045. It provides a foundation for decision-making on land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, and community facilities, so that future development aligns with the community's goals. The plan combines technical data and trend analysis with extensive community input to paint a clear picture of where Bedford stands today and where it aspires to go.

Vision Statement

Our Goal for 2045 is a Town of Bedford that preserves its history while embracing its future; that is an economic and cultural hub within its region; that provides a rich variety of employment and housing opportunities; that provides high-quality public services to its residents; and that is sought after by residents and visitors alike for its vibrant culture and quality of life.

This vision guides the plan's goals and strategies so that as Bedford grows, it preserves its rich history and small-town character even as it embraces future opportunities, becoming an economic and cultural hub of the region with diverse housing and employment options, excellent public services, and a vibrant quality of life.

Local Setting and Community Context

Bedford is a historic Virginia town situated between Lynchburg and Roanoke at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This central location (about 25 miles from each city) gives Bedford a blend of small-town charm and regional connectivity, as many residents commute for work or services while enjoying Bedford's scenic, close-knit environment. The town is surrounded by rolling rural landscapes and notable attractions, from the Peaks of Otter and Blue Ridge Parkway to nearby Smith Mountain Lake and Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, making it both a pleasant hometown and a "home base" for tourism.

A defining aspect of Bedford's recent context is its change in governmental status. Historically an independent city, Bedford reverted to town status in 2013, rejoining Bedford County's jurisdiction. This reversion was part of a strategic agreement to improve fiscal sustainability and service delivery. The change expanded town boundaries and population, as Bedford absorbed adjacent areas in phases. For example, the most recent boundary adjustment in 2023 increased the town's area to about 11 square miles and boosted the population by roughly 20% in one year. Under the town/county arrangement, Bedford now partners with Bedford County for certain services (such as schools and courts) while retaining its own local government for town services. This unique setup gives Bedford the advantages of a small town governance model with access to broader county resources.



Brief History of Bedford



Founded as the village of Liberty in 1782, Bedford has over two centuries of history that have shaped its identity. It became an incorporated town in 1839 and later, after a period of growth and rebuilding following a major late-19th-century fire, was renamed "Bedford City" in 1890. The late 1800s and early 1900s were boom years: the arrival of the railroad, new industries (like textiles and furniture), and the establishment of several preparatory schools all fueled Bedford's development. The town even started its own electric utility during this era, a legacy that continues today in the town's provision of electricity to residents. Bedford evolved into a regional agricultural, commercial, and educational center while retaining its quintessential small-town character.

One of Bedford's most enduring legacies comes from World War II. The town was home to the "Bedford Boys," a group of local soldiers who served in Company A of the 116th Infantry and suffered devastating losses during the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944. Bedford's per capita sacrifice was the highest of any American community on D-Day, a poignant distinction that led to the town being selected as the site of the National D-Day Memorial.

Through the mid-20th century, Bedford continued to modernize. In 1968, Bedford transitioned from a town to an independent city under Virginia law, reflecting its growth and urbanizing services. It remained a city for the next 45 years, during which it undertook downtown revitalization and became one of Virginia's first Main Street communities in the 1980s. However, by the early 21st century, to address changing economic and administrative realities, Bedford made the significant decision to revert to town status (effective 2013) and rejoin Bedford County. Bedford is one of only a few Virginia localities to undergo such a reversion, and it set the stage for the town's current governance and planning approach.

Bedford's history is one of resilience and adaptation: from its founding as Liberty to its industrial peaks and educational endeavors, through wartime sacrifice and civic re-invention. This rich historical context informs this plan's emphasis on preserving heritage even as the town plans for future growth. Bedford's past is not just preserved in museums or memorials; it's alive in the town's layout, architecture, and community spirit, all of which the plan strives to carry forward.

Plan Process

The development of this plan was a thorough and inclusive process spanning roughly 18 months, designed to engage citizens, stakeholders, and officials at every stage. The planning process included multiple phases of outreach and analysis so that the final plan reflects community needs and aspirations. A full summary of public engagement activities is included in the appendix. Key steps in this process were:

1. Project Kickoff and Visioning (Mid-2024):

Town staff and the Planning Commission launched the plan update in mid-2024, branding it Our Goal – Bedford 2045. Early efforts focused on public awareness and visioning. For example, planners solicited input on a vision for Bedford's future at community events such as the 43rd annual Centerfest festival in downtown Bedford (Fall 2024), where residents were invited to share ideas for the 2045 vision statement. This helped lay the groundwork for the plan's overarching goals.

2. Community Survey (Fall 2024):

A town-wide Comprehensive Plan Survey opened in September 2024 to gather broad public input. The survey asked residents, business owners, and property owners about Bedford's strengths, weaknesses, and priorities for the future, covering topics from housing and economic development to public services and quality of life. The survey received approximately 280 responses, a large share coming from long-term residents (many with 20+ years in Bedford). Respondents provided valuable insights: for instance, they overwhelmingly praised Bedford's friendly small-town feel and historic charm, while noting concerns about limited shopping options and job opportunities. This community feedback was analyzed and summarized to inform the plan's priorities.

3. Stakeholder Meetings (Winter 2025):

In addition to general public input, the Town convened focused stakeholder meetings in February 2025. These sessions brought together representatives from key sectors, including housing, business and economic development, public safety, utilities, education, healthcare, and others, to discuss Bedford's future needs in detail. Each stakeholder group identified pressing issues and potential strategies. For example, housing experts highlighted the need for more affordable starter homes and senior housing, while economic stakeholders discussed opportunities to attract businesses and the challenges of limited industrial space. Infrastructure and service providers noted aging facilities and the importance of coordinating upgrades (such as water, sewer, and broadband improvements) to support growth. These insights from local leaders and subject-matter experts were instrumental in shaping realistic and targeted plan recommendations.

4. Existing Conditions and Trends Analysis (Spring 2025):

Using input from the survey and stakeholders, along with demographic and economic data, the planning team prepared a detailed State of the Town and Trends Report in spring 2025. This report examined Bedford's current conditions, including population trends, housing stock, land use patterns, transportation network, utilities, economic base, and more, and discussed the implications for future planning. Notably, the report confirmed that Bedford's population had been stable with modest growth, and it documented the significant jump to ~8,000 residents after the 2023 boundary adjustment. It also highlighted community values (such as the fact that 41% of survey participants cited Bedford's image/identity as its greatest strength) and challenges (such as an aging population and pockets of poverty) the plan must address. This analysis set the stage for informed goal-setting.

5. Drafting Goals, Strategies, and Future Land Use (Summer 2025):

With a vision in place and a clear picture of trends, Town staff and consultants worked with the Planning Commission to craft draft goals and a Future Land Use framework. By July 2025, the initial goal "foundations" in key areas (Housing, Economy, Infrastructure, etc.) were presented for discussion, building on themes from the May 2025 Planning Commission meeting. The Future Land Use Plan was also updated to reflect desired development patterns through 2045, emphasizing downtown revitalization and targeted growth areas. During this phase, the Planning Commission provided feedback to refine priorities and guide the plan's proposals to be aligned with the community's vision. Once these elements were refined, the team began assembling draft chapters of the plan.These insights from local leaders and subject-matter experts were instrumental in shaping realistic and targeted plan recommendations.

6. Public Review and Refinement (Summer–Fall 2025):

In August, a public meeting was held to gather feedback on the draft plan, where residents reviewed and commented on draft goals, land use maps, and suggested initiatives. Participants provided comments ranging from downtown revitalization ideas to transportation improvements. The plan's draft materials were also made available on the Town's website for broader review. The input from this round of engagement was used to make final revisions. By late September 2025, the planning team had a revised draft ready for formal review.

7. Plan Adoption (Winter 2025 – Spring 2026):

The final draft Comprehensive Plan was presented to the Town's Planning Commission and, subsequently, the Town Council for consideration. After public hearings as required by Virginia law, the Bedford 2045 Comprehensive Plan was adopted on April 21, 2026 as the

Town's official guide for the next twenty years. The adopted plan will be implemented through annual budgeting, zoning updates, and collaboration with regional partners to realize its vision.

The Town of Bedford emphasized transparency and community involvement throughout this planning process. Regular updates were provided via the project website (Bedford2045.com) and Town communications, and all meeting materials were accessible to the public. By engaging citizens at multiple stages, from visioning and surveying to reviewing the draft, the Town made every effort to create a plan that reflects local values and aspirations.

The chapters ahead will discuss specific elements like land use, housing, transportation, and implementation strategies to achieve Bedford's 2045 vision.

Capital Improvement Plan

The Town implements this Comprehensive Plan in part through its annual budget and its five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is an annually updated planning tool that identifies major capital needs such as facilities, utilities, streets, sidewalks, and equipment, along with estimated costs, potential funding sources, and anticipated timing. Cost figures referenced in this plan reflect preliminary, planning-level estimates based on current prices as of February 2026 and are subject to change; inclusion of a project does not constitute a funding commitment. Projects included in the CIP are evaluated and prioritized through the annual budget process, and the first year of the CIP forms the basis for the Town's capital budget. Because many recommendations in this plan depend on long-term public investment, the CIP is referenced periodically throughout this document as a key mechanism for phasing and funding priority projects.



Chapter 2: Key Issues and Opportunities

Strengths 12
Weaknesses 13
Opportunities 14
Threats 15
A Foundation for Goals 16

Key Issues and Opportunities

Bringing together all the findings above, a clear picture emerges of Bedford's strengths to build on, weaknesses to address, opportunities to seize, and threats to mitigate.

Strengths

- **Strong Small-Town Character and Community Cohesion:** Bedford's friendly, quaint atmosphere and historic charm are highly cherished by residents. Community pride is evident in the well-maintained appearance of the town and the plethora of civic volunteers (from firefighters to event organizers). This social capital is a foundation for any future initiatives.

- **Historic Downtown and Cultural Assets:** The Downtown district, National D-Day Memorial, Bower Center for the Arts, and other cultural assets give Bedford a unique identity and draw visitors. These assets provide a base for tourism and community events, reinforcing the town's image.

- **Parks, Scenery, and Location:** With Liberty Lake Park and other green spaces, plus scenic Blue Ridge views, Bedford offers a high quality of life close to nature. Its location on a major corridor between Lynchburg and Roanoke has the potential to be advantageous.

- **Basic Services and Utilities are High-Quality:** Residents rate core services like police, fire, EMS, library, and waste removal very positively. The town's control of utilities allows enhanced responsiveness. Road infrastructure is generally sufficient, and traffic is minimal.

- **Robust Infrastructure and Location Advantages:** Bedford benefits from robust local infrastructure and a strategic location between two metro areas. These assets, including municipal power with renewable options and abundant water capacity, give the town a competitive foundation for attracting new businesses and residents, as noted in recent economic planning efforts.

Weaknesses

- **Stagnant Economic/Commercial Activity:** The prevalence of vacant downtown buildings and limited shopping options is seen as Bedford's greatest weakness by survey and stakeholder meeting participants. Local job opportunities are also limited, leading to youth out-migration and daily commuting for many residents. There is a sense that the town's economy has not kept pace, with few new businesses opening and some long-time industries declining.

- **Housing Gaps:** While housing costs are relatively low, Bedford lacks diverse housing options – specifically affordable starter homes, upscale rentals for professionals, and housing for low-income families. This weakness makes it hard to retain young adults and accommodate seniors looking to downsize.

- **Infrastructure Strains in Specific Areas:** Aging water/sewer lines, a potentially overtasked volunteer fire department, and incomplete pedestrian infrastructure are weak points. These do not pose immediate crises but could hinder growth or safety if not addressed (e.g., volunteer shortages in fire/EMS or lack of sidewalks causing pedestrian safety issues).

- **Limited Services for Youth and Certain Populations:** Youth opportunities are a critical long-term priority for Bedford's community vitality and talent retention, yet community input indicates limited year-round options outside of school activities and partner-led offerings. Bedford also does not offer robust specialized support for certain populations, including veterans and seniors, beyond basic services. In addition, limited communication and coordination with nonprofit and community partners has been cited, leading to missed opportunities in community programming; because many programs are delivered through partners, the Town should strengthen collaboration and periodically evaluate whether its budget, staffing, and in-kind support are sufficient to sustain and expand desired services.

- **Lack of Natural Gas and Modern Industrial Facilities:** Bedford's ability to grow its industry is hindered by the absence of a natural gas service, distance from the nearest interstate, and an aging, limited stock of commercial and industrial buildings. The town currently has no dedicated industrial park and a relatively small skilled labor pool. These infrastructure and market gaps were highlighted in the Economic Development Authority's Strategic Plan as key constraints on Bedford's economic expansion.

Opportunities

- **Amtrak Rail Stop and Enhanced Connectivity:** The forthcoming passenger rail station (now in planning with federal support) could be a tremendous opportunity for the town. It could spur transit-oriented development, tourism, and make Bedford more attractive for residents who work in Lynchburg or Roanoke but want small-town living. Similarly, expanding trails and perhaps instituting a local shuttle could vastly improve mobility.

- **Downtown Revitalization and Tourism Development:** There is a significant opportunity to enhance downtown Bedford by capitalizing on heritage tourism, creating events, and possibly reviving the Main Street program to coordinate revitalization. Bedford could attract niche businesses that thrive on the town's charm with relatively small investments (façade improvements, marketing, tax incentives).

- **Regional Growth and Partnerships:** The region around Bedford is growing, and Bedford can benefit by positioning itself as the hub for surrounding rural areas, providing shopping, services, and housing for those new residents. Partnerships with Bedford County and neighboring localities on economic development, infrastructure, and tourism can amplify Bedford's reach.

- **Quality of Life Improvements:** Opportunities exist to improve quality of life relatively easily, such as repurposing vacant facilities, leveraging grant programs for downtown and infrastructure, and continuing to involve citizens in planning. The first business-class hotel in the Town and County is slated for completion in December 2026.

- **Education Quality and Perception:** Because public schools are governed at the County and School Board level, the Town does not control school policy; however, school performance and public perception can significantly influence Bedford's ability to attract and retain young families and a skilled workforce. The Town should continue coordination with Bedford County and the School Board and identify supportive roles it can play, such as youth enrichment partnerships, after-school programming, and community facilities that complement school and family needs.

- **Regional Infrastructure Collaboration:** The Bedford Regional Water Authority's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan emphasizes collaboration to fund critical water and sewer upgrades. There is an opportunity for the Town to work jointly with the County and BRWA on replacing aging pipes and extending utilities. Such partnerships could secure outside funding and ensure that infrastructure improvements keep pace with development, strengthening the town's capacity for growth.

Threats

- **Continued Economic Decline or Stagnation:** If current trends continue without intervention, Bedford risks further downtown deterioration, loss of businesses, and being viewed as a "pass-through" town. The negative image of stagnation (some used survey words like "outdated, declining") could become self-fulfilling, with young people leaving and a reduced tax base to fund services.

- **Competition from Larger Markets:** Bedford is flanked by larger retail centers. Without differentiation, Bedford could continue to lose shoppers and investors to those areas. Similarly, attracting industries can be challenging when bigger cities offer more workforce and incentives. The town must carve a niche to stay competitive.

- **Aging Population and Volunteer Base:** The demographic trend toward an older population means fewer working-age folks and potentially fewer volunteers to sustain community initiatives. It also means increased demand for healthcare and assisted living, which could strain families. A shrinking school-age population could threaten local schools' viability and quality.

- **Infrastructure Funding Constraints:** Like many small towns, Bedford faces the threat of insufficient funding to maintain and upgrade infrastructure. If state or federal support wanes, needed projects (water system fixes, road improvements, etc.) might be delayed, exacerbating problems. Also, regulatory mandates could force expensive upgrades. Ensuring fiscal sustainability is key.



A Foundation for Goals

This Comprehensive Plan is organized around goals and strategies that advance the Town's vision, build on strengths and opportunities, and directly address identified weaknesses and threats. The goals focus on key themes including downtown revitalization, economic development, housing, infrastructure, transportation, and community partnerships.

Downtown and Economic Revitalization as Top Priority

Economic development remains a central priority. Bedford's Economic Development Authority (EDA) is updating its economic development strategy and has made progress on prior goals, including the Bedford Regional Metal Workforce Retention Center, approval of a business-class hotel near the D-Day Memorial, and the ongoing launch of a Business Development Center. The Town's economic development direction emphasizes mixed-use development, support for local entrepreneurs, expanded events and activities, and coordinated downtown leadership (including Main Street-style programming). Marketing Bedford's assets and targeting compatible employment sectors strengthens the local economic base.

Housing Strategy for Diversity and Affordability

The plan establishes goals to expand housing supply and improve housing choice, including affordable units and a range of housing types in appropriate locations. Implementation includes pursuing state and federal housing resources and coordinating with housing partners on programs such as first-time homebuyer assistance, housing rehabilitation, and targeted infill development. Priorities align with the Housing Authority's 2024 strategic direction, including creating pathways to affordable homeownership, expanding senior-friendly housing options, and supporting workforce households. Partnerships with nonprofits and private developers are key to delivering housing options that strengthen neighborhood stability and community inclusivity.

Infrastructure & Service Upgrades for Growth

The plan identifies priority infrastructure and public facility needs, including water and sewer line replacement, continued public safety facility planning, sidewalk and trail construction, and utility and infrastructure planning around the future passenger rail station area. Modernizing and maintaining utilities is a core implementation focus. Water and sewer line replacement is a top priority, consistent with regional utility planning. The Plan also emphasizes coordinated implementation with Bedford County and the Bedford Regional Water Authority to pursue funding, align capital planning, and phase infrastructure investment. Addressing service gaps supports economic competitiveness and future development readiness.

Transportation and Connectivity Enhancements

Transportation strategies focus on advancing the passenger rail project and implementing targeted improvements such as intersection safety measures, crosswalk enhancements, sidewalk infill, and bicycle facilities where feasible. A phased sidewalk program prioritizes key routes, including school connections and links between major community destinations. The *Bike | Walk Plan* provides an implementation framework for many of these investments. Together, these improvements support safer mobility, strengthen connections between neighborhoods and amenities, and enhance Bedford's appeal for residents and visitors. The plan also supports evaluating improved connections among major visitor destinations, including downtown, the D-Day Memorial area, lodging, and other attractions, in order to strengthen the visitor experience and increase economic benefit to local businesses.

Tourism Development and Promotion

The plan identifies tourism as an additional implementation priority with strong potential to support downtown revitalization, small business growth, and community identity. Bedford's assets position the Town to expand its role as a heritage, outdoor, and small-town destination.

The Plan also supports coordination among the Town, the Bedford County Department of Tourism, other tourism partners, event organizers, and local businesses to better connect existing visitor activity with downtown destinations. Near-term actions could include enhanced promotion, coordinated programming, and evaluation of shuttle or circulator concepts linking lodging, the Memorial, downtown, and related attractions. These efforts can help convert existing visitation into stronger economic benefit for the Town.

Community Life and Partnerships

The plan supports continued community-building through events, volunteerism, and coordinated partnerships. Priorities include strengthening communication among the Town, nonprofits, and businesses; expanding programming; and supporting volunteer recruitment for community services and events. Branding and marketing efforts reinforce Bedford's identity as a place to live and visit and help counter negative perceptions associated with economic stagnation. Partnerships with regional agencies—including the Bedford Regional Water Authority and the Central Virginia Planning District Commission—support coordinated implementation, shared resources, and broader reach for local initiatives. By recognizing the trends and feedback documented in this report, Bedford is positioned to preserve its small-town character while pursuing targeted, sustainable progress. The policies, projects, and programs identified in this Plan translate community input and baseline conditions into actionable steps for the years ahead.

Chapter 3: Demographics

Population Growth and Recent Trends..... 18
Age Distribution and Median Age 19
Household Size and Composition 21
Racial and Ethnic Composition..... 21
Educational Attainment, Income Levels, and Poverty..... 22
Regional Context..... 24
Projections to 2045 and Implications 25

Population Growth and Recent Trends

Bedford's population has grown slowly over the past decade, consistent with its small-town character. From 2013 to 2022, the town's population increased modestly from about 6,052 to roughly 6,676. Annual changes were generally modest, indicating stable, incremental growth. However, a notable spike occurred in 2023, when Bedford's population rose to roughly 8,010 residents. This increase was not due to natural growth but resulted from the July 2023 boundary adjustment (Phase II), which expanded the town's municipal limits and incorporated adjacent areas. Because U.S. Census estimates do not yet fully reflect the Town's updated boundary, the 2023 figure was estimated using ESRI Business Analyst, which applies recent Census data, housing trends, and other demographic inputs to estimate population. Apart from this one-time adjustment, Bedford's underlying historical growth trend has remained steady and gradual, reflecting an average annual growth rate of approximately 1.1%. Note that this historical rate does not include the additional population that could result from housing units currently planned or under construction (see page 23).

Bedford's geographic context also shapes its demographics. The town is located between the Lynchburg and Roanoke metropolitan areas and is officially part of the Lynchburg Metropolitan Statistical Area. Many residents commute to Lynchburg and Roanoke for jobs, shopping, and services. This regional position means that Bedford's population trends do not occur in isolation but are influenced by broader patterns in Central Virginia. Overall, Bedford remains a small town in population size, especially compared to nearby cities, but it benefits from its proximity to these larger labor and consumer markets

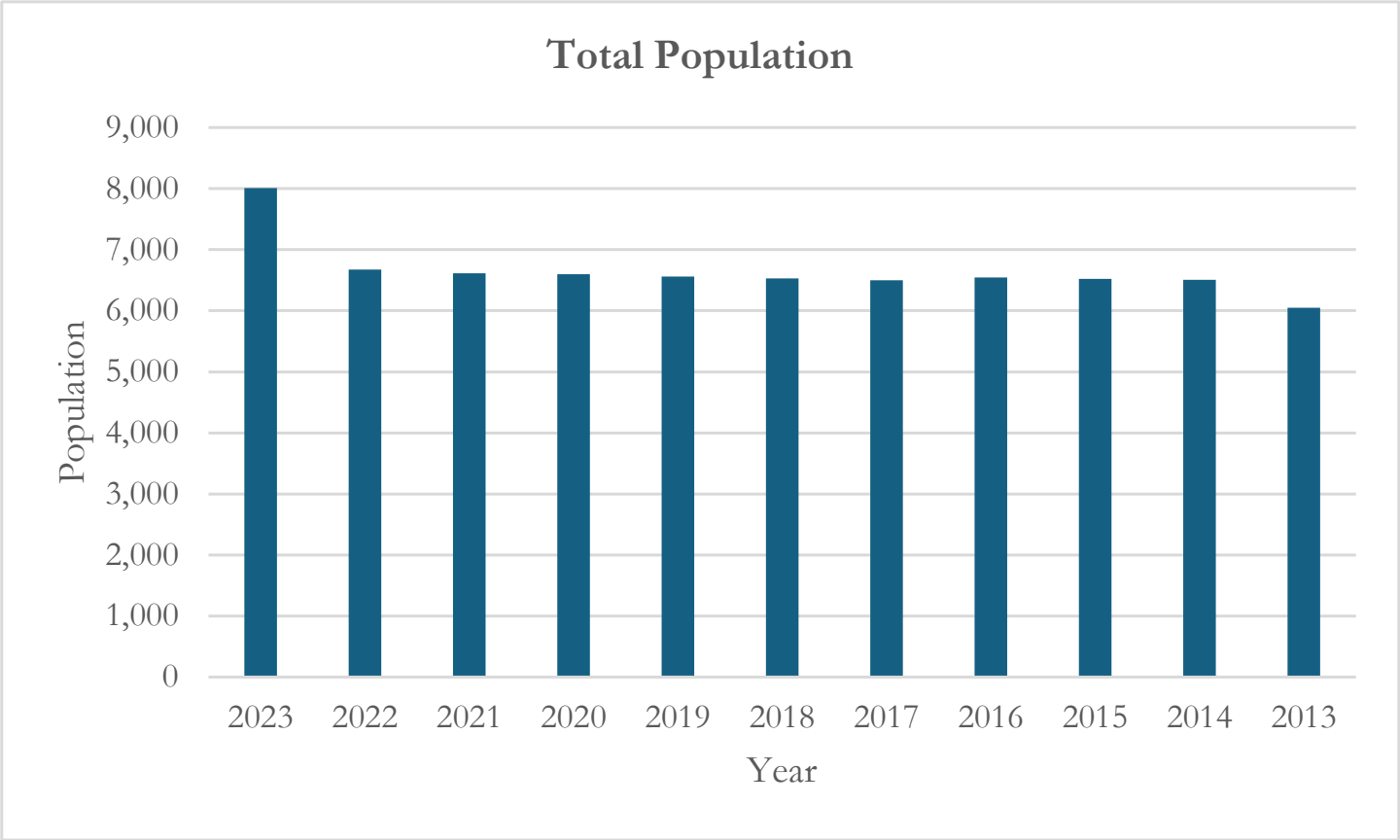


Figure 1: Total Population (2013-2023). Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, ESRI

Age Distribution and Median Age

Bedford's population is older on average than that of the surrounding region and state. The town's median age is about 43.6 years – notably higher than the Lynchburg metro area (≈40 years), the Roanoke area (≈42.8), and Virginia as a whole (≈38.8). This reflects a substantial proportion of seniors in the community; roughly 22% of Bedford residents are 65 or older. Many households consist of retirees and "empty-nesters, " contributing to the higher median age. At the same time, Bedford has fewer young adults and children compared to statewide averages, indicating a challenge in retaining youth and attracting young families.

The age profile has important planning implications. An older population will likely increase demand for healthcare services, senior programs, and age-friendly infrastructure such as accessible public facilities, transportation options, and housing that supports aging in place. It also presents economic opportunities tied to healthcare, eldercare, and retirement-oriented development. Partnerships with education and workforce institutions, including Central Virginia Community College, could help expand training pipelines in high-demand fields such as nursing and other healthcare occupations, creating stronger local career pathways for younger residents while helping meet the needs of an aging population. The median age will continue to inch upward as long-time residents age in place and retirees

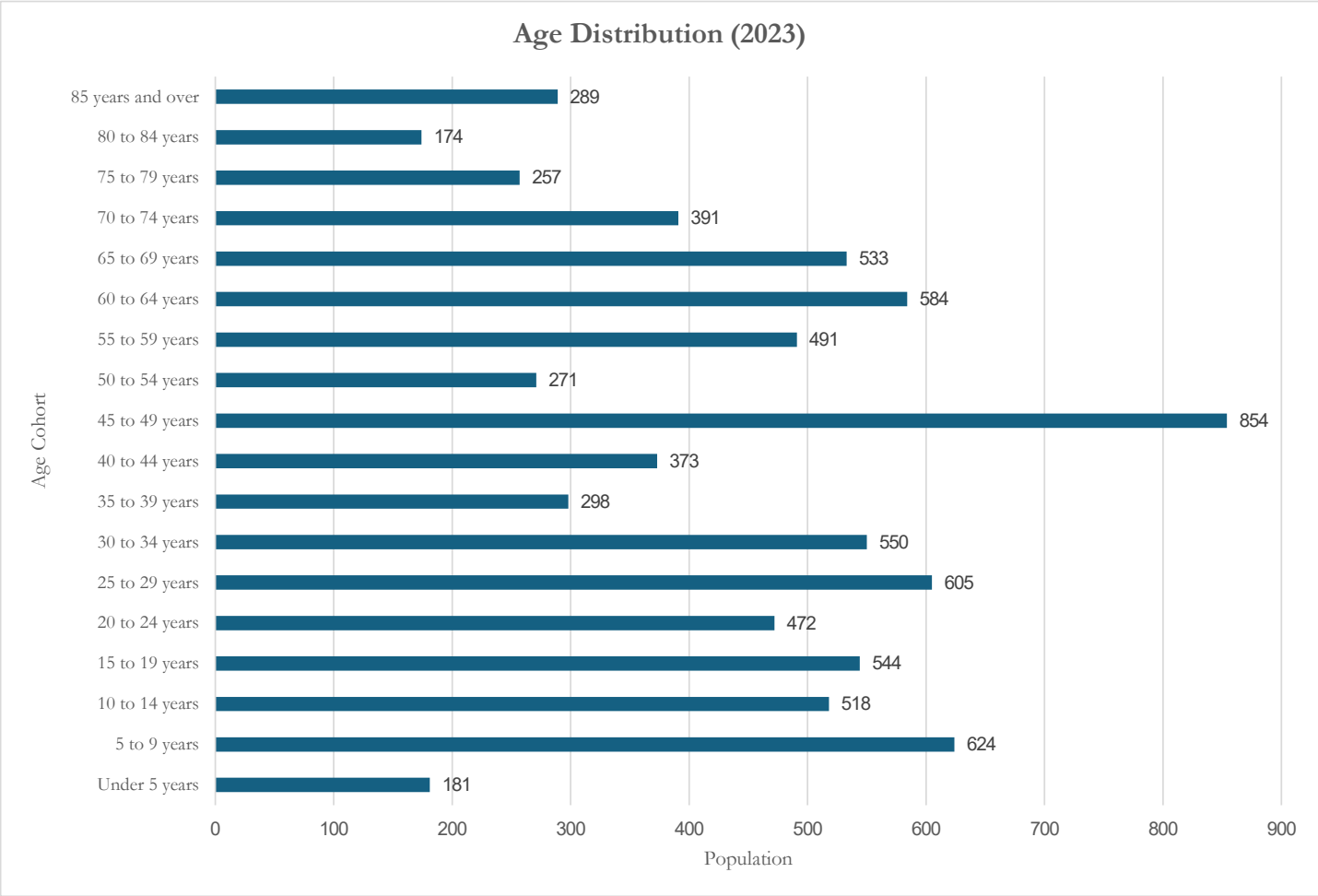


Figure 2: Age Distribution (2023). Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2018-2022

are drawn to Bedford's quiet, small-town charm. In contrast, youth retention is an ongoing concern: many young adults may leave for educational or job opportunities in larger cities, and few are moving in at rates high enough to lower the median age significantly. Without efforts to create local opportunities and amenities appealing to younger people, the town will face a gradually shrinking share of young working-age residents.

This dynamic could result in a smaller labor pool and fewer families with children, affecting school enrollment, workforce availability, and the town's long-term tax base. In response, Bedford can support strategies that strengthen career preparation and local opportunity for younger residents, including workforce training, vocational and skilled-trades education, and broader collaboration with school and institutional partners. Ensuring Bedford remains attractive to young families and professionals through job creation, cultural and recreational offerings, and housing affordability will be key to balancing its age demographic over the long term.

Household Size and Composition

Reflecting its older population and small-town characteristics, Bedford's households tend to be smaller. The average household in Bedford has about 2.2 persons, which is slightly below national and state norms. Notably, about one-third of all households consist of a single person. This high proportion of single-person households correlates with the town's many seniors (widows, widowers, or singles aging alone) and younger adults living independently. These figures paint a picture of a community with many empty-nesters, older adult couples, and young single individuals or couples without children. By contrast, traditional family households (parents with children at home) are less prevalent – consistent with the fact that only ~22% of residents are under 18.

This household profile suggests that housing needs in Bedford may differ from those in more family-oriented suburbs. Many residents may prefer smaller, lower-maintenance homes – for example, single-story houses, apartments, or townhomes suitable for singles, couples, and elderly residents. The prevalence of one-person and two-person households also underscores the importance of social support networks and community activities, since many residents (especially older singles) may live alone. Meanwhile, the presence of some family households (often long-time Bedford families or newer households attracted to the town's quality of life) means the community must still plan for the needs of children, but on a more modest scale. Overall, the household composition trends reinforce Bedford's image as a small, close-knit community with a sizeable contingent of older residents.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Bedford's population is predominantly White, with Black residents comprising the largest minority group. As of 2020 estimates, about 74% of residents identified as White and 17% as Black. The remaining ~9% of the population includes people of other races or multi-racial backgrounds, and a small but growing Hispanic/Latino population is likely part of this segment (though specific percentages are low). In recent years, Bedford has gradually increased diversity, but it remains less diverse than Virginia overall.

For context, statewide demographics are much more mixed (Virginia has significantly larger Black, Hispanic, and Asian populations in percentage terms than Bedford). These

figures indicate that, while Bedford is becoming slightly more varied in its racial and ethnic makeup, it is still a community where most residents share a similar racial background. Recent shifts, such as new residents moving in from urban areas or abroad, have broadened the town's diversity. As Bedford plans for the future, inclusivity and representation should be important considerations.

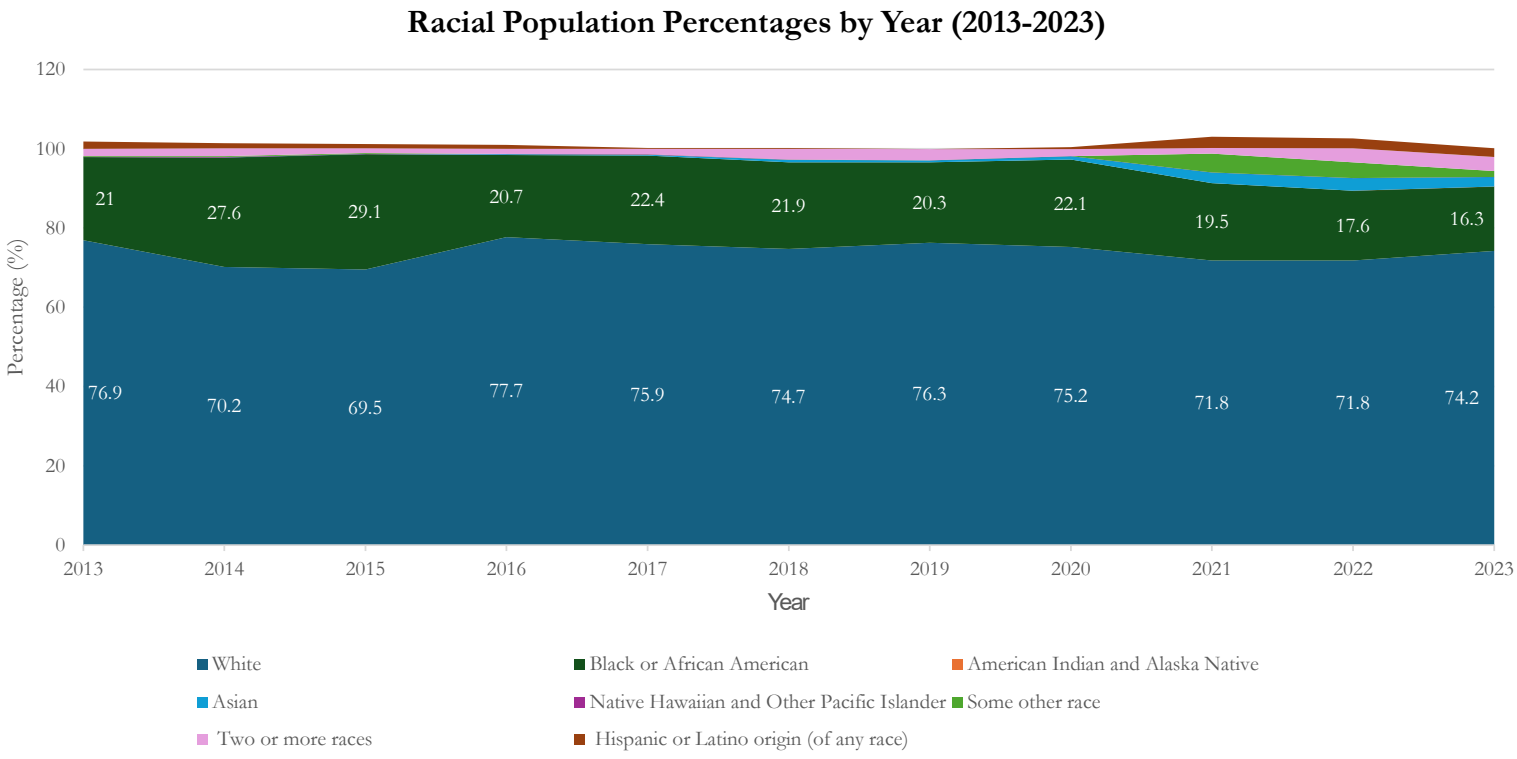


Figure 3: Racial Population Percentages by Year. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment, Income Levels, and Poverty

Bedford's demographic profile includes lower educational attainment and income levels relative to state averages and some areas of economic hardship. About 85% of Bedford adults have at least a high school diploma, but only roughly 19.5% have a bachelor's degree or higher. This rate of college attainment is about half of Virginia's statewide rate. Many Bedford residents have a high school education or some college/trade schooling, but comparatively few have four-year degrees. This is not unusual for a small community, but it can affect the types of jobs available and the earning potential of the workforce.

Consistent with the education levels, incomes in Bedford are modest. The town's median household income is around $47,000 per year, significantly below the Virginia median (for context, Virginia's median household income is roughly $91,000 per ACS 2019-2023 estimates). Per capita income is about $29,700, indicating that many households rely on limited or single incomes. These figures suggest a local economy oriented toward lower- and middle-wage jobs (retail, entry-level manufacturing, service industries, and public sector work) rather than high-paying professional or tech sectors.

One consequence of lower income levels is the community's relatively high poverty rate. An estimated 20.4% of Bedford residents live below the poverty line– roughly one in five

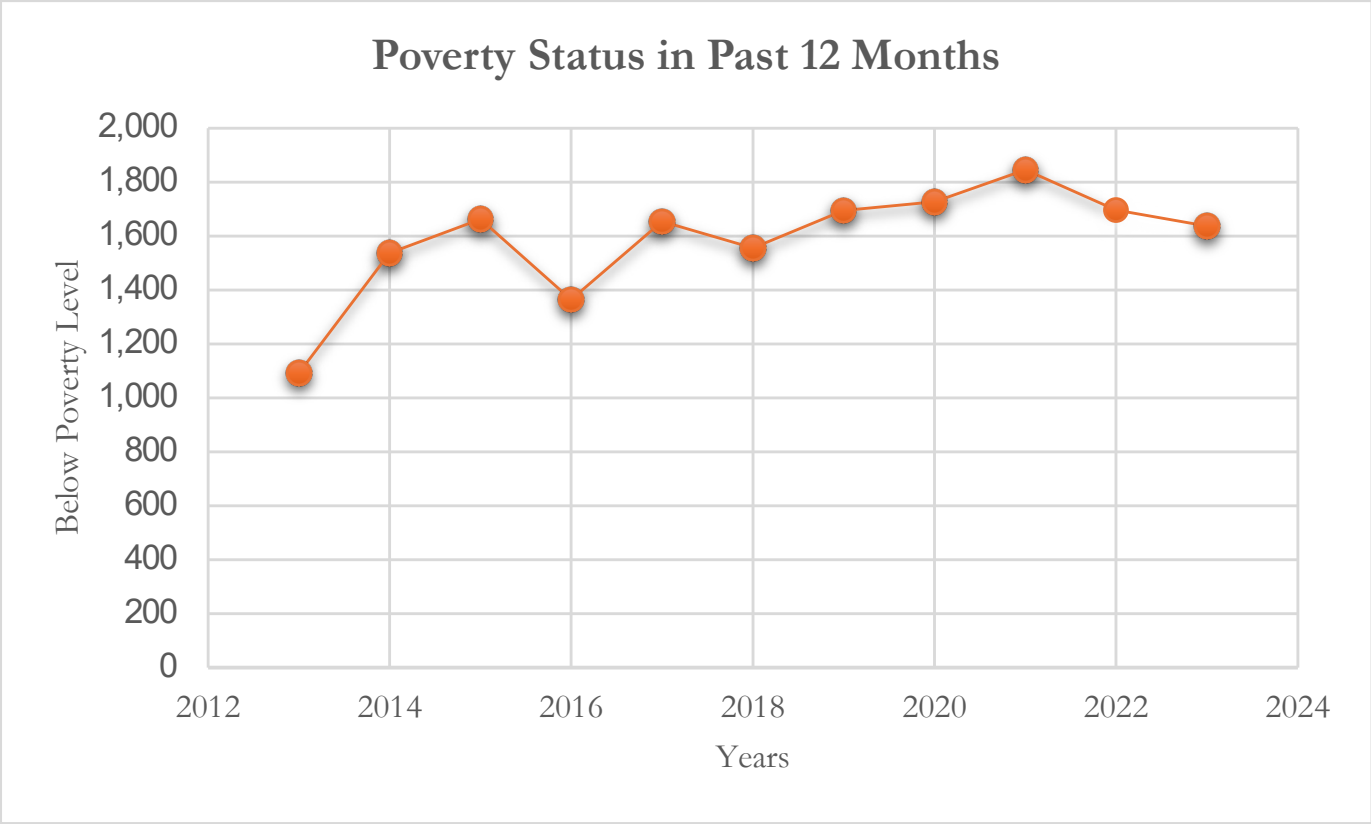


Figure 4: Poverty Status in Past 12 Months. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2012-2023

residents, which is about double the statewide poverty rate. This elevated poverty rate may be influenced by several factors: an aging population on fixed incomes, pockets of generational poverty in specific neighborhoods, and limited local job opportunities that pay above a subsistence wage. High poverty levels are a concern for the town's future because they correlate with greater needs for affordable housing, healthcare, nutrition assistance, and other social services. They also highlight the importance of economic development initiatives to create higher-paying jobs and workforce training for Bedford's residents.

Despite these challenges, Bedford's community fabric provides some strengths. The cost of living (particularly housing costs) is relatively low, which helps mitigate income constraints for many families. Going forward, improving educational attainment and incomes should be a priority for Bedford. Strategies might include strengthening local schools and vocational programs, partnering with nearby colleges or training centers, and encouraging business investment to diversify the employment base. Reducing poverty and raising the standard of living is not only a social goal but also critical to expanding the town's tax base and enhancing the quality of life for all residents.

Economic and social indicators also differentiate Bedford. The town's median income and educational attainment levels lag behind the statewide average. Additionally, poverty in Bedford (20%) is comparable to or even slightly higher than poverty rates in the nearby cities

(Lynchburg and Roanoke have had poverty challenges around the 15–20% range in recent years). Bedford County, by contrast, is more affluent on average, with higher incomes and lower poverty than the town. This suggests that Bedford faces more small-area socioeconomic strain than some parts of the region, even as it shares the overall growth trajectory of Central Virginia.

Bedford occupies a unique niche in the region: it is a small, older community between two mid-sized cities. Its growth has depended more on boundary changes, whereas Lynchburg and Roanoke grow more through economic expansion and in-migration. Bedford's demographic trends underscore the importance of regional collaborative efforts, such as working with Lynchburg and Roanoke on economic and workforce initiatives, which could help Bedford retain young people and attract jobs, given the interconnected labor market. Likewise, comparing metrics reminds local leaders to tailor solutions to Bedford's scale and needs: strategies that work in a larger city may need adjustment for a town of 8,000. By understanding where Bedford stands relative to its neighbors on key indicators, the Town can better position itself within the regional context and advocate for resources or partnerships that address its demographic opportunities and challenges.

Regional Context: Bedford vs. Lynchburg, Roanoke, and Virginia

In a regional context, Bedford's demographics reflect and diverge from those of nearby communities. Population growth in the broader Central Virginia region has been steady, and Bedford's future growth is expected to keep pace with its neighbors. The University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center projects that Bedford's population will increase by around 16% through 2050, similar to the projected growth rate for the surrounding Bedford County (≈16.6%) and the City of Lynchburg (≈14.5%). The City of Roanoke is forecast to grow more slowly (around 5–6% by 2050). These projections suggest that, as a whole, the region will continue to experience moderate growth, and Bedford is likely to share in that trend – albeit starting from a much smaller population base. One limiting factor for Bedford is its geographic size; unlike counties or larger cities, the town has a confined area for development, so its growth may be constrained by available land and housing unless further expansions occur. In contrast, counties like Bedford County can absorb more growth over a broad area, and Lynchburg and Roanoke, while hemmed in by their borders, have larger economies that attract newcomers.

Comparatively, Bedford stands out as older and smaller than these regional peers. As noted, Bedford's median age (43.6) exceeds that of the Lynchburg and Roanoke metro areas and Virginia overall. Lynchburg and Roanoke (the cities) have universities, medical centers, and industries that draw younger adults, keeping their median ages slightly lower than Bedford's.

With its quieter profile, Bedford has fewer young adults and more retirees proportionally. In terms of diversity, Bedford is less racially and ethnically diverse than larger cities. Lynchburg and Roanoke each have more varied racial and ethnic populations, whereas Bedford remains roughly three-quarters White and one-fifth Black. Statewide, Virginia's population is far more diverse than Bedford's.

Projections to 2045 and Implications

Looking ahead to 2045, Bedford is expected to experience gradual growth shaped by natural demographic change, the current housing development pipeline, and the phased boundary adjustments established through the Town's reversion agreement with Bedford County. Based on recent American Community Survey trends, population growth in Bedford has averaged approximately 1.1% annually and is expected to remain modest. However, Bedford's current housing pipeline could accelerate overall population growth beyond that baseline. As of February 2026, approximately 785 housing units are planned or under construction (see page 36 for more information). Applying the town's average household size of roughly 2.2 persons suggests these units could accommodate approximately 1,700 additional residents if fully built and occupied.

The July 2023 Phase II boundary adjustment produced a significant one-time increase by incorporating adjacent developed areas into the Town. A Phase III boundary adjustment area has also been identified in the reversion framework; however, its implementation is contingent on future development patterns, performance criteria, and Town policy decisions, and no specific timing is currently established.

Bedford's population could exceed 11,000 residents by 2045 if current growth trends continue and planned housing development proceeds, reflecting ***an effective annual growth rate of roughly 1.8 percent*** from the 2023 population base. If the Phase III boundary adjustment were to occur before 2045, the Town could experience a larger step increase in population and land area beyond this projection. Even with moderate growth, Bedford will need to plan for incremental increases in demand for housing, services, and infrastructure.

Demographically, Bedford will remain one of the older communities in the region. The median age is forecast to rise slightly as retirees comprise a larger population share, while younger cohorts remain relatively small. Unless Bedford succeeds in expanding job opportunities and lifestyle amenities to attract young families and professionals, the population profile will continue to skew toward seniors and smaller households. At the same time, Phase III's expanded land area offers opportunities for new housing that could help attract a more diverse mix of residents if planned strategically. Over the longer term, broader national demographic change is also likely to influence Bedford, including increasing racial and ethnic diversity among younger households. While the pace and scale of change in Bedford may differ from national trends, the Town should plan for a more diverse

future population by supporting inclusive housing choices, family-oriented amenities, and community services that appeal to a broad range of current and future residents.

These projections carry clear implications for Bedford's future planning and policy:

- **Growing Service Needs for Seniors and Healthcare:** As the older population expands, demand for healthcare, senior programs, and accessible infrastructure will continue to rise. Expanded emergency services, clinics, and social supports will be necessary, especially for fixed-income residents.

- **Housing Adaptation and Availability:** With smaller households and more seniors, the housing stock should include accessible options such as single-level homes, apartments with elevators, and assisted living facilities. At the same time, attracting younger households will depend on ensuring affordable starter homes and rentals, potentially supported by the land base gained through Phase III.

- **Workforce and Youth Retention Challenges:** A shrinking share of working-age residents could strain the local economy. Partnerships with regional employers and educational institutions will be essential to create appealing job opportunities, while investments in quality-of-life amenities can help retain and attract younger adults. Efforts to attract and retain young families will be especially important to sustaining school enrollment, workforce participation, and long-term community vitality.

Bedford's outlook to 2045 is one of gradual but meaningful change. The town is expected to continue growing through a combination of modest population increases and the buildout of planned or already under construction housing units. While Bedford's long-term historical growth trend remains modest, the current development pipeline could increase the town's effective growth rate over the planning horizon beyond its recent baseline. At the same time, much of this change will remain incremental rather than driven by rapid in-migration. As the current population ages in place, attracting young families and accommodating a more diverse population will be important to maintaining demographic balance and supporting future growth. Planning proactively for the effects of an aging population, evolving service needs, and the possibility of additional future growth associated with Phase III will be critical to achieving Bedford's long-term vision.

Chapter 4: Economy

Economic Statistics..... 27
Commercial Areas 29
Commuting Patterns 30
Incentives 32
EDA Strategic Plan 32
Downtown Plan 33
Goals & Strategies..... 34

Economic Statistics

Bedford's local economy reflects its small-town context and its role as a hub between larger regional job centers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap application (2022), the town supports approximately 6,700 jobs. The largest employment sectors are Educational Services (1,950 jobs; 29%), Health Care and Social Assistance (967 jobs; 14%), and Retail Trade (879 jobs; 13%). Together, these three sectors account for more than half of all jobs located within the town, underscoring Bedford's reliance on education, health services, and retail as key economic drivers. The remaining employment is distributed among manufacturing, food services, government, and other industries, reflecting a diverse but locally focused employment base. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of employment by major sector.

Median incomes in Bedford remain modest compared to state averages. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019–2023 American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates), the median household income in the Town of Bedford is approximately $47,700, well below Virginia's statewide median of about $91,000. The per capita income is roughly $29,700, and about 20.4% of residents live below the poverty line, more than double the statewide rate.

Educational attainment levels reflect similar disparities: only about one in five adults in Bedford hold a bachelor's degree or higher, roughly half the statewide proportion. These figures indicate that many local jobs are concentrated in lower-wage service and trade sectors; the town's workforce leans toward high school graduates and technically skilled occupations.

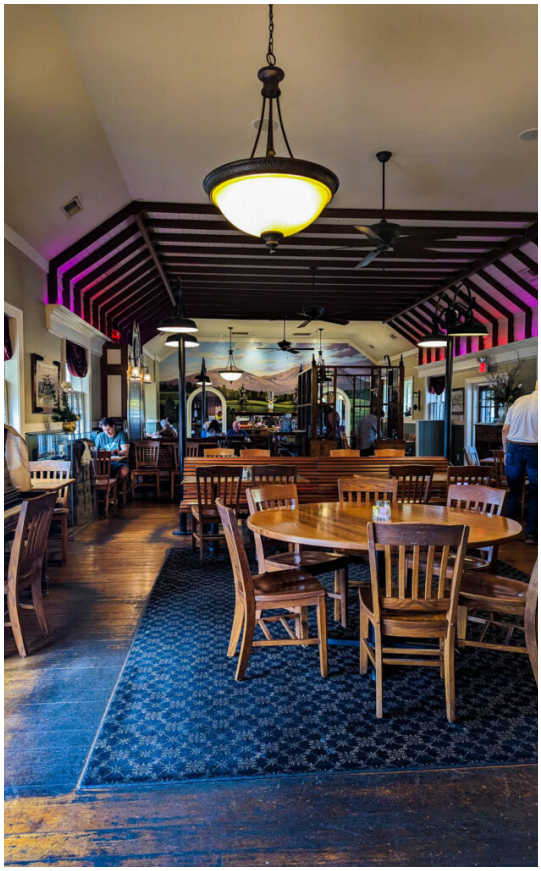
Unemployment in Bedford generally tracks near state averages (with a brief spike during the COVID-19 pandemic) and labor force participation is estimated at 55–57% of the adult population, slightly below national levels. These estimates carry notable margins of error due to the town's small population size but provide a reliable picture of Bedford's economic conditions. Overall, Bedford's economic indicators paint a picture of a stable but slow-growing economy characterized by lower incomes and growth compared to its urban neighbors.

Note: Table 1 uses U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap (2022) employment data organized by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) sector. Sector names and totals may differ from those used in the Town's 2025–2026 budget document because the two documents rely on different sources, timeframes, and reporting conventions.

Industry Sector (NAICS)	Jobs (Count)	Share of Total Jobs
Educational Services	1,950	29.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	967	14.4%
Retail Trade	879	13.1%
Manufacturing	814	12.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	398	5.9%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	367	5.5%
Public Administration	354	5.3%
Wholesale Trade	164	2.4%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	137	2.0%
Finance and Insurance	116	1.7%
Information	84	1.2%
Administration & Support, Waste Management, and Remediation	63	0.9%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	32	0.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	9	0.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	9	0.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3	0.0%
Total, All Jobs	**6,729**	**100.0%**

Table 1: Jobs by Sector. Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap (2022)

Commercial Areas



Bedford's commercial activity is concentrated in two primary settings: the historic downtown "Centertown" district and the highway-oriented corridors on the town's periphery. Centertown, a name that came about with the revitalization efforts of the 1980s when Bedford became a Main Street community, is a central business district featuring charming historic architecture, independent shops, restaurants, and civic institutions like the courthouse. This traditional downtown core around Main Street, Bridge Street, and adjacent blocks serves as the heart of the community and a draw for both tourists and local residents. However, downtown Bedford currently faces challenges with vitality. Many storefronts and upper-floor spaces are vacant or underutilized, and residents have expressed strong concerns about this issue. For example, 88% of surveyed residents reported being worried about vacant buildings in Centertown.

The mix of shopping and dining options is limited, with 67% of survey respondents dissatisfied with downtown retail offerings. The decline of some Centertown businesses was noted in a public forum as a weakness, along with perceptions of limited parking and a lack of activity in the downtown area.

Outside of downtown, commercial development in Bedford is primarily located along major highways, such as U.S. Route 460 and Route 221, where they bypass or enter the town. These corridor areas feature shopping centers, grocery and hardware stores, gas stations, restaurants, and other auto-oriented businesses that serve both town and county residents. Most large-scale commercial uses (big-box retailers, chain restaurants, etc.) are found along these highway corridors. While these areas provide convenient services and capture regional through-traffic, they also pull some retail activity away from downtown.

The community survey and engagement indicated a desire for more businesses and restaurants within town, both to reduce the need to drive elsewhere and to enhance local quality of life. In particular, residents have cited the need for more dining options (including later-night restaurants or a local theater) to serve both residents and tourists better. Moving forward, Bedford will need to strike a balance between highway-oriented commercial growth and strategies to reinvest in the Centertown district. The town's location along US 460 is an asset for economic development, but maintaining a thriving downtown core is also seen as essential for Bedford's identity and long-term economic health.

Commuting Patterns

A significant portion of Bedford's workforce commutes to jobs in Lynchburg, Roanoke, or other parts of Bedford County. According to U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap data (2022), approximately 74 percent of employed Bedford residents commute outside the town for work, while only 26 percent both live and work within the town (see Figure 1). Conversely, Bedford attracts a larger number of in-commuters—nearly 5,900 workers travel into Bedford each day, compared to about 2,300 who commute out. This indicates that, despite its modest size, Bedford functions as a local employment destination center within the region.

The average commute time for Bedford residents is about 20 minutes, suggesting that most commuters travel short distances to nearby communities within the Lynchburg-Roanoke region. Bedford's strategic position along U.S. 460 and its proximity to U.S. 221 and other regional routes provide excellent connectivity and easy access to employment centers throughout the area. This highway access, combined with the town's compact size, results in generally minimal traffic congestion and manageable commute times for residents.

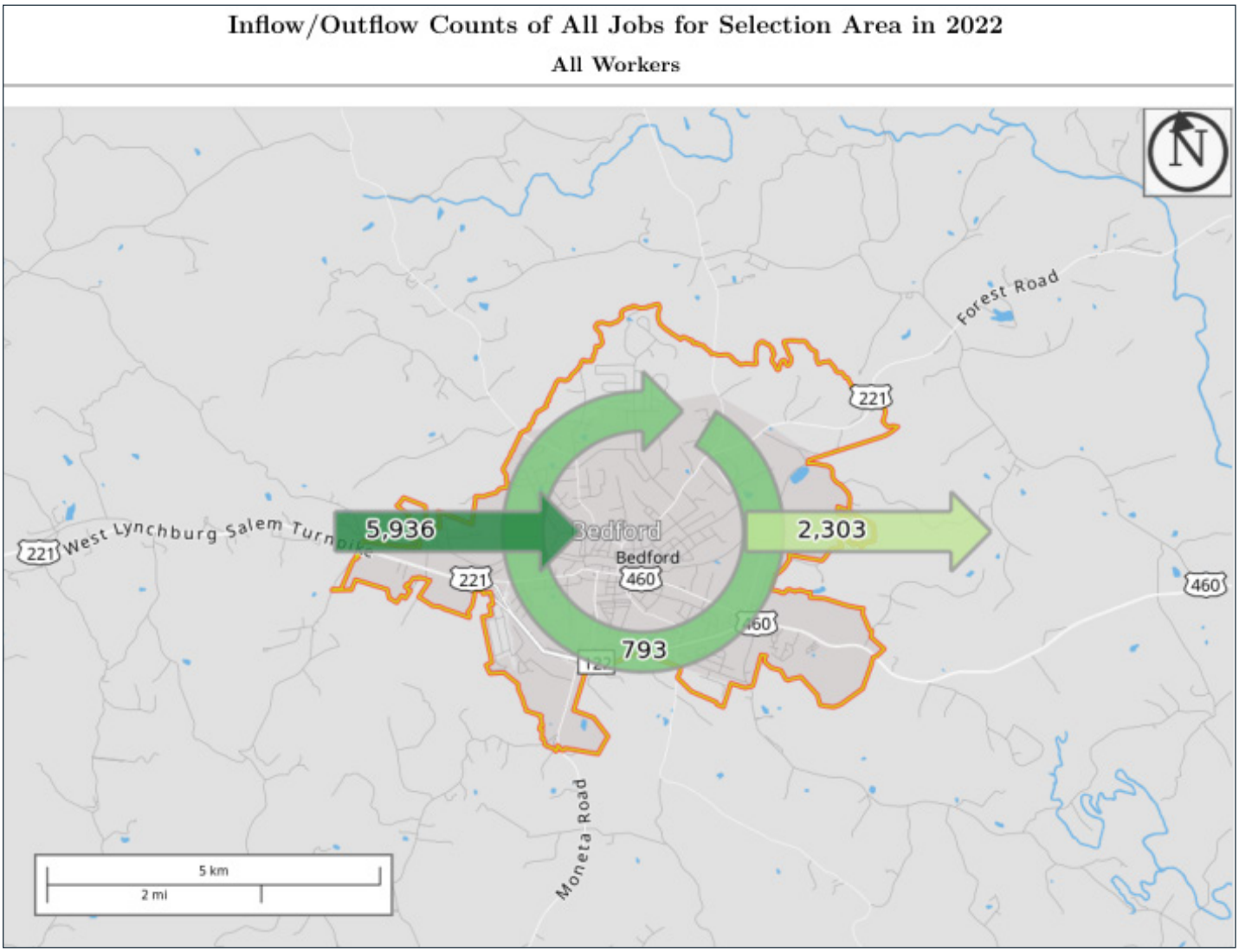


Figure 5: Inflow/Outflow Counts for All Workers. Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap (2022)

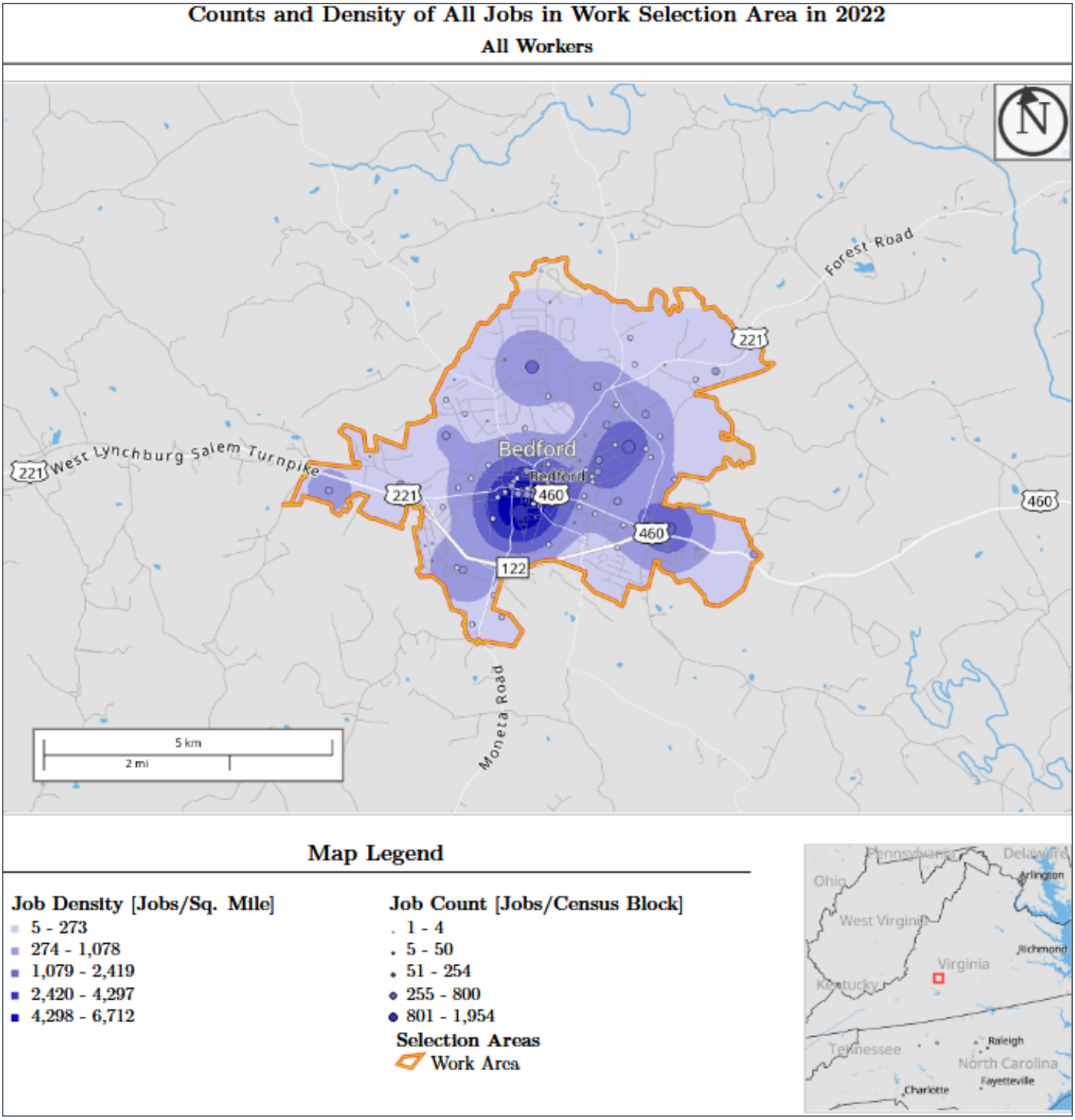


Figure 6: Job Counts and Density. Source: U.S. Census Bureau OnTheMap (2022)

However, the high rate of out-commuting underscores the limited number of local job opportunities. Strengthening Bedford's employment base, particularly within its existing commercial and industrial areas, could allow more residents to both live and work in town, reducing their reliance on regional commuting. The forthcoming Amtrak passenger rail stop is expected to expand mobility options, making Bedford more accessible for telecommuters and regional travelers, while further enhancing its attractiveness as a residential community.

Bedford's commuting patterns highlight its role within a regional economy: the town offers a high quality of life, affordability, and housing diversity, while many residents' employment and some shopping needs are met in nearby cities. Improving local job opportunities and transportation alternatives will be essential to balancing this dynamic. Given the limited greenfield development potential outside the Bedford Center for Business, the town's future economic growth will rely heavily on redevelopment and adaptive reuse of existing properties and brownfield sites.

Incentives

To stimulate economic development and reinvestment, the Town of Bedford and its Economic Development Authority (EDA) employ a variety of incentive tools. Given Virginia's strict limitations on some redevelopment powers, Bedford has focused on voluntary incentives to encourage business growth and property improvements. For instance, the Town offers grants and tax abatements for owners who rehabilitate historic downtown buildings or fill long-vacant structures. These incentives help lower the cost for local entrepreneurs or outside investors to renovate properties and open new businesses, especially in downtown Bedford.

Façade improvement grants and a local Enterprise Zone program offer tax credits or permit fee waivers for qualifying projects, particularly in targeted areas such as downtown and designated industrial parks. The Town has reached its maximum acreage for land allowed in the Enterprise Zone. The Town and its EDA also coordinate with regional and state incentive programs, such as workforce training grants, small business loans, and tourism promotion funds, to attract and retain businesses.

Stakeholder input suggests that expanding incentives could further energize Bedford's economy. Ideas include offering a startup incubator space, small business microloans, or additional tax incentives for businesses that occupy currently vacant downtown storefronts. This plan supports evaluating and enhancing Bedford's incentive packages to remain competitive with nearby localities. By tailoring incentives to Bedford's needs, such as focusing on downtown revitalization, local entrepreneurship, and reuse of historic properties, the Town can encourage private investment that aligns with community goals.

EDA Strategic Plan

Bedford's EDA is in the process of updating its economic development strategic plan, building on progress made in recent years. Since the last EDA plan in 2021, the Town has achieved several notable economic development successes, which the new plan aims to build upon. These recent successes include the feasibility study for creation of the Bedford Regional Metal Workforce Retention Center, the approval of a new business-class hotel near the D-Day Memorial, and the launch of a study for a Business Development Center to support entrepreneurs.

Each of these initiatives addresses key needs. For example, the Metal Workforce Center helps train and retain skilled trades workers, the new hotel will boost tourism and business travel capacity, and the development center nurtures small businesses.
The updated EDA Strategic Plan is expected to emphasize diversifying Bedford's economy and marketing the town's strengths. Priorities under discussion include encouraging more mixed-use development, providing additional incentives for local startups and expanding businesses, and increasing events or attractions that draw visitors downtown. The EDA is also focusing on regional marketing, positioning Bedford as an attractive location for several new employers in sectors such as light manufacturing, technology, and tourism services. Focus will also continue on growing the Metal Workforce Center.

Downtown Plan

Revitalizing downtown emerged as a top priority during this planning process, and efforts are underway to formulate a dedicated downtown revitalization plan. In March 2025, a Downtown Stakeholder Forum brought together local business owners, officials, and consultants to brainstorm strategies for strengthening downtown Bedford. That discussion, along with community survey input, helped inform the Downtown 5-Year Action Plan, which aims to make the downtown area a thriving hub of commerce and activity by 2045. Key elements of the Downtown Plan include initiatives to fill vacant buildings, increase foot traffic, and improve the downtown experience for both residents and visitors.

One recommendation is to hire a dedicated coordinator, which Bedford currently lacks. A downtown-focused organization could coordinate promotions, recruit businesses, and serve as a champion for downtown revitalization. It is important to note that Bedford is still a Virginia Main Street community at the "Exploring Main Street" level. Bedford's previous Main Street organization closed in 2018, and the Town's current status



reinforces the importance of re-establishing a dedicated downtown coordination function (staff or partner organization) to lead revitalization programming, business recruitment/support, and events.

Stakeholders also suggested organizing more events and attractions in downtown to draw people on evenings and weekends. This strategy has seen success in comparable towns (nearby Rocky Mount's music events at the Town-supported Harvester were cited as an inspiration).

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Strengthen and diversify Bedford's economy while revitalizing downtown as the heart of the community.

Strategy 1A - Revitalize Downtown Bedford as an Economic Hub: Implement a coordinated downtown revitalization program to focus on filling vacant storefronts, improving façades, and marketing downtown to businesses and visitors. The Town should consider hiring or appointing a downtown coordinator to organize events that increase foot traffic, assist property owners in finding tenants, and act as a liaison for downtown merchants. Success will be measured by a decrease in downtown vacancy rates and an increase in the number of businesses and events in downtown. Continue to be a Main Street community with the Virginia Main Street program.

Strategy 1B - Expand Local Business Incentives and Support: Enhance incentive programs that support business growth and entrepreneurship in Bedford. The Town is pursuing the establishment of a small business incubator or co-working space in an underutilized building to encourage local enterprise development. Additional strategies include expanding façade improvement grants and offering targeted tax abatements to support the rehabilitation of downtown buildings. The Town and Economic Development Authority should also continue to provide local incentives, such as real property tax abatements and waivers of zoning and business license fees, to encourage new businesses to occupy long-vacant spaces and help reduce initial startup costs.

Strategy 1C - Market Bedford's Assets to Attract Investment: Develop a new marketing and branding campaign to promote Bedford's advantages to attract a few new employers and investors. By actively marketing its strengths and available sites, the Town can compete with larger localities that offer broader incentives. A successful outcome would be landing one or two new employers in the next few years that provide quality jobs for residents.

Strategy 1D - Leverage Regional Partnerships: Strengthen collaboration with Bedford County, regional economic development agencies, and nearby cities to pursue shared growth opportunities. The Town should continue to work closely with the County's

Economic Development Authority and organizations such as the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance and the Roanoke Regional Partnership to align strategies. Where appropriate, joint efforts can amplify Bedford's reach. For instance, a partnership between the County and local community college on workforce initiatives, such as the Bedford Regional Metal Workforce Center, will aim to provide local workers with skills employers are looking for. The Town can also benefit from regional tourism promotions by linking Bedford's attractions with Blue Ridge Parkway and Smith Mountain Lake marketing in conjunction with the Tourism Department of Bedford County.

Goal 2: Attract and retain a high-skill workforce to support economic growth.

Strategy 2A - Support Workforce Development and Retention: To achieve a high-skill labor force, the Town should collaborate with educational institutions and employers to grow local talent. This includes supporting the expansion of workforce training facilities and advocating for the establishment of satellite campuses or training programs in Bedford for in-demand trades and professions. The Town can also continue to partner with local entities such as the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce to facilitate internships, apprenticeship programs, and job fairs, connecting Bedford's youth and job seekers with local employers. Another strategy is to enhance amenities that matter to younger professionals and skilled workers; for example, continuing to invest in broadband infrastructure, promoting diverse housing options (see the Housing chapter), and expanding cultural and recreational offerings.



Chapter 5: Housing

Housing Statistics 36
Housing Diversity 39
Goals & Strategies 41

Housing Statistics

Housing in the Town of Bedford is a central issue that affects community character, economic development, and the quality of life for residents. As of the 2020 Census, Bedford had approximately 3,163 housing units, with roughly 2,930 of those occupied – a vacancy rate of around 7%, which is not unusual for a small town with some older homes and transitional properties.

A significant aspect of Bedford's housing profile is its low homeownership rate. Only about 55% of occupied housing units in Bedford are owner-occupied, meaning nearly half are rentals. This is significantly lower than the surrounding Bedford County (where over 80% of homes are owner-occupied) and Virginia as a whole (~66%). In other words, Bedford has a much higher proportion of renters than is typical in the region.

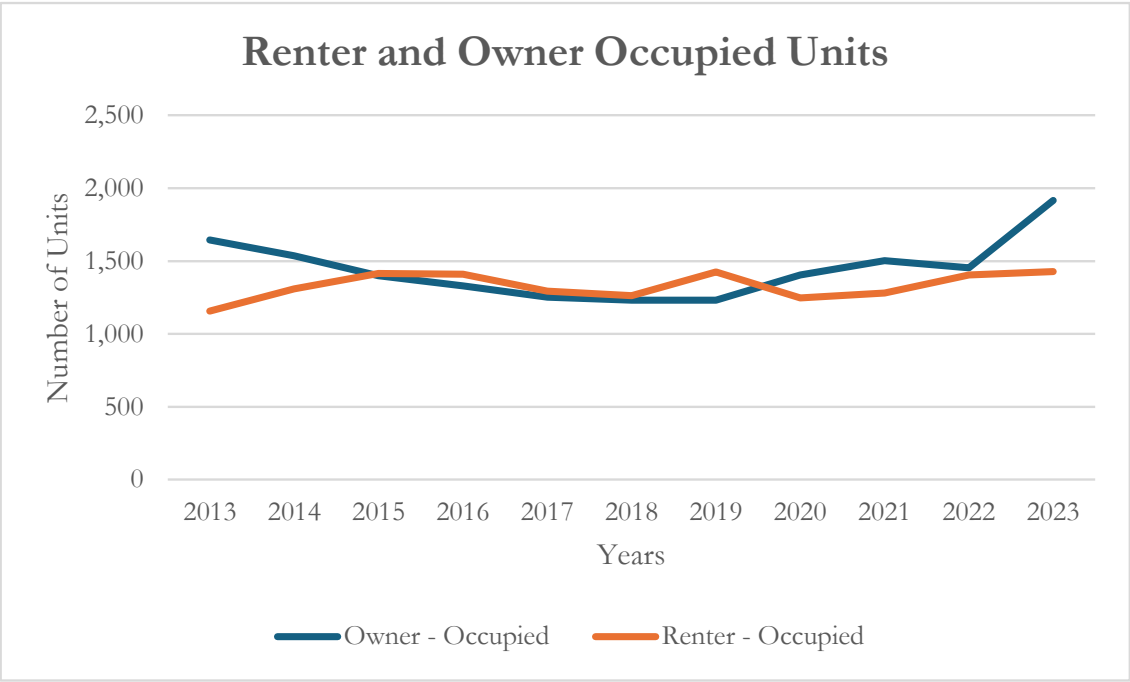


Figure 7: Renter- and Owner-Occupied Units. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2013-2023

The town's housing stock is a mix of single-family houses, townhomes, and apartments, but it lacks diversity in certain key areas. The median value of an owner-occupied home in Bedford is about $192,600, lower than the Virginia median (~$225,000), reflecting the generally modest home prices here. Many of Bedford's single-family homes are older, and while they contribute to the town's historic charm, some require updating.

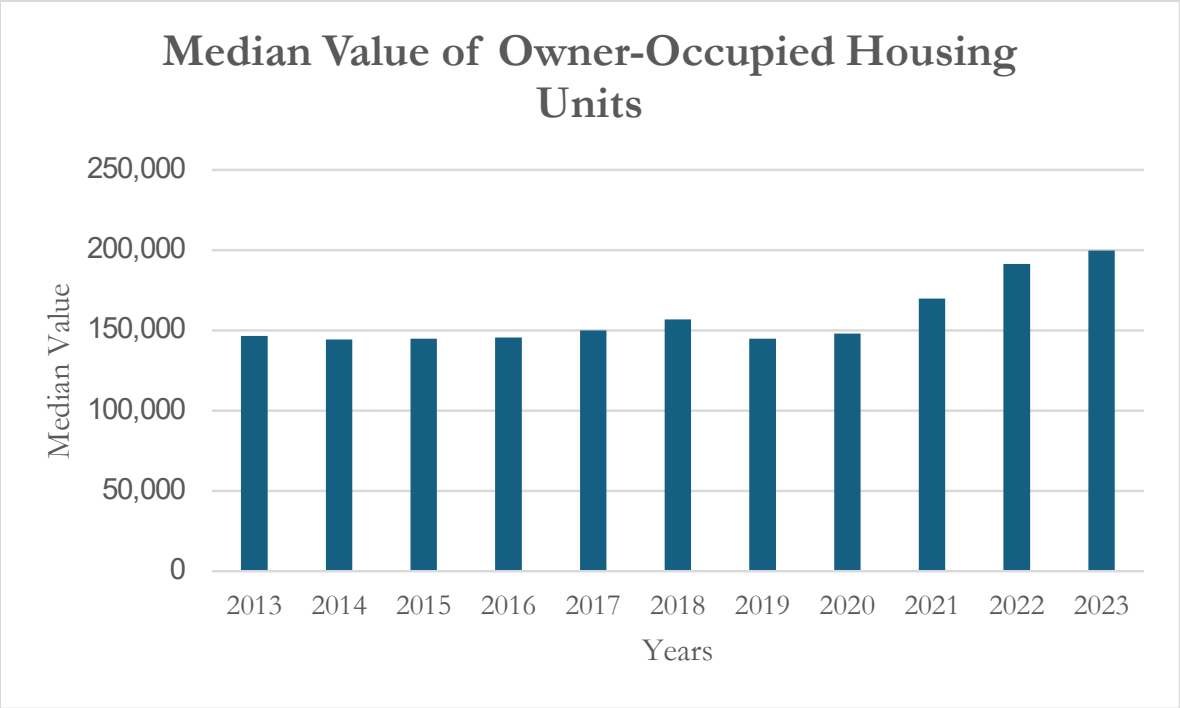


Figure 8: Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2013-2023

Local realtors and housing stakeholders report a shortage of specific housing types, including affordable starter homes for first-time buyers, single-level homes suitable for seniors aging in place, and modern, high-quality rental units for professionals and young families. Demand is high for homes in the $250,000–$325,000 range (a typical price range for young professionals and middle-income families), yet there are relatively few homes in Bedford available at that range. New construction in recent years has been limited and often priced higher, while many older homes in that price range might need significant rehabilitation.

On the rental side, Bedford's median gross rent is around $828 per month (U.S. Census Bureau), which is considered affordable relative to state averages. However, a number of rental units are located in aging apartment complexes or older houses. The town has seven subsidized housing developments, indicating some base of low-income housing, but those serve only a portion of the population in need.

Despite its small size, Bedford is seeing notable housing development activity. As of February 2026, approximately 785 new housing units are planned or under construction, representing a significant potential expansion of the town's housing supply. Key projects include Eastyn

Crossing (124 single-family homes now being built and marketed), Governors Reserve (a proposed development planned for 140 single-family homes and 129 townhouses), and Harmony (a planned mixed-use community expected to include up to 332 homes, including single-family houses, townhomes, and apartments). In downtown Bedford, the former Bedford Middle School has been adaptively reused as The Flora, a 60-unit apartment community. Collectively, these projects are expanding Bedford's housing options and reflect continued confidence in the town's future growth.

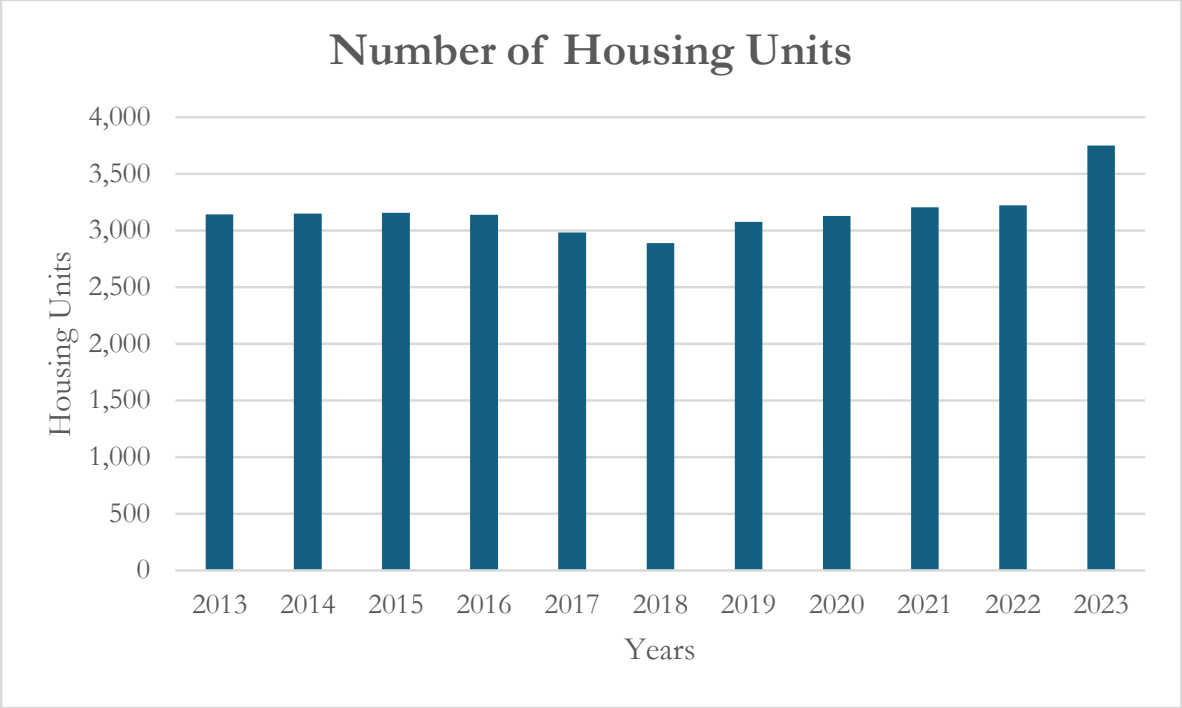


Figure 9: Number of Housing Units. Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2013-2023

Community input on housing reveals a mix of pride and concern. In the town's survey, 11% of respondents identified "Housing and Residential" as one of Bedford's top strengths, citing the town's generally affordable housing costs and attractive, quaint neighborhoods as positives. Indeed, Bedford's housing costs tend to be lower than those of nearby metropolitan areas, which is an asset for retaining residents on fixed incomes or attracting newcomers seeking value.

However, many participants in surveys and meetings emphasized the lack of housing variety. Bedford's housing stock is heavily weighted toward traditional single-family homes and some older apartments. There are fewer options, such as townhomes, new apartments, or cottages, that might appeal to young singles, small families, or downsizing seniors. Public input underscored that this gap in choices makes it difficult to retain certain groups, especially young adults with limited options for starter homes and older residents who cannot find suitable one-level or maintenance-free homes for retirement.

Housing Diversity

Housing affordability and accommodations for low- to moderate-income households are pressing concerns in Bedford. Although the town's housing stock is relatively affordable in comparison to statewide prices, local incomes are also significantly lower than the state average. Many Bedford residents live on fixed or modest incomes, and about one in five residents lives below the poverty line, indicating a substantial need for affordable housing. The town has several subsidized housing options that provide apartments for low-income families, seniors, or individuals with disabilities.

Bedford's Redevelopment & Housing Authority (RHA) adopted its Strategic Plan in June 2024 to help guide its housing work in the Town. The plan outlines the RHA's mission, vision, and priorities and emphasizes maintaining and improving existing housing, leveraging grant resources, and building partnerships to expand affordable homeownership and rental options, including housing that serves seniors and the local workforce. These developments are crucial in providing safe, stable housing for individuals who might otherwise be unable to afford market-rate rents.

However, stakeholders have identified a gap in transitional housing and supportive housing, such as options for people who are moving out of homelessness or those on very low fixed incomes, including individuals working low-wage jobs or living on disability benefits. In a public forum, residents noted that homelessness is an issue in the community, suggesting a need for services or housing solutions targeted at the unhoused population.

Affordability for the working population is also an issue. The term "workforce housing" refers to housing affordable to households earning around the area median income, often including teachers, police, nurses, retail workers, and young professionals. In Bedford, both data and public feedback indicate that workforce housing is in short supply. About 29% of survey respondents said there is an urgent need for more affordable housing in town, and an additional 35% said there is "some need". In other words, a substantial majority of the community recognizes the need for more affordable and entry-level homes. Only a small minority felt there was no need for additional affordable housing. This aligns with comments from stakeholders that Bedford lacks sufficient affordable starter homes and middle-income housing, which in turn makes it difficult for young professionals and families to settle in the area.

Low- to moderate-income housing needs also extend to the senior population. Many seniors in Bedford live on fixed incomes and may struggle with housing costs or maintenance of older homes. There is a demand for more senior-friendly housing options, such as affordable single-story homes, apartments with elevators, or assisted living facilities, so that older residents can downsize while remaining in Bedford. Currently, seniors who cannot maintain a large



house may have limited local options, aside from moving into one of the subsidized senior apartment buildings or relocating to another area.

The community has expressed support for projects that would create more diverse housing options at affordable price points, including small cottage-style homes, duplexes, or new apartment units that are scaled appropriately for Bedford. Infill development on vacant lots within town could provide some of these units.

Public perceptions around different types of housing also influence policy on low- to moderate-income units. The survey results showed that while people are open to adding housing, they prefer it to be in scale with Bedford's character. Traditional single-family homes were viewed positively by 74% of respondents, and townhomes were also more liked than disliked (50% positive vs. 29% negative). In contrast, larger apartment complexes were viewed negatively by over 60% of respondents. Interestingly, small-scale apartments, such as apartments above downtown storefronts, had a 67% positive rating. This suggests that residents do see a place for multifamily housing, especially if it conforms with the Town's existing aesthetics (for example, a few units in a converted building or a two-story building, rather than a large complex of dozens of units).

Bedford's housing challenge is twofold: diversification and affordability. The town needs a variety of housing options to accommodate different life stages and income levels, and many of these new units should be affordable for lower- and middle-income households. This plan will advance strategies to encourage the market to build more affordable units and to leverage state and federal programs that can bring in resources for housing. It will also promote the maintenance and improvement of the existing housing stock, so that older homes and apartments do not fall into disrepair and become health/safety issues or sources of blight.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Expand diverse and affordable housing options to meet the community's needs.

Strategy 1A - Encourage a Variety of New Housing Types: Adjust policies and work with developers to produce a broader mix of housing. This includes promoting the construction of affordable starter homes (e.g., modest single-family houses under $300k) and single-level homes or cottages that would appeal to seniors looking to downsize. The Town can identify suitable parcels for such developments and consider rezoning or offering density bonuses to projects that provide these needed housing types. Likewise, while Bedford has seen new large subdivisions proposed, the Town should also encourage smaller infill projects to increase housing supply gently.

Strategy 1B - Increase Affordable and Workforce Housing through Partnerships: Work proactively with nonprofit housing organizations, the Bedford Redevelopment & Housing Authority, and private developers to create more affordable housing opportunities. The Town can seek state and federal grants to support projects that include affordable units. Public-private partnerships could be used to develop mixed-income communities where some units are reserved for low- to moderate-income. Additionally, Bedford should support programs for first-time homebuyers, such as down payment assistance or credit counseling, possibly in collaboration with state programs, to help renters transition to homeownership.

Strategy 1C - Encourage Mixed-Use and Infill Development for Housing: Update zoning and land-use regulations to make it easier to develop housing in appropriate locations, particularly through infill and mixed-use projects. One key opportunity is converting underutilized spaces in and around downtown into residential use. The Town should continue to encourage upper-floor apartments in downtown commercial buildings. Similarly, larger vacant or obsolete properties could be rezoned or incentivized for mixed-use projects that include a housing component. For example, a small mixed-use development with ground-floor retail and apartments above could add housing and business opportunities. Allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in residential zones is another infill strategy that can create affordable rental units without changing neighborhood character.

Goal 2: Enhance housing quality and accessibility for all, including low-income and senior residents.

Strategy 2A - Rehabilitate and Preserve Existing Housing Stock: Establish or expand initiatives to rehab aging homes and apartments, especially those that provide affordable shelter but are in poor condition. This strategy might include setting up a housing rehabilitation grant/loan fund for low-income homeowners to fix code issues, continuing aggressive code enforcement coupled with assistance programs to help landlords bring substandard rental units up to code, and working with Bedford's Housing Authority on redeveloping any outdated public housing. Pursuing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding or similar grants can provide resources for housing rehabilitation programs.

Strategy 2B - Promote Homeownership and Housing Stability: Because Bedford has a low homeownership rate, strategies to help more residents become homeowners can strengthen community stability and wealth-building. The Town can partner with local banks, realtors, and nonprofits to host homebuyer education workshops and connect renters with first-time homebuyer programs. Exploring a "live where you work" incentive could be beneficial in encouraging homeownership among the workforce. Additionally, supporting the development of workforce housing is crucial. This might involve providing minor subsidies or density bonuses for projects that include moderately-priced homes that those workers can afford.

Strategy 2C - Focus on Context-Sensitive Affordable Housing Solutions: When pursuing new affordable housing, prioritize approaches that fit Bedford's small-town scale and character. Rather than large, standalone apartment complexes, encourage scattered-site or smaller-scale developments. For instance, a few dozen affordable senior apartments integrated near a church or civic center might be more suitable than a massive complex, or a set of duplexes on an infill street might provide affordable family units that blend into the neighborhood. The community has shown openness to upper-floor downtown units and townhomes, so these formats can also serve as vehicles for affordable housing.

Chapter 6: Community Facilities and Services

Public Input 43
Administration and Public Works 43
Utilities 45
Police 46
Fire and Rescue 47
Hospital 48
Library 49
Education 50
Goals & Strategies 51

Public Input

Bedford's community facilities and services are generally well regarded, but survey and stakeholder feedback reveal important gaps. For example, 87% of survey respondents rated fire protection as a strength, 77% rated police services positively, and 67% cited trash collection as a strength. The police department is considered adequately staffed, and three-quarters of residents report satisfaction with public safety. The volunteer fire department handles a heavy call volume (one of the busiest in the county), and the fire department has prepared a capital needs and infrastructure plan to guide future improvements. However, stakeholders noted that Bedford will likely need to supplement its volunteer fire/EMS system with paid personnel as demand grows.

Administration and Public Works

Bedford's municipal administration is concentrated in a few key facilities. Town Hall is situated in the historic Municipal Building, located at 215 East Main Street. This building houses the offices of the Town Manager, Finance, Human Resources, Planning, and other departments, as well as the Council Chambers and public meeting rooms. Another key administrative facility is the Monroe Street Operations Center (877 Monroe Street), which houses the Town's Electric Department. This facility, maintained by Public Works, features



office space, storage, and service bays for the municipal power utility. The Public Works complex, located at 702 Orange Street, serves as the Town's maintenance headquarters. This one-story, warehouse-type building provides vehicle bays and material storage, as well as a small office for Department staff. The adjacent building at 700 Orange Street has additional office space for Public Works staff and a storage yard for Electric Department materials.

The Town has identified capital investment needs to maintain and modernize core municipal facilities, including projects such as Municipal Building roof work (estimated at $60,000) and potential improvements to the Treasurer's Office lobby (estimated at $115,000).* Such investments help support continued public access, staff operations, and the long-term preservation of the Town's primary administrative facilities.

Apart from facility management, the Public Works Department provides core services, including street maintenance, refuse collection, fleet maintenance, and grounds upkeep, for the Town. The Town offers weekly curbside trash pickup (utilizing its own landfill for disposal) and special collection programs, contributing to high resident satisfaction with solid waste services.

The Town has identified capital investment needs to replace aging Public Works fleet and equipment in order to maintain reliable service delivery and reduce downtime. Potential projects include an automated garbage truck replacement (estimated at $405,000), automated leaf collection truck (estimated at $150,000), and other fleet and equipment replacements such as a landfill trash hauling trailer (estimated at $128,000), excavator for landfill operations (estimated at $175,000), roll-off dumpster hauler (estimated at $130,000), grapple bucket truck (estimated at $200,000), diesel fuel storage tank replacement (estimated at $25,000), and replacement of two zero-turn mowers (estimated at $25,000).*

Utilities

Water and Wastewater Services

Bedford's public water supply and wastewater collection/treatment are provided by the Bedford Regional Water Authority (BRWA). The BRWA serves approximately 15,000 customer accounts across the Town of Bedford and Bedford County, maintaining roughly 431 miles of water pipes and 130 miles of sewer pipes. In its 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, the Authority identified a pressing need to replace its aging water and sewer infrastructure. It emphasized the need for continued coordination with the Town and County to fund critical upgrades that support reliable service and economic development.

In addition to general system renewal needs, ongoing sanitary sewer improvements continue to be a key priority. Significant inflow and infiltration, or "I&I" (stormwater and groundwater entering the sanitary sewer system), can reduce available capacity and contribute to peak-flow constraints. Portions of the collection system also include smaller-diameter sewer mains (e.g., 6-inch), which may not meet current design expectations in some contexts where 8-inch mains are typically preferred or required, potentially necessitating targeted upsizing as lines are rehabilitated or replaced.

Opportunities also exist to align wastewater and stormwater efforts. Collaboration on the Town's stormwater initiatives, along with public education and incentive-based programs, could help reduce infiltration and inflow (I&I) by encouraging residents to disconnect gutters and exterior floor drains from the sanitary sewer and redirect them to appropriate storm drainage or other approved outlets. Reducing these connections can help limit sanitary sewer overflows, improve system performance, and increase effective capacity. The Town will continue to coordinate with BRWA on near-term system improvements and, as needed, longer-term capacity expansions to meet current demand and planned growth.

Electric Utility

Bedford operates its own municipal electric utility, a significant asset that provides the Town with reliable service at competitive rates. The Utility maintains 320 miles of distribution lines, 30 miles of transmission lines, eleven substations, and an in-town operations center where line crews respond to outages. The Utility's service territory encompasses the Town, as well as parts of Bedford County, and is interconnected to the regional grid at two redundant delivery points. Approximately 25% of the territory is in town and 75% in the county.

Public ownership means that electric revenues remain in Bedford, allowing the town to set the direction of the utility and providing customers with direct access to operators. The Utility has a diverse portfolio of power supply resources, including solar, wind, and hydro energy. As of

**Cost estimates are based on current prices as of February 2026 and are subject to change through the Town's annual CIP and budget process.*

2025, Bedford's system has met demand without major outages. Broadband providers such as Comcast, Shentel, and ZiTEL have expanded access throughout the territory while replacing many poles to meet service requirements.

The Town should continue to work with the Utility to maintain reliability and upgrade infrastructure to support new developments and industrial expansion (for example, reinforcing lines or adding redundant feeders). By contrast, larger nearby cities rely on Appalachian Power Company (APCO). Lynchburg and Roanoke receive power from APCO's regional grid, which APCO reports has "ample generating and distribution capacity" for local needs – but those cities do not enjoy the local rate-setting or reinvestment control that Bedford has.

Police

The Bedford Police Department is headquartered at 215 East Main Street and provides 24/7 law enforcement and community safety services within the Town. The department is organized around core functions, including patrol, investigations, School Resource Officer (SRO) services, and administration. It coordinates with regional partners as needed for major incidents. Comprehensive plan survey results indicate that residents generally feel safe in Bedford and view police services as a community strength.

The department's FY2024–FY2027 Strategic Plan establishes a mission focused on protecting citizens and property while building trust and legitimacy. The plan was developed through a structured process that included Town Hall meetings and input from community members, including the P.A.C.E. (Police and Community Engagement) team. It organizes priorities around four goals: enhancing public safety, connecting with the community, achieving organizational excellence, and strengthening employee development/recruitment/retention. Implementation items include community engagement and outreach efforts, continued development of volunteers (Volunteers in Police Service), maintaining CALEA standards, and creating a plan for facility needs and space use. The plan also calls for strengthening emergency preparedness partnerships, developing a long-term approach to hardening police facilities, and investing in tools to respond to evolving crime trends (e.g., enhancing the crime analyst function, developing a drone



program, and investing in license plate recognition technology and updated investigative software/hardware).

Recent initiatives and investments described in the Strategic Plan include an ongoing shift toward leasing vehicles through Enterprise to refresh the fleet more frequently and support a longer-term goal of take-home units. The department also highlights community-facing programming (e.g., National Night Out, Coffee with a Cop, drug take-back days, and other public education efforts), along with targeted engagement through the PACE program for both youth and seniors and the use of VIPS volunteers to support events and administrative tasks. Workforce pipeline efforts noted in the plan include collaboration with Virginia Works (LEEAD) and a Department of Labor apprenticeship approach.

The Town has identified capital investment needs to support police operations and facility readiness. Potential projects include Police Department Renovation (estimated at $100,000), PD Support Services Building Improvements (estimated at $40,000), a metal carport for the impound lot (estimated at $7,500), and an in-car and body camera system for patrol (estimated at $300,000, with ongoing costs to be determined).* These investments support facility functionality, secure operations, and modernization of in-field technology.

Fire and Rescue

Fire protection and related emergency response within the Town of Bedford are provided by the Bedford Fire Department (BFD), a primarily volunteer organization based at 315 Bedford Avenue. BFD notes that ongoing residential development, infill housing, commercial redevelopment, and the adaptive reuse of industrial structures are increasing both population density and the complexity of emergency response across its first-due area. The department projects that 2025 will be the busiest year in its 137-year history. BFD's roster includes six officers, six administrative leaders, 42 firefighters (including probationary members), three junior firefighters, 13 associate members, and 19 lifetime members, with some individuals serving in multiple roles.



BFD reports that its primary fire station is 51 years old, and potential expansion is constrained by adjacent residential property, a Bedford County Fire & Rescue facility, and railroad tracks, elevating the importance of targeted reinvestment

**Cost estimates are based on current prices as of February 2026 and are subject to change through the Town's annual CIP and budget process.*

to keep the facility functional and compatible with modern equipment. Priority station improvements include an apparatus bay floor epoxy covering, replacement of original bay doors, HVAC replacement, replacement of an original air compressor system, and apparatus bay roof repairs; with a new Engine and Ladder apparatus anticipated in 2027, BFD emphasizes the need to ensure the station can properly house, protect, and support updated equipment.

The Town has identified capital investment needs for apparatus replacement and station support improvements. Potential projects include replacement of Engine 1 (estimated at $418,417) and replacement of Ladder 1 (estimated at $1,392,200), along with station items such as an air compressor and system (estimated at $12,000), basement AC unit (estimated at $20,000), and lower level bay door replacement (estimated at $25,000).*

The Town also benefits from the Bedford Area Fire Training Center on Orange Street, a heavily used regional training asset; capital investments at the Training Center are shared under an existing Town–County agreement and include improvements such as a permanent bathroom/classroom/shower facility, grading and paving to improve safety and drainage, HVAC installation in the workshop, and burn building repairs and technology upgrades (including temperature monitoring) to support compliant live-fire training.

To maintain effective operations and meet applicable standards, BFD also identifies ongoing equipment and technology modernization needs, including a phased plan to replace 70 portable radios over a 5–8 year period, replacement of an SCBA air compressor, modernization of rescue tools (battery-powered hydraulic tools), and a recurring turnout gear replacement cycle. The Town will continue to coordinate with BFD to modernize facilities, sustain training capacity, and align capital investments with changing development patterns and community risk. Detailed service statistics are expected to be documented in the department's Annual Report.

Hospital

One of Bedford's greatest strengths is Centra Bedford Memorial Hospital, an acute-care facility offering a 24/7 Emergency Department, inpatient services, outpatient surgery, cardiac rehabilitation, MRI/CT imaging, laboratory services, and specialty clinics. The adjoining Oakwood Nursing Home unit was sold to Hill Valley Healthcare in 2021 and remains on the same site, continuing to share certain services and connections with the hospital. Nearby, the Centra Health campus provides home health and hospice services. The former Elks National Home property has been redeveloped as a Spring Oak Senior Living community offering assisted living and memory care through adaptive reuse of a major institutional site.

**Cost estimates are based on current prices as of February 2026 and are subject to change through the Town's annual CIP and budget process.*



Centra Bedford has maintained a high level of service despite rural staffing challenges. It is staffed by approximately 500 employees and over 100 physicians (many of whom are based in Lynchburg) who rotate to Bedford. The hospital continues to invest in technology and facility upgrades, including modernization efforts such as digital imaging equipment and other improvements. According to survey results, Bedford's access to a hospital is seen as a significant strength; however, the Town also encourages Centra to partner with them on addressing community health needs, as required for their nonprofit status—for example, the hospital's 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment prioritized transportation and services for veterans.

Library

Bedford County administers public library services in the Town of Bedford. The Bedford Central Library (321 N. Bridge St.) serves as the County's main public library facility and is widely valued by residents. Located in a historic early-1900s building, the library offers an extensive collection of books and media, as well as free public computer and internet access, and meeting rooms available for community use. It also serves as a small business resource center, hosting regular programs and events. In the comprehensive plan survey, 85% of respondents identified library services as a community strength.

Education



Children living in the Town of Bedford are served primarily by Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS). Two BCPS schools, Bedford Primary and Bedford Elementary, are located within the Town, and many Bedford students attend Liberty High School for grades 9–12. Students also have access to countywide specialty offerings, including career and technical education through the Susie G. Gibson Science and Technology Center and related Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways. The Science and Technology Center serves students from each of the county's three high schools.

Families in and around Bedford also use a range of non-public and alternative education options, including private schools such as Free State Academy (located in the Town) and Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy (located in Moneta), as well as a growing number of homeschooling families, including co-op models.

For postsecondary access, Bedford students can pursue dual enrollment and other college-credit opportunities through Central Virginia Community College (CVCC), including services and courses offered at the CVCC Bedford Center located in the Bedford Center for Business. Dual enrollment options are available to eligible high school and homeschool students, enabling them to get a head start on college coursework.

Community feedback identified opportunities to strengthen youth enrichment outside the formal school day. Some stakeholders noted that after-school, evening, and summer options can be limited or unevenly accessible. The YMCA helps meet some of this demand through youth programming and aquatic facilities, though cost can be a barrier for some households; other community partners (including the Bower Center for the Arts) are potential collaborators to expand offerings.

BCPS's 2022–2027 Strategic Framework reinforces these priorities, including high academic expectations, expanded dual enrollment and CTE credentials, safe and supportive learning environments, workforce development, and strong community partnerships. As the area grows, continued coordination among the Town, BCPS, and community organizations will remain important, particularly as enrollment growth in the Forest attendance zone informs ongoing evaluation of facility needs and potential boundary adjustments.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Maintain high-quality services and expand amenities for all residents.

Strategy 1A - Strategic Fire & EMS Capacity Planning: Work with volunteer fire/EMS departments to develop a strategic staffing plan and plan for new or expanded facilities.

Strategy 1B - Expanded Community Programs & Facilities: Partner with nonprofits, the YMCA, churches, and the school system to expand after-school programs, summer camps, and seniors' centers.

Strategy 1C - Veterans' Support & Engagement: Support local veterans' groups by providing meeting space or co-hosting community events.

Goal 2: Strengthen Bedford's healthcare system and support the recruitment and retention of its healthcare workforce.

Strategy 2A - Healthcare Workforce Recruitment Partnership: Partner with Centra Bedford Memorial Hospital to develop a healthcare workforce recruitment initiative.

Strategy 2B - Quality-of-Life Marketing for Healthcare Talent: Promote Bedford's quality of life to attract doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers.

Strategy 2C - Housing Incentives for Relocating Healthcare Professionals: Support the creation of housing incentives specifically for healthcare professionals relocating to Bedford.

Strategy 2D - Continuing Education & Career Development in Local Facilities: Explore partnerships to offer continuing education, training, and career development for healthcare workers at local facilities.

Chapter 7: Infrastructure

Electric....52
Water and Sewer....53
Broadband....55
Public Works....56
Natural Gas....58
Goals & Strategies....59

Electric

Bedford operates its own municipal electric utility, a significant asset that provides the Town with reliable service at competitive rates. The Town's electric system includes approximately 320 miles of distribution lines, 30 miles of transmission lines, and eleven substations. The service territory encompasses the Town and surrounding parts of Bedford County and is interconnected to the regional power grid at two redundant delivery points for reliability.

Public ownership of the utility means electric revenues remain in Bedford, allowing the Town to reinvest in system improvements and tailor programs (e.g., energy efficiency rebates or local solar initiatives) to meet community goals. Bedford's power supply portfolio is diverse; the Town operates a 5-megawatt hydroelectric plant, partners with another provider on a 3-megawatt solar farm, purchases power through AMP-Ohio (American Municipal Power), and maintains interconnections with Appalachian Power (AEP) for additional capacity. As of 2025, Bedford's system has met demand without major outages, though many poles and lines are aging. The Town should continue to monitor and upgrade its electric infrastructure to support new development.

By contrast, larger nearby cities, such as Lynchburg and Roanoke, rely on AEP for their electricity. Lynchburg and Roanoke are served by AEP's regional grid, which the utility reports has "ample generating and distribution capacity" to meet local needs. However, those cities do not enjoy the local rate-setting ability or direct reinvestment control that Bedford has with its municipal utility. Bedford's locally owned electric system remains a competitive advantage, and maintaining that edge will require ongoing investments in reliability and capacity.

The Town has identified capital investment needs to maintain reliability, improve performance, and support new development within the electric utility. Potential projects include underground improvements (estimated at $100,000), distribution line improvements (estimated at $100,000), transmission line improvements (estimated at $150,000), and fleet and equipment investments such as a crew truck (estimated at $60,000) and a large/small utility truck allocation (estimated at $300,000).*

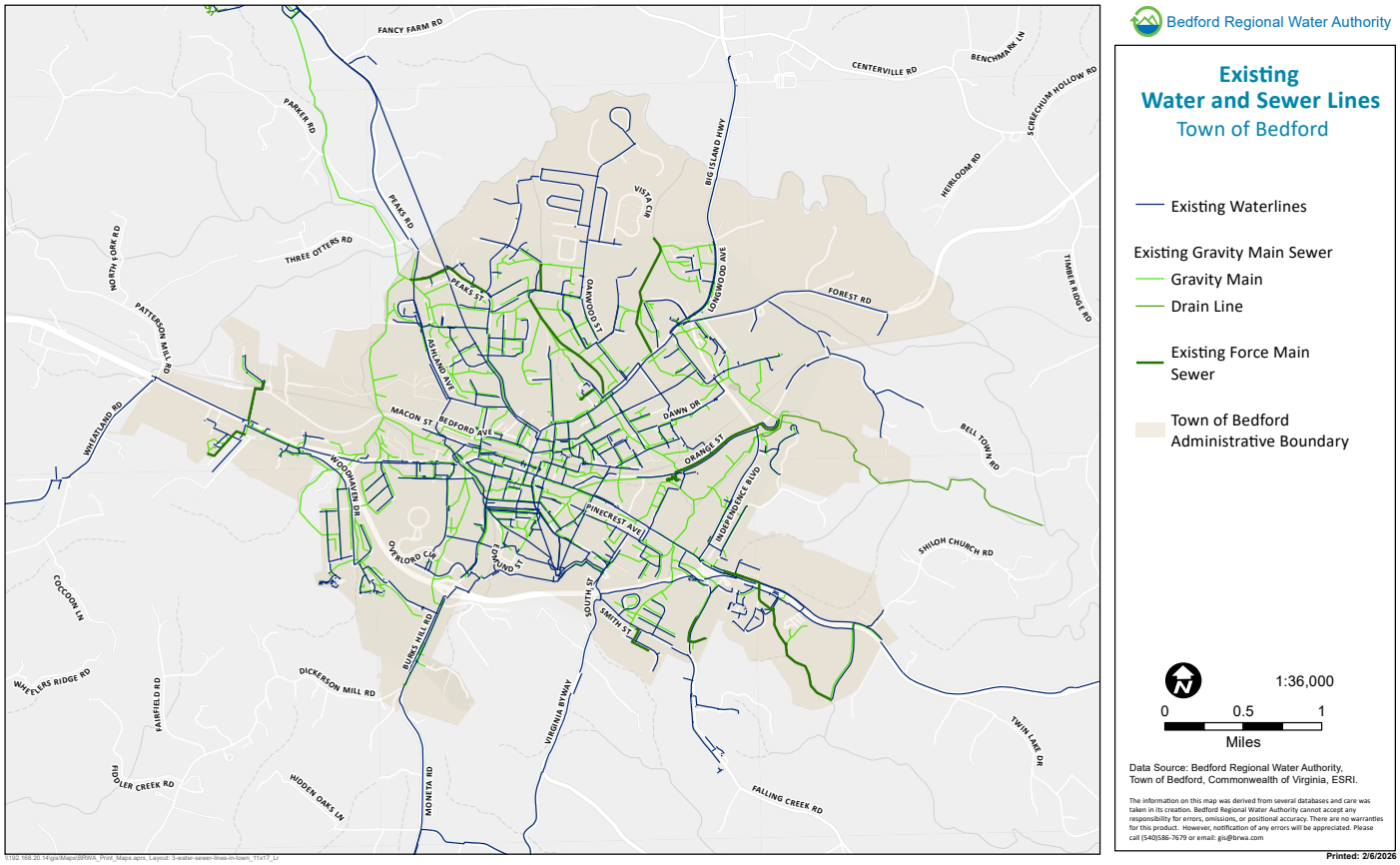
Water and Sewer

Potable water supply and sanitary sewer services in Bedford are provided by the Bedford Regional Water Authority (BRWA), a joint Town–County utility formed in 2013 after Bedford's reversion to town status. BRWA draws water from multiple sources, including the Town's historic East Lynchburg Reservoir, the Stoney Creek Reservoir, and Smith Mountain Lake, and treats wastewater at regional plants serving the greater Bedford area. As of mid-2024, the BRWA system included about 15,529 water connections and 6,092 sewer connections across Bedford County. The Authority maintains roughly 431 miles of water pipes and 130 miles of sewer pipes in its service area. Current regional water and wastewater facilities are reported as adequate for existing demand, while long-term reliability depends on reinvestment in aging distribution and collection infrastructure and targeted capacity planning as growth occurs. BRWA's strategic planning and operating guidance identify rated treatment capacities for its facilities and describe how additional capacity can be achieved through phased improvements and system optimization. Map 1 illustrates current water and sewer service coverage within the Town limits, showing areas served by public utilities and areas that remain unserved.

BRWA's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan identifies that much of the distribution and collection network is aging. In particular, the Town's old water mains are prone to leaks and occasional outages, and some sewer facilities have experienced overflow issues. The Central Wastewater Treatment Plant and four key inflow lift stations have been subject to a Consent Order since 2010 due to overflows during heavy rainfall events. This reflects significant inflow and infiltration (I&I) of stormwater into the sewer system during storms, which reduces available capacity. Portions of the sewer collection system also consist of smaller-diameter 6-inch pipes that do not meet the current standard (8-inch) for mains in developed areas, creating potential bottlenecks for capacity. These factors mean sewer capacity is likely to be the limiting factor for supporting new development in many parts of town unless improvements are made.

Planned growth will test the system's capacity. Significant new subdivisions or major economic development projects could require expansion of treatment capacity or upgrades to water and sewer mains. BRWA publishes an annual Capital Improvement Plan identifying such projects, and significant facility upgrades are funded through that program (with ongoing, more minor line replacements covered by operational budgets). Bedford will need to remain an active partner in prioritizing those investments to support both current needs and future growth.

**Cost estimates are based on current prices as of February 2026 and are subject to change through the Town's annual CIP and budget process.*



Map 1: Existing Water and Sewer Lines. Source: BRWA

For context, nearby cities operate far larger utility systems. Lynchburg's Department of Water Resources, for example, delivers over 3.8 billion gallons of drinking water per year to about 80,000 residents. Roanoke's Western Virginia Water Authority treats roughly 20 million gallons of water per day and serves over 155,000 customers across Roanoke City, Roanoke County, and neighboring towns. These regional systems draw from multiple large reservoirs and have extensive treatment capacity. Bedford's service area is much smaller, and its total water production (about 1.3 billion gallons in FY2024–25) is only a fraction of those cities. Nonetheless, Bedford's water and sewer infrastructure must meet the same health, safety, and environmental standards for quality, pressure, and reliability. The Town and BRWA should continue to invest in systematic water main replacements and sewer line rehabilitation to prevent leaks, reduce overflows, and improve service resiliency.

Ongoing sanitary sewer improvement efforts are especially critical to support growth. BRWA and the Town are prioritizing projects to rehabilitate or replace undersized sewer lines and to reduce infiltration and inflow (I&I) by sealing cracks and eliminating improper connections. Reducing these inflows will help limit sewer overflows, improve treatment capacity, and extend the useful life of existing sewer infrastructure. The Town will continue to coordinate with BRWA on near-term system fixes and, as needed, longer-term capacity expansions to meet future demand.

Looking ahead to long-term water supply, Bedford is in a relatively strong position. The BRWA brought a new Smith Mountain Lake water treatment plant online in recent years, which has reduced reliance on water purchases from the Lynchburg system. Additionally, a new booster pump station along U.S. 460 now enables water to be transferred between the eastern (Forest/Lynchburg) and western (Smith Mountain Lake/Bedford) service areas, improving redundancy. The Town will collaborate with BRWA as it updates its comprehensive Water and Sewer Master Plan to identify future projects based on growth projections and zoning. As part of this effort, any remaining infrastructure limitations should be addressed. Proactive planning and capital improvements will ensure Bedford's water supply is secure and sufficient for decades to come.

Broadband

Broadband internet availability has improved markedly in Bedford in recent years, yet some coverage gaps remain. The Town has attracted new investments in both fiber-optic and wireless broadband networks. Notably, in 2025, Comcast announced a major expansion of its Xfinity fiber network to serve over 4,500 homes and businesses in Bedford, bringing gigabit-capable service to much of the town for the first time and significantly enhancing speeds and competition. In addition, Bedford County's broadband initiative, led by the County's Broadband Authority and backed by approximately $25 million in state grants, has extended fiber lines to thousands of previously unserved addresses in the surrounding region, benefiting many town residents as well. Local providers, such as Shentel and ZiTEL, have also expanded their services in Bedford, augmenting the options previously provided mainly by Verizon. At the same time, cellular carriers continue to upgrade their tower equipment to improve mobile and fixed wireless internet coverage.

Despite these gains, some parts of Bedford still lack high-speed internet options. In the comprehensive plan community survey, residents gave mixed ratings to internet quality. Many respondents reported having modern, reliable service in town, but a significant number – especially those in outlying or hilly areas – said they experience slow speeds or poor signals. These remaining "dead zones" are a priority concern for home-based workers, students, and businesses that rely on connectivity. By comparison, Lynchburg and Roanoke enjoy more robust coverage; for instance, Lynchburg now has multiple gigabit-speed providers (Firefly Fiber, Comcast/Xfinity, and widespread 5G wireless), and Roanoke boasts extensive cable and fiber availability.

Bedford should continue to leverage state and federal programs (such as VATI, RDOF, ARPA, and forthcoming BEAD grants) to incentivize providers to fill the coverage gaps. The Town can also streamline permitting for new broadband infrastructure – for example, expediting approvals for additional fiber installations, communication towers, or small-cell wireless nodes. Coordination with developers is also essential: new housing subdivisions and

commercial projects should include plans for broadband service from the outset, working with providers to extend fiber or cable as these areas are developed. In the near term, Bedford will encourage private internet providers to include the Town in their network expansion plans and seek opportunities to partner on grant-funded projects so that all residents and businesses have access to affordable high-speed internet.

Public Works

The Town's Public Works Department is responsible for local streets and bridges, public facility maintenance, and solid waste collection. Bedford maintains roughly 47 miles of local roads with annual maintenance funding assistance from VDOT. Major highways that run through town, such as U.S. Route 460, U.S. 221, and VA-122, remain state-maintained by VDOT. Public Works crews handle street paving and patching, snow removal, traffic signage, and drainage infrastructure on town roads. Thanks to regular upkeep, Bedford's road network is generally in good condition. In the comprehensive plan survey, residents cited road conditions and smooth traffic flow as community strengths.

Public Works also maintains Town-owned facilities. Key public buildings include the Municipal Building/Town Hall on East Main Street, the Police Department headquarters (in Town Hall) and other police facilities, and the Bedford Fire Department's station on Bedford Avenue. A previously discussed initiative to construct a combined public safety building, consolidating police and fire services into one modern facility, has been shelved based on recent Town evaluations. Instead, the Town is focusing on targeted upgrades to each facility (such as planned improvements to the 51-year-old fire station and an ongoing space-needs study for police) to meet public safety needs within existing sites.

Nevertheless, several infrastructure challenges persist. Downtown streets were platted decades ago and are quite narrow, limiting options for adding turn lanes, bike lanes, or even on-street parking in some areas. Some of the town's bridges and culverts are aging and will require significant rehabilitation or replacement in the coming years. Another concern is pedestrian accessibility: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance is uneven, as numerous curb ramps, crosswalks, and sections of sidewalk are either missing or in poor condition (especially in older suburban neighborhoods). Survey participants and stakeholders have also pointed out a lack of bicycle lanes and inconsistent sidewalk connectivity as issues to address in the future.

Stormwater is another crucial maintenance issue for Bedford. Several older neighborhoods were developed before modern storm drain systems were standard, so heavy rainfall can overwhelm roadside ditches or catch basins, causing localized flooding. Bedford is subject to state and federal stormwater regulations, and larger nearby communities, such as Lynchburg and Roanoke, are designated MS-4 communities (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) subject to special permitting.

Although Bedford's smaller size means it has far fewer miles of stormwater pipes to manage, it faces similar constraints of aging drainage infrastructure, limited rights-of-way, and funding challenges. The Town has adopted VDOT's stormwater management design standards for new development and encourages all projects to use best practices that reduce runoff. This includes incorporating low-impact development techniques, such as upgraded culverts, rain gardens, permeable pavers, and infiltration swales, into street and development projects to improve drainage and water quality.

Because Bedford's tax base is relatively small, the Public Works Department relies on cost-sharing and outside support whenever possible. The Town partners with VDOT on highway improvements and pedestrian safety grants, and it collaborates with Bedford County on



shared services, such as the regional landfill, to control costs. Going forward, beyond the routine maintenance funds the Town receives each year from VDOT, Bedford will need to budget carefully for repaving, sidewalk/ADA enhancements, and stormwater projects. The Town will also continue seeking grants such as VDOT's Transportation Alternatives and Revenue Sharing programs, SMART SCALE funding, and state/federal stormwater management grants, to supplement its limited capital resources.

Natural Gas

The Town's electric utility is exploring all available options for local power generation to reduce transmission costs, diversify energy sources, and meet growing regional demand. One opportunity identified is to use natural gas as a fuel for local power production. Bedford is interested in exploring the potential to generate electricity (for example, via a small gas-fired generator or microturbine) and possibly provide heating fuel for industries.

The absence of local natural gas infrastructure has long put the Town at a disadvantage in economic development, especially when competing for large manufacturers or food processors that require natural gas service. Bedford lies within Columbia Gas of Virginia's franchised service territory; however, the nearest connection point in Columbia's system is approximately 16 miles away in the Lynchburg area. To date, Columbia Gas has no plans to extend its pipelines to Bedford; its network stops about five miles west of town limits, at which point the service territory shifts to Roanoke Gas Company. Roanoke Gas may have more interest in expanding eastward, but any extension would require sufficient demand to justify the cost.

With assistance from local elected officials, including the office of Delegate Eric Zehr, Town staff (under the direction of the Bedford Economic Development Authority) have begun investigating the community's need for natural gas service. This effort involves polling potential high-volume users in the area to gauge interest and gather non-binding commitments that could support a business case for extending the gas line. The Town plans to continue studying the feasibility of a natural gas extension, focusing on routes that would serve industrial parks and large commercial sites first. If the demand is sufficient, Bedford will pursue partnerships with the private gas companies and seek state or federal infrastructure funding to help finance the project.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Upgrade and expand infrastructure to support growth sustainably.

Strategy 1A – Water and Sewer Upgrades and Extensions: Continue coordinated strategic planning with BRWA to align anticipated future growth areas to meet water and sewer availability.

Strategy 1B – Natural Gas Feasibility and Partnerships: Conduct a community survey and gather input from potential natural gas users to assess the feasibility of extending natural gas service to Bedford, with a focus on identifying potential demand from industrial and large commercial users. Work with the General Assembly and private gas providers to explore funding and implementation options if demand supports an extension.

Strategy 1C – Leverage the Municipal Electric Utility: Continue to leverage the Town's electric utility to support economic development through competitive rates, reliable service, and strategic extensions.

Strategy 1D – Integrated Stormwater Management: Incorporate stormwater best practices into roadway and capital projects, such as green infrastructure and updated drainage design, to reduce runoff and improve water quality.

Goal 2: Plan for future energy, water, and broadband needs in a sustainable manner.

Strategy 2A – Renewable Energy Action Plan: Develop a Town renewable energy framework that identifies practical projects for municipal facilities and clarifies how the Town can support voluntary residential and business adoption.

Strategy 2B – Townwide Broadband Expansion: Encourage broadband providers to close remaining service gaps and ensure new development includes modern broadband infrastructure from the outset.

Strategy 2C – Long-Range Water Supply and Capacity Planning: Participate in BRWA's long-range planning to confirm water supply redundancy and identify needed distribution, storage, and sewer capacity upgrades tied to growth. Coordinate priorities and timing so infrastructure investments keep pace with demand and regulatory requirements.

Chapter 8: Transportation

Overview 60
Travel Characteristics 61
The Transportation Planning Process 61
Corridors of Statewide Significance 62
Regional Networks 63
Urban Development Areas 64
Existing Transportation Facilities 65
Current Traffic Volumes 69
Current Level of Service 69
Crash Data 69
Pedestrian Facilities 72
Bicycle Facilities 73
Rail Transportation 74
Public and Other Transportation Services 75
Planning for the Future 78
Engineering and Transportation Infrastructure Projects 78
Fiscal Year 2026-2031 SYIP 79
Goals & Strategies 80

Overview

Bedford is situated between the Roanoke and Lynchburg metropolitan areas along U.S. Route 460 and is served by a network of highways, local roads, bikeways, and pedestrian facilities that support the movement of goods, services, and people, fueling economic activity, tourism,

and long-term growth. That transportation network also shapes how residents and visitors experience Bedford's history and natural beauty through destinations such as the National D-Day Memorial, the former Elks National Home campus, now redeveloped as a Spring Oak Senior Living community providing assisted living and memory care, and Historic Avenel, a preserved historic site and event venue. Surrounding assets, including the Blue Ridge Mountains and nearby destinations such as Smith Mountain Lake, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, and the Sedalia Center for the Arts, reinforce the area's role as a hub for recreation and heritage tourism. Maintaining and improving route capacity, safety, and connectivity helps ensure Bedford remains accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Supporting this broader goal is the Town's commitment to multimodal transportation, guided by the *Bike | Walk Plan* prepared by the Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC) and adopted in 2019. The plan prioritizes expansions and improvements to sidewalks, trails, and multimodal pathways. Implementing its recommendations and continuing to evaluate additional feasible options can enhance safety and mobility while also strengthening public health, outdoor activity, and the social vitality that comes from more connected places.

Travel Characteristics

The 2023 American Community Survey (ACS), conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, collects data each year on commuting patterns. For the Town of Bedford, the average travel time to work is 20.4 minutes. By comparison, the average travel time to work for Lynchburg residents is 16.7 minutes, and Bedford County's average travel time to work is 26.8 minutes. The ACS also reports that 91.5% of people in the Town of Bedford drive to work (either alone or as a carpool).

The Transportation Planning Process

In Virginia, the transportation planning process is a partnership among local, state, regional, and federal agencies. Local stakeholders identify needs and work with other agencies to develop strategies for improving transportation facilities. The Town receives funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to maintain and improve its roads. VDOT outlines these plans in its Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) and updates it annually. Local transportation improvements can also be funded through federal assistance programs. VDOT assists the Town in pursuing these funds and helps prioritize necessary projects.

Regional transportation planning in Bedford is addressed through the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP). The CVPDC updates the RLRTP every five years in partnership with localities and state and federal partners. The RLRTP is implemented through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a four-year statewide program that prioritizes projects and allocates funding.

At the statewide level, VTrans is Virginia's long-range transportation plan, prepared by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI). VTrans defines the vision, goals, and plans for transportation in Virginia, addressing both mid-term (0–10 years) and long-term (20+ years) needs. These identified needs become eligible for funding through VDOT programs such as SMART SCALE and guide requests for the Revenue Sharing program. As part of VTrans, OIPI has identified three planning categories for investment: Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS), Regional Networks (RN), and Urban Development Areas (UDA). An interactive map of VTrans needs is available online at www.vtrans.org/interactvtrans/map-explorer.

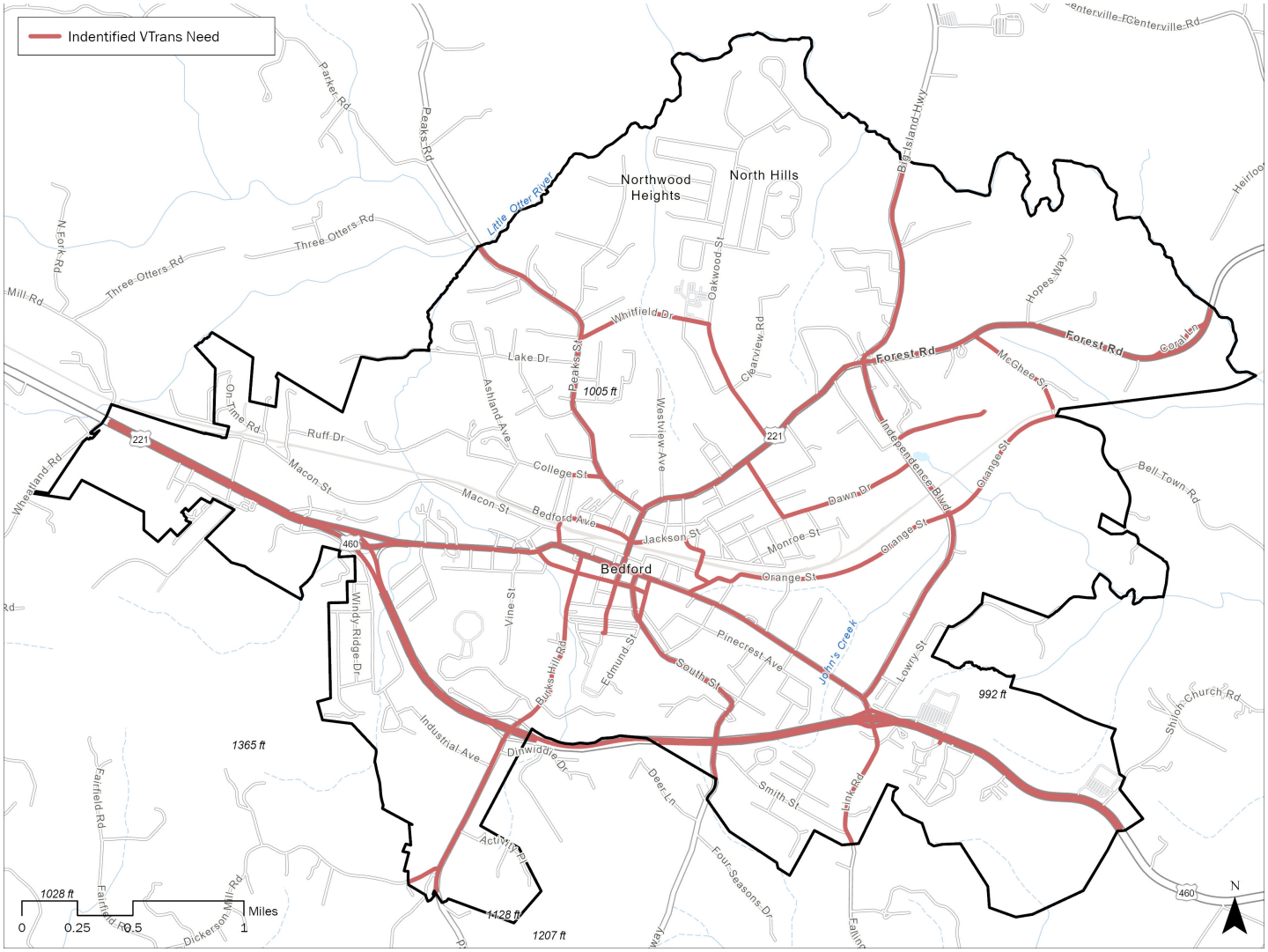
Corridors of Statewide Significance

Corridors of Statewide Significance are major travel routes designated by VTrans. They are integrated, multimodal networks of transportation facilities connecting major centers of activity within and beyond the Commonwealth. The only CoSS in Bedford is U.S. Route 460. VTrans designates twelve such corridors statewide, each meeting criteria such as serving multiple travel modes, linking major regions or activity centers, carrying high travel volumes, and fulfilling statewide goals.

The designation and study of these multimodal corridors are, in accordance with Code of Virginia §33.2-353, a responsibility of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. To be considered a CoSS, a corridor must meet the following four criteria:

1. Multimodal: must involve multiple modes of travel or be an extended freight corridor.
2. Connectivity: must connect regions, states, and/or major activity centers.
3. High Volume: must involve a high volume of travel.
4. Function: must provide a unique statewide function and/or address statewide goals.

VTrans needs are documented transportation deficiencies or performance gaps identified through Virginia's statewide long-range transportation planning process, based on data analysis, agency coordination, and local input. These needs help define priority areas for investment and guide eligibility for state funding programs. The 2023 VTrans needs assessment identified the following mid-term needs along the Route 460 corridor: congestion mitigation, capacity preservation, improved access (including both limited/nonlimited access), transit access, safety improvements (for both segments and intersections), and enhanced rail on-time performance. Projects that clearly address these needs are more likely to align with state priorities and can become eligible for major funding programs such as SMART SCALE (as well as other state programs), strengthening the case for improvements on and around Route 460.



Map 2: Identified VTrans Needs (2023). Source: VTrans

Note: VTrans 'needs' mapping is a statewide planning tool that highlights corridors and locations where performance measures suggest potential issues. These designations are not project commitments and may not capture local conditions such as time-of-day congestion, truck routing behavior, or intersection-specific operational constraints. The Town uses these results alongside local observations, corridor studies, and coordination with VDOT to shape project priorities and funding applications.

Regional Networks

VTrans has also designated 15 Regional Networks (RN), which correspond to major economic regions based on metropolitan planning organization (MPO) areas (urban areas over 50,000 population). Bedford is part of the Central Virginia Regional Network, which covers the region around Lynchburg. The VTrans mid-term needs identified for Bedford's region include congestion mitigation, capacity preservation, improved transit and access (including pedestrian and non-highway access), and safety enhancements for road segments and intersections, as well as improved rail performance.

Urban Development Areas

Urban Development Areas, or other similarly defined growth areas, are a voluntary designation made by Virginia localities with comprehensive plan and zoning authority per the Code of Virginia § 15.2-2223.1. The local designation of UDAs has several potential benefits:

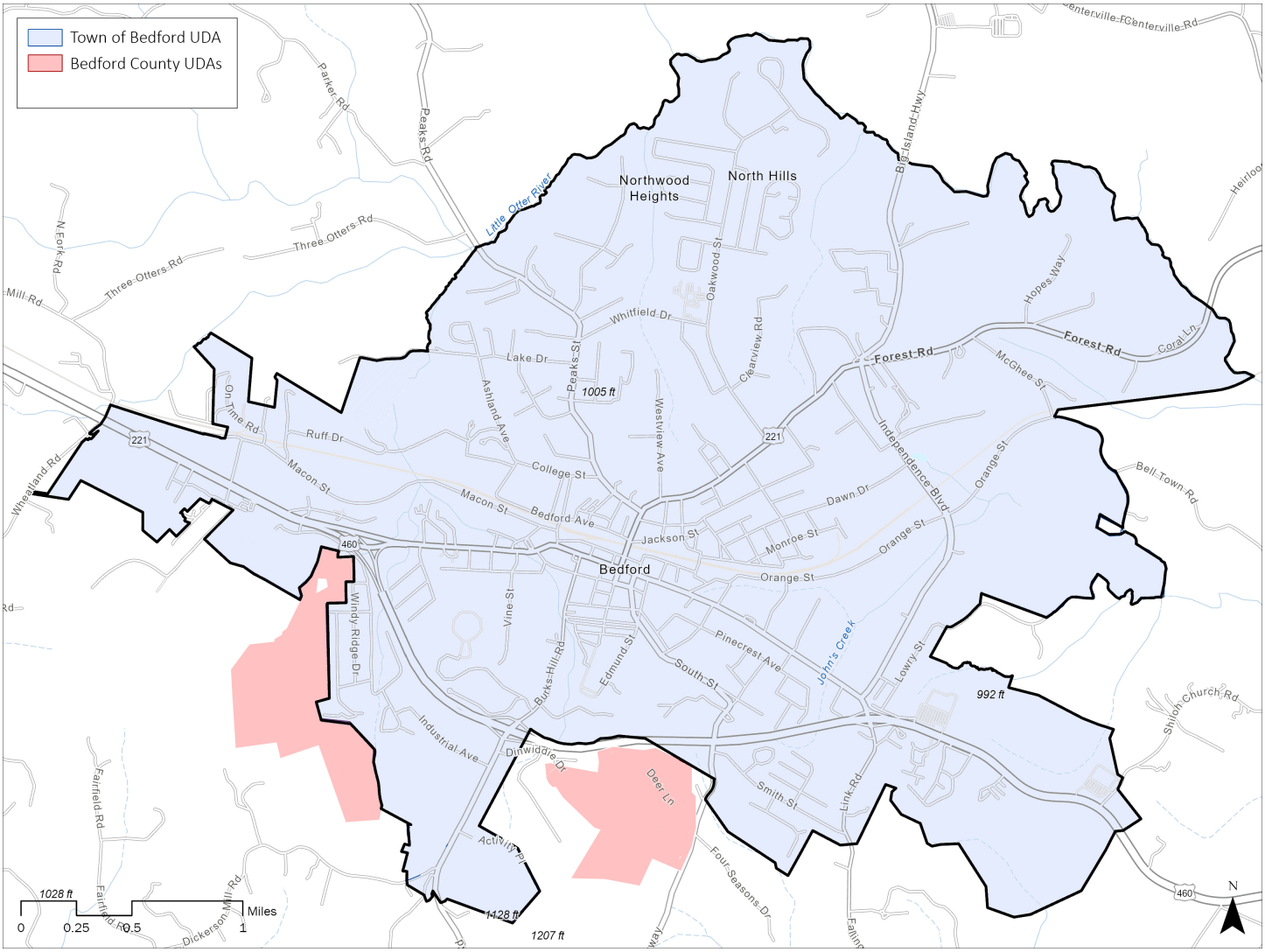
- Promote transportation-efficient land use and land development patterns to help reduce the impact of growth on the state's transportation network.
- Encourage walkable, bikeable, and mixed-use places as a means to attract development and spur local economic growth. Designating a UDA also opens up opportunities for state planning assistance and project funding:
- The Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment's Growth & Accessibility Planning (GAP) Technical Assistance Program provides support to eligible applicants under program Component #1 to "Conduct multimodal planning within existing or planned UDAs or Growth Areas."

Per the Code of Virginia § 33.2-353, VTrans identifies capacity needs and improvements in the designated UDAs. In 2007, Bedford County designated Urban Development Areas, some of which are now within the Town boundary limits, as adjusted in 2013 and 2023.

VTrans outlines several criteria for UDAs, including specific requirements for growth, density, and the need to incorporate Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) principles. These principles include:

- Pedestrian-friendly road design;
- Interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads;
- Connectivity of road and pedestrian networks;
- Preservation of natural areas;
- Mixed-use neighborhoods, including mixed housing types, with affordable housing to meet the projected family income distributions of future residential growth;
- Reduction of front and side yard building setbacks; and
- Reduction of subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections.

The VTrans needs assessment identified the following needs: roadway capacity and operations, Intersection Design, Street Grid, Safety Features, Traffic Calming, Wayfinding, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, Complete Streets, Sidewalks, on- and off-street parking, and Environmental Considerations.

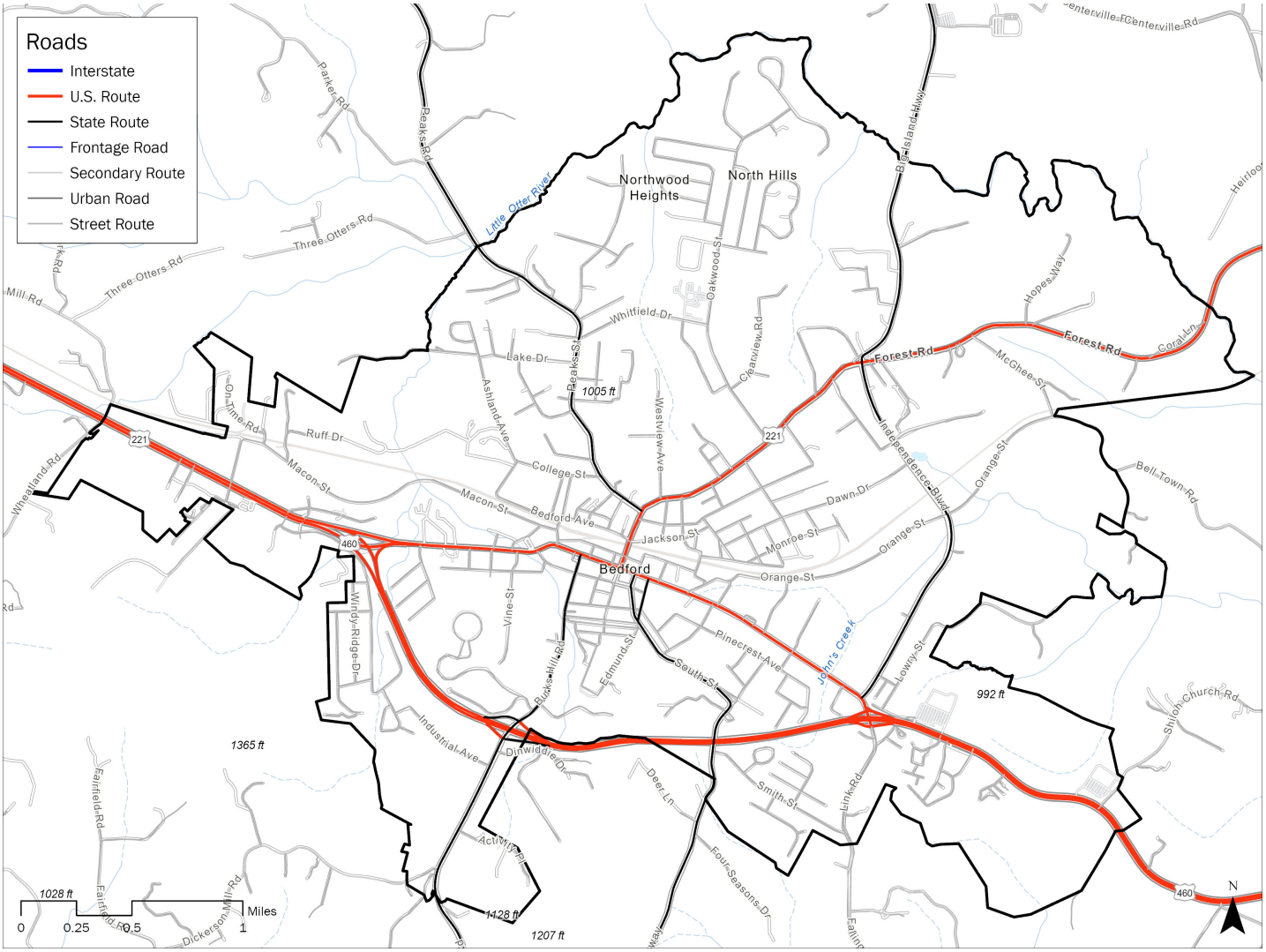


Map 3: Urban Development Areas (UDAs). Source: VTrans

Consistent with Bedford's growth strategy emphasizing infill, redevelopment, and multimodal investment within Town limits, the Planning Commission has expressed support for expanding the UDA designation to encompass the full Town boundary. A townwide UDA would align state planning-screen tools and technical assistance opportunities with the Town's goal of directing growth to areas already served (or planned to be served) by infrastructure.

Existing Transportation Facilities

Bedford's transportation system includes approximately 117 lane-miles of roadways and 26.1 miles of sidewalks. The Town has a comprehensive program to maintain and improve streets and sidewalks, addressing major defects and performing asphalt overlays as needed. This program is funded through a combination of local and VDOT sources. In addition to roads and sidewalks, the Town has about 5.5 miles of railroad track and nearby airports that provide additional transportation access beyond road travel.



Map 4: Existing Road Network

Roadways

Multiple highways facilitate the movement of traffic within and around Bedford. U.S. Route 460 is part of the National Highway System (NHS) and is a Corridor of Statewide Significance (COSS). Known as the Heartland Corridor, Route 460 crosses the Town, connecting residents with Roanoke, Lynchburg, and other parts of the state and beyond. Route 460 runs east-west from Norfolk, Virginia, to Frankfort, Kentucky, leading to the Hampton Roads area to the east and to Roanoke and Interstate 81 to the west. Route 460 is also designated as part of the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET), a network of highways important to the United States' strategic defense policy, providing defense access, continuity, and emergency capabilities for defense purposes. East Main Street, Blue Ridge Avenue, and West Main Street (460 Business) are the principal arterials that cross the Town from Route 460 at the southeast and southwest limits of the Town.

Virginia Route 43 is designated a State Scenic Byway because it offers a scenic, rustic driving experience. To earn this designation, a roadway segment must meet the following physical criteria:

- Provide significant scenic values and experiences.
- Offer a diverse sequence of landscapes, with noticeable transitions from one scene to another.
- Link to, or provide access to, scenic, scientific, historic, or recreational destinations.
- Bypass major or high-speed roads to support a more leisurely, varied drive.
- Allow feasible landscape control and management along the route.
- Be suitable for safety improvements that protect users.
- Contribute to a balanced distribution of scenic byways across the state.

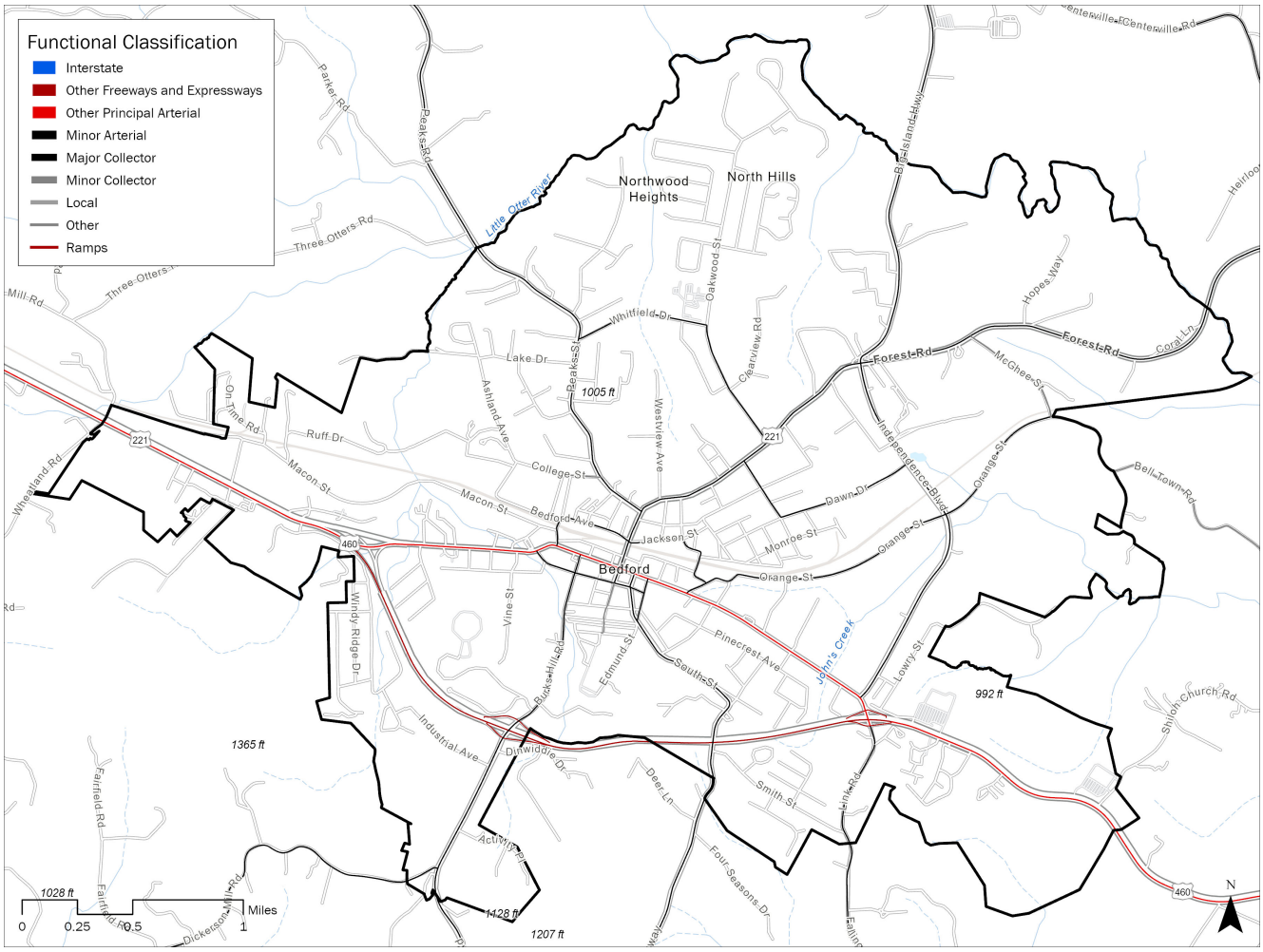
Route 43 is a primary connector between the Town and the Blue Ridge Parkway/Peaks of Otter recreational area and southward into Bedford County. As it enters the Town, it crosses Route 460 and Route 221, then climbs to the majestic Peaks of Otter, and descends toward Buchanan where it connects to Interstate 81. Beyond the Town limits, the Route 43 segments are part of the Virginia Scenic Byway designation, meeting the criteria for inclusion outside the urban area. This designation also creates an opportunity for Bedford to market attractions, businesses, and downtown destinations to visitors traveling the corridor.

Virginia Route 122, which also passes through Town, is a state highway that originates from Big Island in the northeast section of Bedford County and terminates at Route 40 in Franklin County near Rocky Mount. Route 122 is a heavily used connector between the Town and Smith Mountain Lake, which, through its business route, leads to the National D-Day Memorial and the downtown area.

Other well-known and major roadways within the Town include Peaks Street and South Street (designated segments of Route 43), Longwood Avenue (which intersects with Routes 221 and 122), Orange Street (Route 718), Burks Hill Road, and Independence Boulevard (Route 122). Independence Boulevard is a key north–south corridor within the Town, serving both local traffic and regional travel to destinations such as Smith Mountain Lake. Due to increasing traffic volumes and development pressure, the corridor has long been identified for capacity, safety, and operational improvements.

The Town has previously evaluated a range of improvement concepts for Independence Boulevard, including intersection upgrades and alternative designs such as roundabouts, and has pursued state funding opportunities through regional and statewide prioritization programs such as SMART SCALE. While specific projects along Independence Boulevard have not yet advanced to construction, the corridor remains a priority for future investment. A SMART SCALE application was presented for Macon Street ahead of the proposed rail stop,

but scored too low in the cost analysis. Continued coordination with VDOT and regional partners will be necessary to evaluate intersection treatments, access management strategies, and context-appropriate design solutions that improve safety and mobility while remaining competitive for future funding rounds.



Map 5: FHWA Functional Classification. Source: VDOT.

Functional Classification

Roadways in the Commonwealth of Virginia are categorized into classes/systems based on the type of service they are intended to provide. VDOT and the Transportation Mobility and Planning Division (TMPD) are responsible for maintaining the Commonwealth's official Federal Functional Classification System. TMPD determines the functional classification of a road using the guidelines established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA classifies roadways into four categories: principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and locals. Map 5 shows these federal designations of roads in the Town.

Private roads that were not maintained by the state or locality prior to the Town's 2023 boundary adjustment are not included on this map. To be maintained by the Town, these

roads must be brought to acceptable standards for public streets, which would require design, engineering, and construction services, including right-of-way acquisition, widening, paving, curb and gutter installation, and other necessary improvements. To secure the required funding, the Town can consider participating in VDOT's Rural Addition Roads program or establishing a special assessments program in which affected residents agree to contribute 100% of the funding. In cases where residents are willing to provide funding for up to 50% of the total project cost, the Town can consider applying for a Revenue Sharing grant on behalf of the property owners.

Current Traffic Volumes

VDOT provides traffic volume data for all VDOT-maintained roadways within the Town. Traffic volume data is shown as Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), which represents the total number of vehicles on a roadway in a year, divided by 365 days. Traffic Volume is a critical component of transportation analysis, providing a picture of the usage patterns and capacity demands of the road network. This data helps understand the flow of vehicles and enables informed decision-making about infrastructure improvements, traffic management strategies, and future development planning. The map below depicts the AADT on the Town's main roads as of 2022, which is the most recent available. The highest AADT of over 16,000 vehicles is found along Route 460, as it is classified as a principal arterial. Arterials handle a significant number of long-distance trips and daily vehicle miles traveled. In rural areas, they typically represent about 50% of the daily vehicle miles traveled.

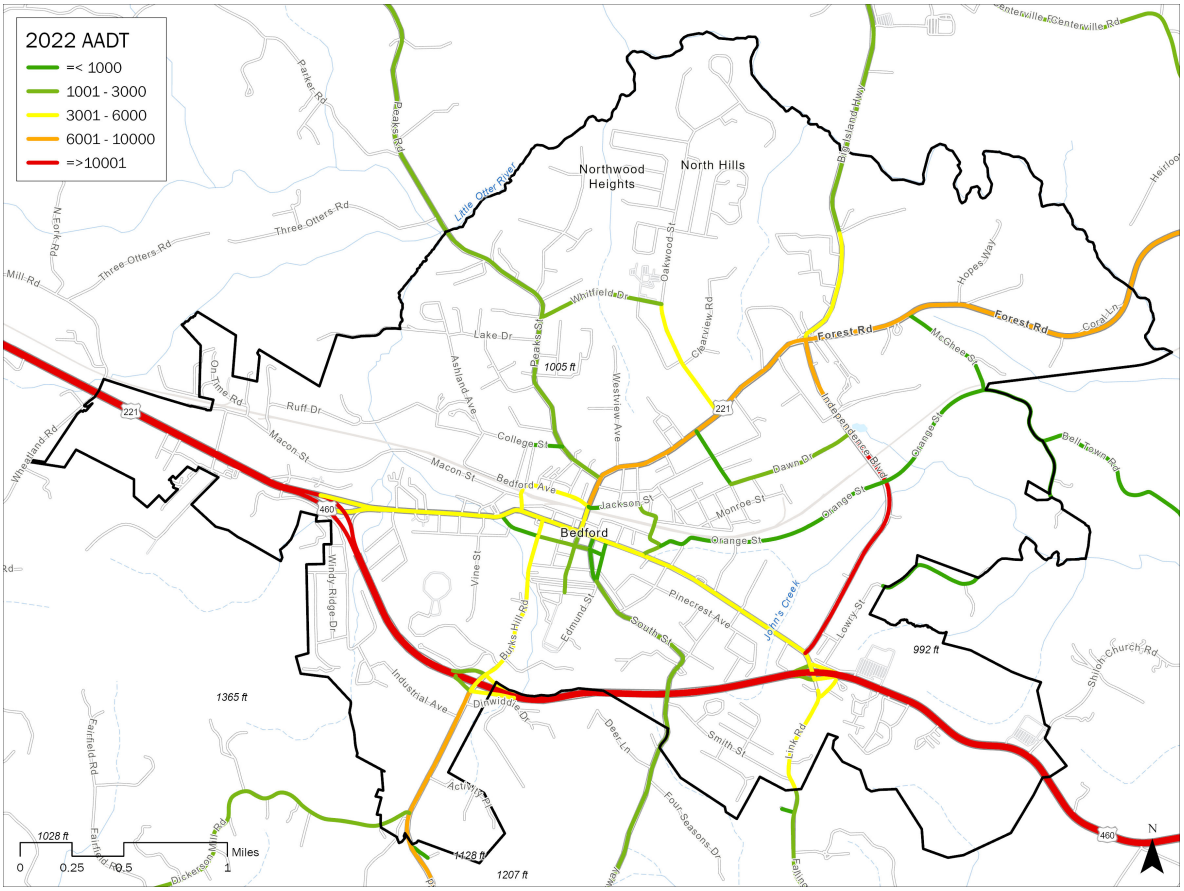
Current Level of Service (LOS)

Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative assessment used in transportation data analysis to help define a road's operating conditions. The level of service reflects driver satisfaction through various factors that impact congestion, including speed, travel time, traffic interruption, safety, and delays.

VDOT uses six levels of service (A through F). LOS A represents "a free flow" of traffic with low volumes and high speeds with little or no delays. Drivers are virtually unaffected by others in the traffic stream." LOS F represents the point at which demand volumes exceed roadway capacity, resulting in congestion. Motorists will seek other routes, and this will impact adjacent streets. Main roads in Bedford have a desirable level of service, as shown in Map 7.

Crash Data

Safety is the most crucial factor in assessing existing conditions and identifying the need for future improvements. VDOT makes annual crash data available for public view. Additionally, VDOT identifies locations labeled as "Potential for Safety Improvement" segments or



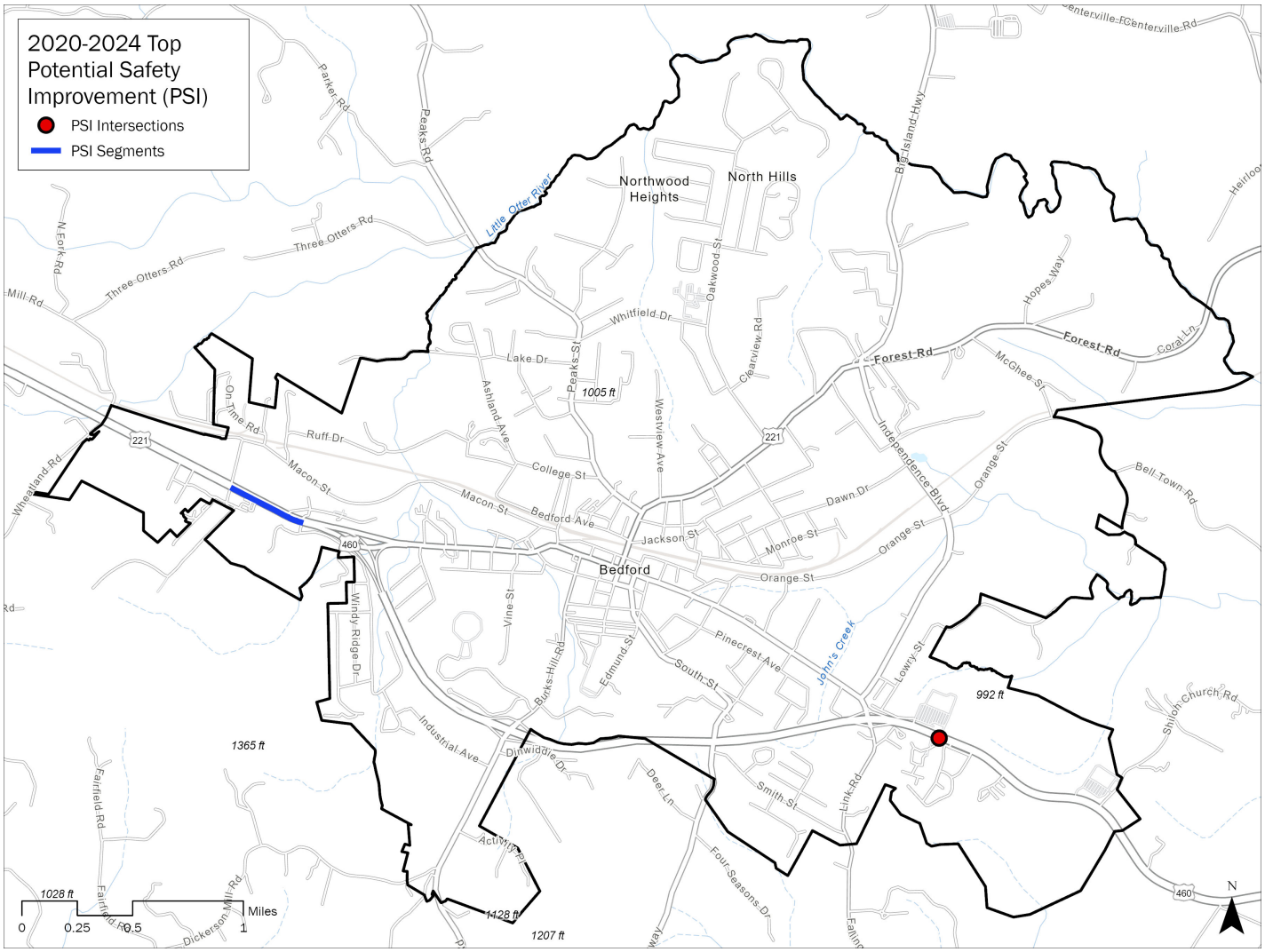
Map 6: Annual Average Daily Traffic (2022). Source: VDOT.



Map 7: Level of Service (2023). Source: VDOT.

intersections. Potential for Safety Improvement (PSI) identification is completed by comparing the predicted number of crashes to the observed number of crashes in that area. If a location has more crashes than expected, there is the potential for safety improvement. The Town has two (2) locations identified in the Top 100 PSIs. One is at the intersection of Route 460 and Hull Street. The other is a segment of Route 460 (a portion of Blue Ridge Avenue).

The table on the following page shows that injury crashes decreased from 2020 to 2022, even as overall crashes dipped in 2021 and then rose in subsequent years. This pattern can occur if the mix of crashes is changing: a relatively small increase in high-energy, high-severity crashes concentrated at specific corridors or intersections can raise overall crash counts and severity outcomes, even while the total number of injury crashes trends downward. In other words, severity can worsen if severe and fatal crashes grow as traffic volumes and exposure rebound, despite fewer injury crashes overall. The severity categories shown in the table reflect injury crashes only, while the annual totals also include no-injury/property-damage-only crashes.



Map 8: VDOT Top 100 Potential for Safety Improvements (PSI).

Severity	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fatal Injury	0	0	0	1	1
Severe Injury	1	3	4	5	2
Visible Injury	18	14	12	16	15
Non-visible Injury	0	01	0	1	2
Total	**78**	**76**	**84**	**100**	**110**

Table 2: Crashes Per Year by Severity (2020-2024). Source: VDOT Crash Analysis Tool.

Pedestrian Facilities

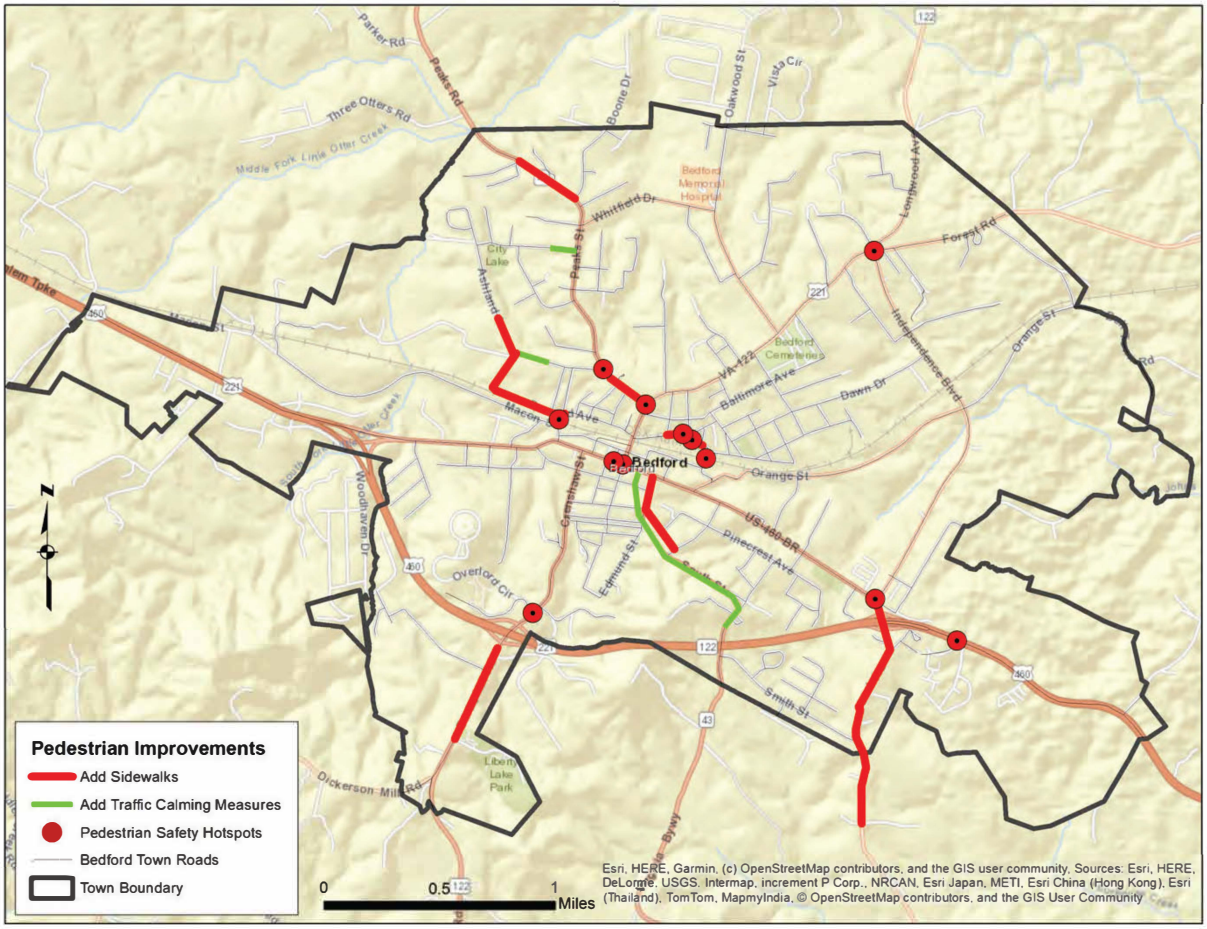
Bedford is known as the "World's Best Little Town" for its rich history, walkable downtown, and mixed-use neighborhoods. As such, the Town has long been committed to pedestrian safety and walkability, preserving its small-town charm while fostering economic development. The 2017 comprehensive plan included a goal to install sidewalks on every public street and a recommendation to develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Previous studies have focused on the historic downtown and its connection to the Burks Hill area (home to the National D-Day Memorial and Welcome Center). In 2018, recommendations were made to add new sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as replace some sidewalks with multi-use paths, from West Main Street (downtown) along Crenshaw Street to Burks Hill Road. This route connects downtown with the D-Day Memorial and Liberty Lake Park. Most of these recommendations have been implemented.

In 2019, the Central Virginia Planning District Commission prepared Bedford's *Bike | Walk Plan* in collaboration with the Town, the USDOT, the FHWA, and VDOT. This plan identifies detailed projects and funding to enhance existing pedestrian facilities and plan for future improvements. Proposed improvements include the addition of sidewalks, safety features, and traffic-calming measures. A map of these recommendations, based on pre-2023 boundaries, is shown on the following page; the new Town boundary has been overlaid for reference.

Currently, the Town maintains over 26 miles of sidewalks. Some older sidewalks are not ADA-compliant, limiting accessibility for people with disabilities. A strong pedestrian network exists around downtown, with sidewalks on both sides of main streets leading to shops and restaurants. Sidewalks also run along key residential streets, such as Peaks Street, Whitfield Drive, and Oakwood Street ("The Loop"). Expanding the sidewalk network into surrounding neighborhoods would significantly increase walkability and encourage more residents to walk. Adding shade trees along sidewalks would further encourage walking by providing comfort, while also aiding in stormwater management and beautification. The Bike Walk Plan provides details on potential pedestrian improvements. The Town should continue to seek opportunities to retrofit existing facilities for ADA compliance and expand sidewalks to promote an even more walkable community.

Proposed Pedestrian Improvements

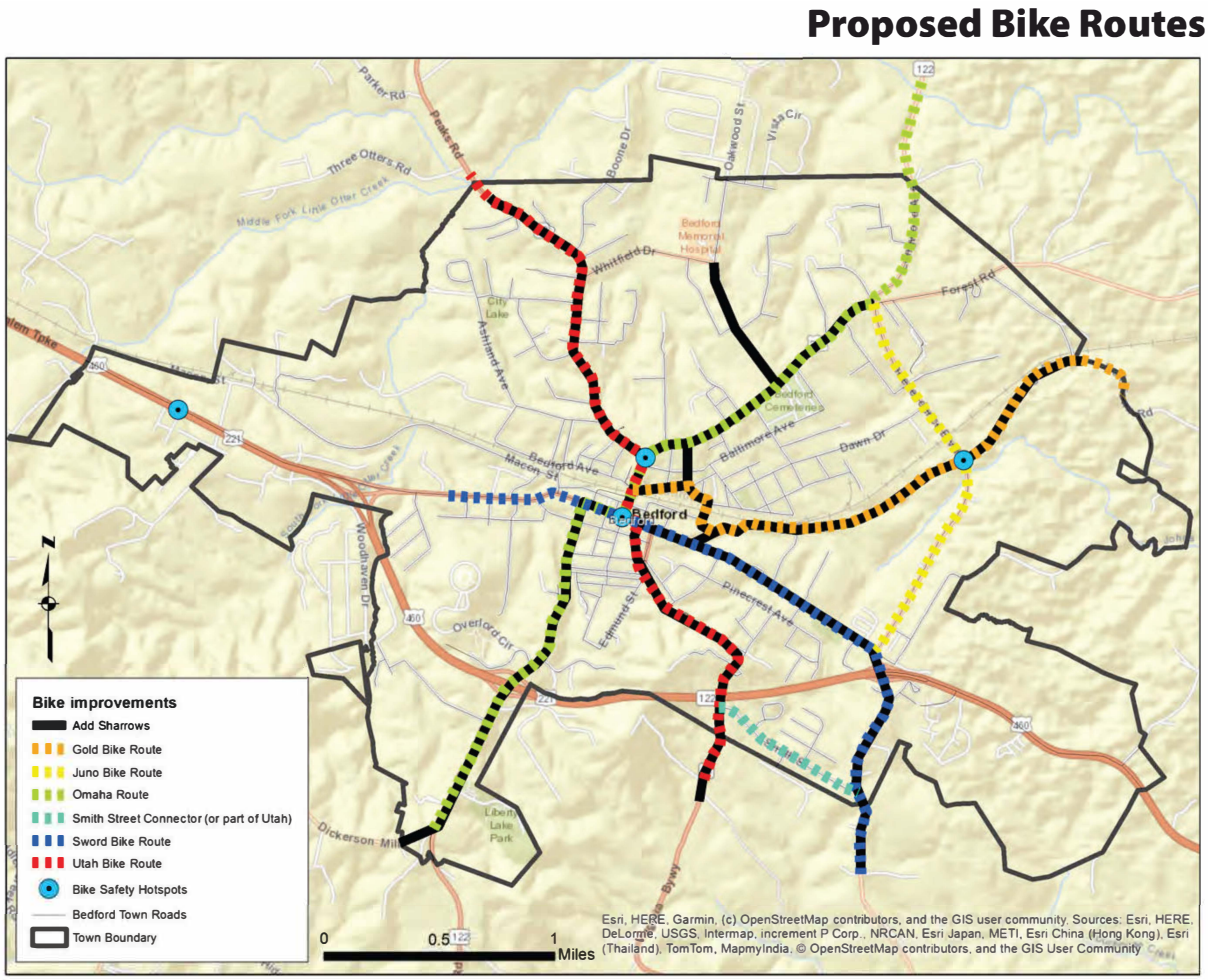


Map 9: Proposed Pedestrian Improvements (from 2019 Bike | Walk Plan).

Bicycle Facilities

All roads in Bedford may be used by bicyclists unless specifically prohibited. Implementing bicycle-friendly improvements will encourage cycling as a safe and viable mode of transportation. For example, installing "Bikes on Road" signs alerts motorists to the presence of bicyclists. The Bike Walk Plan recommended bicycle pavement markings (sharrows) on portions of Peaks Street (Route 43), Longwood Avenue (Routes 221/122), Independence Boulevard, Orange Street, and Burks Hill Road as they lead into downtown. Many sections of these roads are wide enough to accommodate dedicated bike lanes or shared-use paths.

Roadway reconfigurations have already been implemented for safety. For example, between the US 460 interchange and Liberty Lake Park, Burks Hill Road was restriped (road diet) to include 5-foot bike lanes on each side. Implementing striping and markings when roadways are repaved is a cost-effective way to add bike lanes and improve safety by reducing crashes, vehicle speeds, and conflicts with pedestrians. Finally, the Town can increase the number of bicycle racks on public property or work with local businesses and community agencies to coordinate additional bicycle parking.



Map 10: Proposed Bike Routes (from 2019 Bike | Walk Plan).

Rail Transportation

Norfolk Southern operates one mainline through Bedford, running east-west roughly parallel to U.S. Route 460. This line has about 5.5 miles of track within the Town limits (excluding sidings). Freight service on this line connects Bedford's industries to major rail routes nationwide; the eastern end of the line connects with the Port of Virginia (Norfolk). Rail sidings serve local industries, and there is capacity for potential service expansion.

Amtrak's Northeast Regional passenger service passes through Bedford on the route between Roanoke and Lynchburg, but it does not currently stop in Town. Through collaborative efforts with regional partners, the Town has secured funding to plan and design a future Amtrak passenger rail stop at Macon and Baldwin Streets. This station will provide direct rail access to destinations such as Lynchburg, Roanoke, Washington, D.C., and the Northeast Corridor, offering a viable alternative to highway travel. A future station would also support tourism, expand commuting options for residents, and strengthen Bedford's potential to attract employers and workers.

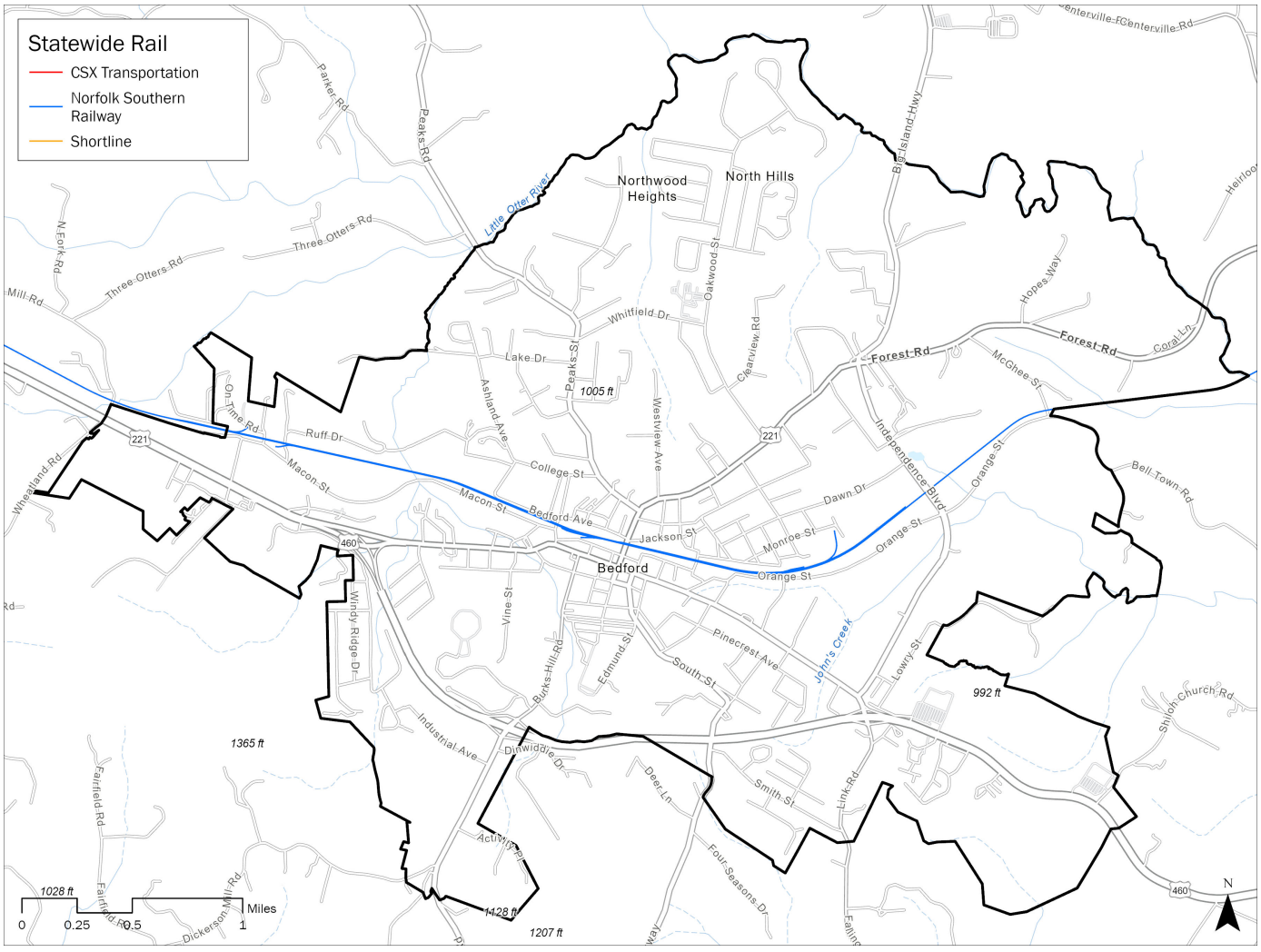
As planning for the station advances, the Town should also evaluate multimodal access improvements to the surrounding area. Potential enhancements include improved pedestrian

and bicycle connections between the station, downtown, and adjacent neighborhoods, as well as the long-term feasibility of a shared-use path or greenway connection along the Macon Street corridor. These improvements would strengthen first- and last-mile connectivity, enhance safety, and reinforce the station's role as an integrated transportation asset.

Public and Other Transportation Services

In collaboration with the Bedford Community Health Foundation, the Town secured funding from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit to launch a public transit demonstration project known as the Otter Bus. Since September 2021, the Otter Bus has provided free transportation within Town limits, connecting residents to essential destinations such as medical facilities, grocery stores, employment centers, and community services.

Public outreach and stakeholder feedback have consistently identified the Otter Bus as a critical community need, particularly for seniors, persons with disabilities, and residents without reliable access to private vehicles. The service plays an important role in supporting independence, access to healthcare, and overall quality of life. As demand continues to grow, the Town should prioritize the long-term sustainability of the Otter Bus by pursuing



Map 11: Railways. Source: Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT).

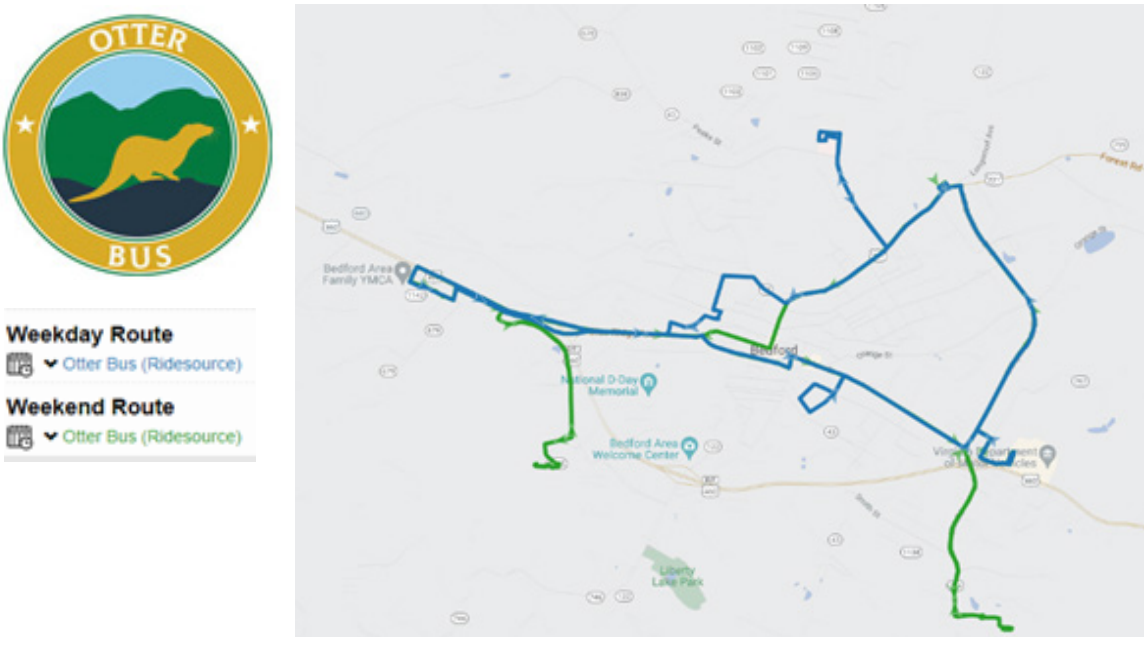
permanent funding sources, evaluating opportunities for service expansion, and integrating transit considerations into broader land use and transportation planning efforts.

During early transit planning efforts, the Town explored a range of service models, including flexible and on-demand microtransit approaches, to better understand how transit needs could be addressed within a small-town context. Those discussions helped inform the development of the Otter Bus, which now serves as the Town's primary public transportation service. Since its launch, the Town's focus has shifted toward sustaining and incrementally enhancing this fixed-route service rather than pursuing a standalone on-demand transit program. The program funding is expected to request transitioning to the Federal 5311 transit program.

Elderly and Disabled Transportation Service

The Central Virginia Alliance for Community Living (CVACL) provides shuttle vans for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents throughout the CVPDC region, including Bedford Ride (a volunteer driver program) for non-emergency medical trips. The Town should encourage expanding this service to connect clients with non-medical activity centers (grocery stores, parks, etc.) and to establish new routes in neighboring localities. Such expansion would provide more transportation choices and better serve seniors and persons with disabilities.

Rural communities, characterized by their remoteness and limited transportation options, often require improved public transportation infrastructure, including the permanent establishment of bus routes, enhancements to existing road networks, and the implementation of microtransit or carpooling programs. Securing funding to expand these options is a vital investment in the community, as it will not only improve mobility for all residents but also stimulate economic activity and foster social inclusion.



Map 12: Otter Bus Routes. Source: Otter Bus.

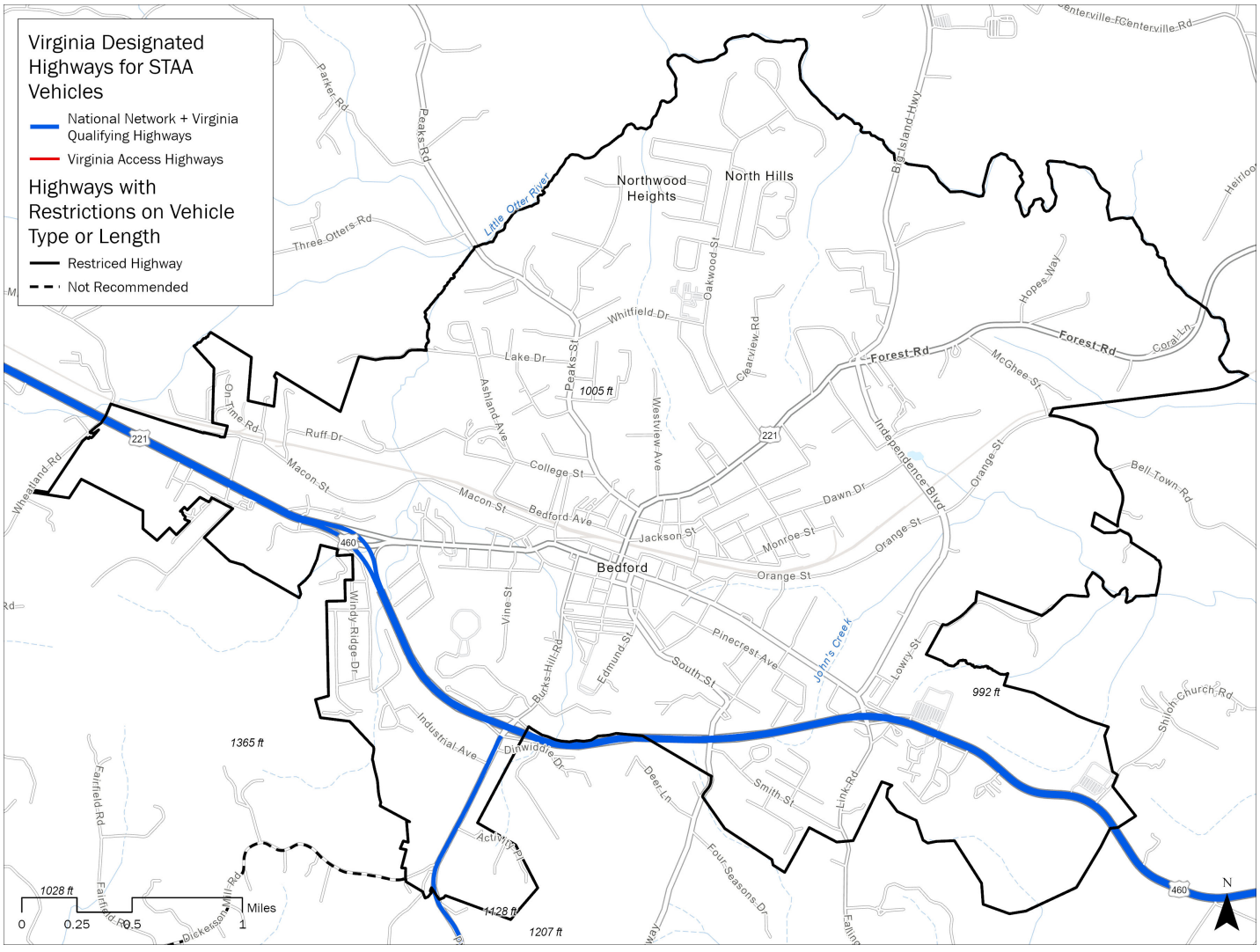
Trucking Service

Bedford is served by several interstate and intrastate motor freight carriers, offering service coverage throughout the eastern United States and beyond. Major carriers such as United Parcel Service (UPS) and Federal Express (FedEx) also operate in Town, providing parcel and freight delivery services.

Numerous interstate and intrastate trucking companies utilize Bedford's highways. U.S. Route 460 is a principal east-west trucking corridor for central Virginia, linking the Town's economic area to urban markets and ports along the East Coast and beyond. These routes enable efficient freight movement into and out of Bedford's business districts and industrial areas.

Air Transportation

Two primary commercial airports, Lynchburg Regional Airport and Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport, are within a short drive of Bedford, offering daily flights to national hubs, some direct to major hubs. Two general aviation airports (New London and Smith Mountain Lake) in Bedford County serve regional businesses and residents (operating mainly during daylight, with lighting for limited night use). In addition, several major airports



Map 13: Trucking Routes. Source: VDOT.

(Charlottesville-Albemarle, Richmond International, and Raleigh-Durham International) are within about two hours' drive, and the Washington, D.C. area airports (Dulles and Reagan National) are about four hours away.

Planning for the Future

This section summarizes how Bedford is positioning its transportation network to meet future needs through a combination of funded capital investments and long-range, unfunded recommendations. While the Town's overall network is projected to provide adequate service in the coming years, maintaining that performance will depend on targeting improvements that support growth, strengthen multimodal options, and address corridor- and intersection-specific safety and congestion concerns. The Town takes a proactive approach to identifying and advancing projects that are environmentally sustainable and operationally efficient, and that align with surrounding land uses, support a range of housing options, reduce congestion, enhance connectivity, and foster sustainable growth through effective design.

Some projects described in this chapter have already been implemented, while others are in design or awaiting funding. To distinguish between projects that are already programmed and those that remain aspirational, the tables at the end of this section provide two complementary views:

- VDOT's Fiscal Year 2026–2031 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) identifies projects with committed funding and schedules.
- The Tabular Summary of Recommended Rural Transportation Projects (from the CONNECT Central Virginia 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan) lists priority projects intended to address longer-term safety and congestion needs but that may not yet be funded. Together, these tables show what is currently moving forward and what remains a priority for future investment.

Engineering and Transportation Infrastructure Projects

In addition to the long-range recommendations and funded projects identified in this chapter, the Town continues to advance smaller-scale engineering projects that address localized safety, drainage, and mobility needs. Recent and ongoing efforts include sidewalk and shoulder repairs along Ashland Avenue, storm drainage and streetscape improvements on Jackson Street, transportation-related enhancements at the Washington Street and Crenshaw Street corridor, and the Old Turnpike Road relocation project in coordination with VDOT through the Revenue Sharing Program.

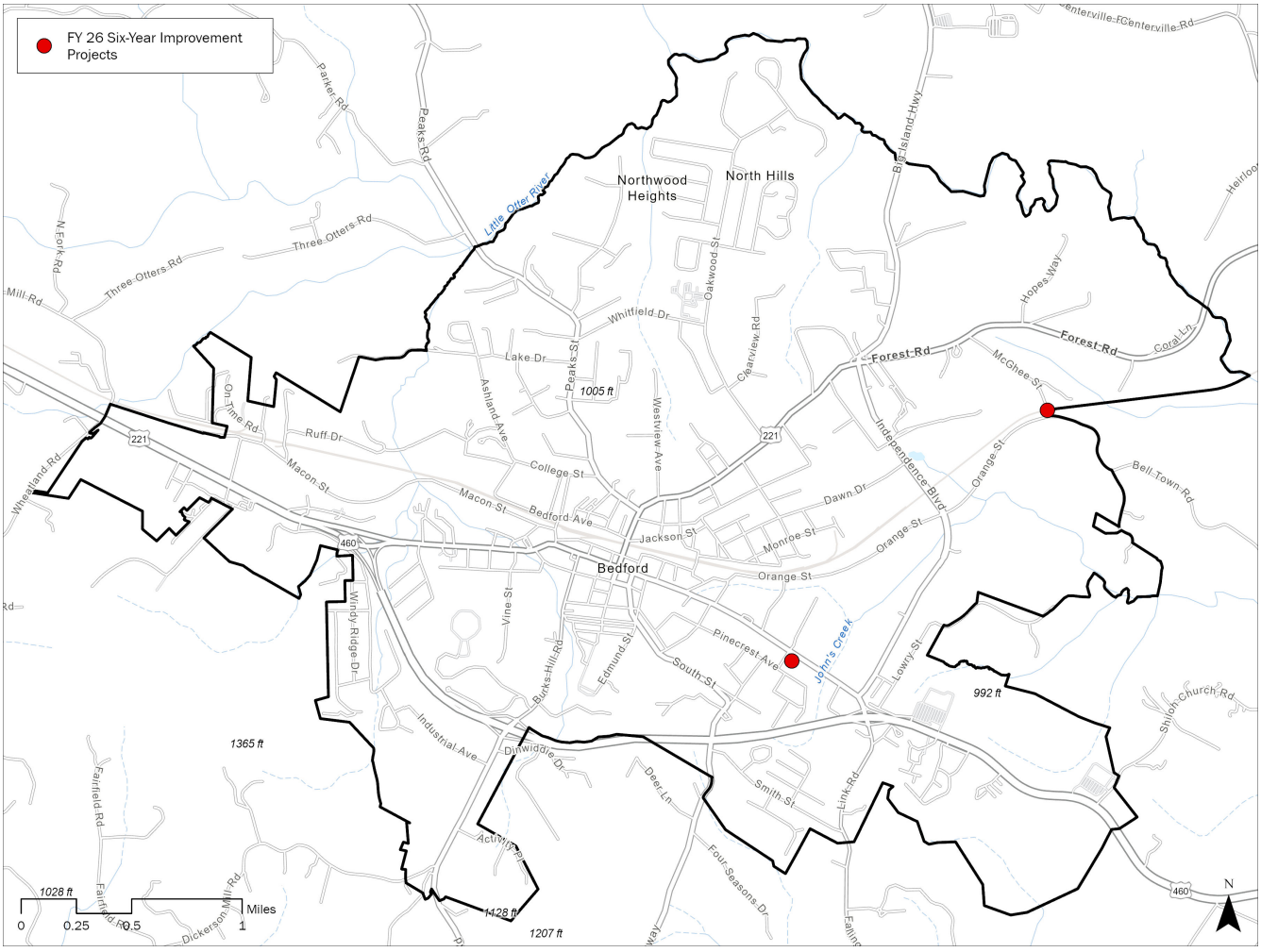
These projects complement larger regional initiatives by improving day-to-day functionality of the transportation network and preparing corridors for future investment.

Fiscal Year 2026-2031 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)

The following projects are shown as funded in the 2026-2031 VDOT SYIP:

UPC	Description	Route	Road System	(Values in Thousands of Dollars)				
				Estimate	Previous	FY26	FY27-31	Balance
126894	US-460-B AT E. MAIN ST EV CHARGING STATION INSTALLATION	221	Miscellaneous	**$1,176**	$1,176	$0	$0	$0
116980	#SGR21LB (FED ID 22403) BRIDGE REPL - MCGHEE ST OVER NSRR		Urban	**$6,270**	$2,643	$1,147	$2,480	$0
113127	RS - TOWNWIDE SIDEWALKS - NEW CONSTRUCTION - TOWN OF BEDFORD	9999	Urban	**$472**	$250	$0	$0	$222
126163	TOWN OF BEDFORD SYSTEMIC SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS	9999	Urban	**$784**	$784	$0	$0	$0

Table 3: 2026-2031 VDOT Funded SYIP Projects



Map 14: 2026-2031 VDOT Funded SYIP Projects.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Improve mobility, walkability, and regional connections.

Strategy 1A – Sidewalk Connectivity: Close gaps in the sidewalk network, prioritizing routes to schools, parks, shopping, and transit stops.

Strategy 1B – Safer Crossings: Install or upgrade marked crosswalks and pedestrian signals at key intersections.

Strategy 1C – Bike and Pedestrian Plan Implementation: Develop a townwide bike and pedestrian plan, consistent with the 2019 Bike/Ped Plan.

Strategy 1D – Trails and Low-Stress Bike Routes: Extend existing trails (such as The Loop) and add bicycle lanes or shared-use paths on low-traffic streets.

Strategy 1E – Centertown Wayfinding: Improve parking signage and wayfinding around Centertown.

Strategy 1F – Street and Intersection Safety Studies: In partnership with VDOT and the CVTPO, study narrow streets and intersections for targeted safety upgrades.

Strategy 1G – Amtrak Station Coordination: Coordinate with Amtrak planners to ensure the future station includes needed amenities and access improvements.

Strategy IH – Otter Bus Funding: Secure long-term funding to maintain or expand Otter Bus public transit.

Strategy 1I – ADA Access at Transit Stops: Audit Otter Bus stops and connecting sidewalks for ADA compliance.

Goal 2: Maintain and enhance Bedford's roadway network for safety, accessibility, and efficiency.

Strategy 2A – Street Maintenance and Resurfacing: Prioritize regular maintenance and resurfacing of local streets to ensure optimal road conditions.

Strategy 2B – Intersection Improvements: Identify and upgrade key intersections to improve safety and traffic flow.

Strategy 2C – Complete Streets: Implement a Complete Streets policy to ensure that new projects accommodate all users.

Strategy 2D – Regional Roadway Advocacy: Coordinate with VDOT and the CVTPO to advocate for needed regional roadway improvements.

Rank	CONNECT CENTRAL VIRGINIA 2045 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
2	US 460 at Walmart Entrance. Short-Term: Safety: Close the shopping center entrance that is located on the westbound lanes of Route 460 between the Walmart traffic signal and the Route 460 Business ramp. Long-Term: Congestion: Widen US 460 to improve accessibility to the retail properties in this area. Relocate Phillips Park Drive to the east and construct a new crossover to improve access management. A new signal may be required based on warrant analysis.
3	US 460 Bypass at US 460 (East Main Street). Long-term: Congestion - Interchange improvements to address long-term safety and traffic flow issues. Specific improvements to be determined.
11	US 460 at VA 122 / VA 122 Business (Burks Hill Road/Crenshaw Street). Mid-Term: Congestion: Interchange improvements, including widening both westbound and eastbound exit ramps to 2 lanes and widening pavement on Crenshaw Street from the westbound ramp to school/D-day Memorial entrance to 4 lanes (provides for northbound left turn lane at school/Memorial entrance, southbound right turn lane at westbound Route 460 ramp, plus one northbound through lane and one southbound through lane). Improvements also include the installation of interconnected traffic signals, if warranted, at eastbound ramps, westbound ramps, and the school and Memorial entrance.
14	VA 43 / VA 221 / VA 122 BUS (North Bridge Street/ Bedford Avenue) at Jackson Street. Mid-Term: Safety: Reconstruct the intersection to improve safety. Improvements include realigning and correcting the vertical geometry for the Bedford Avenue approach and correcting the vertical geometry for the Jackson Street approach.
16	US 460 at VA 1140 (Turnpike Road). Long-Term: Safety: Upgrade intersection by adding turn lanes on Turnpike Road and extending turn lanes on US 460. Construct a new road parallel to US 460, extending east from Turnpike Road.
26	US 460 at Old Turnpike Drive and Woodhaven Drive. Mid-Term: Congestion: Improvements to median crossing and approaches, including Route 460 east of this intersection. Improvements include shifting the median crossing to improve crossover alignment, adding right and left turn lanes on Route 460 (Blue Ridge Avenue), and widening westbound Route 460 from 1 to 2 lanes from the off-ramp to eastbound Route 460 Business to the on-ramp from westbound Route 460 Business.
34	VA 122 (Independence Blvd) From East Main Street to Orange Street. Mid-Term: Congestion: Widen roadway to 4 lanes to U4 Standards.
35	VA 43 (South Street) from East Main Street to South Corporate Limits. Long-Term: Congestion: Upgrade roadway to urban two-lane standards.
36	Baldwin Street from Salem Turnpike to Macon Street. Mid-Term: Congestion: Upgrade roadway to U2 Standards.
41	VA 122 (Independence Blvd) at Orange Street. Mid-Term: Congestion - Install a signal at the intersection as warranted.
48	VA 122 (Independence Blvd) from Dawn Drive to Forest Road. Mid-Term: Congestion: Widen roadway to 4 lanes to U4 Standards.
50	South Bridge from Washington Street to East Main Street. Long-Term: Congestion: Upgrade roadway to urban two-lane standards.
62	Otey Street from Washington Street to Ridge Street. Long-Term: Safety: Rural - 2 Lane 22 Feet.
64	The McGhee Street overpass at the railroad. Mid-Term: Safety: Construct a new overpass at the railroad.

Table 4: Summary of Recommended Rural Transportation Projects.

Chapter 9: Parks & Recreation

Overview 82
Parks 83
Trails 84
Other Open Spaces 85
Looking Forward 87
Goals & Strategies 88

Overview

Bedford's natural beauty is central to the community's quality of life and sense of place. During the comprehensive planning process, residents consistently identified the Town's parks and access to natural areas among its greatest strengths. Words like "beautiful," "scenic," and "historic" were frequently used to describe Bedford's character. Liberty Lake Park, in particular, was praised as a convenient and well-maintained hub for recreation and community gatherings.



At the same time, the community voiced a strong desire to enhance recreational opportunities and programming. While Bedford's existing parks provide green space and amenities, residents noted several gaps in facilities and activities – especially the lack of playgrounds, youth sports fields, and dedicated indoor recreation space. Many survey respondents and stakeholders expressed interest in a new recreation center, more programs for youth and seniors, and better walking and biking connections (particularly for young people) as needs for the future.

This chapter reviews Bedford's current parks and open spaces, highlights gaps in recreational facilities and programming, and establishes goals and strategies to expand opportunities while protecting the natural assets of Bedford.

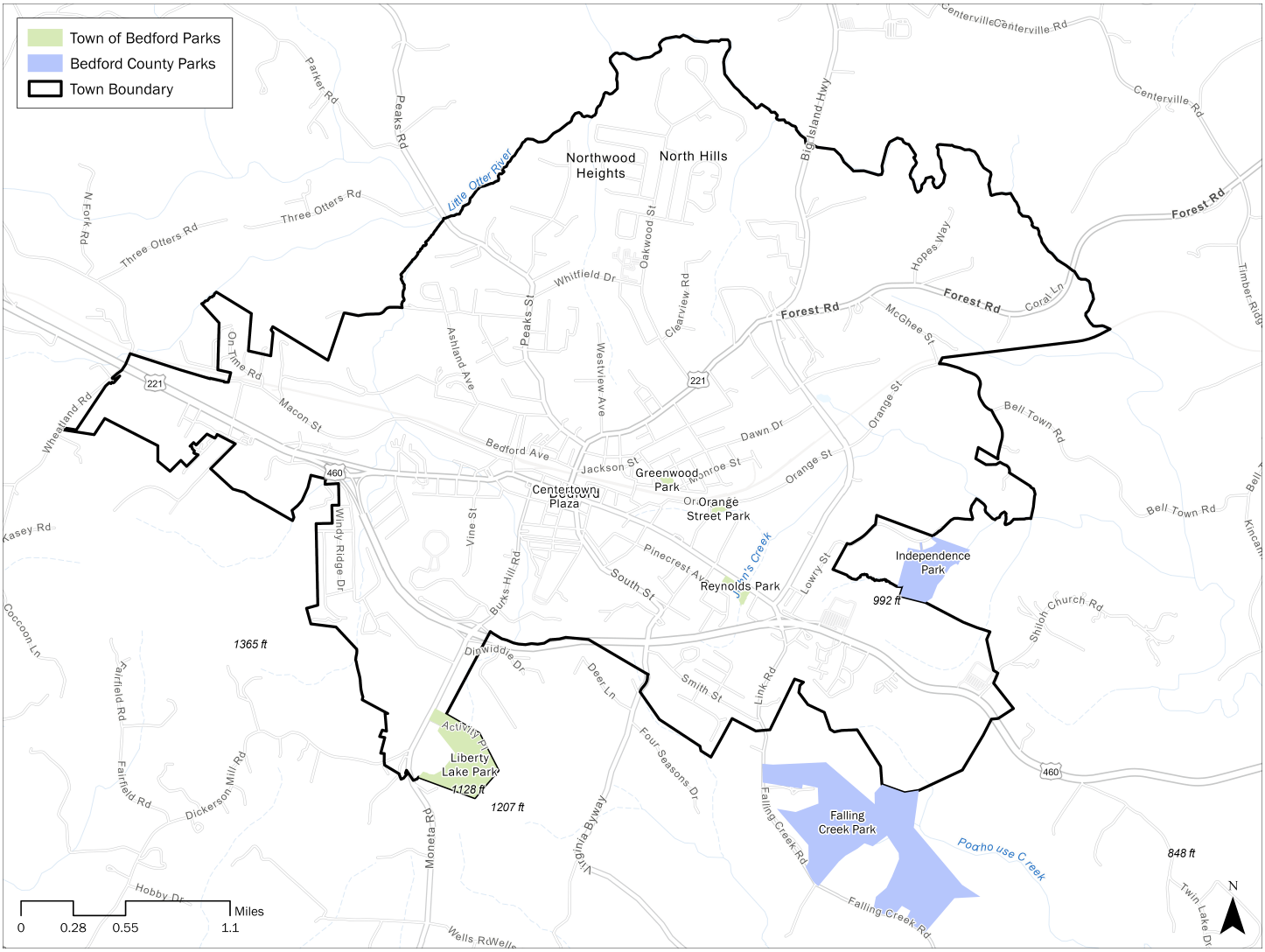
Parks

The Town of Bedford maintains several parks that serve different recreational needs across the community:

- **Liberty Lake Park** – Bedford's flagship park, located on the northern edge of town. It features athletic fields for baseball, softball, and soccer, as well as picnic shelters, a playground, a disc golf course, walking trails around the lake, and ample open green space. The park hosts community events, sports leagues, and family gatherings year-round, and its convenient location and well-maintained facilities make it a beloved community asset.
- **Edmund Street Park** – A neighborhood park in central Bedford that includes a playground and open green space for nearby residents to enjoy.
- **Centertown Park** – A small pocket park/landscaped public space in the town core that provides a place to sit and gather.
- **Greenwood Park** – A neighborhood park equipped with a basketball court, picnic tables, and a playground, offering convenient outdoor recreation within walking distance of surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Orange Street Park** – A neighborhood park that offers a modest play area and open green space for residents in its vicinity.
- **Reynolds Park** – An additional neighborhood-scale park that provides open space and recreation area for residents in its surrounding area.

Residents also use recreational assets near Town limits (e.g., Falling Creek Park, Independence Park). These facilities are not Town-maintained but may influence recreation demand and trail connection priorities.

Map 15 shows Town park locations and helps identify gaps in neighborhood access, potential trail connections, and opportunities for upgrades and programming.

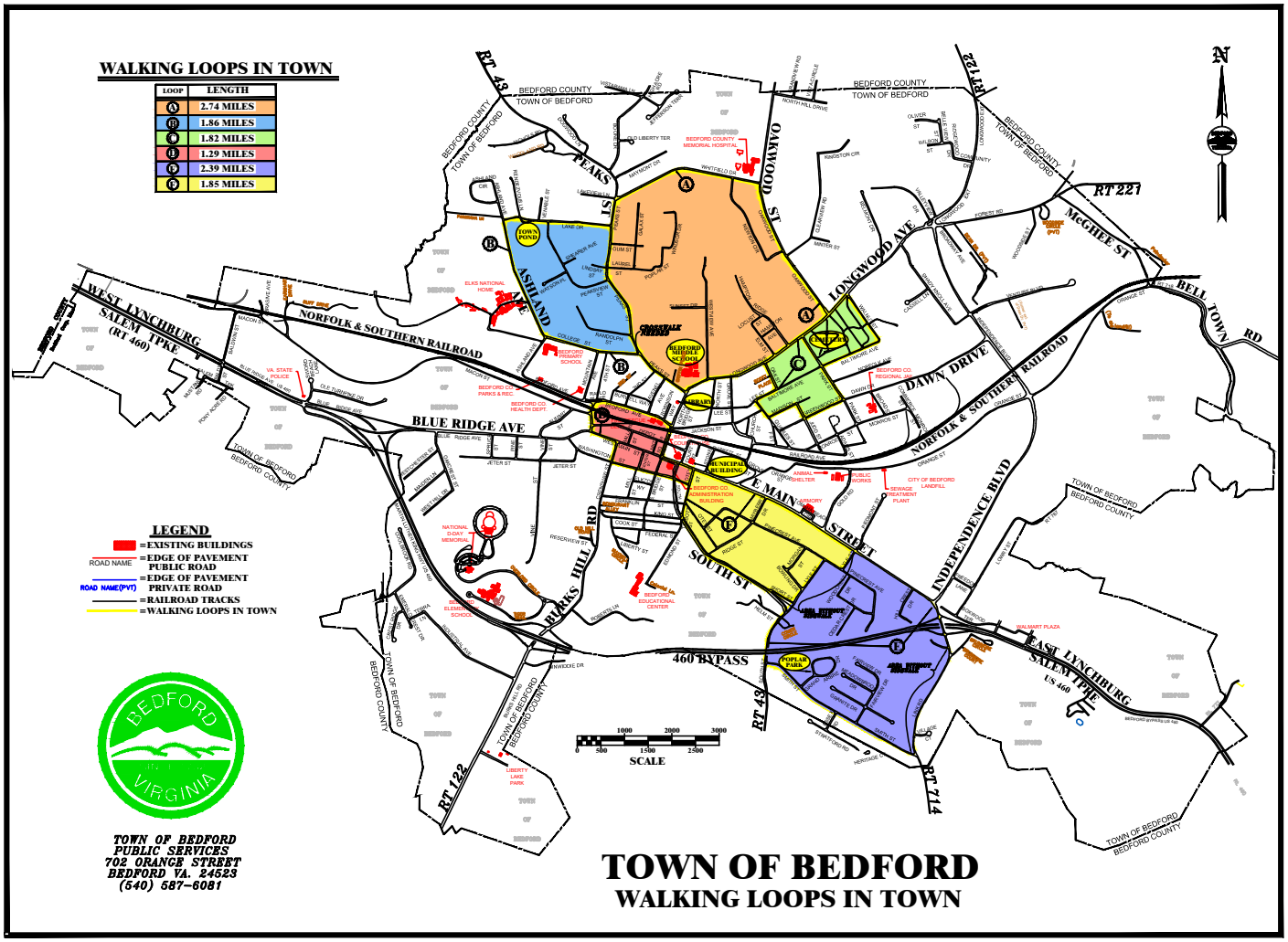


Map 15: Parks

Trails

Trails and shared-use paths are an important part of Bedford's recreation system and help improve access to parks, schools, and downtown without requiring new large-scale facilities. During the planning process, residents frequently pointed to the need for safer, more continuous walking and biking options, especially connections between neighborhoods and major destinations such as Liberty Lake Park, schools, and the Town's core. Trails also support public health, provide low-cost recreation for all ages, and enhance Bedford's scenic character by allowing residents and visitors to experience natural areas close to home.

Maps 16, 17, and 18 show existing walking loops and and proposed trail connections, including the Little Otter River Greenway and the Outer Loop, drawing from the 2019 *Bike | Walk Plan*. These maps should be used as the framework for prioritizing trail segments that close gaps in the network, create comfortable connections between neighborhoods and parks, strengthen links to downtown businesses and civic destinations, and improve



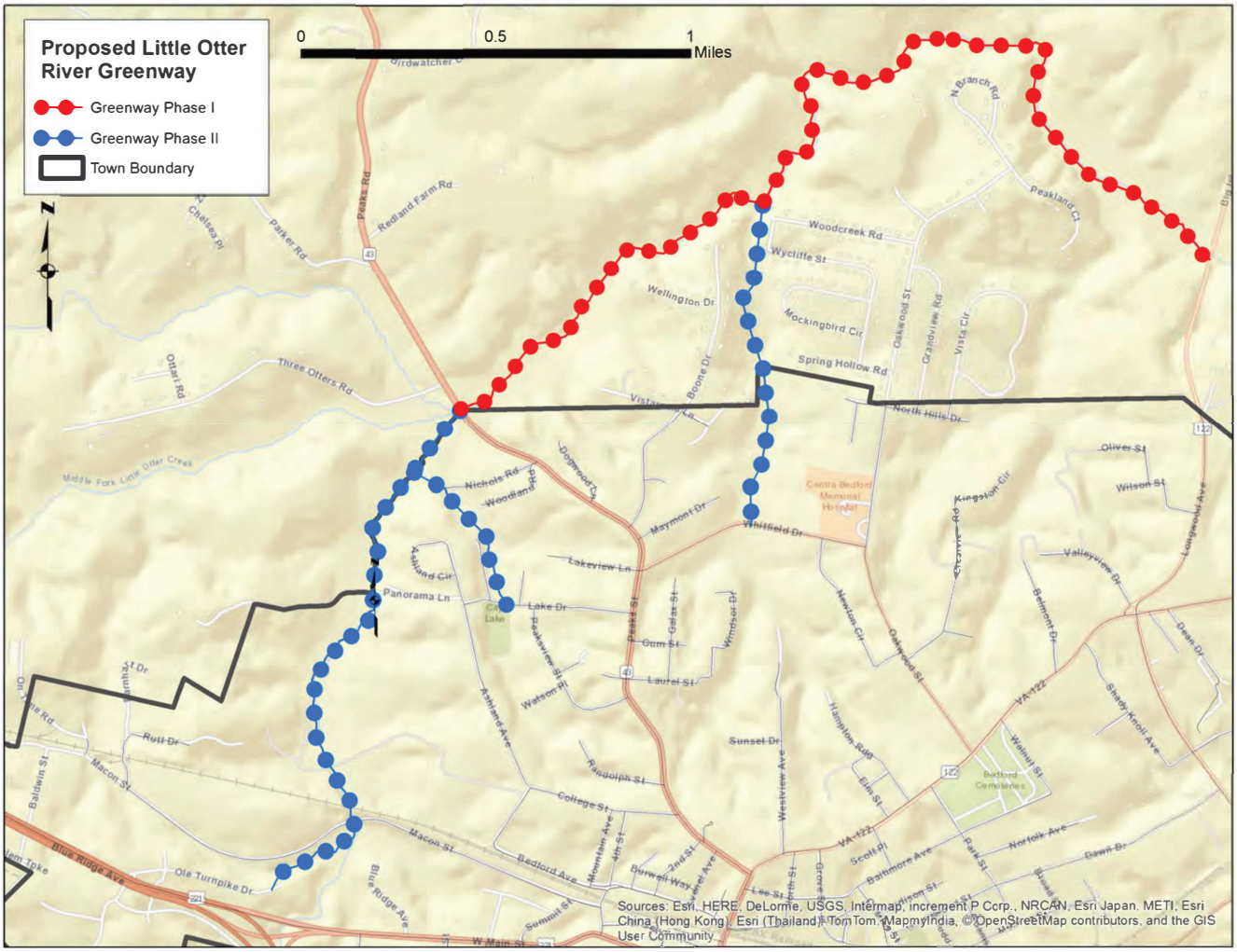
Map 16: Walking Loops

safety at roadway crossings. Note that this map shows trails only; refer to Maps 9 and 10 (found in Chapter 8) for proposed pedestrian and bicycle routes. As trail projects advance, the Town should coordinate with partners, including Bedford County, VDOT, schools, and local organizations, to pursue funding, secure easements where needed, and ensure trails are designed for long-term maintenance, accessibility, and user safety.

Other Open Spaces

Beyond the formal park system, Bedford benefits from other recreational facilities and open spaces, though gaps in programming and accessibility remain. The Bedford Area Family YMCA offers a pool, gym, and fitness classes on a membership basis. While the YMCA provides valuable recreation opportunities, it is not a substitute for a public facility accessible to all residents. Furthermore, the Town itself does not currently operate a recreation center or offer extensive organized programs. In the absence of a municipal recreation center, other community facilities help fill particular needs on a limited scale. The Bedford Public Library and various churches host occasional programs, classes, and gatherings that provide social and educational activities for the community. However, these offerings are limited in scope and

Proposed Little Otter River Greenway



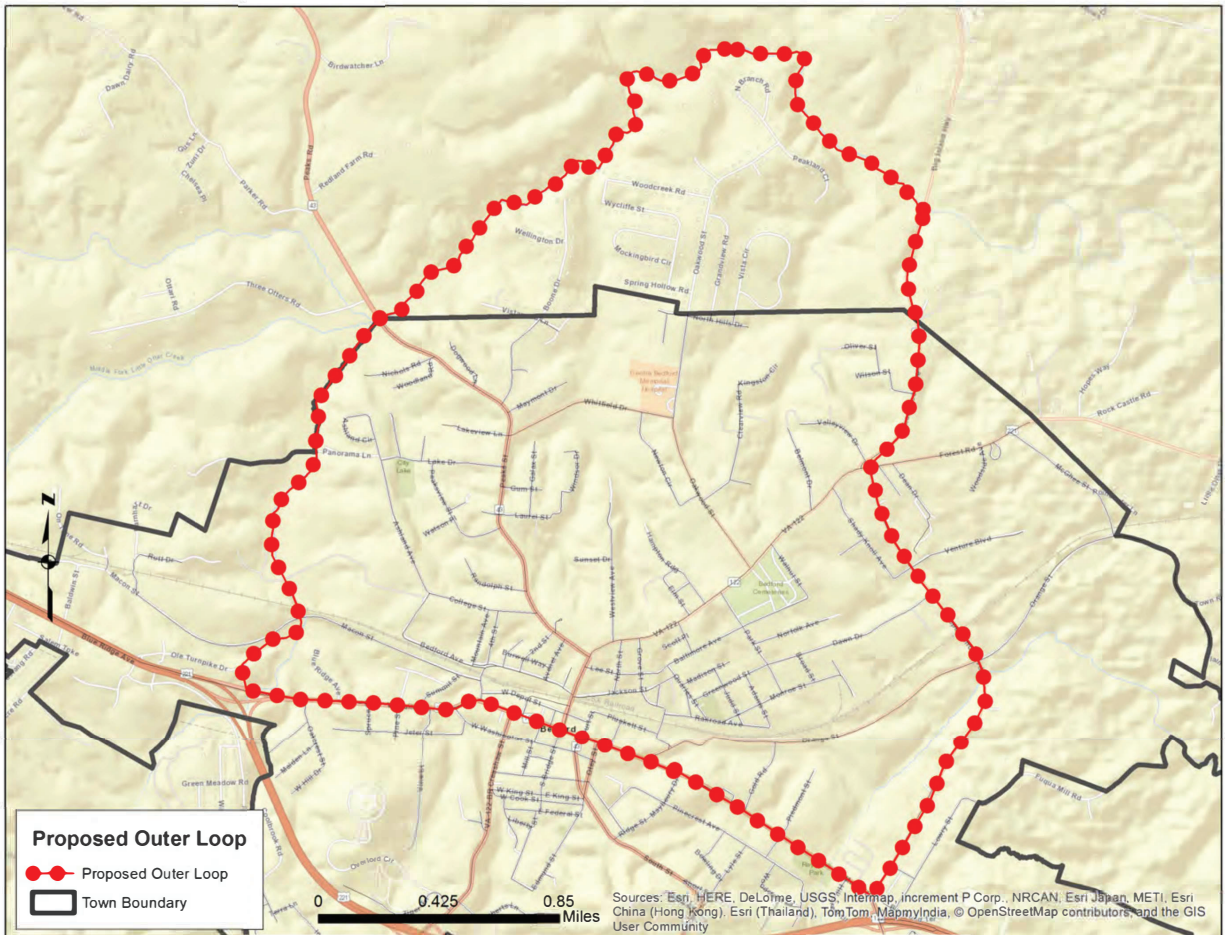
Map 17: Proposed Little Otter River Greenway (from 2019 Bike | Walk Plan)

frequency, leaving notable gaps - especially in youth sports leagues, senior programming, and dedicated gathering spaces for veterans outside of special events.

Additionally, the Town should invest in encouraging community gardens, educational growing spaces, and other small-scale food-producing sites in appropriate locations as amenities that support healthy living and neighborhood identity.

The Town also owns an undeveloped reservoir property that currently serves solely as a water supply and is closed to the public. This large wooded area presents a unique opportunity for future passive recreation, such as hiking, nature observation, fishing, or picnicking, if portions of the land can be opened to the public. Any use of the reservoir property would require rigorous protections for water quality and safety, but with careful planning, this site could eventually provide residents with a new place to enjoy Bedford's natural environment.

Proposed Outer Loop



Map 18: Proposed Outer Loop(from 2019 Bike | Walk Plan)

Looking Forward

Looking ahead, Bedford will need to adopt creative approaches to expand recreational opportunities while safeguarding the natural assets that residents cherish. One idea raised during the planning process is to repurpose an existing structure rather than build a new facility from scratch – for example, converting the former county bus garage into a public swimming pool or community recreation center. A project like this, especially when undertaken in partnership with an organization such as the YMCA to manage operations, could provide an indoor pool and multipurpose recreation space much sooner and at a lower cost than a brand-new construction project.

Expanding programming will likewise rely on partnerships and coordination. The Town can collaborate with schools, nonprofit organizations, faith communities, and even neighboring localities to host new activities using existing parks and shared venues. Through such partnerships, Bedford could introduce youth sports leagues, fitness classes, arts workshops, senior gatherings, and other events that fill current gaps in services. This cooperative approach would enable the community to expand recreation options and enhance civic engagement,

even without an immediate investment in a dedicated town-operated recreation center.

The Town has identified capital investment needs to maintain and upgrade park facilities. Potential projects include reconstruction of Liberty Lake Park restrooms (estimated at $50,000), Liberty Lake pond dredging (estimated at $100,000), and resurfacing of Town tennis and basketball courts (estimated at $130,000). These investments help preserve Bedford's most-used recreational assets and enhance the visitor experience.*

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Expand recreation opportunities while protecting natural assets.

Strategy 1A – Upgrade and Activate Neighborhood Parks: Maintain and improve existing neighborhood parks with updated playground equipment, landscaping, and amenities. Establish regular community events such as outdoor movie nights, small concerts, or seasonal gatherings to activate these parks and encourage greater use by residents.

Strategy 1B – Invest in Trail Connectivity: Complete and extend the Town's trail network to create safe, continuous walking and biking routes that link neighborhoods, parks, schools, and downtown.

Strategy 1C – Advance Plans for a Community Center or Aquatic Facility: Explore options to establish an indoor community recreation center or public pool to serve Bedford residents. This could involve repurposing an existing building or partnering with the YMCA, Bedford County, or other organizations to share costs and management of the facility.

Strategy 1D – Expand Recreation Programming and Leagues: Partner with schools, nonprofits, and community groups to offer a broader range of recreational programs using existing parks and facilities. Develop a coordinated year-round schedule of events to engage residents of all ages and fill gaps in current programming.

Strategy 1E – Explore Recreational Access to Reservoir Property: Study the feasibility of opening portions of the town's reservoir property for low-impact public recreation while maintaining strict protections for water quality and public safety.

Strategy 1F - Downtown Pocket Parks & Plazas: Consider small pocket parks or plazas in the downtown area to enhance public space.

**Cost estimates are based on current prices as of February 2026 and are subject to change through the Town's annual CIP and budget process.*

Chapter 10: Community Identity and Partnerships

Overview 89
Public Events 89
Regional Partnerships 90
Looking Forward 93
Goals & Strategies 93

Overview

Small-town charm and a strong sense of community lie at the heart of Bedford. During the comprehensive planning process, residents consistently identified the Town's distinctive character and community identity as among its greatest assets. This chapter highlights the elements that define Bedford's identity and recommends strategies to strengthen and celebrate what makes the Town unique.

Public Events

Consistent community events play a vital role in building local pride and bringing residents together. Bedford currently hosts several beloved annual celebrations that are provided by outside entities:

- **Bedford Centerfest** – One of the region's most prominent street festivals held each fall in downtown Bedford, featuring vendors, local food, and live entertainment
- **Bedford Festival of Trees** – Hosted at the Bedford Visitor Center, featuring decorated trees and seasonal activities that celebrate the holidays and support community partners.
- **Bedford Christmas Parade** – A tradition that transforms downtown into a winter wonderland, bringing the community together to celebrate the holiday season.

These events and traditions contribute to Bedford's sense of place and help bring residents together. Some events also support local businesses and community organizations by drawing foot traffic to downtown and other destinations. Many of Bedford's signature events are organized and led by community partners, volunteers, and other organizations.
Bedford has opportunities to build on this foundation by strengthening coordination,

clarifying roles (lead organizer vs. Town support), and expanding year-round programming in partnership with local organizations and businesses.

Currently, event coordination often relies on volunteer efforts and informal arrangements. As Bedford grows, there are opportunities to provide more structured support for community events – for example, by establishing a dedicated events coordinator role or formal event committee to improve stakeholder coordination. The Town can also develop strategies to actively market Bedford's assets to visitors, leveraging what makes it unique. Bedford's historic sites, its downtown character, and its authentic small-town atmosphere are valuable draws that could be promoted more effectively to boost tourism and community pride.

Case Study: Rocky Mount's Harvester Performance Center
Other small towns in Virginia have found success in developing consistent event programming that strengthens community identity while attracting visitors. Rocky Mount, for example, has built a vibrant cultural scene around the town-supported Harvester Performance Center, which hosts regular music performances and community gatherings. This venue, as a partnership with the Town's EDA, has become a focal point for local life, demonstrating how dedicated support for events and programming can enhance civic pride, support downtown businesses, and create a distinctive identity that sets a town apart. The Harvester consistently draws notable performers and hundreds of attendees each week; an economic study estimated it generates around $4–5 million in local annual economic impact. Rocky Mount's experience shows that a proactive approach to event infrastructure and programming can pay dividends in both community vitality and economic returns.

Regional Partnerships

Bedford's location positions it within a broader regional context that shapes both its challenges and opportunities. The Town sits between two larger employment centers while serving as the governmental and commercial hub for the surrounding rural areas of Bedford County. This geographic position creates natural interdependencies with neighboring jurisdictions and regional organizations that influence everything from infrastructure capacity to economic vitality.

Existing Regional Relationships

Bedford already participates in several meaningful regional partnerships that support essential town functions. The Bedford Regional Water Authority (BRWA) is a critical partner in managing water and sewer infrastructure for both the Town and portions of Bedford County. The BRWA serves approximately 15,000 customer accounts across the town and county, maintaining roughly 431 miles of water pipes and 130 miles of sewer pipes in the system. In its 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, the Authority emphasizes the need for collaborative funding

approaches to address aging infrastructure and expand utility capacity – challenges that the Town shares and that will require coordinated solutions.

The Town also works closely with the Central Virginia Planning District Commission on regional planning initiatives, transportation projects, and securing access to state and federal funding opportunities. Such partnerships provide technical assistance and help coordinate issues that cross municipal boundaries. Bedford County itself remains a key partner on matters ranging from economic development and tourism promotion to public safety and infrastructure planning. As the county seat, the Town of Bedford has both symbolic importance and practical reasons to maintain strong working relationships with County government.

Opportunities for Commuters

An important characteristic of Bedford's population is the number of residents who commute to jobs in Roanoke and Lynchburg. These nearby cities offer concentrations of industries, medical facilities, and universities that provide higher-wage employment opportunities not readily available in Bedford or the immediate area. Nearly one-third of Bedford's working residents commute to jobs outside the local region, with about 7,400 people traveling to the Roanoke area alone for work. For many households, Bedford offers the appeal of small-town living, lower housing costs, a walkable downtown area, and a tight-knit community atmosphere, all while remaining within a reasonable commuting distance of major employers.

This commuter pattern has implications for Bedford's future. It suggests potential for marketing the Town as a residential choice for regional workers seeking quality of life. However, it also raises questions about how to capture economic activity from residents whose workdays are spent elsewhere. Understanding and strategically strengthening Bedford's role as a residential community within the larger regional economy could influence future housing development, retail strategies, and community programming.

Future Collaboration

Looking ahead, there are several areas where regional partnerships could be strengthened or expanded for mutual benefit. Water and sewer infrastructure represents perhaps the most pressing opportunity – aging pipes need replacement, and some areas lack service entirely. The scale and cost of required upgrades often exceed what individual jurisdictions can tackle alone, suggesting clear benefits from joint planning and funding approaches with Bedford County and the BRWA. By coordinating capital improvement plans and sharing resources, the Town and its partners can more effectively address regional infrastructure needs.

Tourism and downtown revitalization present another avenue for collaboration. Bedford's

historic assets and downtown character could be marketed jointly with county attractions and integrated into regional tourism initiatives. For example, the Town can more formally partner with Bedford County's tourism program (Destination Bedford) to promote major attractions like the National D-Day Memorial alongside county sites, ensuring visitors see the area as a cohesive destination. Similarly, economic development efforts might benefit from closer alignment between town and county strategies so that both entities present a unified message to prospective businesses considering the region. A coordinated approach can amplify marketing efforts and avoid duplication when attracting visitors, investors, or new residents.

There may also be opportunities for better coordination on specific programs and services. For instance, water conservation initiatives led by the BRWA could be reinforced through Town communications and educational outreach, maximizing their effectiveness. Housing assistance programs – whether offered by the county, state, or federal agencies – could be more actively publicized to town residents who might benefit from first-time homebuyer assistance or home rehabilitation funds. By working together on these types of initiatives, Bedford and its regional partners can ensure that essential resources and information reach the community and that efforts are not siloed by jurisdiction.



Looking Forward

Bedford's small-town identity and strong community character exist not in isolation but as part of a larger regional landscape. As Bedford plans for its future, the challenge and opportunity lie in preserving and strengthening what makes the Town unique while strategically engaging regional relationships and resources that can support the community. The goals and strategies that follow aim to build on both fronts: deepening the sense of place and community pride that residents cherish, while positioning Bedford to benefit from regional approaches to shared challenges and opportunities.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Strengthen Bedford's identity and regional collaboration.

Strategy 1A – Formalize and Expand Signature Community Events: Provide enhanced support for Bedford's signature events with organized volunteer coordination and consistent annual schedules. Introduce new year-round programs in partnership with local businesses and nonprofits to create additional opportunities for community gathering and downtown economic activity.

Strategy 1B – Establish Volunteer Engagement and Recognition Programs: Create a structured volunteer program to organize and support citizen participation in town projects. Implement a public recognition system to honor contributions and encourage a culture of civic engagement.

Strategy 1C – Collaborate with Regional Authorities on Shared Priorities: Continue to work closely with Bedford County, neighboring towns, and regional agencies on initiatives that cross jurisdictional lines. Continue active coordination with the BRWA on water and sewer planning and partner with the regional planning commission to pursue joint infrastructure grants that benefit Bedford.

Strategy 1D – Pursue Joint Projects and Service Sharing: Continue to identify opportunities for shared services or joint facilities with Bedford County and relevant state agencies to enhance service quality or reduce costs. Where eligible, submit joint applications for state and federal funding by pooling regional resources, thereby maximizing Bedford's access to grant opportunities.

Strategy 1E – Support Local Nonprofits and Community Groups: Continue to partner with local nonprofit organizations, schools, and civic groups through technical assistance or co-sponsored programs that benefit the community. Facilitate these groups' involvement in Town planning efforts and public outreach, ensuring broad participation and reinforcing

a collaborative approach to meeting community needs.

Strategy 1F – Gateway and Wayfinding Program: Develop a coordinated gateway strategy for primary entrances to Bedford that integrates consistent wayfinding signage, landscaping/streetscape enhancements, lighting where appropriate, and opportunities for public art or signature features that reinforce Bedford's identity. Establish gateway standards and a phased implementation plan, coordinate with VDOT where gateways are on state routes, and identify quick wins (signage/plantings) versus longer-term capital improvements.

Goal 2: Expand civic engagement and celebrate Bedford's community heritage.

Strategy 2A – "Bedford Proud" Community Engagement Campaign: Launch a branded "Bedford Proud" initiative to provide regular volunteer opportunities and neighborhood improvement events.

Strategy 2B – Develop a Bedford Historical Trail: Support the creation of a walking or driving heritage trail that connects and interprets key historic sites throughout Bedford. Install coordinated wayfinding signs and informational markers (with printed or digital guides) to enrich residents' and visitors' understanding of Bedford's history, in partnership with local historical organizations, the Bedford Museum, and property owners.

Strategy 2C – Expand Seasonal Arts and Cultural Events: Build on Bedford's event calendar by adding or enhancing seasonal festivals that showcase local arts, cuisine, music, and culture. Work with regional tourism agencies to promote these events beyond town boundaries, positioning Bedford as a cultural destination within the broader region.

Chapter 11: Land Use and Growth Management

Existing Land Use 95
Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities 97
Zoning 97
Future Land Use 99
Bridge Street Area Revitalization Plan 101
Downtown Action Plan 101
Goals & Strategies 103

Existing Land Use

Bedford's existing land use pattern reflects its history as a long-established town. The community is anchored by a traditional downtown core surrounded by older residential neighborhoods laid out in a grid pattern from historic development companies, while newer development has clustered along key highway corridors, such as the Route 460 bypass built in the 1960s. Commercial land use area increased with the first phase of the negotiated boundary adjustment, while more residential land use area was integrated with the second phase of the boundary adjustment.

Residential areas occupy a significant portion of the town's land area. Historic in-town neighborhoods near downtown feature smaller lots and grid streets, whereas the outskirts include more suburban-style subdivisions. Single-family homes are the primary land use, with a few pockets of townhouses and several apartment complexes scattered throughout. There are two neighborhoods populated solely with duplex units. Preserving the town's low-density, small-town residential character is a high priority for residents; community input shows strong support for protecting Bedford's stable neighborhoods and historic charm, even as growth occurs.

Commercial uses in Bedford are concentrated in two settings. Downtown serves as the historic business district, featuring local shops, restaurants, offices, and civic buildings along Main Street, Bridge Street, and adjacent blocks. This walkable downtown is the heart of the community and an economic asset; however, many upper-floor spaces and some storefronts

remain vacant or underutilized. Revitalizing these empty downtown buildings for new housing or businesses is a significant opportunity identified by the community.

Outside of downtown, highway commercial corridors along U.S. Route 460 and Route 221 host larger-scale, automobile-oriented development. Shopping centers, gas stations, chain restaurants, and big-box retailers have located along these routes to capture regional traffic. While convenient, this pattern can pull retail activity away from downtown. Notably, "lack of shopping and services" was cited as a significant weakness in public input.

There are several parks and public open spaces managed by the Town. Located throughout town, they serve all citizens with the largest being a regional park. Liberty Lake Park draws usage from Bedford County Parks and Recreation for their recreation programming. The park has multiple activities and is open for public rental like the other parks. There is one conservation easement in town that is 44.92 acres around a tributary of the Little Otter Creek near Bedford Memorial Hospital.

Industrial land uses are present but limited. Bedford's main industrial area is near Independence Boulevard and Orange Street, which includes manufacturing and distribution businesses. There are also light industrial and utility uses along parts of Railroad Avenue. Many structures are remnants from the closure of the once-largest employer, Rubatex, which closed in 2010. Stakeholders have emphasized the importance of retaining and, if necessary, expanding these industrial zones to attract jobs and investment. The Town has a Virginia Enterprise Zone designation over most of the land within these industrial areas to encourage redevelopment.

There is one business park in the town. The Bedford Center for Business is owned by the Bedford County EDA and was once jointly owned by the Bedford Joint Economic Development Authority that was dissolved with the boundary agreement. There is some limited development potential in that park.

Bedford's role as the county seat means that institutional and civic uses also occupy a significant amount of land. Government offices, the Bedford County Courthouse, public schools, Bedford's Central Library, and churches are woven into the downtown and neighborhoods. Many are landmarks in repurposed historic buildings: for example, the former Bedford train station now houses a restaurant, and a landmark church has been transformed into the Bower Center for the Arts. Centra Bedford Memorial Hospital, located on Oakwood Street, is another major institutional land use and employer in the area. Overall, the mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and civic land uses is typical for a town of Bedford's size, offering a balance of functions within close proximity.

Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities

The current land use pattern presents both opportunities and challenges for Bedford's future. Bedford has a finite supply of developable land within its boundaries, which creates an incentive to focus on infill development and redevelopment over sprawl. Community members expressed a clear desire to see underutilized properties revitalized, allowing Bedford to "grow inward" and breathe new life into its core. For example, many downtown buildings have empty upper floors that could be converted into apartments or offices. Reusing vacant structures not only adds housing and business space but also preserves historic architecture and reinforces the character of downtown.

Several significant housing developments are in the pipeline on previously undeveloped land at the town's edge. Approximately 785 new housing units have been approved or are currently under construction, representing a significant expansion of Bedford's housing stock. These developments, mainly on the east and south sides of town, will convert open land into new neighborhoods and commercial areas. They reflect confidence in Bedford's growth, but also underscore the importance of growth management. The town's challenge is to accommodate new development while preserving the charm, open spaces, and scenic beauty that define the town.

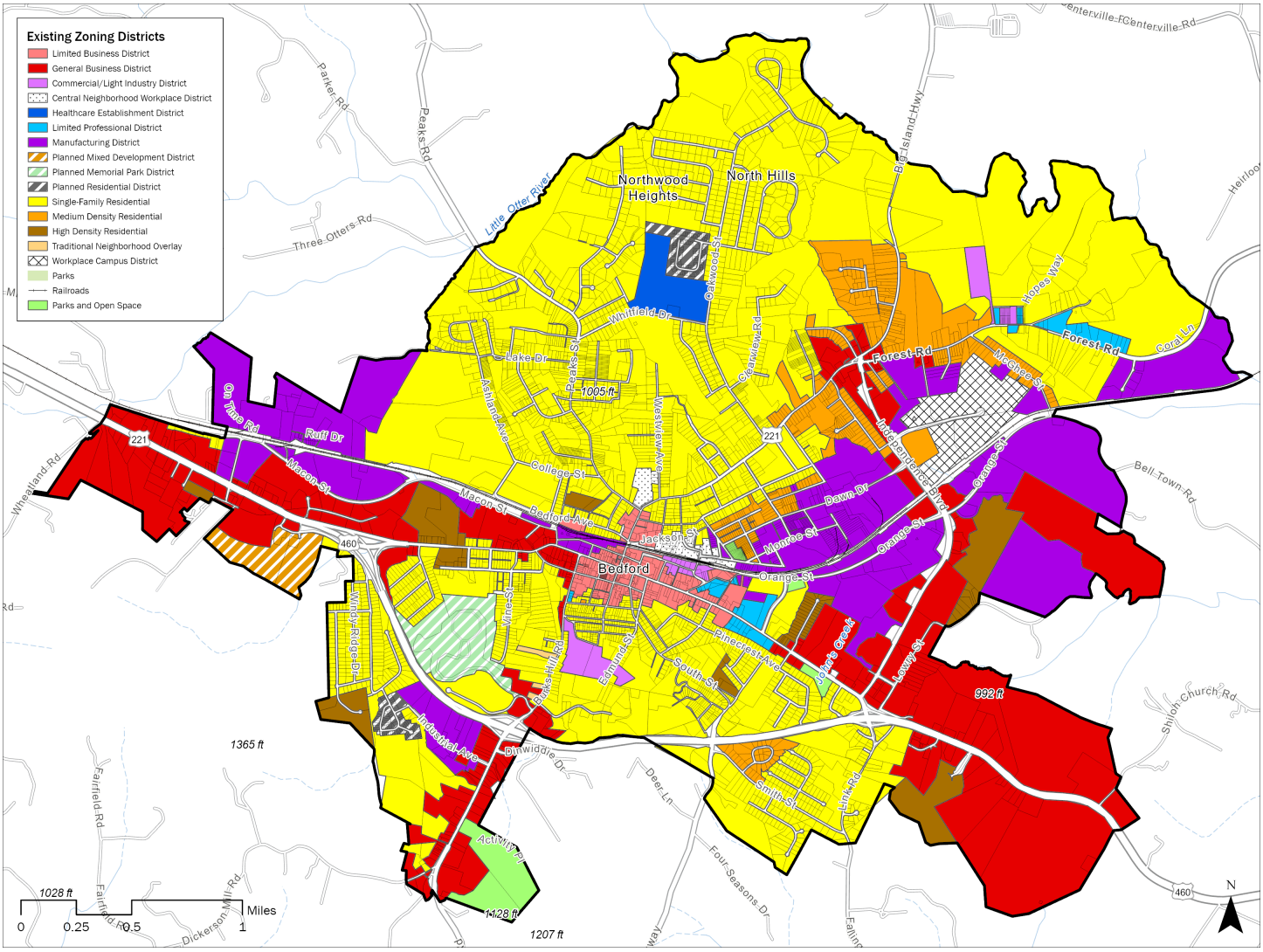
Natural features also influence land use. Bedford lies at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, giving the town picturesque vistas but also steep slopes and floodplain areas that constrain building in certain locations. The northern parts of town feature hills and hollows with scenic views of the Peaks of Otter, while several small creeks create low-lying, flood-prone corridors. These environmental constraints effectively act as green buffers through town. They limit development in some areas, but also present opportunities for trail corridors, parks, and stormwater management. Protecting these natural corridors and Bedford's rural environs on the edges is essential to residents.

Zoning

Bedford's zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementing the land use vision. The Town's zoning map divides the jurisdiction into a range of districts that reflect existing development patterns and future intents. These include residential districts, business districts for commercial uses, and industrial districts reserved for manufacturing, warehousing, and industrial parks. In addition, Bedford has special or overlay districts for unique areas. As a result of Bedford's 2013 reversion from city to town status and the Phase II of that boundary adjustment in 2023, the Town's land area expanded to about 11 square miles, bringing in land that was previously under county zoning. Those areas (such as parcels along Route 460 and 221) have since been assigned Town zoning classifications compatible with their uses. The distribution of zoning districts is illustrated in Map 17, which shows a patchwork of

predominantly low-density residential zones interspersed with commercial corridors and pockets of industrial land.

The Existing Zoning Districts map provides a snapshot of Bedford's regulatory land use pattern. Most of the town is zoned for residential use. Commercial zoning is concentrated in and around downtown as well as along U.S. 460/221, aligning with the corridors of current retail development. Industrial-zoned lands are relatively limited, mainly confined to the Independence Boulevard area and a few sites near the railroad. Notably, much of the land added through the 2023 boundary adjustment was already developed and has been zoned accordingly upon incorporation.

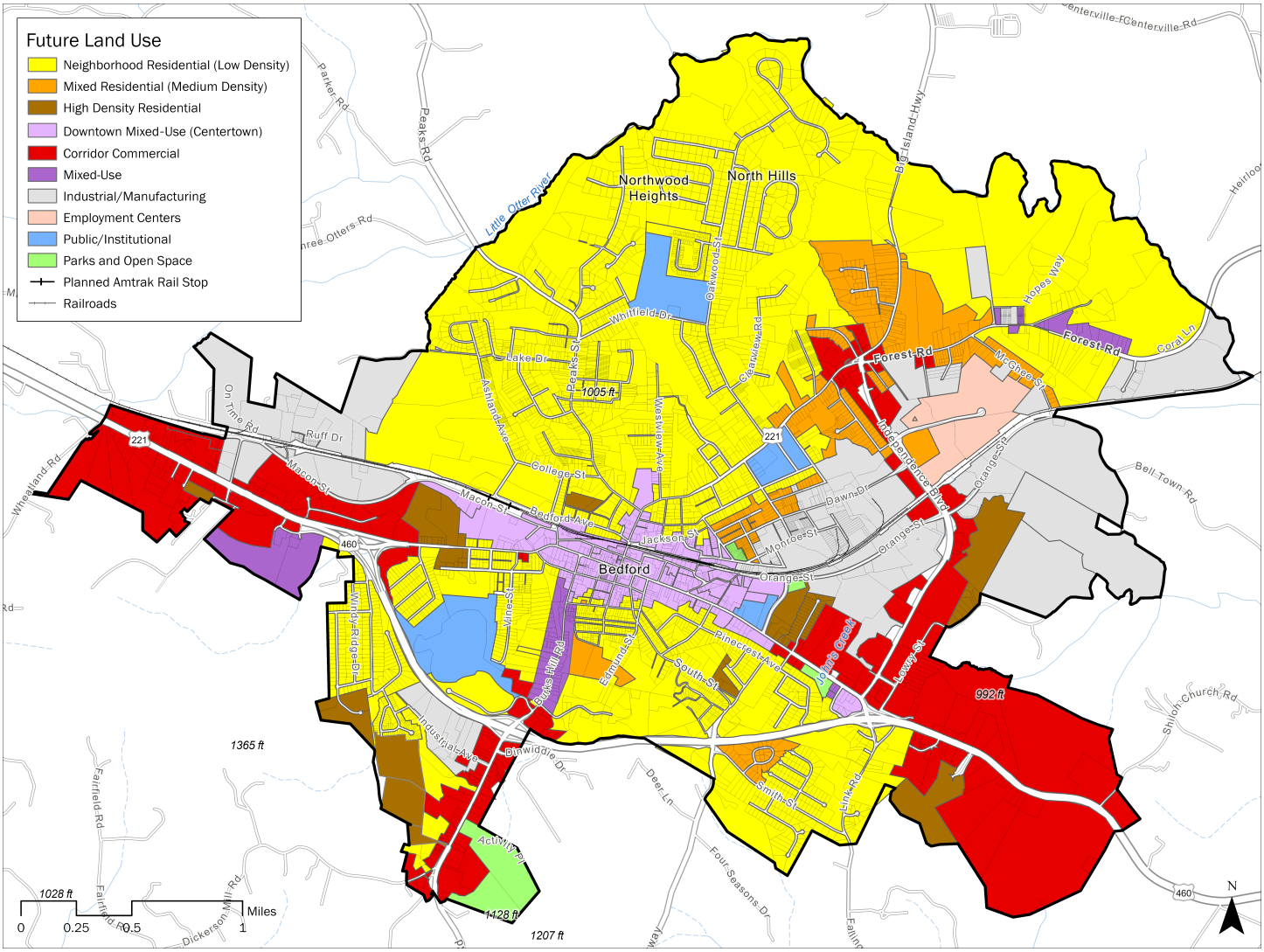


Map 19: Existing Zoning Districts

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use map (below) provides a blueprint for how land uses are expected to evolve to meet community needs by 2045. It delineates broad land use categories for every parcel in town. Note that the Future Land Use map is *not* a zoning map, but it guides zoning decisions and development approvals to achieve the Town's long-range vision. In general, the plan calls for gradual, managed growth that reinforces Bedford's traditional development pattern and avoids unchecked sprawl. Community input has stressed preservation of small-town character and scenic beauty as paramount, so the Future Land Use Plan concentrates growth in areas with existing infrastructure and seeks to protect sensitive environmental and rural edge areas.

The Future Land Use map envisions Bedford's core and corridors as the primary focus for development, while maintaining green buffers around the town. Downtown is designated as a Mixed-Use Center, encouraging a blend of commercial, civic, and residential uses to revitalize vacant spaces and keep the heart of Bedford active. The main arteries are planned as Commercial or Mixed-Use Corridors where new businesses, services, and higher-



Map 20: Future Land Use

Category	General Character & Uses	Total Acreage	Percentage of Future Land Use
Neighborhood Residential (Low Density)	Predominantly single-family homes in established neighborhoods; low-density suburban or small-town residential setting. Minimal infill to preserve character.	3,223	49.72%
Mixed Residential (Medium Density)	Blend of housing types (townhouses, duplexes, small apartments) at moderate density. Provides diverse housing options while respecting neighborhood scale.	323	4.98%
High Density Residential	Multifamily housing such as apartments or condos in walkable, service-rich areas; compact and higher density residential.	244	3.77%
Downtown Mixed-Use (Centertown)	Historic town center with mix of commercial, residential (often above shops), offices, and civic uses. Walkable, traditional Main Street environment.	226	3.49%
Corridor Commercial	Major road corridors for retail, services, and larger commercial uses. Auto-oriented but evolving to include clustered mixed-use nodes and improved pedestrian infrastructure.	1,055	16.28%
Mixed-Use	Integrates residential, commercial, and/or office uses within a single development or area; walkable, flexible, and compact.	125	1.93%
Industrial/Manufacturing	Areas for light industrial, manufacturing, warehouses, and related employment uses. Typically segregated from residential areas, with necessary utilities and transport access.	955	14.73%
Employment Centers	Business parks, office campuses, R&D, and tech-oriented flex spaces compatible with mixed-use areas.	92	1.43%
Public/Institutional	Major public and institutional facilities (schools, government offices, hospital, civic centers, etc.). Community-serving uses, often on sizable campuses or landmark buildings.	170	2.62%
Parks & Open Space	Parks, recreation areas, natural open spaces, and greenways. Preserved lands for leisure, scenery, or environmental protection (floodplains, steep slopes, etc.).	68	1.05%

Figure 10: Future Land Use Categories & Acreage

density housing can be located in a coordinated manner. Recent investments, such as the announcement of a new Hampton Inn & Suites near the D-Day Memorial, signal the potential for these areas to grow into economic hubs. The Future Land Use map supports such growth but pairs it with design and access management strategies to prevent strip development and traffic congestion. For example, along the 460 East corridor, the Town will encourage clustered commercial nodes and interconnected development rather than continuous driveway sprawl. Outside the key corridors, Bedford's established residential neighborhoods are generally planned to remain Low to Medium Density Residential, preserving their current character. Some infill development is anticipated on vacant lots or by sensitively increasing density. Still, the scale will be kept consistent with the surroundings.

Institutional land uses are shown for continued civic use, with an eye toward possible expansion or reuse. The plan also highlights Parks and Open Spaces, including existing parks such as Liberty Lake Park, as well as potential new greenways or protected viewshed areas. One of the priorities is to protect the scenic backdrop of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The future land use map identifies Conservation/Open Space designations along the town's northern edge and creek floodplains, signaling that these areas should remain undeveloped primarily to serve as natural buffers. Additionally, since Bedford's boundary adjustments have brought formerly rural lands into town, the plan pays special attention to boundary areas, recommending cooperation with Bedford County to manage growth just outside town limits.

Bridge Street Area Revitalization Plan

One of Bedford's signature redevelopment efforts is the Bridge Street Area Revitalization Plan, or "School-to-School" Plan, an initiative focused on revitalizing the broader Bridge Street corridor, extending from the area of the historic school buildings through downtown and along South Bridge Street toward the Susie G. Gibson campus area. The project's name comes from the presence of former school facilities that help anchor this vision, but the plan is intended to guide improvements across the full corridor, not just at those individual sites. The vision of the School-to-School Plan is to transform this underused corridor into a vibrant mixed-use area that benefits the entire community. Key elements proposed include placemaking features such as public art, seating, streetscape enhancements, and façade and landscape improvements to strengthen identity and encourage walking, lingering, and small business vitality, as well as new residential units, community and recreation spaces, cultural or educational facilities, and hospitality uses. The concept envisions attractive downtown apartments for young professionals or retirees, lodging options to support tourism, recreation amenities, and opportunities for small business or entrepreneurial activity. By creatively adapting the former school buildings and coordinating improvements throughout the corridor, Bedford aims to preserve these landmarks while anchoring broader revitalization, connectivity, and investment along the Bridge Street area.

Downtown Action Plan

In 2025, The Town undertook work to complete a comprehensive 5-Year Strategic Action Plan designed to strengthen and revitalize downtown as the economic and cultural heart of the community. The strategic plan, provides implementable, market-driven strategies across four key focus areas: Policy & Administration, Design, Tourism & Promotion, and Economic Vitality. Rather than creating another long-term vision document, this action-oriented plan focuses on practical projects and initiatives that can be implemented within a five-year timeframe to create immediate visible impacts.



Figure 11: Bridge Street Area Revitalization Plan (2018).

Goals & Strategies

1. Preserve Bedford's Small-Town Character While Accommodating Strategic Growth.

Strategy 1A - Prioritize Infill and Redevelopment: Actively encourage development on vacant or underutilized parcels within the town. The Town should inventory empty lots, underused buildings, and brownfield sites, and work with owners or developers to facilitate their reuse. This may involve flexible zoning, fast-track permitting for infill projects, or incentives such as tax abatements for rehabilitating long-vacant structures. Success will be measured by a decrease in downtown and corridor vacancy rates, as well as the creation of new housing and businesses on previously idle sites.

Strategy 1B - Protect Scenic Resources and Edges: Partner with Bedford County and land conservation organizations to preserve critical open spaces around Bedford's perimeter. This strategy includes promoting conservation easements for farmlands and forested hills that form the town's picturesque backdrop, as well as maintaining vegetative buffers along the town's entrances. The Town should identify gateway viewsheds and work to preserve their aesthetic integrity through tools such as overlay districts or land acquisition for parks and open spaces.

Strategy 1C - Strengthen Land Use Policy Coordination: Continue close collaboration with Bedford County on planning and growth management issues. Given the town's reversion arrangement and shared interests with the County, establish a regular Town-County planning forum to discuss development proposals near the town limits and infrastructure needs in boundary-adjusted areas. The Town should also participate in regional efforts that address land use, such as regional housing initiatives or farmland preservation, so that Bedford's growth aligns with broader goals. A coordinated approach will help prevent abrupt changes at the town boundary and leverage regional resources for managing growth.

Strategy 1D - Update Zoning and Design Guidelines: Modernize Bedford's zoning ordinance to align with comprehensive plan objectives. This includes creating provisions for mixed-use development in suitable locations and allowing a broader range of housing types to meet community needs. Additionally, develop or refine design guidelines for new construction, especially in historic downtown and along gateway corridors, so that architecture and site design contribute to Bedford's small-town charm.

Strategy 1E - Focus Growth in Master-Planned Areas: Direct new large-scale development to areas covered by small-area plans, such as the School-to-School corridor, Burks Hill, and the East 460 Corridor. Use these master plans as a blueprint when reviewing development proposals.

2. Revitalize Underutilized Areas through Infill, Mixed-Use, and Adaptive Reuse.

Strategy 2A - Implement Downtown Revitalization Initiatives: Launch a coordinated program to revitalize downtown as a mixed-use, vibrant district. Key actions include establishing a formal Main Street organization beyond the current Main Street status or a downtown coordinator role, expanding events and marketing to attract visitors to the downtown area, and continuing to offer incentives for downtown building rehabilitation. The Town should consider expanding its façade improvement grant program and offering small, low-interest loans or rent subsidies to help fill vacant storefronts with local businesses. By 2030, the goal is to significantly reduce the commercial vacancy rate in downtown and increase the number of upper-floor residential units downtown.

Strategy 2B - Encourage Mixed-Use Development in Key Corridors: Proactively recruit and support mixed-use projects in areas like Burks Hill and the Eastside corridor, where residential and commercial uses can be integrated. For instance, if a developer is interested in the Burks Hill area, the Town could encourage a site design that incorporates both commercial and residential components, consistent with the Burks Hill Master Plan. This may involve offering density bonuses or flexible parking requirements for mixed-use designs. On the Route 460 West corridor, as the Harmony Town Center development takes shape, ensure the plan includes walkable connections between retail and the new homes. Consider utilizing zoning tools such as mixed-use districts to permit the formal integration of housing and businesses.

Strategy 2C - Expand Use of Overlay Districts: Use overlay zoning to stimulate redevelopment of aging commercial strips and industrial sites by establishing corridor-specific standards layered on existing zoning. For example, a Route 460 Corridor Overlay could require enhanced landscaping, signage, and architectural upgrades for refurbishing older strip centers.

Strategy 2D - Expand Use of Incentives: Use incentive programs to encourage reinvestment in targeted areas by lowering costs and improving project feasibility. For example, the Town could offer a partial tax abatement on the value of improvements for a set period and extend Enterprise Zone or create Tourism Zone designations along Burks Hill or Longwood Avenue, including support such as providing an unused public building or low-cost leased space to a nonprofit or the chamber of commerce to operate a facility.

Chapter 12: Implementation

Overview 105
Funding 105
Strategies Matrix 106

Overview

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance for growth and development decisions. Planning is an ongoing process. Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan should not be seen as the end of this process. Instead, the town should continuously work to align goals, policies, ordinances, processes and programs with the vision and aspirations of the plan.

This chapter summarizes the goals and strategies expressed throughout the plan in chapter or topic area. As departments throughout the county undertake various projects, policies and ordinances within their own spheres of influence, this plan should be used to provide direction and guidance where appropriate.

Implementation occurs through a range of tools that dictate the town's short- and long-term policies, procedures, and expenditures, including:

- Zoning ordinance
- Economic development strategic plan
- Individual departmental plans and strategies
- Capital Improvement Program and Budget Process
- Revitalization, infill and economic development strategies and plans
- Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and County Administration Policies
- Partnerships among civic organizations, private entities, business councils, special interest groups, citizens and the county government.

Funding

Funding and capital investments are critical components in the implementation of comprehensive plans in Virginia. Comprehensive plans typically outline a long-term vision for a locality's growth and development, including infrastructure improvements, public facilities,

and community services. To realize these goals, local governments must secure adequate funding through various means, such as municipal bonds, state and federal grants, and public-private partnerships. To this end, capital improvement plans (CIPs) are often developed in tandem with comprehensive plans, serving as detailed financial blueprints that prioritize and schedule capital projects over a multi-year period. Effective CIP management ensures that resources are allocated efficiently, addressing immediate needs while aligning with the broader strategic objectives of the comprehensive plan. Such planning not only supports sustainable growth but also enhances the quality of life for residents by ensuring that essential public services and infrastructure are available and well-maintained.

Strategies Matrix

The following matrix of strategies outlines specific actions and strategies to achieve this plan's goals. This matrix provides a detailed roadmap for implementation, including:

- **Strategy Number** - corresponding to each chapter or topic area and goal. Strategies are not listed in order of priority
- **Strategy** - detailing individual implementation actions. Some strategies may be abridged from what is included within each chapter
- **Lead** - noting what town department or other agency should assume primary authority for the strategy's execution
- **Support** - describing department or agencies that may provide additional support of information necessary to the strategy
- **Term** - showing the general timeline for implementation. Short-term = approximately 1-2 years, Medium-term = approximately 3-7 years, Long-term = approximately 7+ years
- **Cost** - describing the general expense to implement each strategy. $ = 0-100,000; $$ = 100,000 - 1,000,000; $$$ = 1,000,000 - 5,000,000; $$$$ = 5,000,000+
- **Resources** - detailing what information, interim steps, or funding sources might play a role in each strategy

#	Strategy	Lead	Support	Term	Cost	Resources
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Goal 1: Strengthen and diversify Bedford's economy while revitalizing downtown as the heart of the community						
1A	Implement a coordinated downtown revitalization program focused on filling vacant storefronts, improving façades, and marketing downtown to businesses and visitors.	Economic Development Authority / Main Street Organization	Economic Development Staff / Main Street Coordinator	Short	$$$	Design guidelines; local or grant funding
1B	Enhance incentive programs that encourage business growth and entrepreneurship in Bedford.	Economic Development Authority	Economic Development Staff	Medium	$$	Economic and business data; incentive structure or funding
1C	Develop a new marketing and branding campaign to promote Bedford's advantages to attract new employers and investors.	Economic Development Authority	Economic Development Staff	Medium	$$	Design/branding consultant; production structure and materials
Goal 2: Attract and retain a high-skill workforce to support economic growth						
2A	Strengthen collaboration with Bedford County, regional economic development agencies, and nearby cities to pursue shared growth opportunities.	Economic Development Authority	Economic Development Staff	Medium	$	Staff time; regular coordination
2B	Collaborate with educational institutions and employers to grow local talent.	Economic Development Authority	Economic Development Staff	Medium	$	Coordination with employers of applicable skills
HOUSING						
Goal 1: Expand diverse and affordable housing options to meet the community's needs						
1A	Adjust policies and work with developers to produce a broader mix of housing.	Planning Staff	Planning Commission	Long	$	Staff time; deveoper outreach
1B	Work proactively with nonprofit housing organizations, the Bedford Redevelopment & Housing Authority, and private developers to create more affordable housing opportunities.	Planning Staff	Redevelopment and Housing Authority	Long	$$	Staff coordination; potential incentives
1C	Update zoning and land-use regulations to make it easier to develop housing in appropriate locations, particularly through infill and mixed-use projects.	Planning Staff	Planning Commission	Short	$	Peer community research; PC coordination
Goal 2: Enhance housing quality and accessibility for all, including low-income and senior residents						
2A	Establish or expand initiatives to rehab aging homes and apartments, especially those that provide affordable shelter but are in poor condition.	Redevelopment and Housing Authority	Planning Staff	Long	$$	Program structure; community organization partnerships; grants or other funding
2B	Partner with local banks, realtors, and nonprofits to host homebuyer education workshops and connect renters with first-time homebuyer programs and encourage commuting workers to live in Bedford.	Redevelopment and Housing Authority	Planning Staff	Medium	$	Program curriculum; program materials

#	Strategy	Lead	Support	Term	Cost	Resources
2C	When pursuing new affordable housing, prioritize approaches that fit Bedford's small-town scale and character.	Redevelopment and Housing Authority	Planning Staff	Long	$	Staff / commission coordination
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Goal 1: Maintain high-quality services and expand amenities for all residents						
1A	Work with volunteer fire/EMS departments to develop a strategic staffing plan and plan for new or expanded facilities.	Fire and EMS	Town Administration	Long	$$$$	Emergency facilities consultant; station site and/or design
1B	Partner with nonprofits, the YMCA, churches, and the school system to expand after-school programs, summer camps, and seniors' centers.	Town Administration	Town Council	Medium	$$	Program coordination; facility space
1C	Support local veterans' groups by providing meeting space or co-hosting community events.	Town Administration	Town Council	Short	$	Facility space; scheduling coordination
Goal 2: Strengthen Bedford's healthcare system and support the recruitment and retention of its healthcare workforce						
2A	Partner with Centra Bedford Memorial Hospital to develop a healthcare workforce recruitment initiative.	Economic Development Authority	Town Administration	Medium	$	Examples of similar recruitment programs in other communities
2B	Promote Bedford's quality of life to attract doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers.	Economic Development Authority	Town Administration	Short	$	Social media or other outreach startegies; promotional materials
2C	Support the creation of housing incentives specifically for healthcare professionals relocating to Bedford.	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Long	$$	Incentive structure and funding
2D	Explore partnerships to offer continuing education, training, and career development for healthcare workers at local facilities.	Economic Development Authority	Town Administration	Long	$	Community partners; research on skills training
UTILITIES						
Goal 1: Upgrade and expand infrastructure to support growth sustainably						
1A	Continue coordinated strategic planning with BRWA to align anticipated future growth areas to meet water and sewer availability.	Town Administration	BRWA	Long	$$$$	Assessment of existing facilities; engineering design; construction grants or funding
1B	Conduct a community survey and gather input from potential natural gas users to assess the feasibility of extending natural gas service to Bedford.	Economic Development Authority	Town Administration	Medium	$	Study consultant; planning funds; implementation funding
1C	Continue to leverage the Town's electric utility to support economic development through competitive rates, reliable service, and strategic extensions.	Economic Development Authority	Town Administration	Long	$$	Feasibility analysis and program structure

#	Strategy	Lead	Support	Term	Cost	Resources
1D	Incorporate stormwater best practices into roadway and capital projects, such as green infrastructure and updated drainage design, to reduce runoff and improve water quality.	Public Works	Planning Staff	Long	$$$	Facility design guidelines; design consulting for individual projects
Goal 2: Plan for sustainable energy, water, and broadband future needs						
2A	Develop a Town renewable energy framework that identifies practical projects for municipal facilities and clarifies how the Town can support voluntary residential and business adoption.	Town Administration	CVPDC	Medium	$	PDC participation and experience
2B	Encourage broadband providers to close remaining service gaps and ensure new development includes modern broadband infrastructure from the outset.	Town Administration		Medium	$$	Partnerships with broadband providers
2C	Participate in BRWA's long-range planning to confirm water supply redundancy and identify needed distribution, storage, and sewer capacity upgrades tied to growth.	Town Administration	BRWA	Long	$$$$	Assessment of existing facilities; engineering design; construction grants or funding
TRANSPORTATION						
Goal 1: Improve mobility, walkability, and regional connections						
1A	Close gaps in the sidewalk network, prioritizing routes to schools, parks, shopping, and transit stops.	Planning Staff / Planning Commission	Public Works	Long	$$$	GAP technical assistance; SMARTSCALE funding
1B	Install or upgrade marked crosswalks and pedestrian signals at key intersections.	Planning Staff / Planning Commission	Public Works	Medium	$$$	GAP technical assistance; SMARTSCALE funding
1C	Develop a townwide bike/pedestrian plan per the 2019 Bike/Ped Plan.	Planning Staff / Planning Commission	Consultant / CVPDC	Medium	$$	Consulting services; grant or local funding
1D	Extend existing trails (like The Loop) and add bicycle lanes or shared-use paths on low-traffic streets.	Planning Staff	Consultant / CVPDC	Long	$$	Community partners; plan consulting; right-of-way easements
1E	Improve parking signage around Downtown.	Town Administration	Planning Staff	Short	$	Sign strategy/design; grant or local funding
1F	In partnership with VDOT and the CVTPO, study narrow streets and intersections for safety upgrades.	Planning Staff	Consultant / CVPDC	Medium	$	GAP technical assistance
1G	Coordinate with Amtrak planners to ensure the future station has necessary amenities.	Planning Staff	Consultant / CVPDC	Short	$	Coordination with rail operator
1H	Secure long-term funding to maintain or expand Otter Bus public transit.	Town Administration	CVPDC	Short	$$$	PDC study, grant funding
1I	Audit Otter Bus stops and sidewalks for ADA compliance.	Planning Staff	Consultant / CVPDC	Short	$	PDC study

#	Strategy	Lead	Support	Term	Cost	Resources
Goal 2: Maintain and enhance Bedford's roadway network for safety, accessibility, and efficiency						
2A	Prioritize regular maintenance and resurfacing of local streets.	Public Works	Town Administration	Medium	$$	Funding coordination with VDOT; assessment of existing conditions
2B	Identify and upgrade key intersections with new improvements for safety and traffic flow.	Planning Staff	Consultant / CVPDC	Long	$$$	GAP technical assistance
2C	Implement a Complete Streets policy, ensuring new road projects accommodate all road users.	Planning Staff / Planning Commission	Consultant / CVPDC	Short	$	Peer communtiy research; design guidelines
2D	Coordinate with VDOT and the CVTPO to advocate for regional roadway improvements.	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Short	$	Staff coordination
PARKS AND RECREATION						
Goal 1: Expand recreation opportunities while protecting natural assets						
1A	Upgrade and support neighborhood parks with maintenance and minor improvements.	Public Works	Town Administration	Short	$$	Coordination with County; grant or local funding
1B	Invest in connecting trails – for example, extend The Loop or add a riverside path – to popular areas.	Planning Staff	Public Works	Long	$$$	Community partners; plan consulting; right-of-way easements
1C	Advance plans for a community center or pool.	Town Administration	Public Works	Long	$$$$	Facility study; grant funding or other financing
1D	Develop recreational leagues and classes (sports, arts, fitness) by partnering with community organizations.	Town Administration	Public Works	Short	$	Community partners; program/staff coordination
1E	Explore recreational access to reservoir property	Public Works	Town Administration	Medium	$$	Property ownership/ use agreement; access improvements funding
1F	Consider small pocket parks or plazas in the downtown area to enhance public space.	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Medium	$$	Property ownership or use agreement; improvements funding
COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND PARTNERSHIPS						
Goal 1: Strengthen Bedford's identity and regional collaboration						
1A	Formalize and expand signature community events.	Tourism		Short	$	Community partners; event programing
1B	Establish volunteer engagement and recognition programs.	Town Administration	Town Council	Short	$	Program coordination and promotion
1C	Collaborate with regional authorities on shared priorities.	Town Administration	Town Council	Medium	$	Regular staff coordination
1D	Pursue joint projects and service sharing.	Town Administration	Town Council	Long	$	Regular staff coordination
1E	Support local nonprofit organizations through town assistance or joint programming.	Town Administration		Medium	$$	Community partners;staff coordination

#	Strategy	Lead	Support	Term	Cost	Resources
1F	Develop coordinated gateway and wayfinding signage programs.	Town Administration	Town Council	Long	$$$	Staff time, professional design and planning, capital funding
Goal 2: Expand civic engagement and celebrate Bedford's community heritage						
2A	Launch a "Bedford Proud" citizen engagement campaign, including volunteer days, mural projects, and cleanups.	Tourism		Short	$$	Community partners; programing
2B	Support the creation of a Bedford Historical Trail highlighting key sites and stories.	Tourism		Long	$$	Partner coordination; web or print promotion
2C	Expand seasonal events celebrating local arts, food, and music to foster community pride and regional tourism	Tourism		Medium	$$	Staff time; sponsorships
LAND USE						
Goal 1: Preserve Bedford's Small-Town Character While Accommodating Strategic Growth						
1A	Actively encourage development on vacant or underutilized parcels within the town before considering boundary expansions.	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Medium	$	Developer outreach; staff coordination
1B	Partner with Bedford County and land conservation organizations to preserve critical open spaces around Bedford's perimeter.	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Long	$	Staff coordination
1C	Continue close collaboration with Bedford County on planning and growth management issues.	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Medium	$	Staff coordination
1D	Continually review Bedford's zoning ordinance for potential revisions to align with comprehensive plan objectives.	Planning Staff	Planning Commission	Medium	$	Staff time; planning commission coordination
1E	Direct new large-scale development to areas covered by small-area plans	Planning Staff	Town Administration	Long	$	Staff coordination
Goal 2: Revitalize Underutilized Areas through Infill, Mixed-Use, and Adaptive Reuse						
2A	Launch a coordinated program to revitalize Downtown as a mixed-use, vibrant district.	Town Administration	Economic Development Authority	Long	$$$	Business coordination; investor outreach; local or grant funding
2B	Proactively recruit and support mixed-use projects in areas where residential and commercial uses can be integrated.	Town Administration	Economic Development Authority	Medium	$	Developer outreach; potential incentives
2C	Use overlay zoning to promote the redevelopment of aging commercial strips and industrial sites.	Planning Staff	Planning Commission	Medium	$	Planning study; staff time
2D	Create or expand incentive programs to stimulate desired growth and redevelopment.	Town Administration	Economic Development Authority	Medium	$$	Incentive program regulations; local or grant funding

Appendix: Public Engagement Report

This appendix provides a summary of how the Town of Bedford gathered community input during preparation of the comprehensive plan. It highlights the outreach activities documented in the plan, incorporates findings from the stakeholder meeting summary and community survey overview, summarizes the number of responses received where counts are available, and includes the full set of non-empty short-answer survey responses grouped by question.

Engagement Activities

Mid-2024 — Project kickoff and visioning. Town staff and the Planning Commission launched the plan update under the name "Our Goal – Bedford 2045."

Fall 2024 — Community visioning at Centerfest. Residents were invited to share ideas about Bedford's future and the community vision for 2045.

September 2024 — Town-wide comprehensive plan survey. The survey gathered input from residents, business owners, and property owners on Bedford's strengths, weaknesses, and priorities.

February 2025 — Stakeholder meetings. Focused discussions were held with representatives from housing, public facilities, economic development, utilities and environment, and health and community organizations.

May–July 2025 — Planning Commission work sessions. Input from earlier outreach helped shape draft goals, strategies, and the future land use framework.

August 27, 2025 — Public meeting on the draft plan. Residents reviewed draft goals, land use maps, and suggested initiatives and provided comments.

Summer–Fall 2025 — Online review of draft materials. Draft plan materials were made available online for broader public review and comment.

Winter 2025–Spring 2026 — Public hearings and adoption. The Planning Commission and Town Council considered the plan as part of the formal adoption process.

Participation Snapshot

Engagement activity	Participation
Town-wide survey	313 total respondents
Open-ended responses	992 total written responses
Stakeholder meetings	5 discussion groups
Website comments	6 online submissions

What We Heard

Across the survey, stakeholder meetings, and public comments, several themes appeared repeatedly:

  - Residents value Bedford's small-town character, friendliness, safety, and historic identity.
  - Downtown revitalization remains a major priority, including interest in more businesses, restaurants, shopping, and activity in vacant buildings and storefronts.
  - Many comments call for a broader range of housing options, including starter homes, senior housing, affordable housing, and additional rental choices.
  - Transportation and mobility emerged as recurring concerns, including walkability, parking, regional transit access, public transportation, and stronger connections between destinations.
  - Community members expressed interest in stronger recreation and community amenities, including trails, parks, youth spaces, senior services, and gathering places.
  - There is broad support for growth and investment, but with an emphasis on preserving Bedford's character and strengthening quality of life.
- Survey participants identified Bedford's overall image and identity as its greatest strength, while retail/commercial development and industrial development were among the most frequently cited weaknesses.
- Stakeholders consistently connected growth with the need for coordinated infrastructure, utility capacity, parking, transportation, and public facility investment.
- Input from both the survey and stakeholder conversations emphasized retaining and attracting residents by supporting local jobs, business growth, youth and senior services, and a range of housing choices.

Stakeholder Meeting Summary

In February 2025, the Town held five focused stakeholder discussions on housing, public facilities, economic development, utilities and environment, and health and community needs. The conversations added topic-specific detail to the broader survey themes and reinforced the need to balance growth, affordability, accessibility, and revitalization with preservation of Bedford's small-town character.

Housing

- Local realtors and developers emphasized the need for more affordable housing options, including one-level homes, starter homes for first-time buyers, rental units, Section 8 housing, and housing suited to retirees, commuters, remote workers, and low-income households.
- Participants noted that many Bedford buyers need homes in roughly the $250,000 to $325,000 range to afford housing comfortably. They also identified challenges with property acquisition, vacancies, and Centertown buildings held by owners without realistic plans to use, sell, or redevelop them.

- Housing stakeholders also highlighted Bedford's small, safe, friendly atmosphere; The Loop and other trail investments; opportunities for more events, child and elder care, retail, and Main Street improvements; potential reuse of public sites for community facilities; and the positive potential of future rail service.

Public Facilities

- Public facilities stakeholders discussed the Bedford library branch, fire and rescue services, and the relationship between facilities, access, and community needs. The town library building was described as large enough, but parking was identified as a limitation.
- Participants noted that transportation can limit youth access to enrichment opportunities, while seniors appear to use facilities more frequently. The library also provides important small-business services, including copying, faxing, and meeting rooms.
- Fire and rescue services rely heavily on volunteers, and recruitment has become increasingly difficult. Stakeholders noted that Bedford's fire station is among the busiest in the county but has limited space, including limited capacity to house interns. They also discussed the need for strategic planning, career fire staffing in parts of the county, stronger involvement in planning/building review, and water supply considerations.

Economic Development

- The economic development discussion emphasized retaining and supporting existing businesses, particularly small businesses and manufacturing. Stakeholders identified traffic management, industrial zoning, and competitive electricity rates as important factors in supporting business activity.
- Participants viewed Bedford as a community with business assets and growth potential, while also stressing the importance of encouraging more people to stay in town and creating stronger local employment opportunities.

Utilities and Environment

- Utilities and environment stakeholders described Bedford as a growing community that is no longer rural in its infrastructure needs. They emphasized the importance of utility coordination, transparent communication, early coordination with developers, and continued attention to aging infrastructure and capacity.
- Parking, especially downtown, was a recurring concern. Stakeholders also identified needs for improved parks and recreation facilities, event-supporting infrastructure, better hotel options, transitional housing, improved walkability and connectivity, and potential recreation use of the Town-owned reservoir property.

Health and Community

- Health and community stakeholders emphasized parking, transportation, sidewalks, lighting, collaboration, and public investment. The Bedford Boys Tribute Center was noted as a significant visitor destination with parking challenges, and participants suggested improved signage, more bus stops, and shuttle connections among hotels, attractions, and businesses.

- Participants also discussed the need for stronger partnerships among the Town, nonprofits, and businesses; better tourism and economic development promotion; more community events; and continued investment in affordable, starter, and transitional housing.
- Looking toward 2045, stakeholders emphasized tourism, transportation improvements, diverse housing options, and continued support for arts, culture, historic resources, community health, and environmental assets.

Community Survey Overview

The community survey overview summarized how respondents viewed Bedford's strengths, weaknesses, development priorities, services, transportation, quality of life, and demographics. The following summary captures the major findings from that overview; the complete open-ended responses follow in the next section.

About Bedford

- Residents commonly described Bedford as small, quaint, quiet, friendly, beautiful, and safe. The town's image, reputation, appearance, friendliness, and character were consistently viewed as key strengths.
- Forty-one percent of respondents identified Bedford's overall image and identity as its greatest strength, followed by Parks and Recreation at 16 percent and Housing and Residential at 11 percent. Other strengths included the D-Day Memorial, location, reputation, and historic value.
- Retail and commercial development was identified as the greatest weakness by 37 percent of respondents. Other frequently cited concerns included government operations, infrastructure, maintenance delays, lack of restaurants, and industrial development.

Overall Development

- Survey participants prioritized preserving Bedford's small-town charm while recognizing that downtown improvement and broader revitalization will require new investment and development.
- Respondents generally viewed single-family homes and townhomes more positively than denser housing types such as apartments and other multifamily options. Commercial development was viewed most positively in downtown and other established areas.
- Economic development concerns were pronounced: 88 percent of respondents expressed concern over vacant buildings and storefronts, 67 percent were dissatisfied with shopping options, and 63 percent cited limited employment and job opportunities as a significant issue.
- Overall, respondents supported attracting businesses and developers that can create financially successful commercial ventures and job opportunities while maintaining Bedford's low-density residential character.

Community Facilities and Services

- Most respondents viewed community facilities and services as strengths, especially fire protection and emergency response (87 percent), library services (85 percent), police protection and public safety (77 percent), and trash removal (67 percent).
- At the same time, many respondents wanted improved services for youth, veterans, and seniors. Recreation opportunities such as playgrounds, youth sports, and recreational spaces were more often viewed as weaknesses than strengths.
- Parks and access to natural areas were viewed positively, suggesting that improving programs and enhancing existing park facilities could strengthen community engagement across age groups.

Transportation

- Transportation was a major concern. Car-oriented infrastructure, including highways, traffic flow, and road conditions, was generally viewed as a strength, while pedestrian and bicycle facilities were viewed as significant weaknesses affecting connectivity.
- The lack of multimodal transportation and regional transit access stood out in the survey. The absence of train stations was identified as a weakness by 74 percent of respondents. Sidewalks and overall walkability were strengths, but bikeability and access to alternative transportation modes remained gaps.

Overall Quality of Life

- Respondents indicated that Bedford's quality of life has slightly declined or stagnated compared with a decade ago. The trend was tied to weaknesses in commercial areas, downtown and townwide economic development, limited community programs, and limited accessible transportation.
- Downtown was identified as the top improvement priority, followed by shopping options, businesses, and restaurants. Respondents across residency lengths generally agreed that Bedford needs revitalization in its downtown and business districts.

Participant Demographics

- More than 88 percent of survey participants owned property in Bedford. Respondents included both newer residents and long-time residents, with 24 percent having lived in Bedford for one to five years and 32 percent for 20 or more years.
- Fifty-four percent of respondents worked full-time and 29 percent were retired. Many residents commute to Lynchburg, Roanoke, Bedford County, or other dispersed job locations. Sixty-nine percent of respondents owned their homes and 11 percent rented.
- When asked what attracted them to Bedford, respondents most often cited natural beauty and small-town atmosphere, echoing the themes of friendliness, beauty, and economic potential found throughout the survey.

Survey Response Charts and Graphs

The following section presents visual summaries of the comprehensive plan survey results. These charts and graphs illustrate how participants responded to each survey question, highlighting key patterns, priorities, and areas of agreement or concern across the community.

Please describe the Town of Bedford in three words.

Word cloud



Hide table

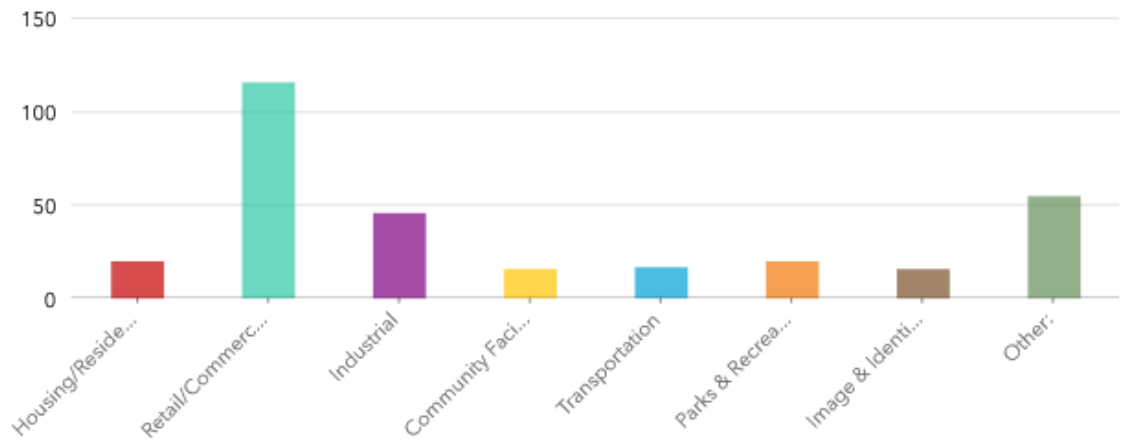
Show responses

Word	Count
small	60
quaint	56
friendly	42
quiet	41
Town	38
beautiful	34
safe	31
peaceful	18
community	12
home	11
historic	10

Answered: 277 Skipped: 36

● What is the Town of Bedford's greatest weakness?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Other response Empty categories Sort

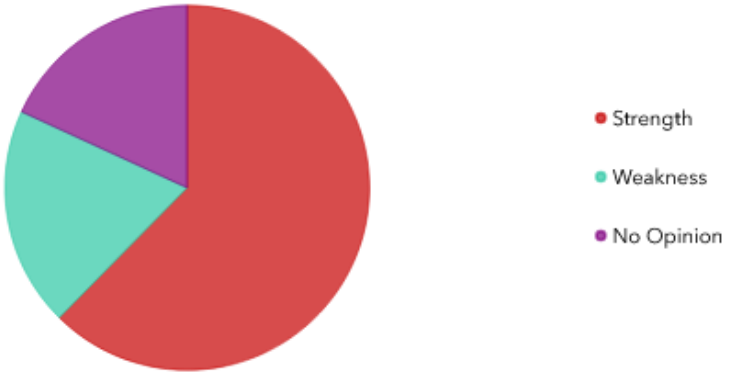
Answers	Count	Percentage
Housing/Residential	20	6.39%
Retail/Commercial	116	37.06%
Industrial	46	14.7%
Community Facilities & Services	16	5.11%
Transportation	17	5.43%
Parks & Recreation	20	6.39%
Image & Identity	16	5.11%
Other:	55	17.57%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

About Bedford > Indicate whether each of the following community characteristics is a strength or a weakness for the Town of Bedford.

Community image and reputation

Column Bar Pie Map

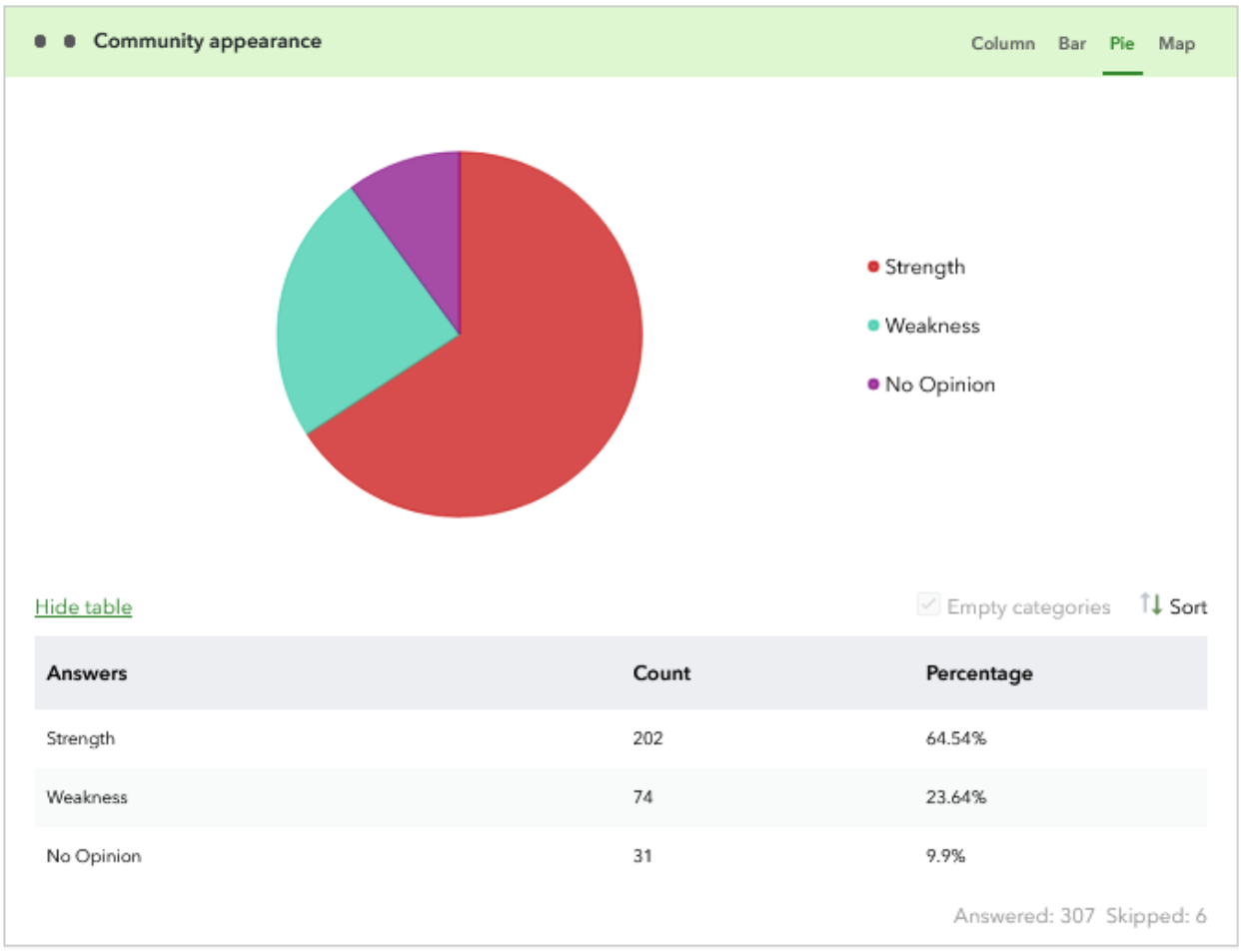


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	189	60.38%
Weakness	59	18.85%
No Opinion	55	17.57%

Answered: 303 Skipped: 10



Hide table

Empty categories

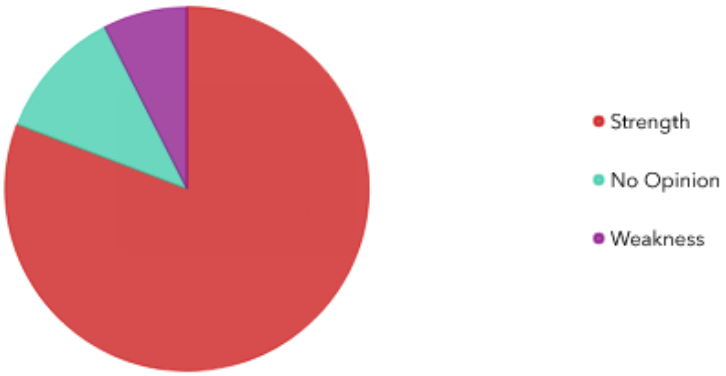
Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	202	64.54%
Weakness	74	23.64%
No Opinion	31	9.9%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Community friendliness

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

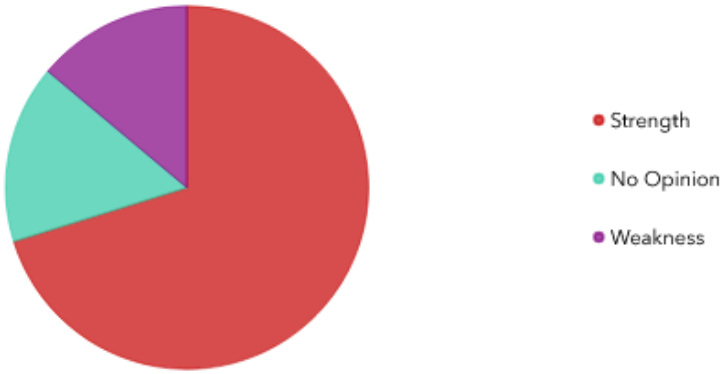
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	248	79.23%
No Opinion	36	11.5%
Weakness	23	7.35%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Community character and appeal

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

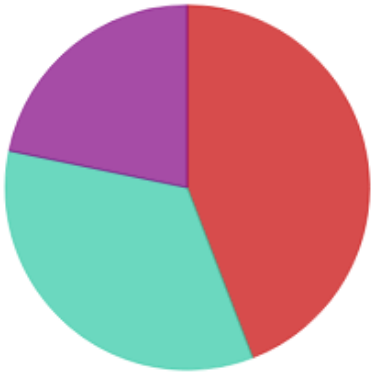
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	212	67.73%
No Opinion	48	15.34%
Weakness	42	13.42%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Diversity of population

Column Bar Pie Map



No Opinion

Strength

Weakness

Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	136	43.45%
Strength	105	33.55%
Weakness	67	21.41%

Answered: 308 Skipped: 5

Landscaping/Maintenance of public areas and properties

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

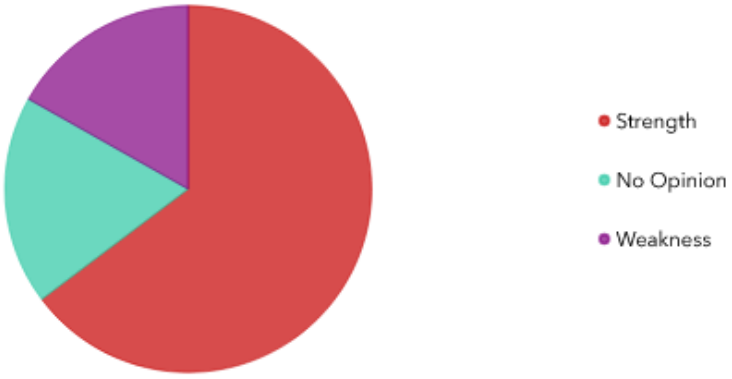
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	186	59.42%
Weakness	69	22.04%
No Opinion	51	16.29%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Cleanliness of public areas and properties

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

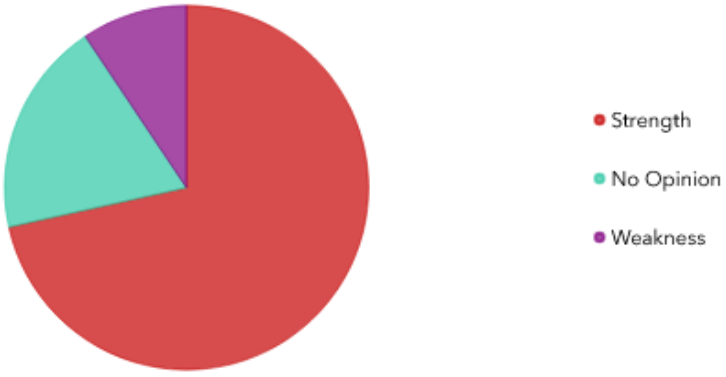
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	200	63.9%
No Opinion	57	18.21%
Weakness	52	16.61%

Answered: 309 Skipped: 4

Historic preservation and assets

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

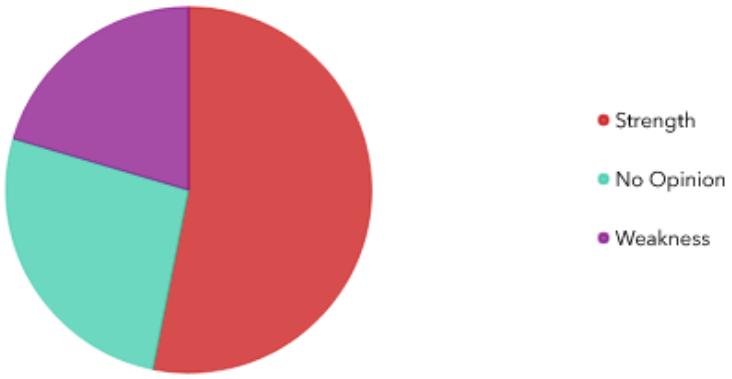
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	221	70.61%
No Opinion	59	18.85%
Weakness	29	9.27%

Answered: 309 Skipped: 4

Arts and cultural amenities

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

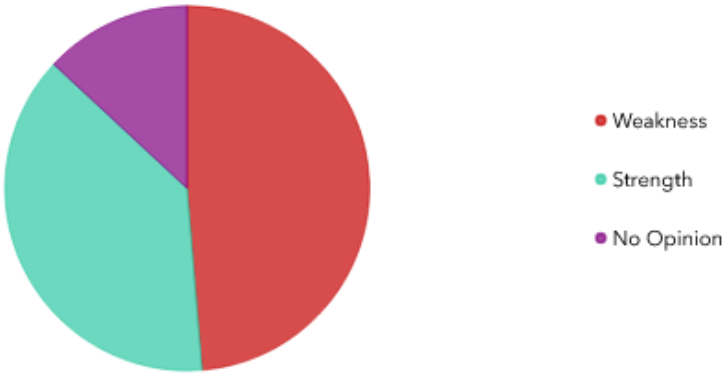
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	161	51.44%
No Opinion	80	25.56%
Weakness	62	19.81%

Answered: 303 Skipped: 10

Downtown / Centertown

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

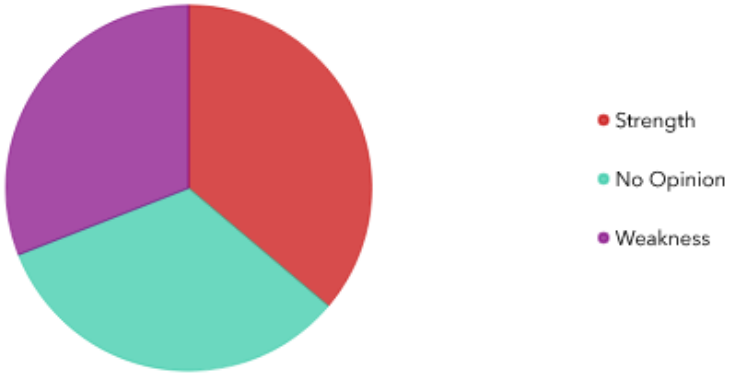
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	149	47.6%
Strength	117	37.38%
No Opinion	40	12.78%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Character of entry points into the community

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	111	35.46%
No Opinion	101	32.27%
Weakness	95	30.35%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Community events and festivities

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

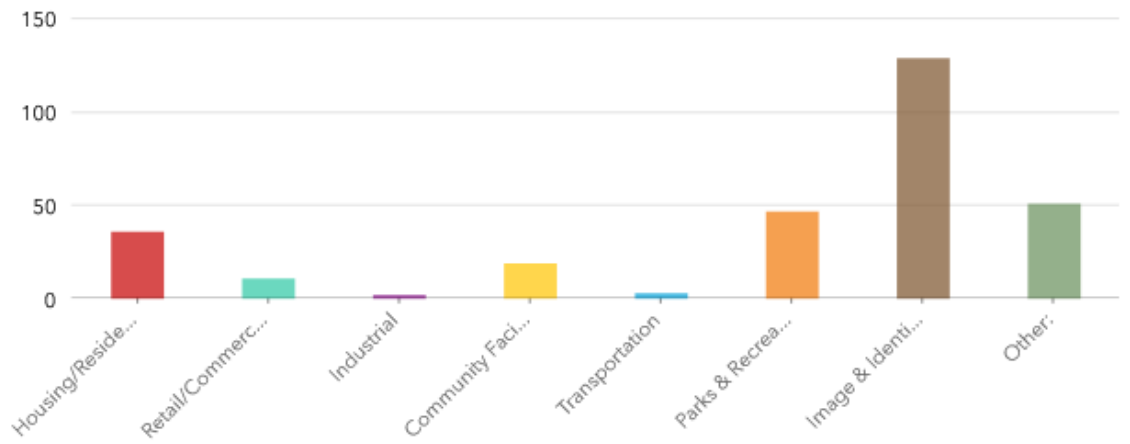
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	166	53.04%
Weakness	77	24.6%
No Opinion	64	20.45%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

● What is the Town of Bedford's greatest strength?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Other response Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Housing/Residential	36	11.5%
Retail/Commercial	11	3.51%
Industrial	2	0.64%
Community Facilities & Services	19	6.07%
Transportation	3	0.96%
Parks & Recreation	47	15.02%
Image & Identity	129	41.21%
Other:	51	16.29%

Answered: 298 Skipped: 15

Residential Development > In your opinion, what kind of impact would each of the following types of new residential development have on the Town of Bedford?

Single-family homes

Column Bar Pie Map

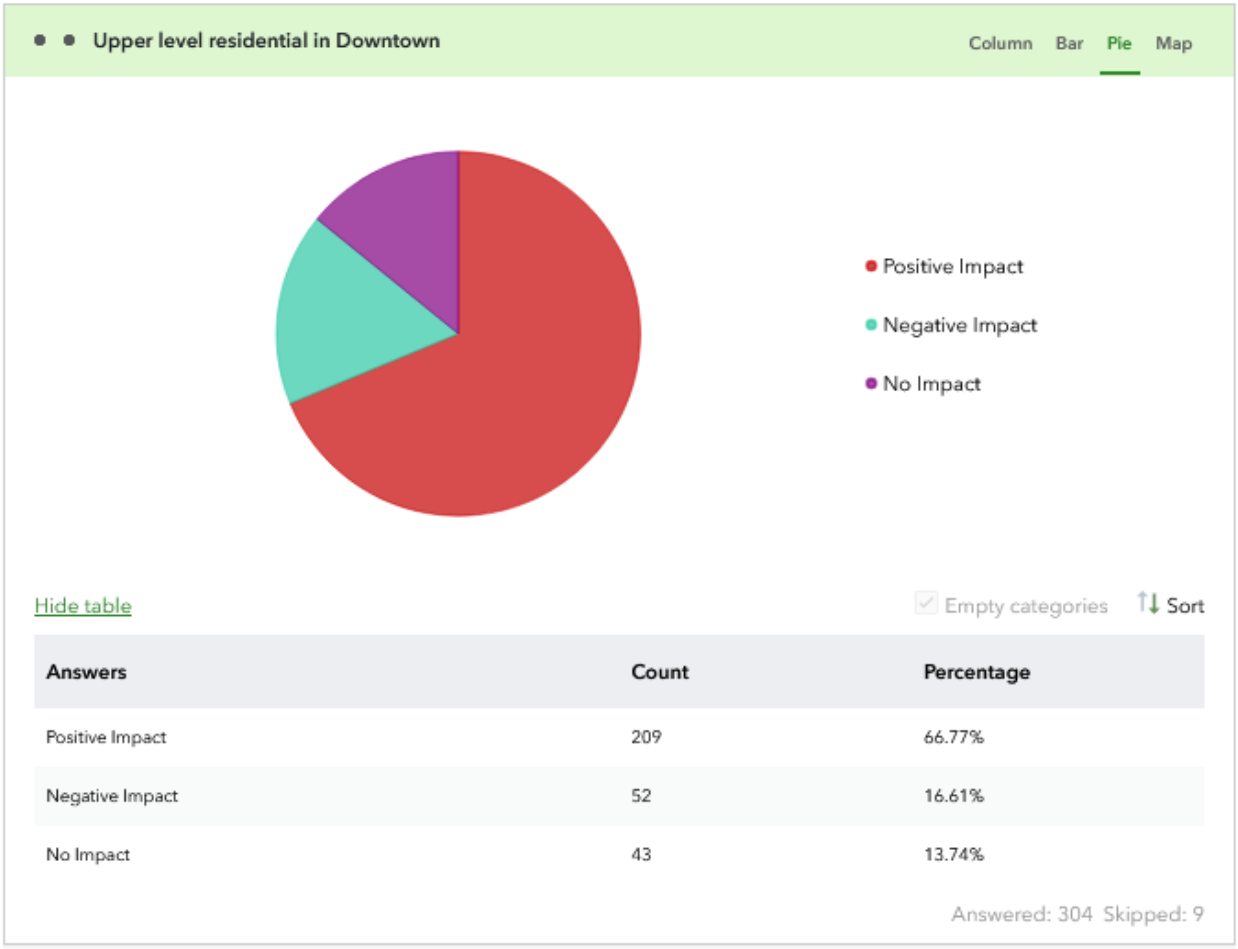


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	230	73.48%
Negative Impact	39	12.46%
No Impact	30	9.58%

Answered: 299 Skipped: 14



Hide table

Empty categories

Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	209	66.77%
Negative Impact	52	16.61%
No Impact	43	13.74%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Townhomes

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	153	48.88%
Negative Impact	95	30.35%
No Impact	54	17.25%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Duplexes and Triplexes

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

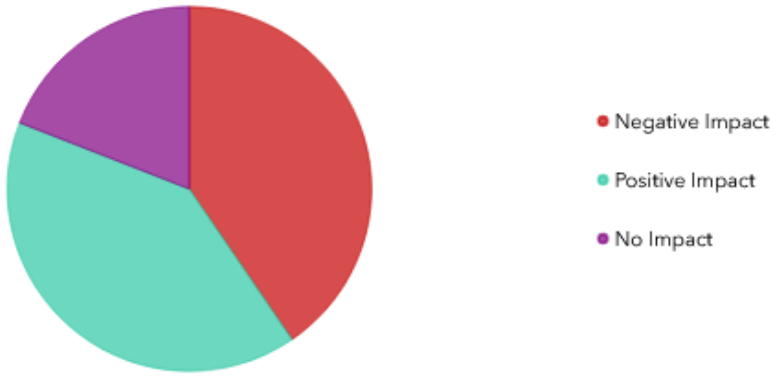
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Negative Impact	150	47.92%
Positive Impact	98	31.31%
No Impact	56	17.89%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Small Apartment Buildings (4-8 plex/quadplex)

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Negative Impact	123	39.3%
Positive Impact	123	39.3%
No Impact	58	18.53%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Large Apartment Complexes (more than 8 units)

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

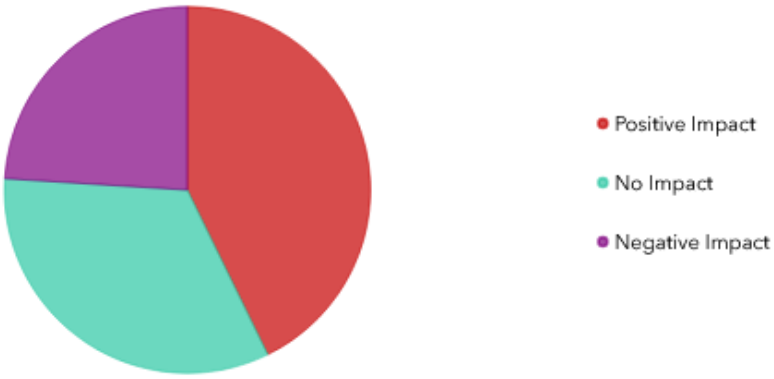
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Negative Impact	191	61.02%
Positive Impact	80	25.56%
No Impact	33	10.54%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Age Restricted Community/Housing

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

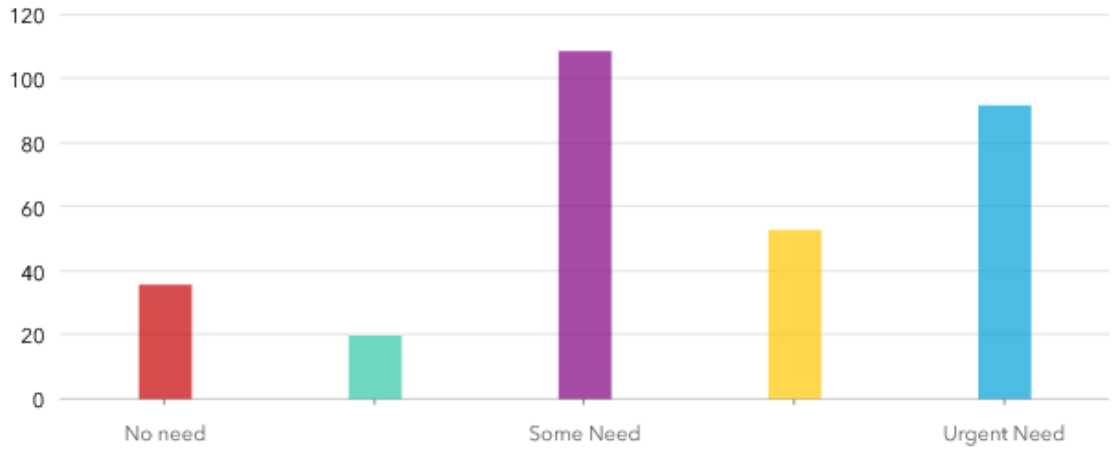
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	130	41.53%
No Impact	101	32.27%
Negative Impact	73	23.32%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

● How would you rate the need for affordable housing in Bedford?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

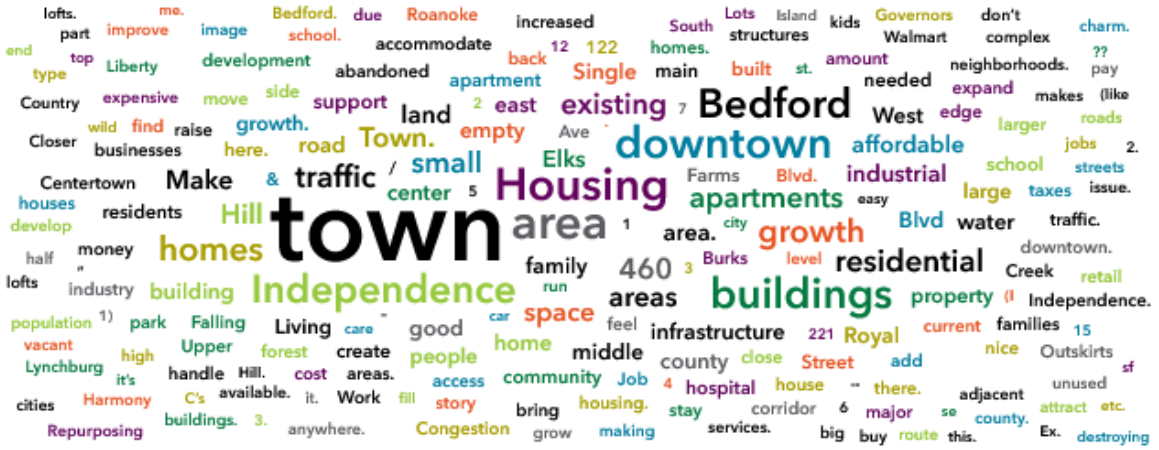
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No need	36	11.5%
	20	6.39%
Some Need	109	34.82%
	53	16.93%
Urgent Need	92	29.39%

Answered: 310 Skipped: 3

Where in town would new residential growth be appropriate?

Word cloud



Hide table

Show responses

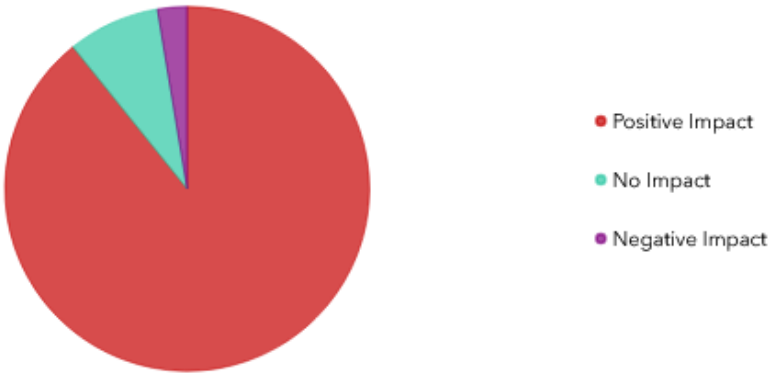
Word	Count
town	82
area	33
Housing	30
downtown	29
buildings	27
Bedford	26
Independence	25
homes	19
growth	18
residential	16
traffic	16

Answered: 235 Skipped: 78

Commercial Development > In your opinion, what kind of impact would each of the following types of new commercial development have on the Town of Bedford?

Downtown retail and services

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	273	87.22%
No Impact	25	7.99%
Negative Impact	8	2.56%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Entertainment and lodging

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	267	85.3%
No Impact	24	7.67%
Negative Impact	16	5.11%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Suburban shopping centers

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	166	53.04%
Negative Impact	88	28.12%
No Impact	50	15.97%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Mixed use (commercial and residential

Column Bar Pie Map

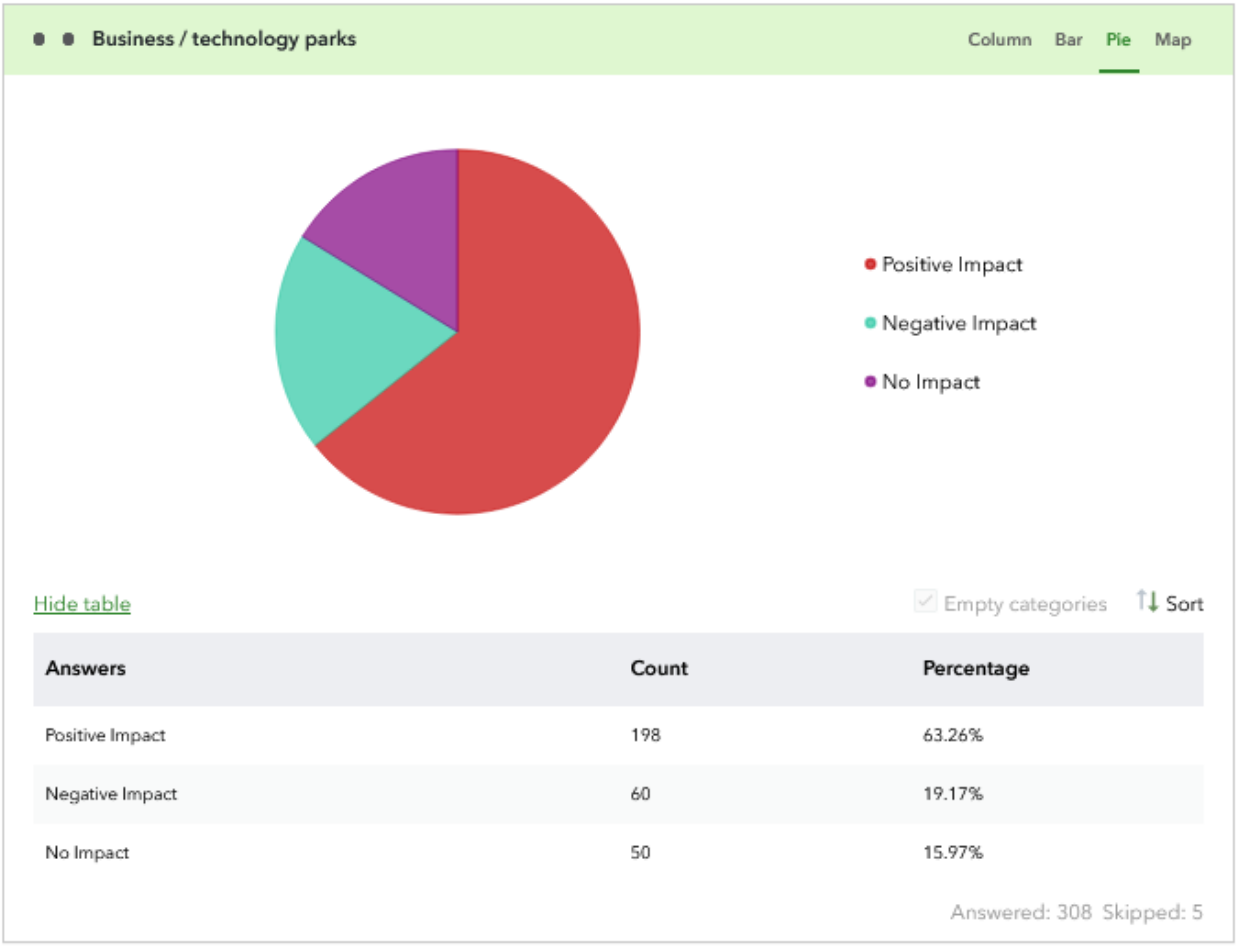


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	188	60.06%
No Impact	73	23.32%
Negative Impact	41	13.1%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11



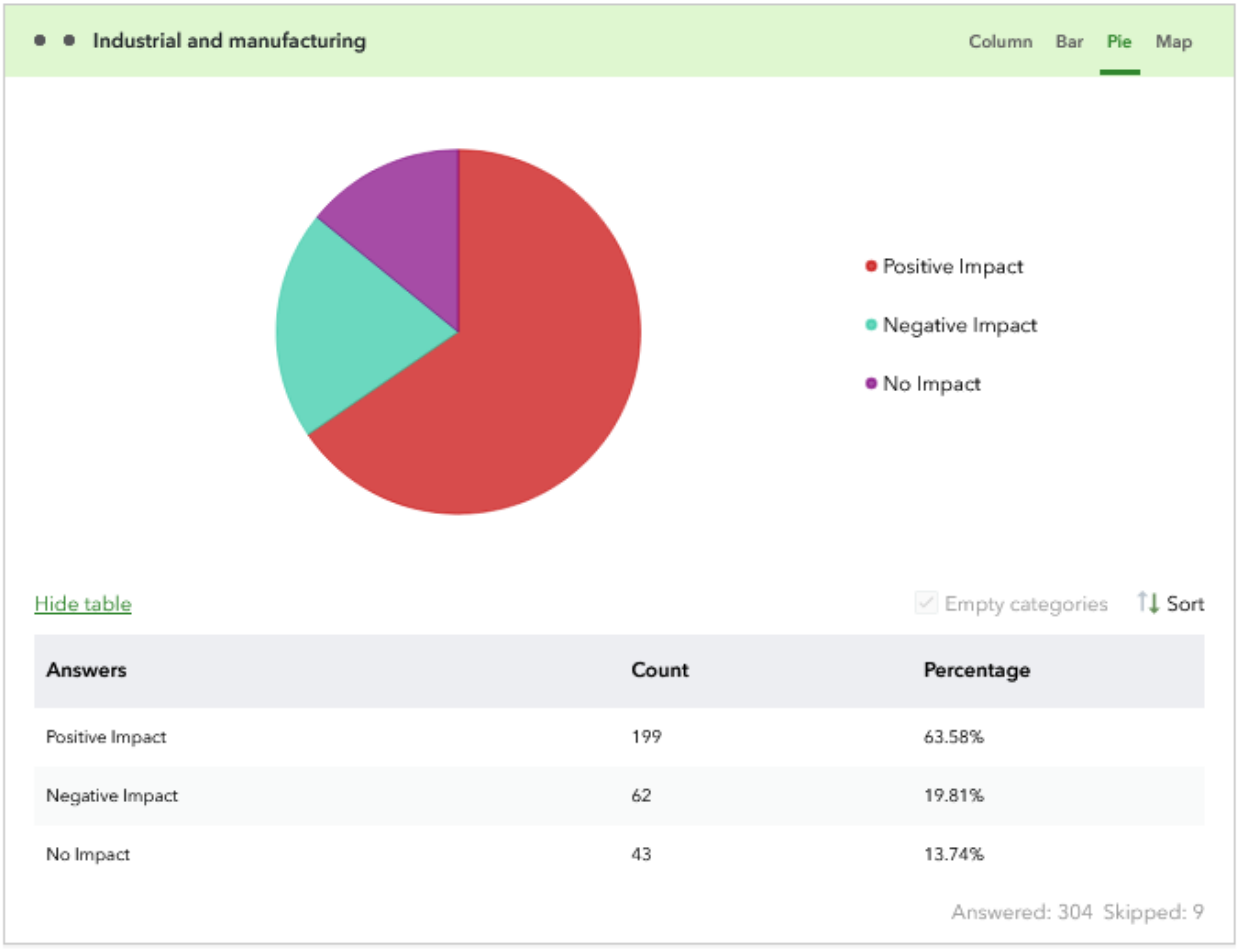
Hide table

Empty categories

Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	198	63.26%
Negative Impact	60	19.17%
No Impact	50	15.97%

Answered: 308 Skipped: 5



Hide table

Empty categories

Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Positive Impact	199	63.58%
Negative Impact	62	19.81%
No Impact	43	13.74%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

● Where in town would new commercial growth be appropriate?

Word cloud



Hide table

Show responses

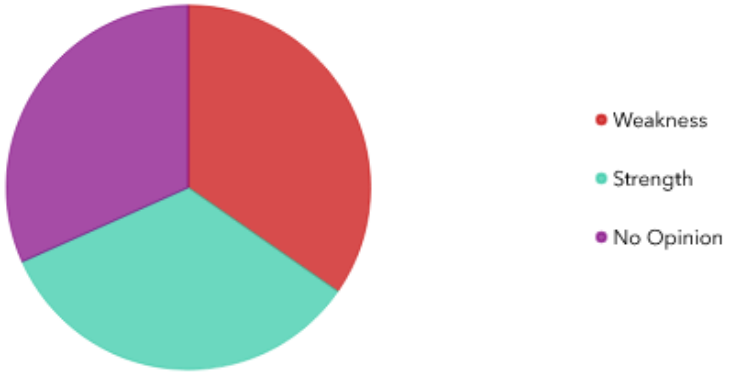
Word	Count
buildings	62
Town	47
downtown	45
existing	36
Independence	28
commercial	27
industrial	25
empty	24
center	21
460	20
area	20

Answered: 234 Skipped: 79

Economic Development > Please indicate whether each of the following economic conditions in the Town of Bedford is a strength or a weakness.

Character of commercial areas

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

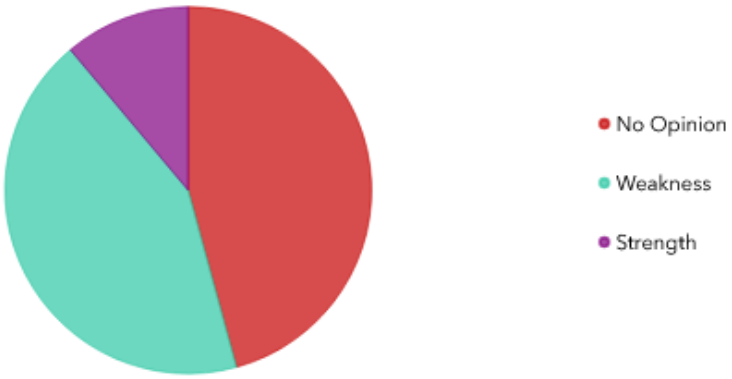
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	105	33.55%
Strength	102	32.59%
No Opinion	96	30.67%

Answered: 303 Skipped: 10

Cost to buy/rent commercial property

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

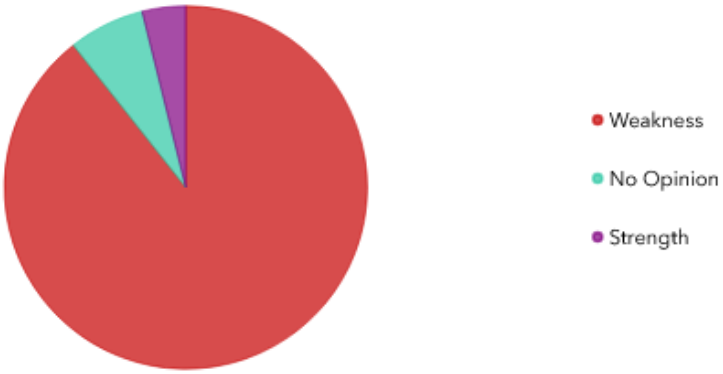
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	140	44.73%
Weakness	132	42.17%
Strength	34	10.86%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Vacant buildings/storefronts

Column Bar Pie Map

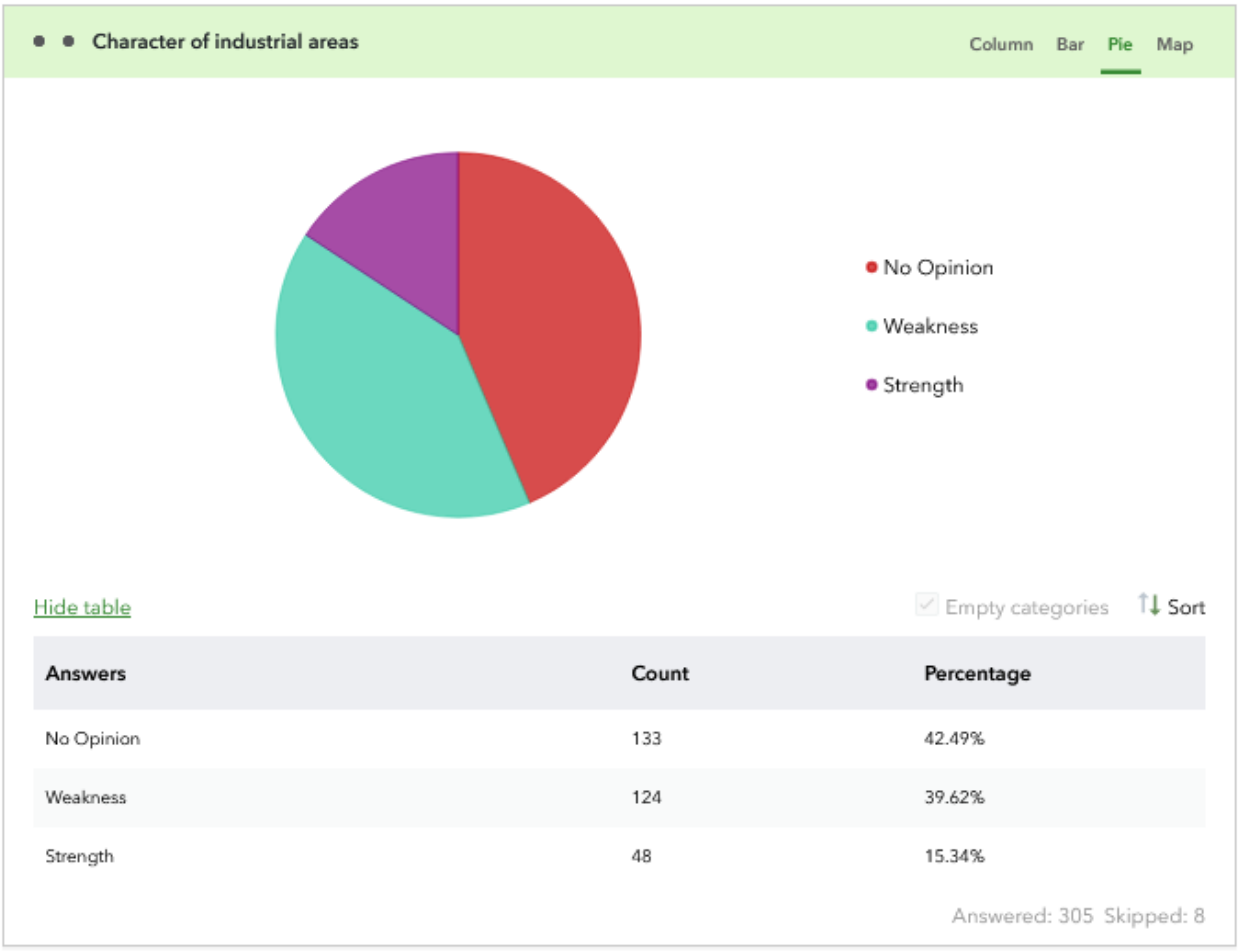


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	277	88.5%
No Opinion	21	6.71%
Strength	12	3.83%

Answered: 310 Skipped: 3

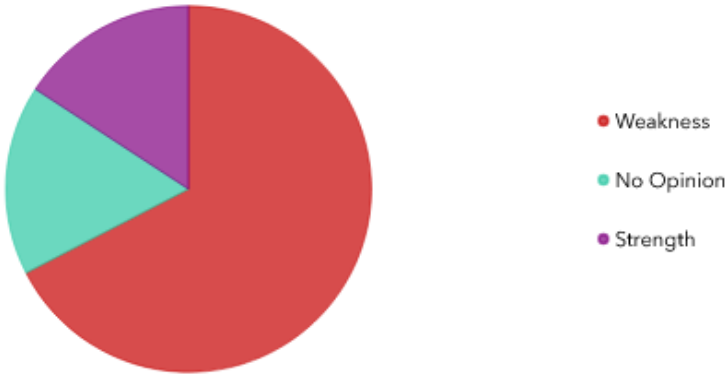


Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	133	42.49%
Weakness	124	39.62%
Strength	48	15.34%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Mix and availability of shopping options

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

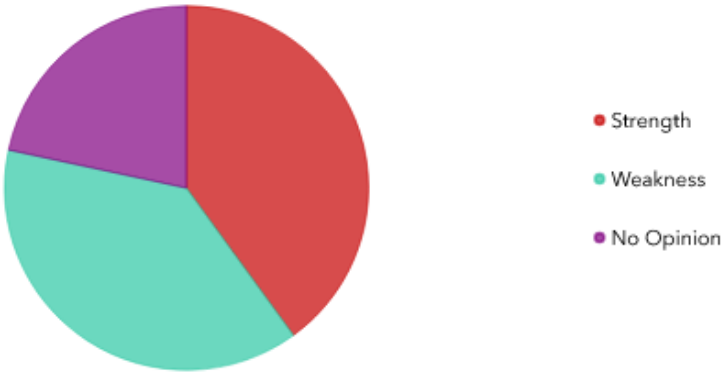
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	209	66.77%
No Opinion	52	16.61%
Strength	49	15.65%

Answered: 310 Skipped: 3

Access to everyday goods and services

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

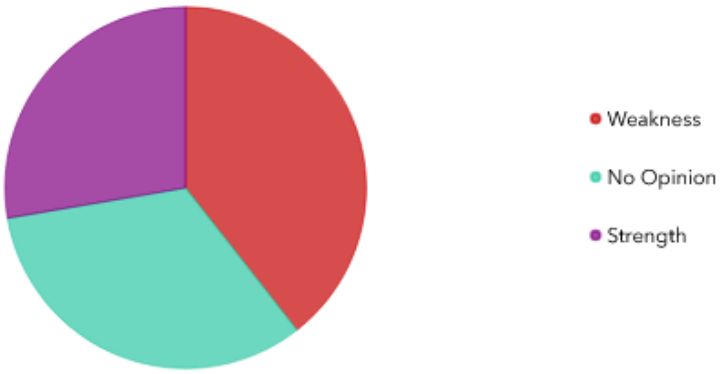
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	122	38.98%
Weakness	117	37.38%
No Opinion	66	21.09%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Opportunities for new commercial development

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

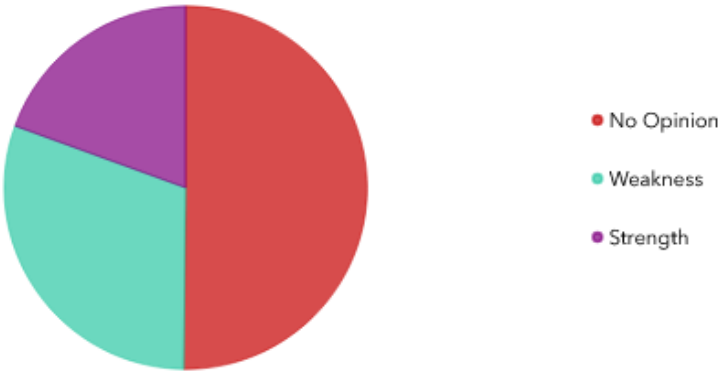
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	121	38.66%
No Opinion	101	32.27%
Strength	85	27.16%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Impact of industrial uses on the community

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

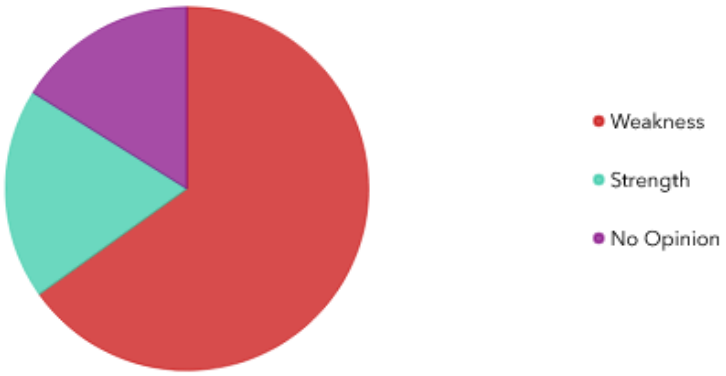
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	152	48.56%
Weakness	92	29.39%
Strength	59	18.85%

Answered: 303 Skipped: 10

Employment and job opportunities

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

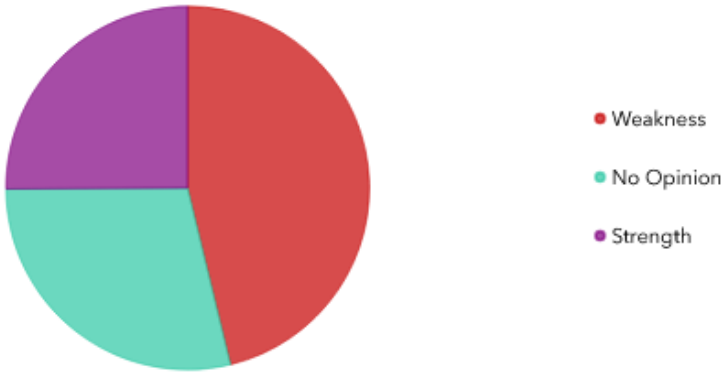
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	198	63.26%
Strength	57	18.21%
No Opinion	49	15.65%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Opportunities for new office and employment uses

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

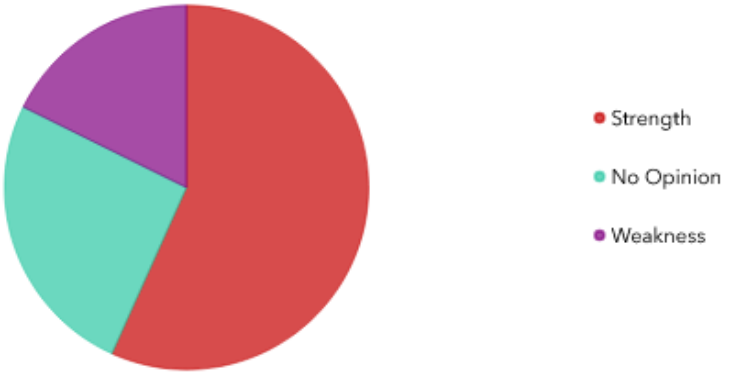
Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	140	44.73%
No Opinion	87	27.8%
Strength	76	24.28%

Answered: 303 Skipped: 10

Community Facilities & Services > Please indicate whether each of the following community facilities and services that serve the Town of Bedford is a strength or a weakness.

Schools (K-8)

Column Bar Pie Map

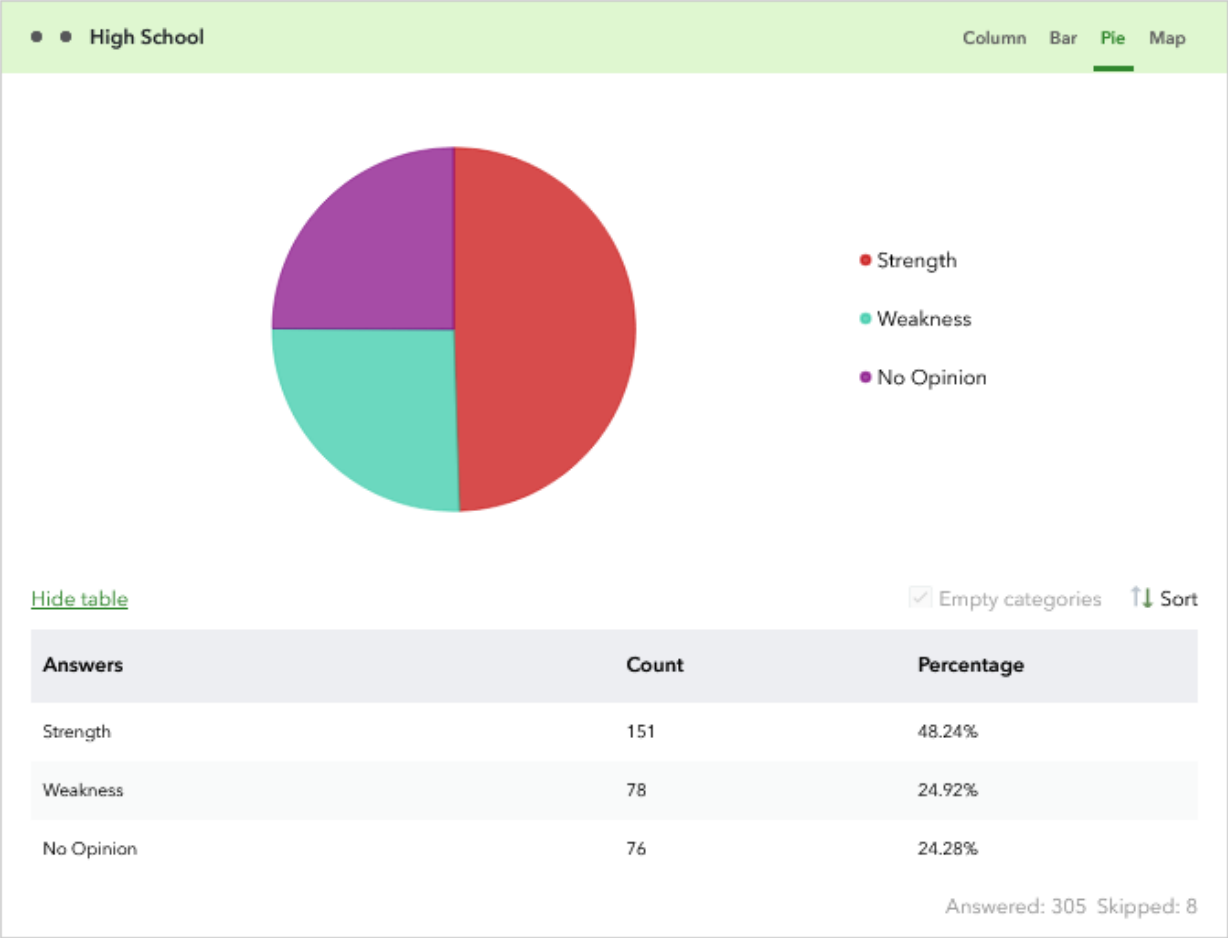


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	173	55.27%
No Opinion	78	24.92%
Weakness	54	17.25%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8



Hide table

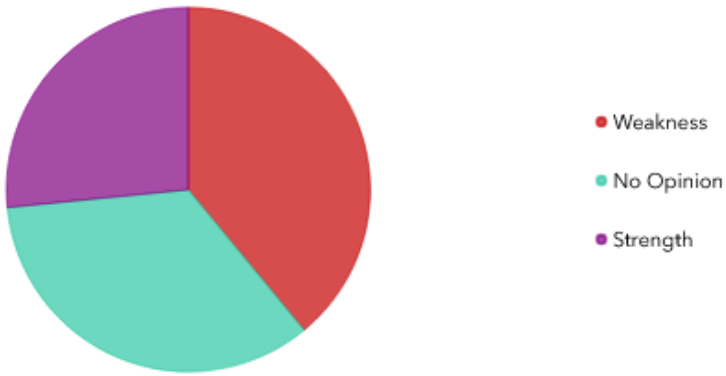
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	151	48.24%
Weakness	78	24.92%
No Opinion	76	24.28%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Higher Education

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

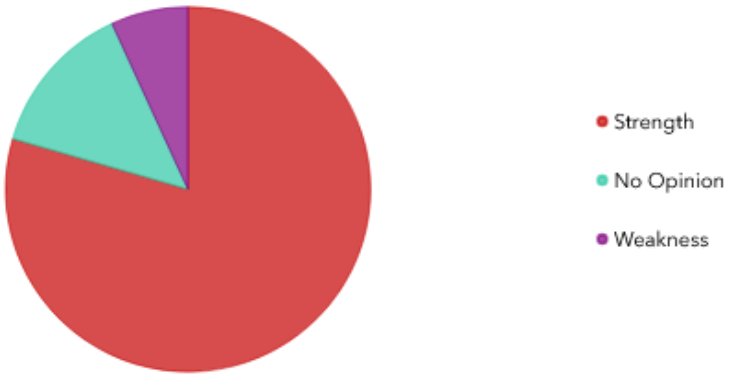
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	119	38.02%
No Opinion	105	33.55%
Strength	81	25.88%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Police protection and public safety

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

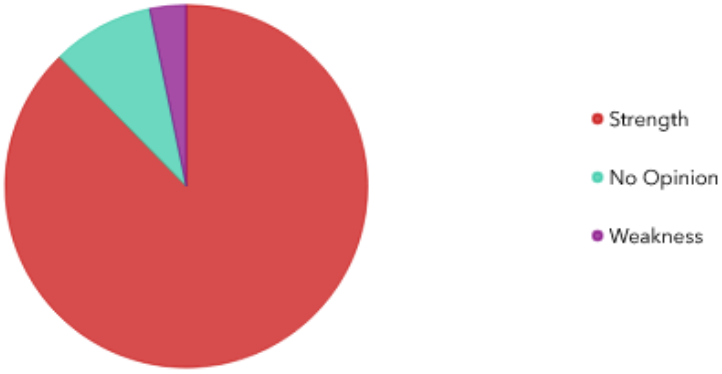
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	244	77.96%
No Opinion	42	13.42%
Weakness	21	6.71%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Fire protection and emergency response

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	270	86.26%
No Opinion	28	8.95%
Weakness	10	3.19%

Answered: 308 Skipped: 5

Drinking water quality

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

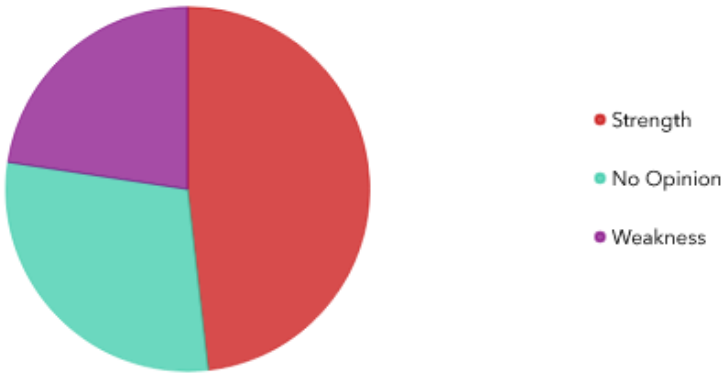
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	173	55.27%
Weakness	67	21.41%
No Opinion	67	21.41%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Water and sewer utilities

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	147	46.96%
No Opinion	89	28.43%
Weakness	69	22.04%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Electric utilities

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	176	56.23%
Weakness	68	21.73%
No Opinion	65	20.77%

Answered: 309 Skipped: 4

Broadband availability and reliability

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	135	43.13%
Weakness	122	38.98%
No Opinion	49	15.65%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Trash removal

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

No Opinion

Weakness

Hide table

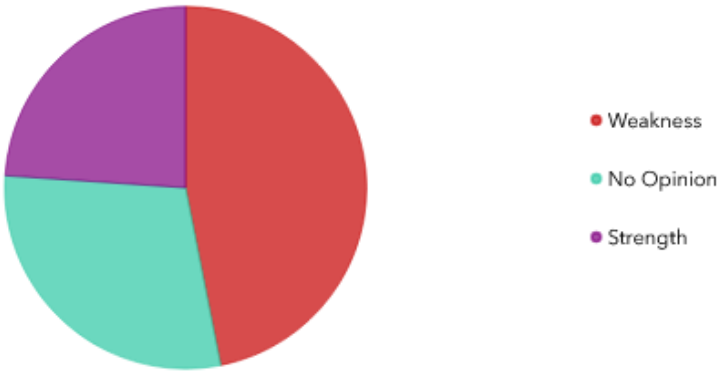
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	205	65.5%
No Opinion	74	23.64%
Weakness	27	8.63%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Recycling services

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	143	45.69%
No Opinion	89	28.43%
Strength	73	23.32%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Stormwater damage (flooding)

Column Bar Pie Map



No Opinion

Strength

Weakness

Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	178	56.87%
Strength	78	24.92%
Weakness	48	15.34%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Healthcare and medical facilities

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

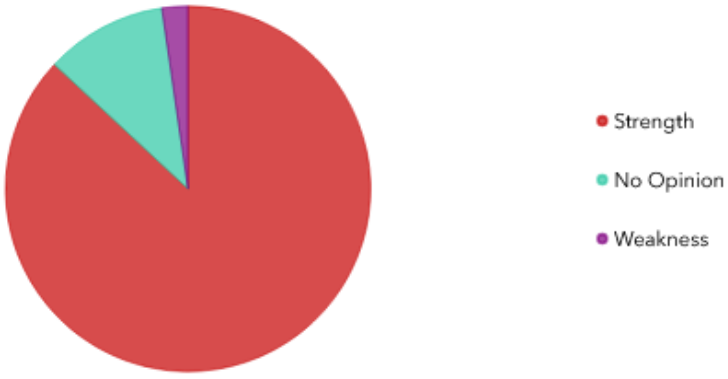
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	164	52.4%
Weakness	89	28.43%
No Opinion	54	17.25%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Library

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

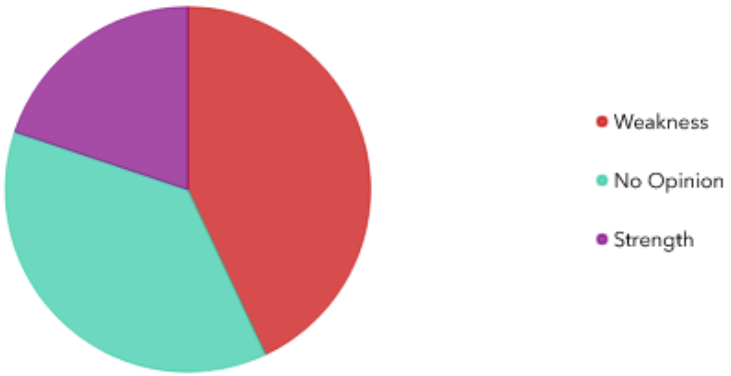
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	266	84.98%
No Opinion	33	10.54%
Weakness	7	2.24%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Services for youth

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

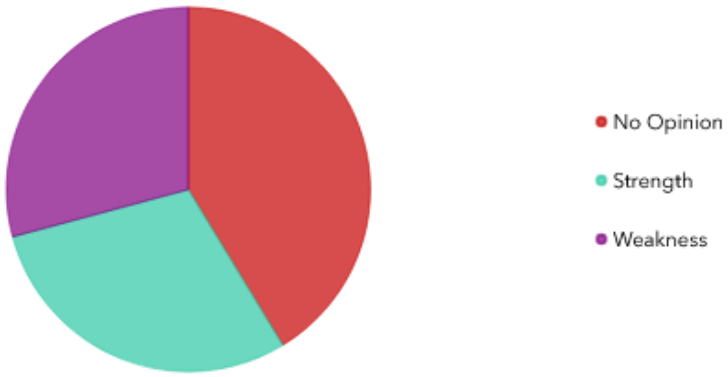
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	132	42.17%
No Opinion	114	36.42%
Strength	61	19.49%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

Services for senior citizens

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

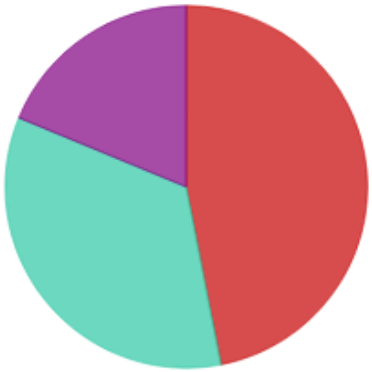
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	126	40.26%
Strength	90	28.75%
Weakness	89	28.43%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Services for veterans

Column Bar Pie Map



No Opinion
Weakness
Strength

Hide table

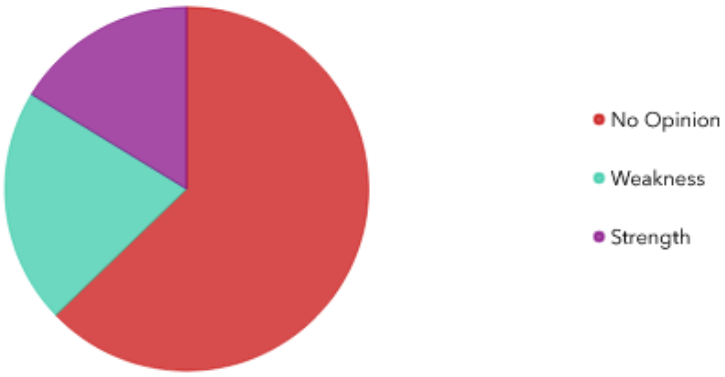
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	145	46.33%
Weakness	106	33.87%
Strength	58	18.53%

Answered: 309 Skipped: 4

Other municipal programs and services

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

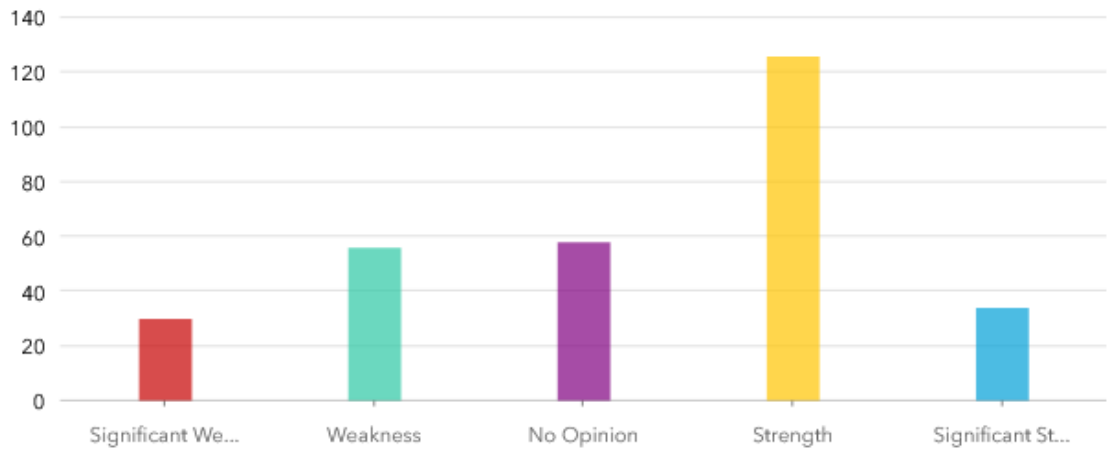
Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	189	60.38%
Weakness	63	20.13%
Strength	49	15.65%

Answered: 301 Skipped: 12

Community Facilities & Services > Please indicate whether each of the following parks and recreational facilities in the Town of Bedford is a strength or a weakness.

Parks and Recreation Programs

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

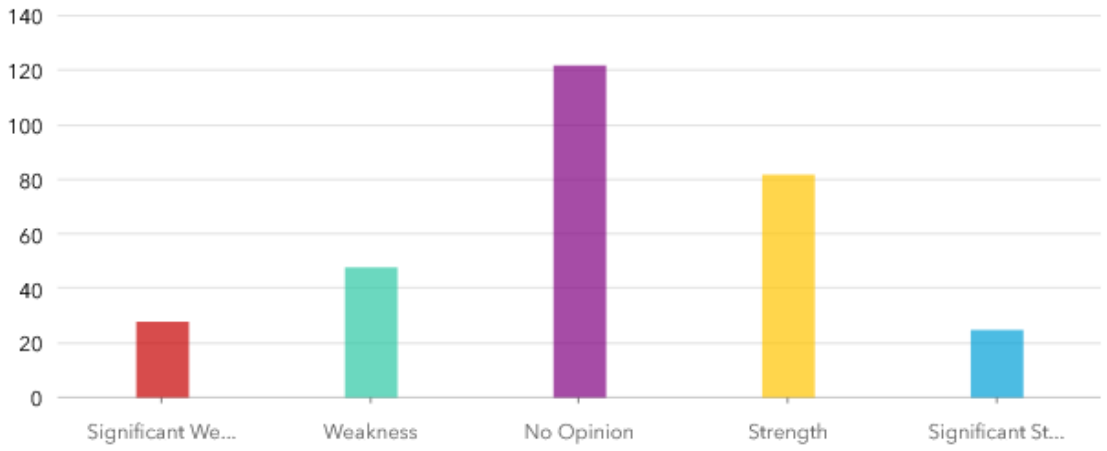
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	30	9.58%
Weakness	56	17.89%
No Opinion	58	18.53%
Strength	126	40.26%
Significant Strength	34	10.86%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Youth sports

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

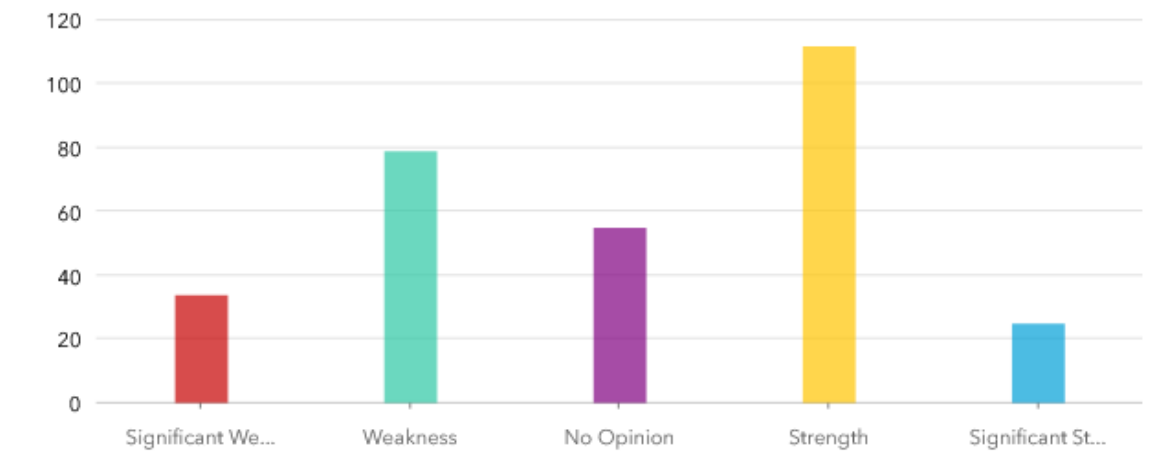
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	28	8.95%
Weakness	48	15.34%
No Opinion	122	38.98%
Strength	82	26.2%
Significant Strength	25	7.99%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Neighborhood Parks

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

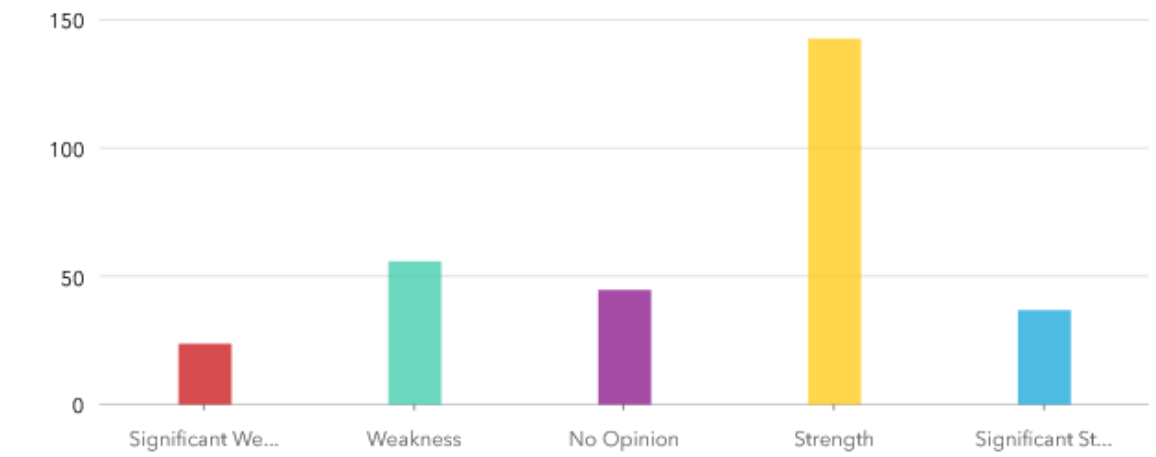
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	34	10.86%
Weakness	79	25.24%
No Opinion	55	17.57%
Strength	112	35.78%
Significant Strength	25	7.99%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Community Parks

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

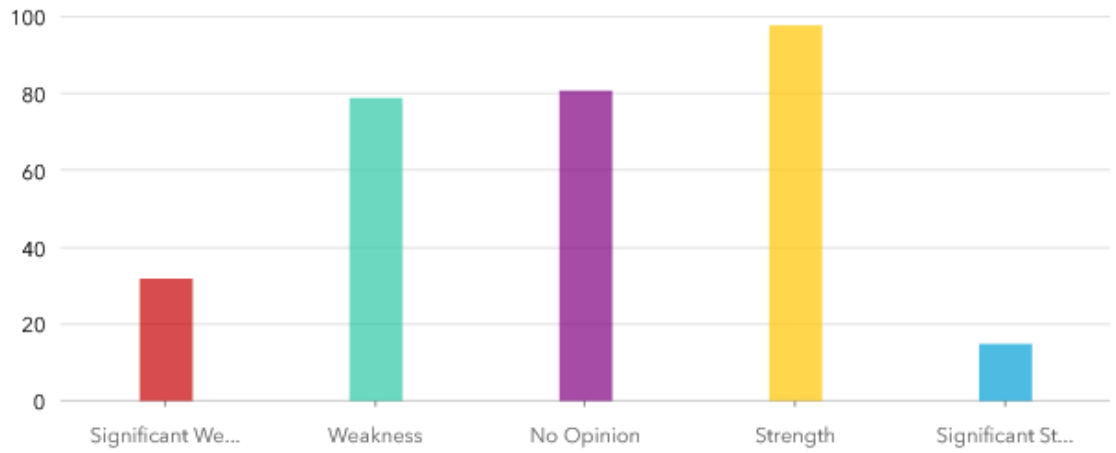
Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	24	7.67%
Weakness	56	17.89%
No Opinion	45	14.38%
Strength	143	45.69%
Significant Strength	37	11.82%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Playgrounds

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

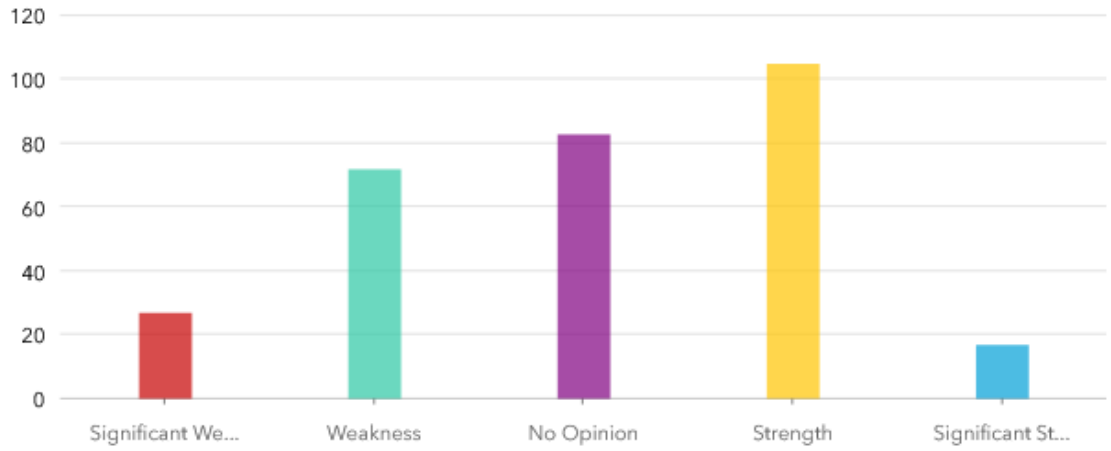
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	32	10.22%
Weakness	79	25.24%
No Opinion	81	25.88%
Strength	98	31.31%
Significant Strength	15	4.79%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Sports fields and courts

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

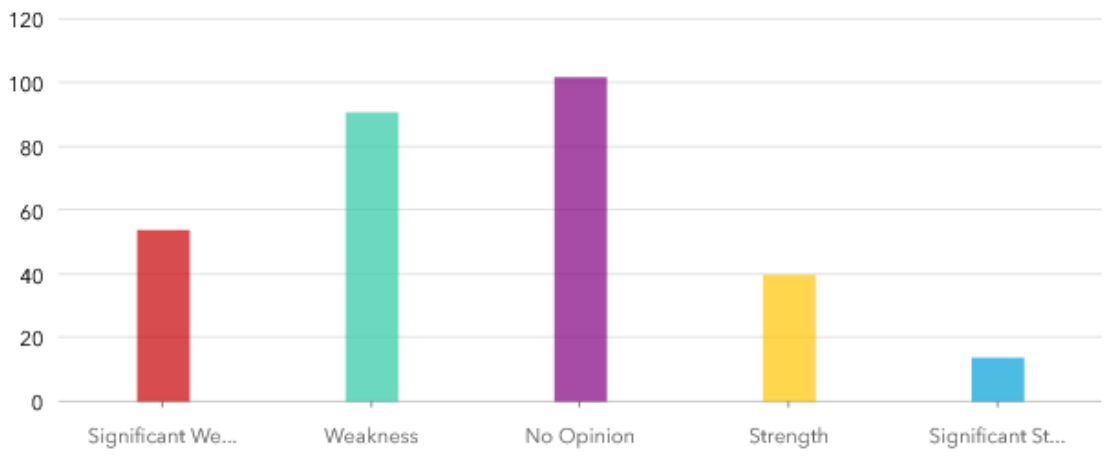
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	27	8.63%
Weakness	72	23%
No Opinion	83	26.52%
Strength	105	33.55%
Significant Strength	17	5.43%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Access to water features

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

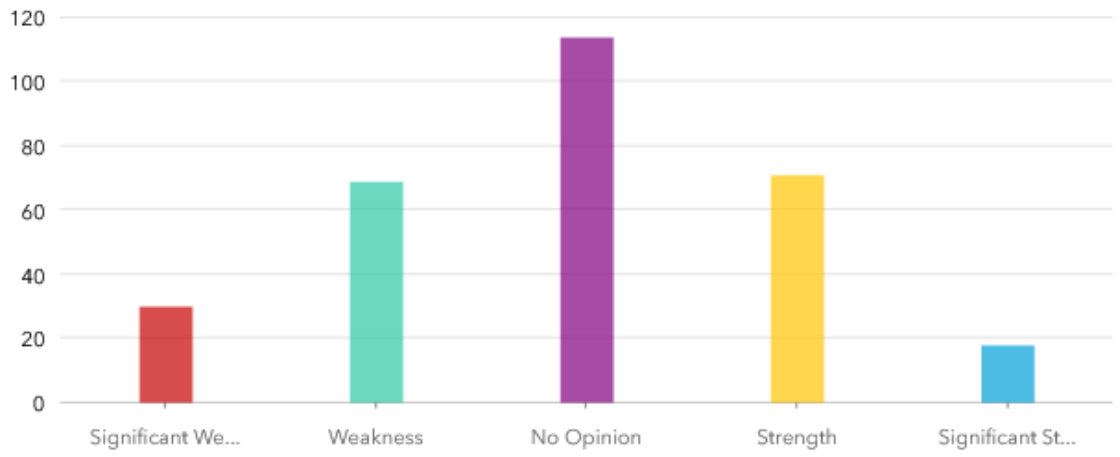
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	54	17.25%
Weakness	91	29.07%
No Opinion	102	32.59%
Strength	40	12.78%
Significant Strength	14	4.47%

Answered: 301 Skipped: 12

Recreational programs

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

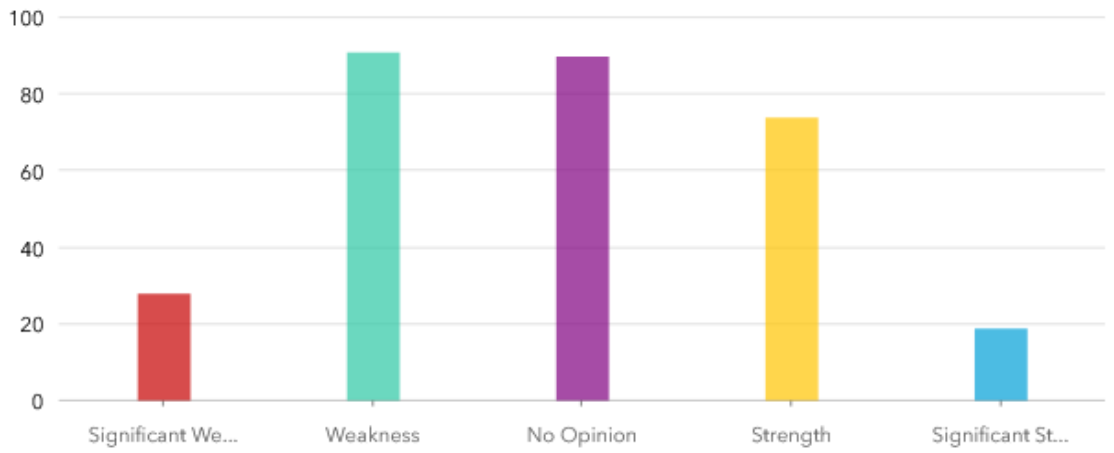
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	30	9.58%
Weakness	69	22.04%
No Opinion	114	36.42%
Strength	71	22.68%
Significant Strength	18	5.75%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Recreational facilities

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

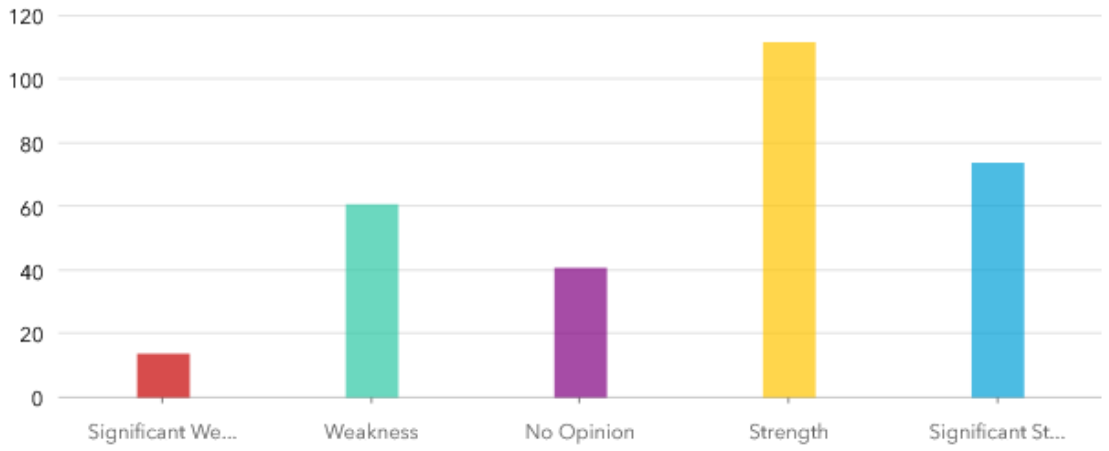
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	28	8.95%
Weakness	91	29.07%
No Opinion	90	28.75%
Strength	74	23.64%
Significant Strength	19	6.07%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Open space and natural areas

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

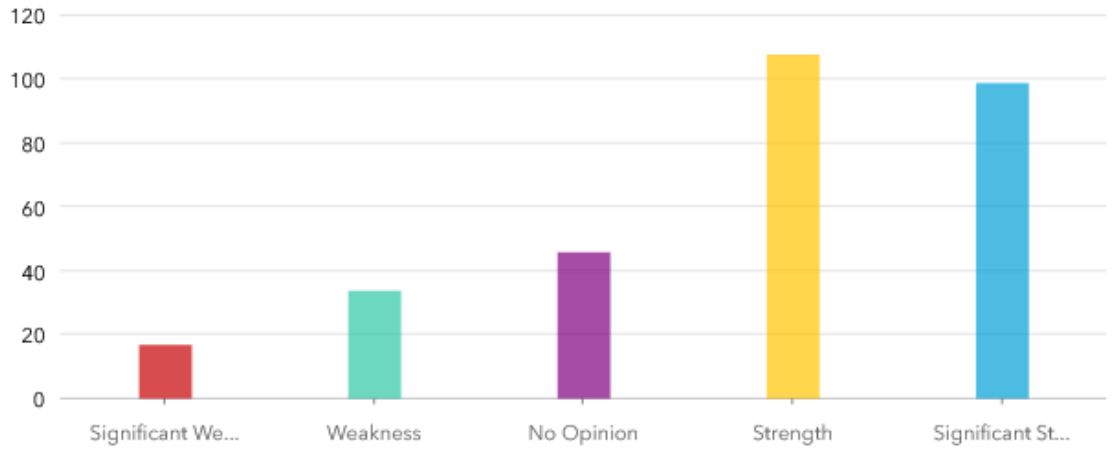
Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	14	4.47%
Weakness	61	19.49%
No Opinion	41	13.1%
Strength	112	35.78%
Significant Strength	74	23.64%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Environmental features such as rivers, forests, or unique topography

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

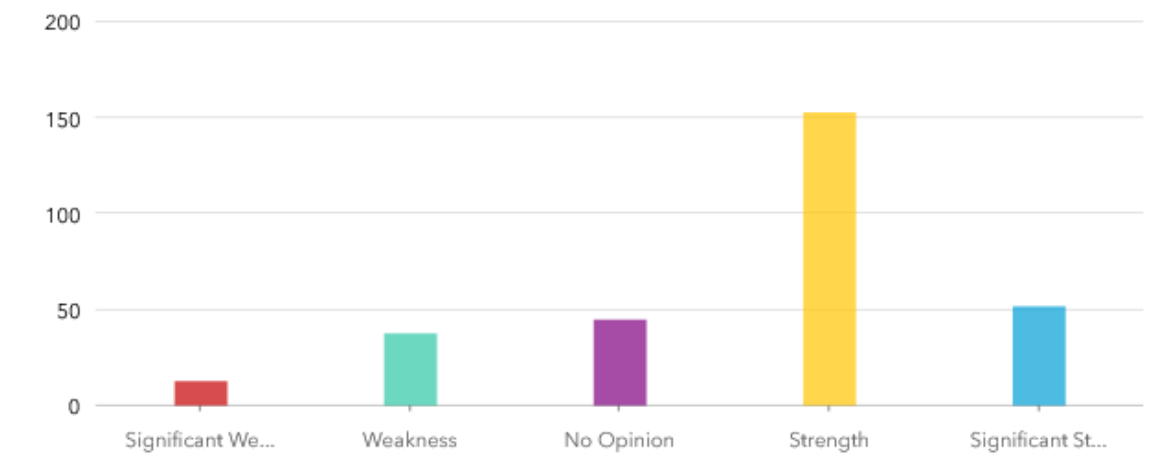
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	17	5.43%
Weakness	34	10.86%
No Opinion	46	14.7%
Strength	108	34.5%
Significant Strength	99	31.63%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Proximity and access to local parks and recreational facilities

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

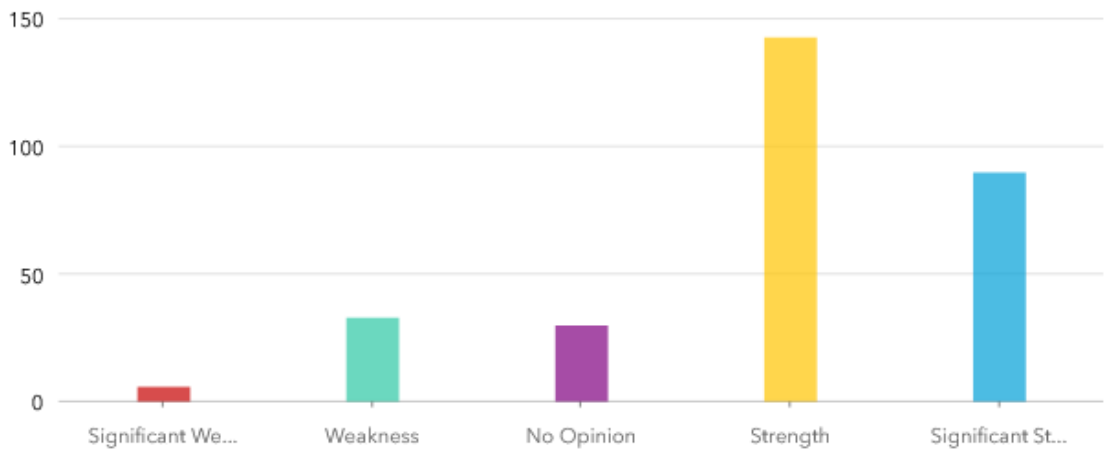
Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	13	4.15%
Weakness	38	12.14%
No Opinion	45	14.38%
Strength	153	48.88%
Significant Strength	52	16.61%

Answered: 301 Skipped: 12

Proximity and access to regional open spaces (nature preserves, state parks, etc.)

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

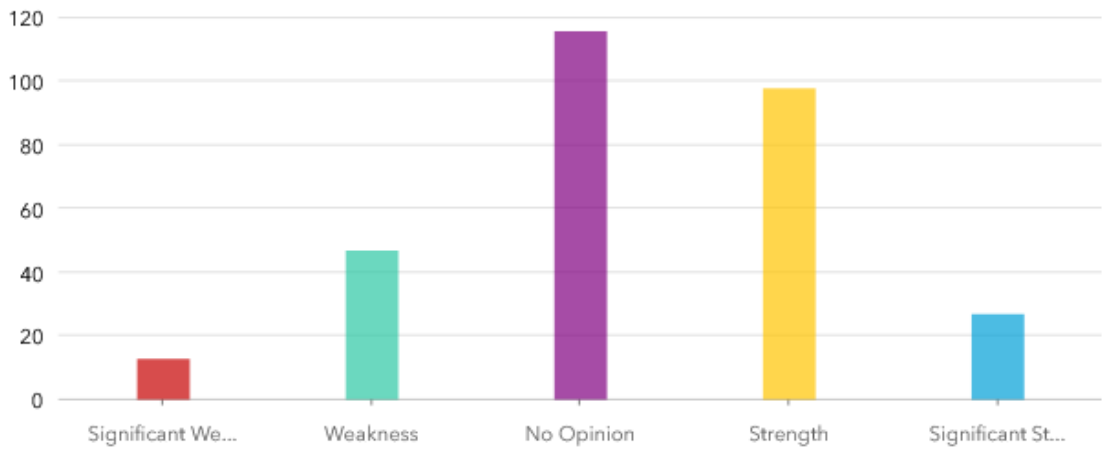
Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	6	1.92%
Weakness	33	10.54%
No Opinion	30	9.58%
Strength	143	45.69%
Significant Strength	90	28.75%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Urban tree canopy

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

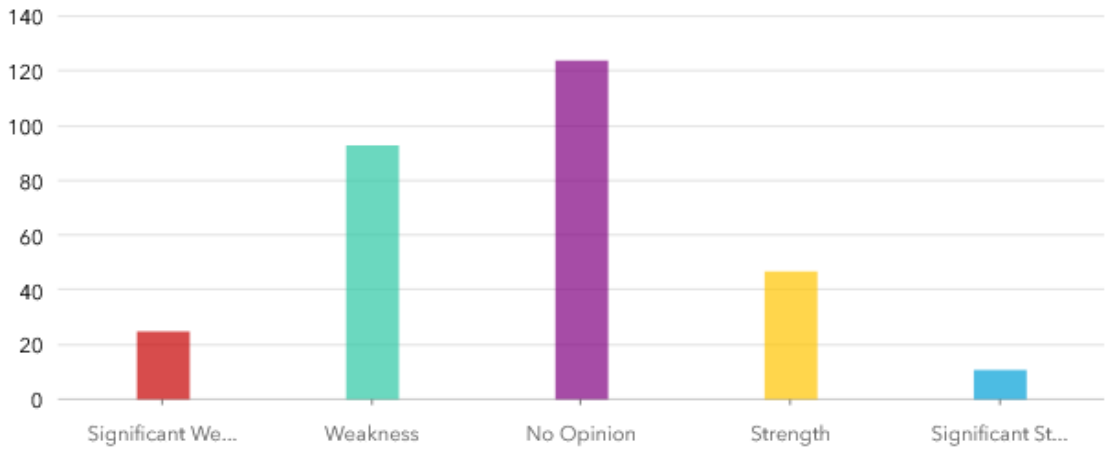
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	13	4.15%
Weakness	47	15.02%
No Opinion	116	37.06%
Strength	98	31.31%
Significant Strength	27	8.63%

Answered: 301 Skipped: 12

The community's efforts toward sustainability

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

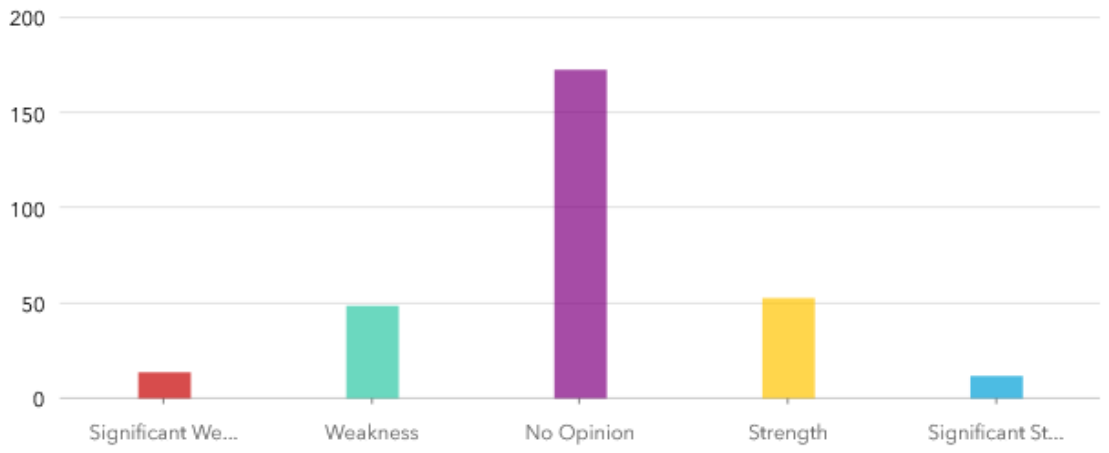
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	25	7.99%
Weakness	93	29.71%
No Opinion	124	39.62%
Strength	47	15.02%
Significant Strength	11	3.51%

Answered: 300 Skipped: 13

ADA accessibility of parks and recreational facilities

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Significant Weakness	14	4.47%
Weakness	49	15.65%
No Opinion	173	55.27%
Strength	53	16.93%
Significant Strength	12	3.83%

Answered: 301 Skipped: 12

What outdoor recreation destination do you commonly visit in the Town of Bedford, if any?

Word cloud



Hide table

Show responses

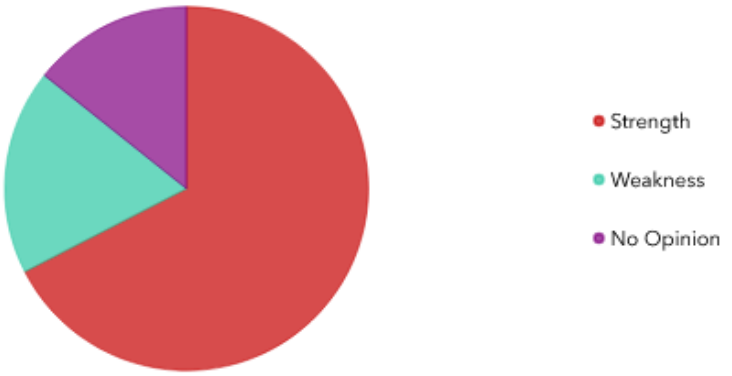
Word	Count
Park	113
Lake	75
Liberty	74
Creek	57
Falling	56
parks	31
town	28
park.	17
Peaks	16
Bedford	15
trails	13

Answered: 219 Skipped: 94

Transportation > Please identify whether each of the following transportation conditions in the Town of Bedford is a strength or a weakness.

Ability of major roadways to handle traffic

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

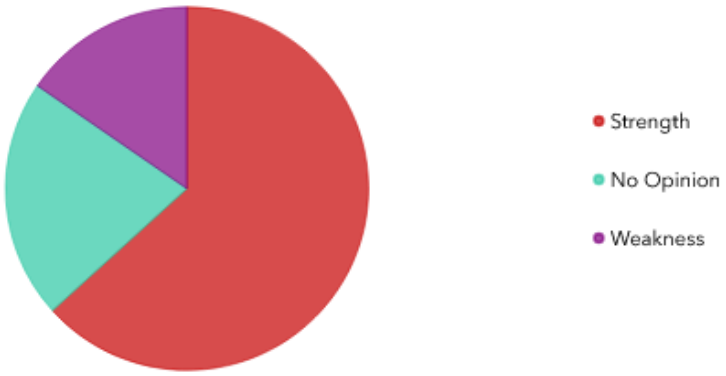
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	203	64.86%
Weakness	55	17.57%
No Opinion	43	13.74%

Answered: 301 Skipped: 12

Condition of roadways

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

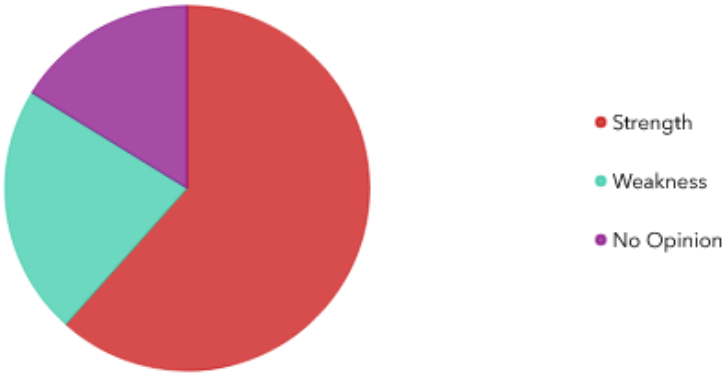
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	193	61.66%
No Opinion	65	20.77%
Weakness	47	15.02%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Traffic flow and congestion

Column Bar Pie Map

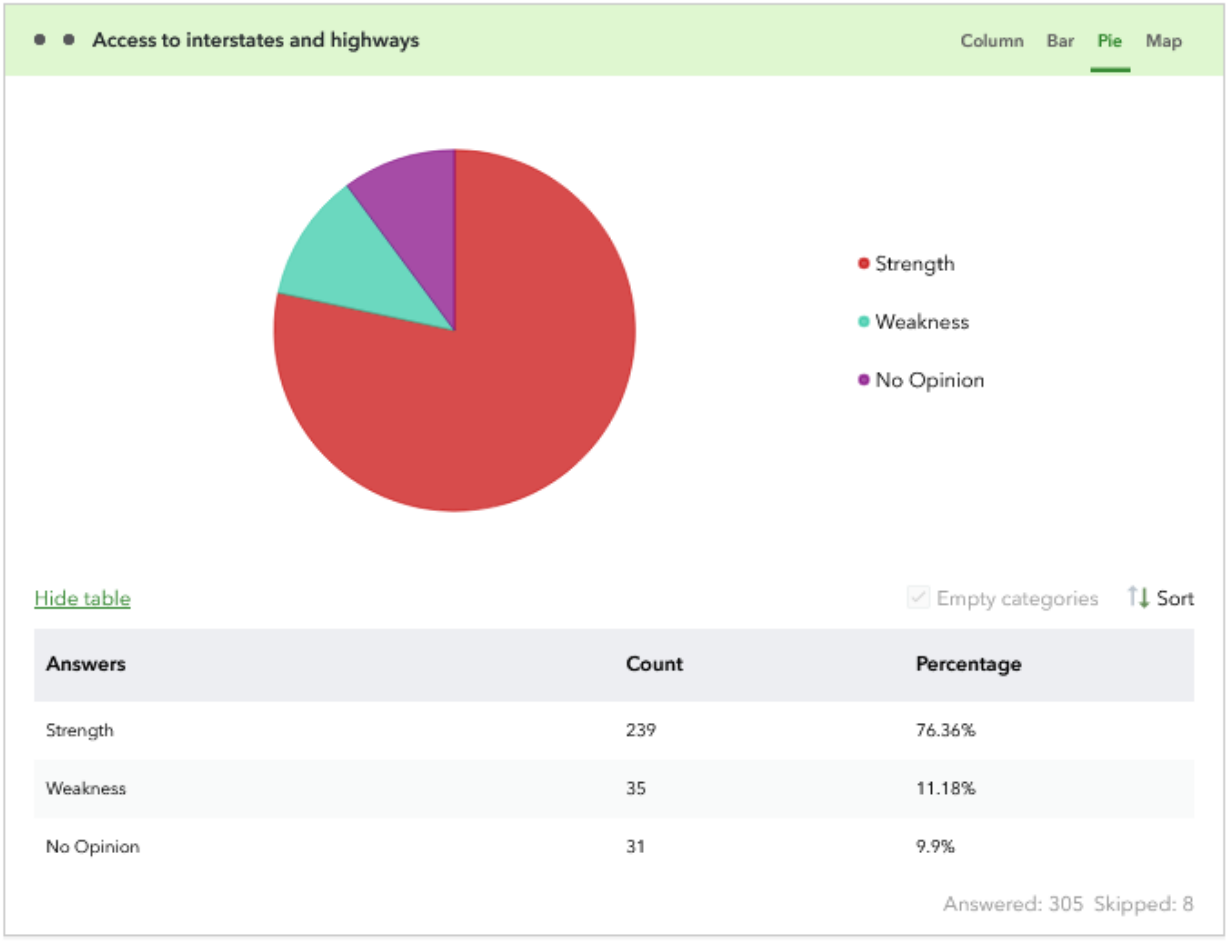


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	186	59.42%
Weakness	67	21.41%
No Opinion	49	15.65%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11



Hide table

Empty categories

Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	239	76.36%
Weakness	35	11.18%
No Opinion	31	9.9%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Sidewalks

Column Bar Pie Map



Strength

Weakness

No Opinion

Hide table

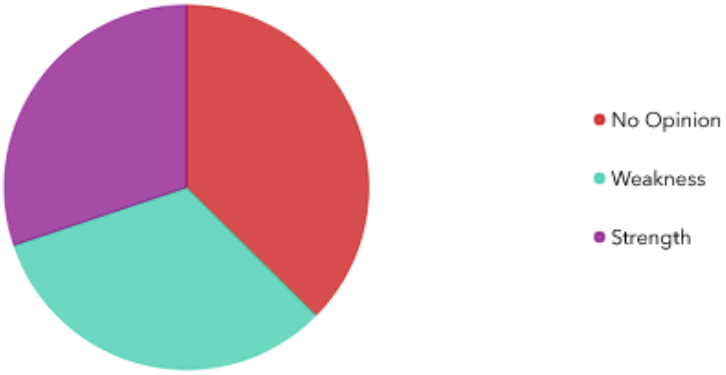
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	159	50.8%
Weakness	76	24.28%
No Opinion	70	22.36%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Pedestrian facilities

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

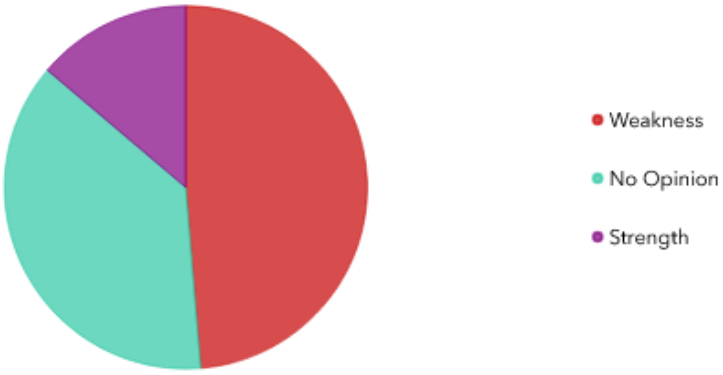
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
No Opinion	113	36.1%
Weakness	98	31.31%
Strength	91	29.07%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Bicycle facilities

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

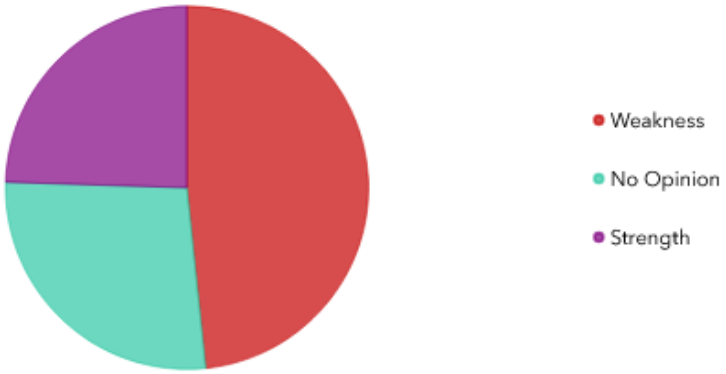
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	148	47.28%
No Opinion	114	36.42%
Strength	42	13.42%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

Greenways and trails

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	146	46.65%
No Opinion	82	26.2%
Strength	74	23.64%

Answered: 302 Skipped: 11

Transit options

Column Bar Pie Map



Weakness

No Opinion

Strength

Hide table

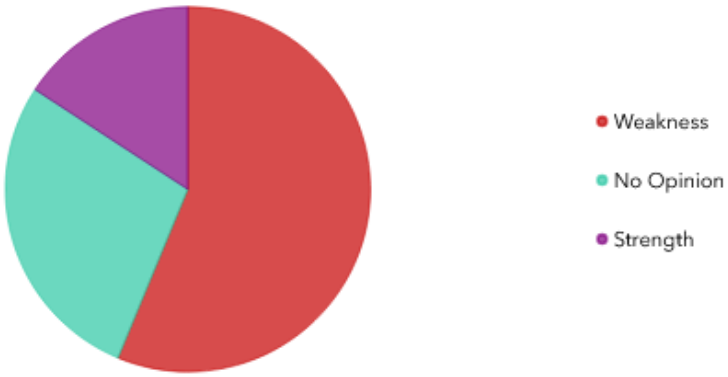
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	169	53.99%
No Opinion	93	29.71%
Strength	44	14.06%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

Access to regional transportation

Column Bar Pie Map

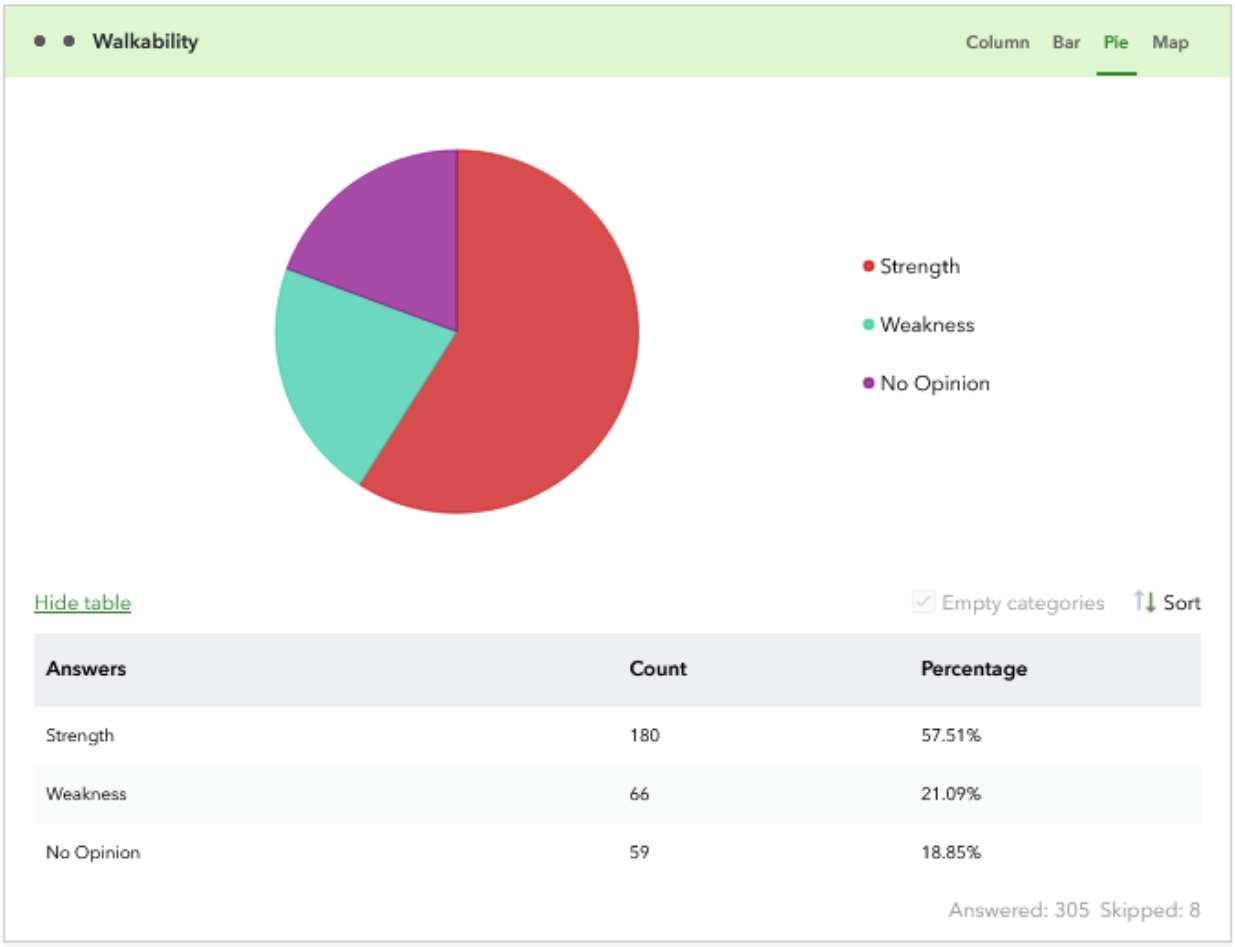


Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	171	54.63%
No Opinion	85	27.16%
Strength	48	15.34%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9



Hide table

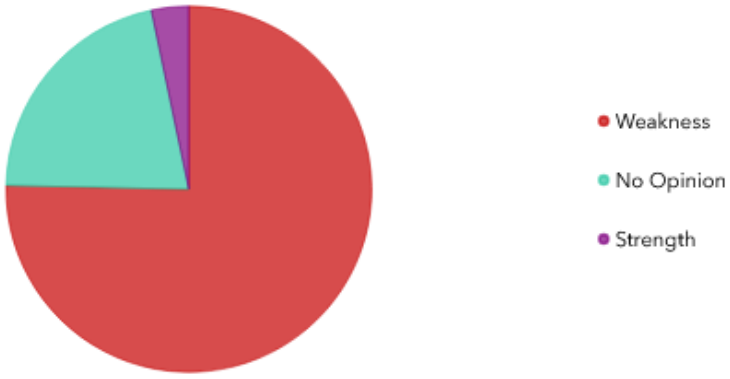
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Strength	180	57.51%
Weakness	66	21.09%
No Opinion	59	18.85%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

Lack of train station

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Weakness	229	73.16%
No Opinion	65	20.77%
Strength	10	3.19%

Answered: 304 Skipped: 9

How does the quality of life in the Town of Bedford today compare to what it was ten years... Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
About the same	150	47.92%
A little worse	91	29.07%
A little better	58	18.53%

Answered: 299 Skipped: 14

● What would improve quality of life in the Town of Bedford?

Word cloud



Hide table

Show responses

Word	Count
town	75
downtown	47
options	40
people	37
shopping	27
Bedford	27
community	25
businesses	23
restaurants	20
sidewalks	20
things	19

Answered: 243 Skipped: 70

If you have lived in the Town of Bedford for five years or less, what improvements would you like to see? Word cloud



Hide table

Show responses

Word	Count
town	32
businesses	20
N/A	15
downtown	15
town.	14
Bedford	13
buildings	12
shopping	11
lived	11
stores	10
people	9

Answered: 143 Skipped: 170

About You

Please select all that apply: Column Bar



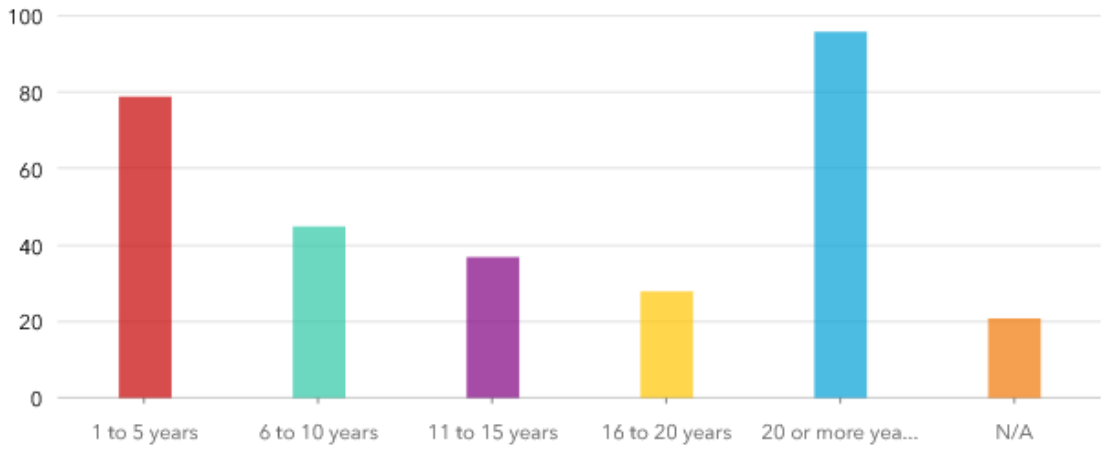
Hide table Other response Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
I own property in town	195	62.3%
I am a town resident	198	63.26%
I own or manage a business in town	42	13.42%
Other:	46	14.7%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

● How long have you lived, owned property, or owned a business in town?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

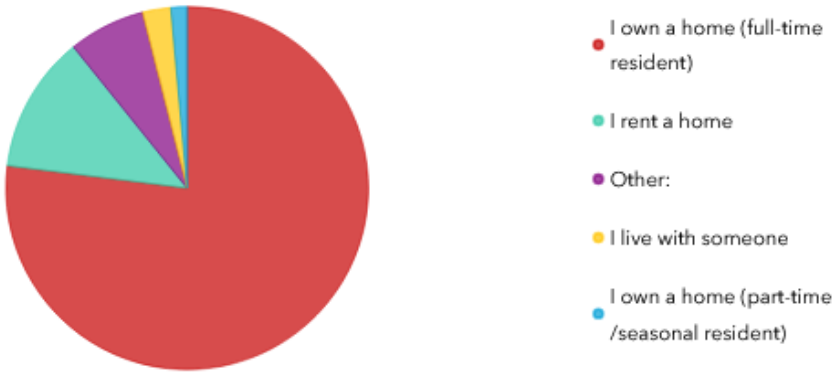
Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
1 to 5 years	79	25.24%
6 to 10 years	45	14.38%
11 to 15 years	37	11.82%
16 to 20 years	28	8.95%
20 or more years	96	30.67%
N/A	21	6.71%

Answered: 306 Skipped: 7

If you live in the Town of Bedford, which best describes your current housing situation?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

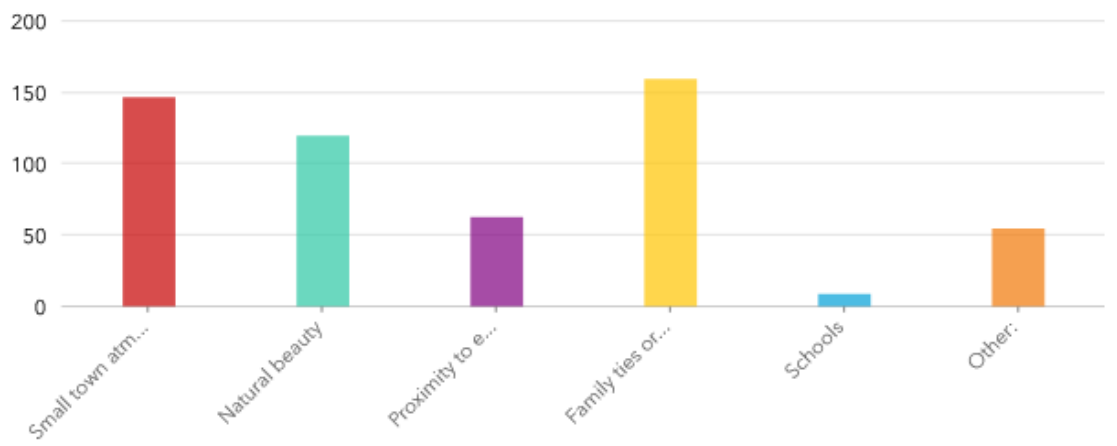
Other response Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
I own a home (full-time resident)	214	68.37%
I rent a home	34	10.86%
Other:	19	6.07%
I live with someone	7	2.24%
I own a home (part-time/seasonal resident)	4	1.28%

Answered: 278 Skipped: 35

● What drew you to Bedford?

Column Bar



Hide table

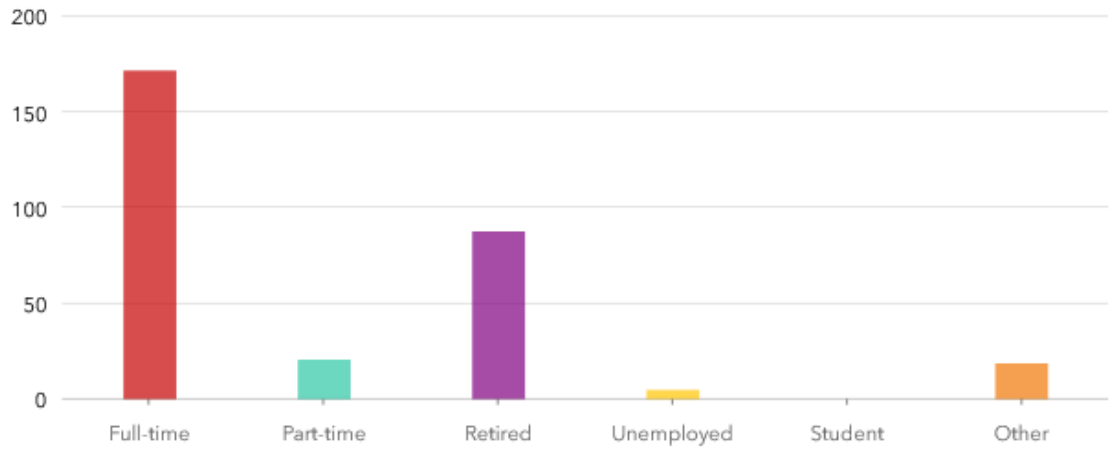
Other response Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Small town atmosphere	147	46.96%
Natural beauty	120	38.34%
Proximity to employment	63	20.13%
Family ties or raised here	160	51.12%
Schools	9	2.88%
Other:	55	17.57%

Answered: 307 Skipped: 6

● **OPTIONAL: What is your current employment status?**

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

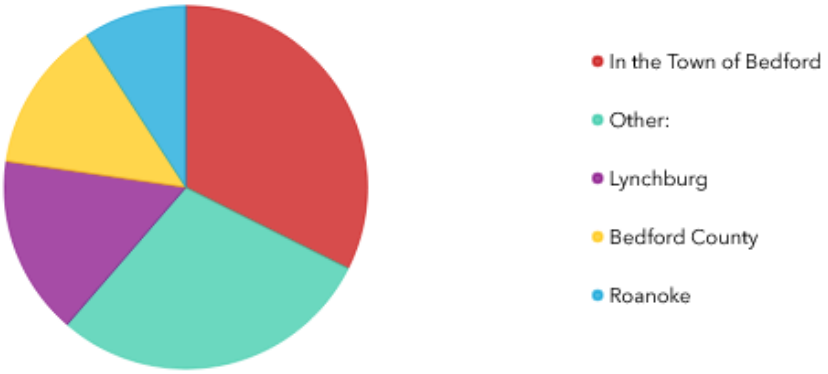
Other response | Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
Full-time	172	54.95%
Part-time	21	6.71%
Retired	88	28.12%
Unemployed	5	1.6%
Student	0	0%
Other	19	6.07%

Answered: 305 Skipped: 8

OPTIONAL: If employed, where do you work?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

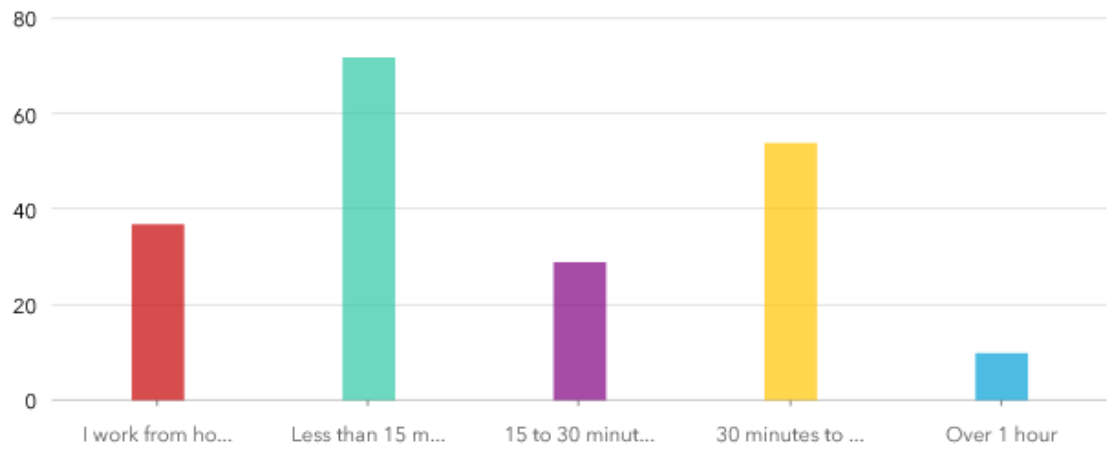
Other response Empty categories Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
In the Town of Bedford	67	21.41%
Other:	60	19.17%
Lynchburg	33	10.54%
Bedford County	28	8.95%
Roanoke	19	6.07%

Answered: 207 Skipped: 106

● **OPTIONAL: If employed, how long is your commute?**

Column | Bar | Pie | Map



Hide table

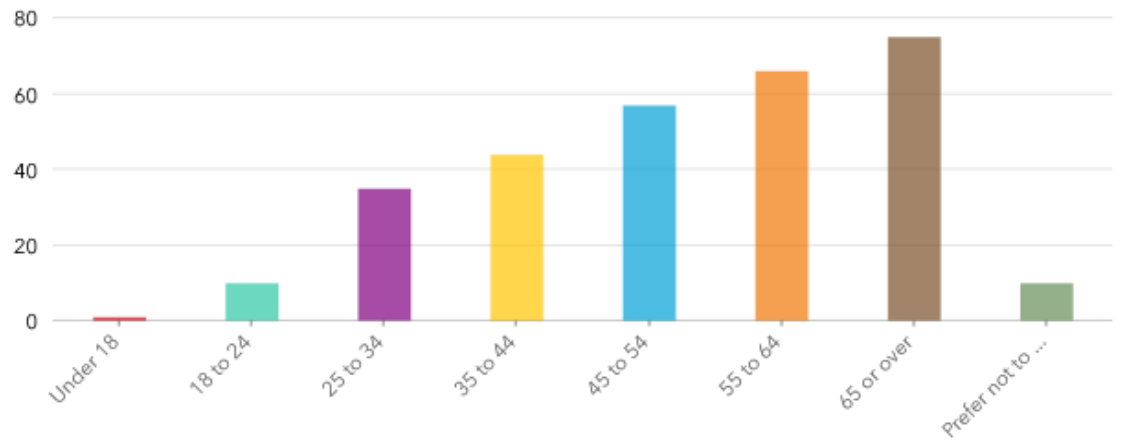
Empty categories | Sort

Answers	Count	Percentage
I work from home	37	11.82%
Less than 15 minutes	72	23%
15 to 30 minutes	29	9.27%
30 minutes to 1 hour	54	17.25%
Over 1 hour	10	3.19%

Answered: 202 Skipped: 111

● OPTIONAL: What is your age group?

Column Bar Pie Map



Hide table

Empty categories Sort

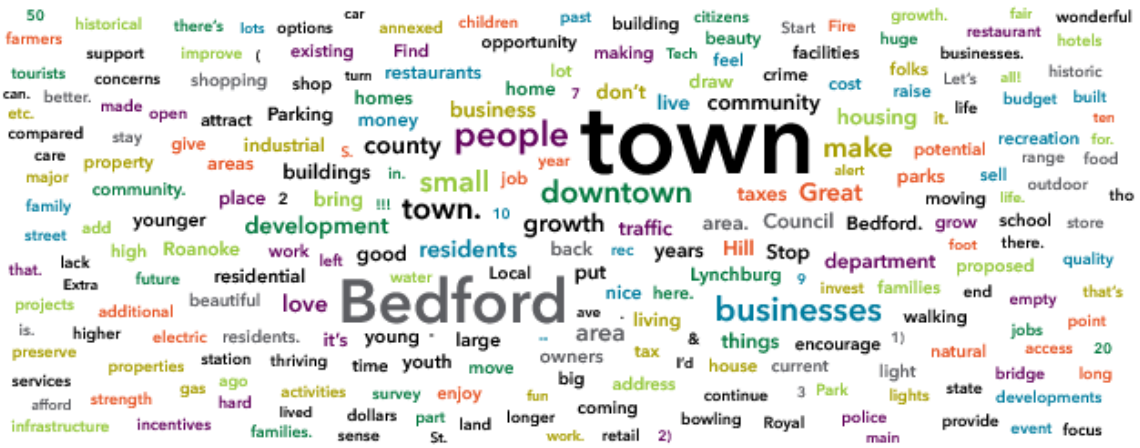
Answers	Count	Percentage
Under 18	1	0.32%
18 to 24	10	3.19%
25 to 34	35	11.18%
35 to 44	44	14.06%
45 to 54	57	18.21%
55 to 64	66	21.09%
65 or over	75	23.96%
Prefer not to say	10	3.19%

Answered: 298 Skipped: 15

Anything else?

- Do you have any opinions about the Town of Bedford that have not been addressed in these survey…

Word cloud



Hide table

Show responses

Word	Count
town	114
Bedford	63
people	29
businesses	27
downtown	23
town.	22
small	21
make	19
Great	15
county	15
growth	15

Answered: 153 Skipped: 160

Short-Answer Survey Responses

Question 1

What outdoor recreation destination do you commonly visit in the Town of Bedford, if any?

219 responses

- The Loop
- I would love to see more hiking trails, and really a focus on getting those in Bedford areas in which they can bike ride safely (a bike lane up to the Peaks would be so awesome for our town residents and those who come to our community to exercise). Also, more protected trials that are highlighted and an emphasis on health and well being in Bedford would be very nice.
- Recreational should be turned over to the County off Town Taxpayer's backs
- Sharp top
- Liberty Lake
- The garden by the library, Reynold's Park, Liberty Lake Park. Also visit the Peaks regularly and enjoy the view from town nearly every day. Proximity to the mountains is my favorite thing about recreation in Bedford.
- Wharton Garden
- Many bicyclist travel to Bedford to ride, no bike shops. More campground for campers traveling though or visiting D-Day and other events,
- Falling Creek Park- the other parks are not kept up with well at all. Liberty Lake Park is sketchy and always has random cars parked there doing who knows what. We need more parks and better upkeep with parks and playgrounds.
- None. Normally go to the Peaks
- Parks
- Downtown is all I've gotten to
- The Loop!
- Your survey doesn’t provide for comment on any of the above, and in spite of the title doesn’t list any facilities to rate. Liberty Lake Park is fine, but way too far out of town for ease of access; Co facility on Bedford Ave is awful and shd be the Town’s to manage , including a dog park; Centertown Park is nothing but hard surface with no shade. The YMCA provides most of the real rec opportunities for youth and adults in Town, but receives precious little support in return economically from the Town. We need them to do more in town, since we don’t have a parks/rec dept.
- Recreational fields, Liberty Lake Park, Falling Creek, Skate Park
- None
- Rec field. Liberty Lake Park
- Liberty Lake Park, Falling Creek Park, YMCA
- The Peaks
- Falling Creek

- Hiking trails, Clayton lake, DDay
- None.
- Liberty Lake Park, love the serenity if it.
- Falling Creek Park, Liberty Lake Park, Independence Park
- None
- There's the Liberty lake park which we love and the kids games through the school but I'm not aware of much else except center fest which is great.
- Falling Creek Park, Liberty lake park
- Patio at Beals. Downtown walks and loop.
  Need a dog park at Liberty Lake Park.
- All of the parks surrounding the town of Bedford.
- L
- None
- Liberty Lake Park for the events and festivals. The Loop, Although it would be better if the sidewalks were widened to accommodate the number of people who routinely walk that path.
- Falling creek
- The Library. Most incredible play area for small children.
- Falling Creek
- Peaks of Otter
- Disc golf parks. Falling Creek for walking even though that's not "in town".
- The public parks but they are not in good repair or kept up or clean
- Playgrounds and parks
- Greenwood park in town as it's near out home but equipment is aging and not well maintained. Typically spend more time in county parks and the woods/mountains surrounding town than parks/spaces in town itself.
- Falling creek and liberty lake parks
- Falling Creek Park
  Liberty Lake Park
- The Wharton Garden, Reynolds Park.
  Desperately need something for folks to do… bowling alley?????
- None in the town of Bedford, my children are grown, my husband and I travel outside of Bedford for outdoor recreation or spending time touring other autdoor destinations
- Falling creek park but this is in the county. I've visiting independence park a few times but I think this is maintained by the county as well.
- skate park, liberty lake park, library
- I walk the "Loop" because I can get some exercise in without major disruptions like crossing busy streets. I personally do not think we can afford to invest in parks or other outdoor recreational venues until we get a larger citizen base who would routinely utilize the spaces.

- None
- Liberty lake
- Parks and Ponds
- Liberty Lake
- Frisbee Park, but not for frisbee just walking.
- Falling creek park. It seriously needs new Equipment for children. It would be awsome to have a splash pad during summer as well.
- Trail liberty lake park daily
- Edmund Street Park
- The mountains are a huge draw! Would love to see more things catering to it— maybe shops with hiking gear, or bike rentals. Downtown could use bike lanes, paved walking/running trails, more local restaurants (dinner options), breweries, expanded farmer's market
- Liberty Lake Park
- The peaks of otter
- my main area outdoors is the loop in town
- I walk the track at Bedford Elementary
- None in town, county parks. I would like to see more outdoor pickleball courts in town
- Only Liberty Lake to see holiday lights. Haven't explored any other areas as I know nothing about them and I've lived here two years
- All of them at different times. I love them all!
- Liberty Lake Park
- Enjoy going downtown
- Liberty Lake Park, Falling Creek Park
- smith mountain lake
- None
- The outdoor festivities
- Liberty Lake Park
- There are parks but in the more urban areas, they are run down and inaccessible. No one wants to visit or take care of them.
- Liberty Lake Park
- Falling Creek Park
- Liberty Lake Park
- Parks, some of which could use upgrades, such as Greenwood
- Falling Creek Park
  Liberty Lake Park
- Visit Peaks of Otter most.
- Falling Creek Park,

- Bedford Gym
  YMCA
  Falling Creek Park
- Town pond
- Peaks of Otter, not in Town. In Town not much to visit.
- Peaks of Otter, Smith Mountain Lake, Youth parks. Should have more emphasis on town and near town eating facilities, both small and large. Need more eating facilities and major help in promoting by government, etc. (need to do study on what our restaurants bring to town and near town)
- Liberty Lake Park and DDay Memorial
- NA
- I hunt, so I visit the blue ridge parkway and our national forests frequently. I used to play rec sports, and back then (15-20 years ago), they thrived. Now we barely have rec sports participation anymore, which is honestly sad. Especially since I will be raising kids in this area in the very near future.
- none
- Liberty Lake
- None
- I walk the "Loop" almost daily
- Liberty Lake park
- Walk the Loop almost daily
- Library Park
- None, they offer very little for non- retired senior citizens.
- Liberty Lake Park
- N/a
- I walk the loop, or through Longwood Cemetery.
- Liberty lake park, little town players ball fields.

  It is a significant weakness that all of Bedfords town parks and playgrounds are only viably accessible by vehicle. It is hard to access them by foot or bike.
- Falling creek park is the nicest park that Bedford has, but a splash ground would be a wonderful addition to falling creek park for all bedford residents!
- Walking our streets, need more sidewalks in many neighborhoods not just Longwood Ave
- Falling creek, liberty lake, town rec fields, ynca
- Poplar Park, which I can't even really call a park because of its poor condition. I also semi frequently visit Greenwood. I never visit Liberty Lake except for the lights -- Falling Creek is my large park of choice. It is a significant weakness that the Town does not have a parks and rec dept like the County does, as there is no active promotion of parks and programs or no perceived active betterment of these facilities by public works.
- Claytor nature center. Falling creek

- Falling Creek Park. This is the only park I've visited that offers both walking, biking, AND running trails. I sincerely appreciate the ADA considerations of the existing parks, but there also needs to be consideration given to runners who would like access to safe paved trails away from cars. The current paved trails in town are limited in length and often are designed based on walkers only.
- Liberty Lake park
  basketball hoops
- Liberty Lake park.
- Liberty lake
- Parks to walk trails
- Liberty Lake Park
- D-day Memorial, liberty lake
- none
- We visit the parks a lot. Liberty lake, Falling Creek, and the Reynolds's memorial park. They could use some TLC. Both playgrounds need mulch. They aren't very ADA accessible. Reynolds's park has a broken bridge and downed trees.
- The kids park at the elementary school or the public park at the library
- N/a
- None.
- CenterFest
- We visit both LLP and Falling Creek Park.
- None
- Falling Creek Park
- My little sisters love Falling creek park as did I growing up.
- None
- Where the clock is downtown and area near library
- Non
- Falling Creek Park
- The Loop
- The County has the best programs for recreation. Their parks are the best anywhere. They are clean & always well maintained.
- All. So don't develop it and ruin the natural beauty and views. Bedford doesn't need to be Forest
- Falling Creek Park, Liberty Lake Park, Edmund Street Park
- We don't because there is not much. The Town needs a sports complex like the surrounding counties. This would support commonwealth games whether in Lynchburg or Roanoke. Would be a huge money maker. Then more restaurants and lodging would be needed.
- Liberty Lake Park when grandkids visit. There needs to be more to do.

- Liberty Lake Park
  Falling Creek Park
- Ball fields
- Falling creek park, sharp top mountain, otter creek, and farmers market
- Liberty Lake Park. The Loop...but mostly Falling Creek and the Peaks.
- Liberty Lake Park, Reynolds Park, Independence Park
- Liberty Park
- Peaks of Otter

  Park by BCNH
- None
- Library/Garden
- Walking the loop, Liberty Lake park
- Fall vreek
- all over
- Liberty lake park
  Falling creek park
- None
- Falling Creek best park
- Falling Creek Park if that's "town" (specifically the trails)
- Liberty Lake Park. But fix the dang slides. My taxes doubled in this past year. You should be able to afford it.
- YMCA
- Reynolds Park, Independence Park/disc-golf park. SML state park and Lake Abbott walking circle/Peaks of Otter outside of Bedford.
- Liberty lake park
- None
- Not a lot in town
- Liberty lake park
- Falling Park
- None
- None except to walk the loop area
- Peaks of otter trails
- Liberty Lake Park and others outside of town--SML & Falling Creek
- None. I wish there were nice and safe options. Parks in Bedford feel more like a place where drug deals take place than are frequented by those looking to enjoy the outdoors. Plus, none of the parks are enjoyable to walk, run, or bike.
- Liberty Lake
- Falling Creek Park
- FCP and LLP

- Liberty Lake Park, Falling Creek Park,
- Parks
- Not many. Need more for the children.
- Fallen creek or Liberty lake
- Parks, recreational fields
- Falling Creek Park, Liberty Lake Park
- We need more parks and better maintained parks. The loop at liberty lake would be a fantastic amenity but it is poorly maintained and falling apart. The natural beauty of the area is a strength that we don't take enough advantage of. Play to that. Grow the outdoor recreation offerings. A walking Greenway would be amazing. More outdoor spaces for all ages. Protect the outdoors and environment here.
- I really don't use or visit any of the available options, so honestly, my opinhere really doesn't count.
- Park
- We do not go to any of the parks and facilities in the town, but we do frequent those in the county!
- Liberty Lake Park
- Local playground
- Natural trails and mountains
- Community parks and state parks
- Town pond, Liberty Lake
- Falling Creek
- Falling creek
- Bedford County Rec Field
- Usually none.
- Llp
- None. The Y offers many programs, excellently run...but that's not the Town. Liberty Lake is well out of the way, and Centertown Park is a very hot, generally uninviting slab of concrete. And the Bedford Ave. park is controlled by the County, who do with it as they please.
- Peaks of otter
- Falling Creek Park, Liberty Lake Park (for Christmas light display)
- I frequent Reynolds Memorial Park with my dog, the creek there needs to be cleaned out and access to it needs to be added, my dog would love to get close and splash around.
- Liberty Lake Park
- walking 3 mile around Oakwood St./Library/Big Hill
- None
- none
- Liberty Lake Park
- Liberty Park

- Parks and ponds
- Falling Creek Park
- We walk the loop, but we have to go elsewhere to hike, bike, be near water, mountain climb, ski, skateboard...
- Parks. Peaks. Walking trails in town.
- Falling creek park. It has something to offer to the young and old.
  Need to beef up Liberty Lake park.
  You cannot walk through open fields without getting dog pooh on your shoe.
  Please provide "potty spots" for pets. I have not seen any doggy bag facilities for pet owners to pick up after their dogs. Perhaps I missed it???
  This does not happen often or not at all at Falling creek park and my grandkids and I romp through the grass to play frisbee etc.
- Liberty lake park.
- Community Parks
- Falling Creek Park. Greenwood park

  Cemetery
  Loop.
  Walk the streets.
  Some have sidewalks.
  Some don't.
- Peaks of otter
- Falling Creek Park
- NA
  I USED to go to summer films when they were in Bedford Elemtary field. Then they went to Falling Creek Park, & I am NOT a fan because it is not convenient or close & doesn't have community feel of being in school field.
- Usually none. Just not pleasant enough to be a draw. Eliminating property taxes would be better than trying to spend more on them
- Some of my favorite places are those owned by the county. They tend to do a better job.
- none
- Liberty Lake Park and Falling Creek Park
- None
- Peaks of Otter.
  Parks are great but NOT maintained. Reynolds's is always unkept.
- Liberty lake park but it needs repair really bad
- Montvale park because it has creekside trails. It's a beautiful area. Falling creek park is also visited often.
- Liberty Lake Park
- SML, Liberty Lake, Claytor

- Falling Creek park and Liberty Lake Park. Both are in great need of repairs and proper upkeep.
- None
- liberty lake park
- Not commonly, but enjoy the trail behind Peaks of Otter Lodge and playgrounds at Falling Creek Park. Also Warton Garden beside library.
- Falling creek and Peaks of Otter. I would visit Liberty park more, but it a little run down and could use some beautification.
- Parks. The walking trail maps are substandard, don't have the length of trails, or difficulty, trails are often poorly maintained. This has been the case for some years. I understand the disc golf trails are generating county income but these long time walking/hiking trails are neglected.
- Walking paths at Liberty Lake Park

Question 2

Do you have any opinions about the Town of Bedford that have not been addressed in these survey questions?

153 responses

- Either Sell the Electric Department or get new management and remove all items that the County is to cover. Stop building houses or financing restaurants and retail small businesses doomed to fail.
- Survey to dam long
- Would love to collaborate on some vision planning on regards to the Cloverlea Foundation and how we can collaborate for ideas. www.cloverleafoundation.org
- Would be supportive of growth, residential and industrial in the town .
- It is a beautiful town but very slow to grow it appears. Bedford can still be a small town but needs growth to attract more businesses and other facilities to the area so residents can do and get everything they need in Bedford instead of having to travel to Lynchburg or Roanoke.
- Put a right hand turn lane coming from Burger King on Longwood at the intersection of Longwood and independence. Put a light at the intersection of bridge and 43 by the old middle school.
- I love the generosity of kindness of the people. Would like more access to helping people and the animal shelter.
- Again, your survey fails re employment; you never mention that one might be self-employed; that might be interesting data to collect, particularly to compare to a thriving community like Floyd, where self-employment is almost the norm.
  In my opinion, among so many issues, the town needs to improve relations with the County, which to our detriment, I think, is huge, and far more focused on everything but the Town. Our 2 Supervisors act as tho they have no constituents in the Town, and I don't see any effort to hold them to account for this oversight.
  We desperately need forward thinking, aggressive leadership willing to invest in projects that may have a big payoff down the road (Rocky Mount VA has done this and compared to Bedford is fluorishing, even tho it's 1/3 smaller). The more we invest now to address these major shortcomings the better the future payoff, not least of which is that our best and brightest children won't feel the need to leave Bedford at the first opportunity.
- Need new blood in the decision making of what is best. Too much my way or no way little cliques.
- I would love to see better town character. We should have prettier murals. We should redesign our town flag to look better. All street signs in Centertown should have a town of Bedford logo. Little details everywhere to add to small town charm.
- We've got hotels under construction, but very little in town worth visiting. The hotels will struggle if the state of downtown doesn't improve

- Would like to see empty downtown businesses full. Downtown revitalized. Maybe grants offered to bring businesses in.
- Keep the natural beauty of the elks home farm land a farm. Not a solar farm….
- Need to address job openings in town and pay. Also need to address how to attract more residents into town rather than just lower cost of living for commuters to Roanoke/Lynchburg
- Please keep us small and feeling like "hometown." That IS what makes Bedford special!!
- No migrants or illegals! They only bring I'm drugs and crime. Bring a good department store and some decent restaurants that are open past 2:00 p.m.
- This is a great survey and I'd love to be a part of the growth and change here.
- It is a good place to raise children. The crime rate is extremely low. We need housing but not to add to the congestion or the crime rate. We need more employment for average workers.
- Would like to see more woman in leadership positions on Town Council.
  Let residents vote and approve public mural designs and concepts before they are applied and installed on historic downtown buildings, assuring the are keeping with the historic significance of the town.
- I realize I am not a person who lives in the town, but I love the quaintness feel of the town. I would love to see something more substantial for the Bedford Boys, embracing the history of the town through the years. The downtown area needs more stores and eateries, a bigger farmers market. The antique shops are fun and I do enjoy visiting them, but there is not much else to do to make the drive worthwhile. Something that would draw someone to come on a Saturday and shop the downtown area. This is not just a Bedford issue, but I wish there was a way to know about events that are happening in the area. We do seem to learn more about the events because of the Bedford Bulletin that we recently subscribed too and enjoy. Bedford could use a bowling alley, mini golf course, or something of that nature for families to enjoy. The hiking and disc golf and such are great, but would like to see more options. Better advertisement and promotion of the existing restaurants
- No
- Preserving the character, aesthetics, and sense of community in Bedford, while accommodating growth, is paramount. Thoughtful development that accommodates the needs of a range of people and priorities, and promotes the integration of newcomers into the community is essential to preserve the unique character of the town of Bedford. ensuring that new development meets these criteria should be an imperative for the town planning commission and the town council. The current proposed development at Governors Hill, for example, does not meet these criteria. It should be re-envisioned in a way that allows it to be integrated into the existing community and become a thriving neighborhood as opposed to an isolated, congested area that is disconnected from the town and community where it is proposed to be built.
- Can't seem to progress.

- When we first looked to move here, downtown had more businesses, Peebles department store was here. It looked as if a shopping mall (off 460) was being planned. Local hospital. In the 7 years, we have seen businesses close, buildings deteriorate and downtown become a ghost town. Doctors left and the health care now takes months to be seen, meanwhile you pray your health problem doesn't get worst or you die.
  We love the location and history of this area. It just needs a good kick in the pants to refresh and grow.
- I think we need some common sense in regards to handling of budgets, a town council that works to benefit the people and not themselves/their businesses (there are a few like that), they also need to be transparent in what they're spending our taxes on, they need to light a fire under the developer who is converting the middle school to make some real progress and complete the project. They need to give value to our commercial properties when selling to developers instead of selling them at rock bottom prices. So much money has been wasted over the years and this is why we're in the state of disrepair we're in. We are one of the most beautiful areas at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains- we should be drawing tourists in but instead, they just drive right on by and dine, lodge, entertain themselves in Lynchburg or Roanoke.
- Bedford needs to invest in the youth of the town and have things to do with kids when it's winter and the parks aren't really an option
- Identity is both a strength and weakness for us. We're a Christmas town while the lights are up, but nothing else for the other ~11 months of the year. We're a WW2 town because of the D-Day memorial, but again, we don't really lean into that. We're in the foothills of the mountains and we have beautiful views of the peaks, but I haven't seen much tourism economy as a result of that.
- The town needs to have more event venues that do not have to serve alcohol.
  The town needs more facilities available for the youth that are not involved with sports or drama.
  The town needs a skating rink / laser tag.
  The town needs a bowling alley.
  The town needs a dance hall.
- Investigate the current Fire Chief!
- Police Department needs to be more community oriented. I've never meet the chief. But I guess that's a mute point since he's leaving.
- Most of the meetings I've attended between being annexed and more recent meetings everyone is focused on revitalization of the downtown area. When most of the jobs that this creates are seasonal or low paying. I'm sure Walmart is the biggest employer besides the hospital and I think what Bedford needs are some industrial jobs. That way the younger generations can start a career without commuting to Lynchburg or Roanoke everyday. With the new welding school most of the people who graduate from it will have to commute to work. I'm sure it's difficult to attract this kind of business but the town now has at least two industrial parks and with the right incentives and I think you could

attract a big time employer. Maybe go the route of the county and build a shell building that a corporation can buy and use. I know there's also a lot of land behind royal farms where a potential business could go with easy access to 460. If you want feel free to reach me at [redacted email]

- my home is one house over the town limits so i cannot vote in town elections. I own and operate a business within the town of Bedford. I'd like an amendment to the rule to allow business owners the right to vote in town elections.
- Our police department does a great job keeping us safe from crime and other activities, but I do think they are remiss in traffic enforcement.
- I think the cost of electricity is way too high! It should not cost me over $300 a month to have my house at a reasonable temperature in the winter.
- Keep it the charming place it is and keep corporate development out.
- If you keep pushing for faster, growth of The town of Bedford, it will no longer be a little town nor the best kept secret around.
- No
- Whose bright idea was it to lower the speed limits. It makes it difficult to commute in town and causes an increase in traffic. Why wasn't the residents asked about this ?
- I have owned Sharp Top Crossfit in town for 10 years, and I have seen an upward trend in people being more active and healthy. I believe we have a lot of room for growth in that space, especially tied to the exceptional outdoor activities that are available here. My business has also felt largely ignored by the town. We are not promoted in any way, shape, or form, and we do a lot in our community. We participate in every local event, not just 5k's. We started a 501c-3 called Hero Games Charity that supports and honors gold star families, with an annual event at Johnson's Orchard, and it is a struggle to even get the newspaper to do an article about it. So I think the town can do a better job of knowing the great things that are already happening in the community, and showcasing them.
- do not agree with this new neighborhood that has been proposed with houses crammed into a small area.
- Please try to give Bedford a well rounded atmosphere. Stop trying to make it look like a cookie cutter house market that will just become a run down area that attracts no one. We NEED businesses here that are not antique malls. Watch the TV show Hometown on HGTV and see how they have improved not only the older homes but have made their downtown a thriving place to go visit and spend time with your neighbors. Help residents develop businesses in town that bring in people such as a coffee shop, a bakery, a gift store, etc. I am seriously considering (looking) moving out of town because of the way the Economic Development in Bedford is now being handled. I have actually had people say they were considering moving here but not any more after hearing about the new developments planned and being considered. They don't want to buy a home to have its value go down to nothing. Keep us a small quaint town, please!!!!
- I want to address the proposed housing development connected to Governor's Hill. I own a rental property there. While I am all in for new housing in Bedford I am against

anymore traffic in that area. There are already way too many car coming in the back entrance from Harmony and "ranch land" up the hill because you neutered that entrance from 460. Governor's Hill is a family oriented walkable neighborhood and just can't handle that type of traffic and still be safe. If the new planned development can connect to 122 it absolutely should. Pulling out on Burks Hill from Industrial Ave is harrowing enough as it is. You are going to have major traffic concerns that area is not prepared to handle as it.

- Yes. The proposed new homes behind Governor's Hill should not be so close to existing Phase 2 homes and entrance and exits need to be from the state maintained Burk's Hill Rd, not the existing Governor's Hill toads.
- Hope the most balanced decisions are made for the community.
- Yes. Sewage/water and trash removal shouldn't be mandatory. It should be optional
- Planning and Econ Development is solely interested in packing in the homes without even viewing an area or doing any research about the services that will be needed!

  It's all about the money, never about the residents that live in an area. It seems to be run by northerners who want to make our small town like what they left behind.
- Electric and sanitation utilities are wonderful. We would benefit from a curbside recycling program.
- PUT SOMEONE UNDER COVER AS AN EMPLOYEE IN THE ELKS HOME AS AN EMPLOYEE, THEY WILL REVEAL WHAT THE MANAGEMENT IS TRULY LIKE . PLEASE PLEASE .
- Bedford needs more downtown to draw people there, maybe entertainment, more varied shopping, walking distance eating establishments.
- Bedford is a wonderful community and the challenge will be to maintain the community feeling and spirit while managing smart growth. One of the ways to preserve that strength is to think about how to develop mixed use areas that integrate housing, retail, and small business facilities. A mixture of housing options together, including single-family homes, duplexes, and garden-apartments, with areas for playgrounds, parks, and walking trails, will provide a range of price points and encourage a range of family sizes, ages, and compositions (this would be a good model for Governors Hill, for example). This promotes development of neighborhoods and communities which reflect the strength and tradition of Bedford. Providing incentives for clean industry and training the youth for jobs of the future (in tech and healthcare, for example) will enable young people to stay and raise their families here.
- Get rid of the abandoned gas station by Food Lion!
- I think the taxes and how much we pay for power and water uses our taxes are a miss.
- Additional residential housing could support additional businesses, preferably some businesses that stay open past 9 and can support and bring in younger generations. Younger generations complain of nothing to do in Bedford, and they're not wrong, so they move away. Downtown businesses could be better supported with additional parking, such as making Bridge Street one way between Main and Washington for more pull-in

parking on one side. There is less downtown parking now with the newest owners of the bank lot prohibiting parking for downtown customers. I rarely visit downtown businesses due to parking challenges.

- Need more options for mental health and addiction services.
- Landscaping in new development, predestrian (individual and youth access to remote areas of town). Almost no youth incentives or young married age groups to circulate to business without driving.
- NA
- More stop signs, roundabouts or traffic lights are needed at intersections where there is pass-through traffic or turning left onto a major road.
- Need stop lights at the end of industrial ave on burks hill. And at that mess in front of Royal farms and Hardee's on 460. We did not need a bicycle lane on Burks hill. That pissed a bunch of money away!!!
- I would like to see more commercial and industrial development to provide 1) local jobs, 2) a more diverse tax base (rather than relying almost exclusively on residential tax base).

[This survey entered by Mary Zirkle on 11/15/24 at 2:10pm from a printed survey]

- I actually hate this town so much that I can't even put words to it. I think everyone here is incredibly stupid, there's nothing to do, and it's ugly. I'm a photographer that can't find a single thing to photograph here. It's just sad.
- The Police facility and administrative offices need to be replaced
- It is time for younger blood on the Town council, the same old white men end up there every election and they do nothing for the town!
- Taxes are high which would be tolerable if the investment in beautification and infrastructure were addressed. Also, the absorbent cost for new water and sewer hook ups is absurd. If Bedford is going to continue to be a great place to live we need to keep the best interest of the residents in mind when making budget decisions.
- Yes, get the younger folks in office at the town of Bedford. Retire the older folks who are currently in office managing the town. The town needs to be built up.
- I do not want to see more lower-income housing or apartments move in to the town. I like living here because it is quiet and I feel safe, and I don't want that to change by more people coming in. I think investing in the people and businesses that are already here is a better way to improve the town.
- I love that you preserve the natural beauty of the area. The trees and structures are beautiful and well worth preserving. I also appreciate that lights in town are not LED and they are angled downward to light the intended area and not interfere with the wildlife.
- Make Bedford vibrant! It’s so boring and only caters to older generations. Bedford is a nice place to live but it needs to be more fun and vibrant!
- Bedford is beautiful! I have lived here my whole life. But I am seriously thinking about moving for the future of my 2 daughters and myself.It is a nice town for retired residents. But for all the other residents, it is not that great for us.If you want people to continue to

live in Bedford and help it to grow, I would definitely update and add a lot of things as I have mentioned above. I love the town of Bedford, but it needs some work.

- I would like to have a way to know when town meetings are, school board, town council. Maybe put that info in our electric bill.
- Revert the town back to a city, bring it back to its hay days in the 90's. Youth recreation sports in the town are awful.
- Mary is doing a wonderful job!!!!

  Also, young people and young families are the key. According to Cardinal News, Bedford is the fastest growing county west of Richmond but we are also an incredibly aging population. Most of this growth is in Forest and SML -- but it impacts the Town too. How can we harness this momentum encourage people to spend their time and dollars in Town? If outdoor recreation is a key draw of Bedford, how can we elevate our parks to compete with the county's? How can we convince business owners to set up shop here? How can we convince property owners to sell or rent their properties affordable? How can we convince current business owners and community leaders to work together for the advancement of our town and area?Are these things possible: I don't know. But they are the key!
- Quit filling the town with housing. It doesn't make the tax revenue that businesses will after town services, schools and utilities are factored in. The beauts that was is fading away turning into homes.
- Personal property taxes are too high.
- Rt 460 Town of Bedford at the new Royal Farms Conv Store... There is a desperate need for a traffic light there (like the one at Lowes)! Very dangerous as you have Royal Farms. Hardees, Hotel, dentist, Aqua Pros and another building being built, you have the traffic coming out of Town and Country Subdivision (over 200 homes, nursing home) also and cars making U Turns! **Cars/Tractor trailers going East bound fly through there and pop over the hill just as you pull out to go to the median strip crossover. Like playing chicken!
- Many light industry in town has large property with very little benefit to residents.
  Old factory buildings not in use should be condemned and removed.
  Many buildings in the center of town that appear to be multi use are not being used as intended. Likely the internal condition is sub par and rent is over priced.
- Yes I do, we take these surveys but yet we don't see any evidence of what the town residents has asked for, for years. Unless we address opportunities for people to stay here, we will never see growth. It will always be a grandpa grandma town. Schools have less students because of no opportunities for employment. Or things to do for families.
- Bedford needs to fill the empty storefronts in Centertown.
- I'm not from here originally but my husband is. Bedford has so much to offer. I hope it stays the best little town and not turned into a large urban area.
- We need more stores or fast foods that aren't on the highway!

- We do not need a train station, there's not enough businesses or transportation resources to draw in people.
- When I shop in Lynchburg or Roanoke I appreciate living in the little Town of Bedord.....much less traffic and slower lifestyle....
- I have some concerns about the school system; specifically the high school age. I would like to see further development of the Susie Gibson Tech Center to help us give the young people of our area the skills they need to find a job in the area, and ultimately become productive citizens of our Town.
  I would like to express my concern with the cost and quality of water. My water bill is much higher than other municipalities. The quality of the water is not as good as it was ten years ago.
- I would like to see the fire dept and rescue squad get paid
- We sent our concerns in a separate statement to you about being taxed twice as an annexed town resident. Previously when we checked the above box about being a resident 20 years or more, we have lived in the county that long & have been annexed this past year into the town.
- My family and I live across from the elks home field. There is talk about building around 100 homes there. The beauty that this will take away from our street breaks my heart. My parents have discussed moving if this were to happen. Living in this house all my life, it makes me very upset to think about moving because people are trying to make Bedford "better". In reality I think it would hurt it more than help it. I love Bedford and I don't want to see its beauty taken away.
- Small town ideas that prevents new invocations and ideas.
- Religion diversity and/or lack of and a senior citizen center would be an asset. Also, more housing or facilities for aging in place.
- Bedford seems to give the appearance of 10 projects started and all of them halfway finished. If Bedford had a building code that would require certain style of buildings to be built it would remove some of that eclectic feel where buildings from the 70s and '80s are put right beside from the 1900s and late 1800s this would give more historical pool for tourists and a sense of community. Think Williamsburg. (Not the historical area). Bedford needs infrastructure that can handle larger residential areas than currently exist also with today's world strife the infrastructure needs to be hardened from hackers environmental issues and terrorist attacks (think the hacking that caused the gas shortages in Virginia for a while or the snow storms in Texas that caused all the solar panels and windmills to shut down) walking around Bedford is nice but where do you park the parking area is completely surrounded by buildings and outside tourists don't know where to go signage is small and scarce
- It is utterly stupid to put a circle over by Food Lion. Circles are nothing but accidents waiting to happen. Years ago New Jersey torn up all their circles and replaced them with traffic signals. Stop wasting taxpayers money on nonsense.
- I take these surveys & nothing ever happens. Thousands if dollars spent for nothing. Koda

- It's fine the way it is. People move here for a reason. Bedford doesn't have to be a things to all people
- Please, please work on investing in our kids.
- The Town needs new council members. The old guard and the good ole boy system needs gone. The Town needs to focus on industrial development to bring high paying jobs so our younger generation does not leave. We need to create tax base NOT new high density residential developments.
- Refurbish area where Rubatex was.
  Need more free downtown parking.
- No
- I would like to see the town busy exoabd it's area
- Good luck. It's gonna be hard to jump start such a small town.
- No
- The board of supervisors and the council need to begin to work together and quite the fighting! If not both the town and county will continue to decline.
- Please change NOTHING !!! It is wonderful a little lovely town.
- J
- Bedford is a lovely down and I like supporting our local businesses. But, if you need to go clothes shopping or find a nice restaurant you have to head to Lynchburg.
- Good luck with your efforts. You have a big challenge.
- Bedford is a nice town that needs to promote its town and an encourage new entrepreneurs to open restaurants and new businesses.

  We also need new developments to attract the 30-40and 50 year old families.
- Revitalize downtown!!!!!
- Eliminate double taxation and poor management.
- I just want to say how much I love and care about what happens to this town. I urge you to listen to town members. Thank you for the opportunity to complete this survey.
- Lower personal property taxes!!!
- None
- Growth in Bedford is not necessary. Everything the town needs, already exists if used wisely and cared for…
- So tired of no restaurant variety and too many antique stores. Why did little Caesar's leave? People relied on that one for being budget friendly.
- Unincorporate town and go back to being part of county
- Extra taxes for any future projects would not be welcome in my opinion. Let the private businesses pay their way. Big cities always jack up the cost of living there, so it would harm current and somewhat poorer folks and ruin the small town advantages.
- Bedford has great potential. Would love to see historic downtown, lofts, revamped walking block w outdoor cafe space

- I caution the town not to sell out to developers the way Forest did. But also, not shoot down things that would provide growth for the town. Developers who want to take down every tree and cram as many housing units as possible is not what this town needs. The natural beauty we have is a huge draw so preservation of that is important. At the same time, a town of our size must also be growth oriented looking for ways to draw new businesses and residents to the area. Amenities such as parks, sidewalks, and greenways are a draw that highlight Bedford's natural beauty. Also, amenities such as more local restaurants and businesses to make residents not have to feel like to have to constantly go to Lynchburg or Roanoke is a draw. Finally, forcing business owners to fix or sell the unused storefronts downtown would solve two problems. First, get rid of a huge eyesore and the appearance that we live in a dying town. And secondly, to allow new businesses to come to town.
- Need an honest Town Council and no county taxes.
- With appreciation to the hard work town employees and the folks at the chamber put in for the town, let me just say that - We are at the foot of the D-Day Memorial. That our main streets are not thriving and bustling thoroughfares Monday through Friday is a disgrace to the memories and remaining families of the Bedford Boys. The sacrifies this town made to continue on in the face of that tragedy deserve more on our part to fill the empty spaces, to entice new businesses to Bedford, to penalize the owners of these buildings who can't seem to get on board with what it means to be a part of a town like Bedford. Visitors to the memorial who leave a piece of themselves in that place should be able to drive into town and somehow be lifted up by what they discover here, not disappointed in the lack of options and shuttered shops. We can make this better. I know we can. And sooner than in 20 years. Thank you for the opportunity to voice an opinion.
- I would prefer Bedford keeps its small-town charm
- Bedford has more to offer than most all our neigbors. Nicole (at the Visitors Center) is doing more for Bedford than any of the other agencies...She is to be commended....she's always out there promoting Bedford! What is the Town doing to try to make it better??? How about the County???? THATS the problem! We have lots of land....we have lots on empty industrial parks available.... But no one is going to come unless you figure out a way to lure them....make consessions, intice them, do SOMETHING before our little Town shrivels up and dies. People come here in droves....what we need is someone, something, ANYTHING to make them stay!
- I love the history and emphasis on preserving the past!
- Businesses that come to Bedford typically don't stay long and/or don't cater to consumer demand or interest. Also Shentel, and Bedford Electric have a monopoly in the area and often times use that to their advantage when it comes to customer wants and needs.
- No
- Lack of adequate Parking for Disabled to shop/dine, Restaurants having to close because of lack of workers;
- We want "In God we Trust" put back on the police cars.

- It's a great town that seems stuck in the past and doesn't embrace the natural beauty of the area as well as it should. We don't need another Hardee's or gas station, we need outdoor spaces and things for the children/teens to do.
- Current management and council seem to focus on residential growth and not commercial growth.

  Why not ask if residents would like to see the town work closely with the county to reduce the duplication of services and reduce taxes.
- The County Rec department does a great job with the above items, is there a recreation department in the town? The town facilities like Liberty Lake Park could use updates. The thought of the town having a recreation department is laughable! The questions about the parks and rec pertain to the county and not the town. When the town reverted from the city status, the parks and rec department was done away with. Do better with making your citizens know what facilities are yours and what belong to the county because as stated before, the county rec is doing a great job and their plans to make improvements to their facilities are much anticipated! Town council is a joke as well! Members on the council fighting with builders during a meeting, acting like children is not professional at all! Do better with listening to the citizens and not base votes on your own agenda.
- Creating more activities for children specifically during rainy days. More opportunity for young entrepreneurs to grow businesses and more opportunity for younger individuals to improve town, life and community.
- No
- I very much would like an Amtrak stop in town to get around.
  Multi family & large businesses must be placed on the edge of town to stop congestion.
- Bring small businesses to downtown, make it easier for people to shop downtown stop giving money to Large Corporations!
  Make downtown more inviting to ALL!

  Think of how to attract families, by having activities for. Holdren in teens. Especially in summer. Movies in park or farmers market, open up duck pin alert on S. Bridge St. Give incentive for people to shop downtown bring back small town atmosphere in Downtown area!
- Twenty years ago Bedford was a serious contender in the All American Cities competition in Kansas City. Now? Hardly. The Town administration and Council no longer have the vision and enthusiasm to make us a great town. Maybe these individuals are waiting for an Amtrak station to jump start our community...and maybe it will, tho with our present lackluster attitude the subsequent growth may be out of our hands at that point. As pointed out earlier, most of the visible improvements in our community are coming from non-profits, not the Town Admin. At some point we need to roll the dice and invest money where it can have a serious positive payback...maybe even, God forbid, raise taxes in order to allow our fair and beautiful town to begin to achieve the potential quality of life (and

economic vitality!) that might actually make our children want to return here to live and raise their own families.

- Bedford has a lot going for it. I enjoy the farmers market. Would be nice if we had more options to draw in educated workers. If the town would offer tax breaks to lure higher end employers to the community. Like engineering firms or IT businesses.
- I believe that Bedford will be the next growing residential area for commuters to Roanoke and Lynchburg. I think that slow growth is good. I also think that young married professionals will be looking at Bedford for the slower pace and good schools.
- The 25mph speed traps on Longwood and Oakwood are unnecessary and only encourage harassment by Brooks and Sperberg. Our resources could be better invested.
- I think more focus needs to be put on residential concerns, and not just commercial.
- Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this survey. I love Bedford and want it to remain a clean, safe and peaceful place for everyone to enjoy!
- Most of is live here because of the small town atmosphere. Most of us do not want to turn Bedford into Forest or Lynchburg!
- I think in my opinion you need to stop advertising for Big Corporate hotels and businesses and encourage small business that is sustainable to our hometown.
  Our crime rate compared to other towns is great! I have no fear walking the loop, Reynolds park etc.
  But when you add large transportation accessibility and large corporations to come in; you are allowing for a higher potential of crime and violence.
  This is a great hometown to raise your kids.
  Use the existing buildings, resources and potential that is already here!!!
- Need more shopping, shoe store, clothing, etc. Need recreation for youth, roller skating or bowling, movie theater
- I do believe the town can maintain its small town charm, modernize and grow. But high density housing and large scale developments will totally destroy that. Without a question.

  Growth should be done in quality measured steps. Do the right thing and protect this town and it's residents.
- We have so much potential!! Please implement solutions from these questionnaires. We do these studies and data collection and nothing ever changes.
- Would be nice to have at least one high end restaurant like the Social Club was.
- Bedford is currently geared toward old people and WWII. Our young people need a reason to be here - bowling alley no alcohol, movie house w/clean films...
- I don't believe I'd lose anything if we didn't have the Town. Figure out how to get revenue by making the Town great instead of assessing property taxes. Do it this year. The Town cannot be kept waiting till 2045
- It is unreasonable to have such a large rainy day fund. We would like to see our taxes in action. This town feels like it could be so much more.

- When we purchased our home over ten years ago, town properties essentially were not considered due to the extra taxes without many perceived benefits. Having been annexed last year, I can now say that I am getting exactly zero benefits from my additional tax dollars, compared to just being in the county. Whatever you are doing, sell it better. It really looks like you are taking my money just because you can. Potential new residents will look elsewhere if they don't see the value in being town residents. I would encourage you to take a hard look at the town budget and cut any redundancies with the county, and cut taxes to make this community more efficient, yet also attractive to potential residents.
- Please make an effort to retire the term "Centertown" It is a made up term from the 1980s and is no longer descriptive of where life and vitality is located downtown.
- We just wish we could afford a house in town.
  Great little town. Needs some TLC here and there. Great access to the Peaks and for travel. Would definitely move back if we could find a home for us plus 3 kids that was more affordable.
- Adding more housing that is too expensive for people to afford is going to hurt Bedford. Bedford is a catch all county now since Lynchburg and Roanoke is becoming more populated and crime has rose significantly . There's not enough businesses here to support the population y'all want to create. Bedford is also a small historical town, not sure why people want to over crowd it and ruin Bedfords small town reputation. That's the whole point of living in Bedford. Bedford will no longer be a small town in 20-30 years from now. We are slowly loosing beautiful farm land and wooded areas that will become sub divisions or apartments because all realtors/others care about is money. Yea growth is good but let's not forget what the perks of living in Bedford are.
- We are a diamond in the rough- perfect placement between Roanoke, Lynchburg, and SML, but even with DDay we don't capitalize on our strengths!
- Need more food choices, free splash pads, more shopping places for clothing.
- Yes, please don't grow too quickly putting housing before infrastructure. Start small and plan carefully. Find other communities who are successful to emulate. We don't have to be everything to everyone. Let's keep Bedford beautiful. We have an opportunity to grow strategically while keeping our current strengths. One of the things I commonly hear about Bedford is that's its special and folks from the surrounding areas like to come here to enjoy the outdoors and get away from the hustle and bustle of Roanoke or Lynchburg crowdedness and city life. People need to live where they work and they also need a place to enjoy being outdoors and get away from home. Let's make Bedford a destination location where people enjoy time with loved ones and spending money and then get to go back to their homes. Remember, we don't have to be everything to everyone and I like be old fashioned on purpose while still using technology, retail and restaurants to better the community.

Question 3

Where in town would new commercial growth be appropriate?

234 responses

- 460 Corridor and Independence Avenue
- It would be nice to see the buildings in the center of town renovated with apartments on top and eateries on bottom of center town street. Make main street a place people want to eat at and that is in walking distance of where some live. Also, the old buildings such as the old Rubatex building would be logical for new growth/apartments that won't cause as much impact on the town vs. other areas of the town. That building already has parking and would allow the renters access to downtown eateries if that was more of a focus with housing.. Use old buildings that are sitting abandoned for housing instead of trying to make new buildings or pop up new housing. This makes the most sense to me. I am in favor of revitalizing old abandoned buildings for apartments, but I am hesitant on new building of apartments for the congestion of roads, etc...
- Blue Ridge Ave. - Macon Street - Dawn Drive area
- Near downtown
- Around Lowe's and also West of Town
- Around Elks Home
- No opinion
- Centertown has many empty buildings, and I think those should be considered first.
- Repurposing existing buildings
- Same places listed above. Independence Blvd. Big building between Beales and Acute Design. Downtown area. Anywhere would be great!
- Independence and downtown
- Use exiting buildings have more things for kids teenagers to do. Child care takes a lot of revenue out of bedford because childcare for infants and below preschool age is not available
- Center City
- On 460
- Downtown is not as empty as it seems, although there are some spaces that could be rented out if there were policies in place that would encourage property owners to find uses for currently empty buildings. Mixed commercial/residential would be ideal for Independence Blvd or 460 W, industrial/manufacturing would be ideal at the industrial park if more plots could be made closer to site-ready.
- Former Rubbatex properties alongside rr tracks,
  Not suggested in survey is to put CVCC in more suitable bldg (could have been former Middle School complex, but that ship has sailed), so new construction, and return the existing facility to its intended use.
  Also, 30 years ago Westgate was thriving and a major center of retail in Town. It would seem to still have great potential, particularly if a train station is built nearby. Speaking of

which, it's always better to deliver more than is promised. If we don't address many of these issues NOW there will be lots of disappointed visitors to Town when the station is finished and opened.

- Start with repurposing what we have that is vacant.
- Near railroad tracks areas.
- Downtown. Free the buildings from the slumlords that don't make repairs but keep the rent too high
- Centertown needs retail. Build upon what is there. If you have some commercial property and open space add to it with buildings for specialty shops for clothing etc. We need something more than restaurants and banks. We need to support what we have and build on that. We can buy many antiques but not a men's suit or a nice dress or pants. We have a lot of "buildings " just need to utilize them better and with more diversity. Retrying old tired ideas will never change anything.
- Put it in the empty, ugly buildings along Railroad Street. They're embarassing. For heaven's sake, fix them up. DO NOT waste any land on more commercial buildings.
- In the vacant buildings intown
- Plenty of commercial opportunity in Centertown area, property owners need to be reasonable with their sales and rent prices (Owens and Reynolds)
  Also lots of commercial/manufacturing available along the tracks.
- Areas with Abandoned buildings, unused industrial areas
- Venture BLVD
- Around Lowe's
- Nowhere. The town is too beautiful.
- The old warehouses by Beals and 626.
- Downtown.
- Some, like entertainment would be best in town, others like business parks, on the outskirts or edges of town as you enter and exit.
- Repurposing existing buildings
- Downtown, Railroad corridor, large track opposite of Lowes on 460.
  Independent Blvd.
- Where there are already empty buildings sitting around falling apart. Railroad Ave is full of buildings that could be renovated for commercial needs - like Beale's. Why, in heaven's name, would you build more buildings and take up more land when you have so much wasted space down there? Empty buildings in town, too, although that's not as bad at the moment. And finish up what's started. The old Fishers building. The Middle School. Old Yellow. When are they going to be done????????
- I fear a lot of the development as it ruins the small town appeal and charm of Bedford
- Entry corridors; Route 221; Route 122 (North and South); Independence Avenue; Route 460; and downtown.
- Again, repurposing existing sites and structures where appropriate would be optimal. There is currently a lot of vacant retail/commercial space in the center of town and part

of the plan should focus on revitalizing that area. The impacts of traffic and parking would need to be considered to avoid congestion in the center of town. Slightly outside of the town center, there's underutilized mall which could be repurposed to a business/technology Park. Outside the center in the direction of the YMCA, or alternatively, in the direction of the Bedford water authority, there is space for larger commercial or light industrial activities. In all cases, The plans for growth in one particular area need to take into consideration the impacts on the town as a whole, including increased traffic, demand for utilities, need for parking, impacts on police, fire, schools, the hospital, and other town services.

- Anywhere that land is available or the buildings that are available
- Rubatex area
- Nowhere. There are existing buildings that are vacant and should be utilized
- In the existing areas where the buildings are empty. Slum landlords need to be fined heavily for not keeping up the buildings they own, especially on Main Street.
- Repurpose or Rebuild Rubatex, Golden West, and Frank Chervan areas for industrial park.
  The empty buildings in downtown Bedford.
- Suburban shopping centers - let's be realistic - retail is dead, long live retail. Even with expanded population, ROA & LYH will remain the major hubs for retail.
- Anywhere that isn't a park.
- Reusing and repurposing existing commercial building would be positive. They're there sitting empty - how can we make them thrive again in a way that would benefit the people of Bedford?
- In some of the old abandoned factory building along railroad, open lots along 460 near walmart and lowes - high traffic counts and visibility
- A suburban shopping center on 460 behind the royal farms would be a perfect location.
- 6C's Shopping Center and the Old Winn Dixie shopping center
- Centertown desperately needs help.
- Start with the repressing of existing buildings and give business owners that want to move to Beford tax incentives for building a new business in our town.
- West end 460
- Industrial good paying jobs instead of town boutiques that only pay minimum wage and stay open for 6 months.
- again, lots of undeveloped land all over. just leave downtown old and as is
- Harmony Center; along 460 in the Walmart to Lowes corridor. There are opportunities along Independence as well as Orange; along the railroad tracks near Beales
- Please provide some additional option for shopping such as Kroger or Aldi
- The old Rubatex building and the Mccormick food building.
- Not in town, unless it is refurbishing a historic building
- By the railroad tracks downtown
- Don't do it will ruin the small town.

- Unsure. Not to take over too much farm land. Possibly near Walmart.
- The old Mill over by Beales
- 460 west and east
- Vacant commercial properties.
- Downtown Bedford
- We have so many dilapidated spaces that are empty downtown and in the industrial areas— would love to see them revitalized! It would maintain the historic charm, with the benefit of new life.
- Fill the existing structures. I don't think we need more buildings
- not near neighborhoods
- We need to develop more and diverse businesses downtown and in areas now sitting empty that could be good for shopping. such as the 6-C's area and on Independence Ave. These areas are perfect for more commercial growth.
- near major highways for ease of transportation
- Where the old industrial warehouses are currently.
- In buildings going unused
- Repurpose existing commercial buildings.
- Where there is empty buildings
- Repurpose some of what we have
- TVD
- near outskirts of downtown, but out of the direct area of downtown
- Off independence
- Existing Industrial parks and if new ones proposed probably better suited in the outskirts of Town technically in the County. The Town is already dense in buildings from this standpoint.
- There needs to be more options for clothing, shoes, and retail stores
- Not sure
- Use existing buildings and industrial parks
- Empty buildings old factories empty lots in this area
- Along Independence, Downtown (only retail) , anywhere on Main Street. existing commercial and Industrial areas. Along 460 for commercial and retail
- Downtown
- Rubatex buildings and areas where previous industries have closed. In downtown.
- We could really use a movie theatre. A small one would even be great.
  Also, we need somthing for the kids. Bowling or skating - Fun things. We have a shortage of those and usually spend our tax money for those items in Roanoke or Lynchburg.
- Repurposing existing buildings
- I would put them outside the downtown but also focus on quaint specialty shops and restaurants that draw uniqueness to the area. I do like repurposing buildings versus building new ones.

- We need to fill our stores downtown.
  Having moved here a few years ago, I noticed it has gotten worse.
  It is an eyesore to bring family/friends to town and half the buildings are empty and decrepit. When looking into the buildings the rent is so high that no small business could take a chance to succeed due to the cost of the rent.
  I feel like there should be some sort of penalty to these owners for not having their storefronts filled.
- 460 corridor
- In areas away from existing housing.
- Old Rubber Tex area, the small building where the Love chapel exists.
- Along Orange Ave. On Independence Ave.
- Independence Blvd.122 north and 460 east and west. Many of the existing residential need to be maintained to support community value and streetscapes.
- Downtown, Independence, 460 towards Roanoke and Lynchburg.
- Downtown
- Downtown
- Same as previous answer.
- Downtown
- East side of town
- Downtown
- Downtown
  Independence Blvd
- Not sure.
- Need downtown revitalization. Sonia project should provide training opportunities. Would like to see a rail station.
- Route 460 West
- Downtown Bedford, there are so many building empty!
- In the existing vacant commercial and industrial buildings.
- The commercial land for sale across from the Lowe’s
- Downtown Bedford, especially around Main Street where historical buildings are sitting empty and not kept up.
- Main street.
- Everywhere
- I think the perfect location would be out there next to Royal farms! Lots of property, but nothing there.Great opportunity for businesses and for Bedford to grow!
- On 221 towards Forest, just a bit out of town. Lots of space. Repurpose Frank Chervan.
- Anywhere just bring it in.
- Dawn Dr. Norfolk Ave. Downtown of course, I think it'd be great if People's was sectioned. Monroe St. Orange St. Gold Rd. Independence. Plunkett St. Grove St. Macon St. Burks Hill Rd.

- Repurposing before building new. There are a number of unused properties that could be used.
- Smart development downtown that doesn't take away from the historic feel. Large retails should be left closer to the highway because it's important to provide people with options. Develop the business park between downtown and the highway.
- Downtown. This is the anchor of Bedford and has so much potential to be developed thoughtfully. There are several empty beautiful historic storefronts that remain empty for no logical reason. This causes Bedford to miss out on revenue from various commercial services such as dining, entertainment, retail, and the like. These services also provide employment for residents. If these are not filled and maintained, these buildings will continue to deteriorate and residents and tourists from out of town will be even less likely to visit the downtown. As a local, I want to establish a business downtown, but refrain as there's no financial incentives being provided for small business owners to occupy those spaces.
- Making use of old buildings in the west gate shopping center area
- Centertown
  off Independence
- Using existing businesses that currently have negative impact to the town. And also existing industrial buildings that are vacant ex: the old Rubatex buildings, the old chair factory and the Whelabeator.
- In town, out by YMCA, and Walmart
- Off Independance or near old Rubatex or old Wheelabrator or near Town line on RT 221 / Forest Rd,
- Not sure
- Recondition existing buildings for dual purpose use store fronts and living space above.
- Probably on the west side of town. More retail.
- ?
- There’s a stretch of land out on independence by the Virginia furniture market that would be perfect for family entertainment like mini golf or a movie theater, etc.
- I’m down town! That way, more people can enjoy the town beauty while shopping
- Industrial park off independence as well as on dawn drive
- Anywhere. There are plenty of empty buildings that could be used
- Repurposing buildings just outside of Centertown.
- Heritage center and industrial area...need larger industry in Bedford so people don't have to travel to Roanoke or Lynchburg to work....keeps the money in Bedford..
- I am not sure but we need career type jobs in Bedford. We have plenty of service sector jobs, but very limited manufacturing. As a high school teacher, so many of my former students either have to leave town or end up in a dead end entry level position here in town.
- Anywhere there is a vacant building as well as Independence
- No opinion

- I don't think there is any need for commercial buildings. We don't need to make Bedford something it's not.
- Rubbertex/Woolen Mill area....additional apt. or light commerical
- Old Westgate Shopping Center and Old 6Cs Shopping Center
- Down main street and bridge street expanding the old shopping mall
- Repurpose Rubatex buildings
- Independence Ave area, Orange Street, Gold Rd
- That entirely depends on the commercial entity. Exploitative companies have no business here at all.
- Need a large industrial park and then for the Town to promote it to bring good paying jobs.
- East Main Street
- The are across from Elbas butcher shop
- Repurposing of any unused, salvageable structures like the old middle school for example.
- Out skirts of town. Town of Bedford counselors ran out many businesses.
  Why are you asking. You have 2 Industrial parks...no business are interested.
- Orange street area
- Please please please add shops and restaurant chains in Bedford!!! Keep things open later than 6 or 7pm!!! Open up a bowling alley or arcade or something other than downtown having all overpriced antique shops!
- Main Street at the corner of South Bridge Street
- West end of town needs revitalization
- Downtown/Centertown
- DOWNTOWN! Too many store fronts have sat empty for YEARS!!!!
- South 460
- nowhere
- Yes, repurpose existing buildings with new businesses. There are too many empty buildings in our lovely downtown area.
- Near the Community College and along Enterprise
- Vacant land near the walmart area
- Near Lowe's
- Anywhere!! We are bored
- On Tim Black's grave.
- In out of the way areas that don't require destruction of our natural forest environments. I'd rather see repurposed areas being brought back to usefulness,
- The old rubber Tex building s
- Repurposing existing commercial buildings is ideal to preserve the history, while still putting to use buildings that are already taking up space in the town. We need to use what we already have and make the town better before expanding and destroying the small town charm of Bedford.

- Repurposing of all old and existing buildings in town and industrial area. No new structures needed.
- Independence Rd. The town lines both sides.
- On North side of Bedford
- On or around Orange Street through Bell Town.
- Downtown core or immediate surroundings
- Downtown, Westgate, Independence, The Forks, Burks Hill, unused industrial areas
- repurposing/refurbishing downtown shopping
- Unused/abandoned buildings. 460 corridor.
- repurposing existing buildings.
- Bridge Street. Main Street. The empty builidings. This is a major issue.
- WHY does the Town have an industrial park (2 now if you include the one on 221 at the new towns limits). There HAS to be a company out there somewhere that would fit into Bedford! Make consessions and make these people a deals they can't resist!
- Anywhere off 460
- There's a bunch of old buildings that could be repurposed and fixed up in the downtown area.
- Town center
- along 122
- In the commercial areas of town
- Repurpose existing structures
- Again, old empty buildings.
- The buildings beside the tracks next to Beales - repurpose existing buildings Independence Ave
- 460 area, independence blvd, 6cs shopping area, downtown old rubatex area
- Independence, the land near the Elks home
- Not sure what's available.
- Existing vacant buildings
- Downtown and along 460.
- The old Rubber Tex building must be repurposed.Here is the only place that industrial & or manufacturing should be done in the town of Bedford.
- Repurposing/renovating existing industrial buildings would be terrific! A shopping area/center in the area of the old Rubatex would be amazing! My concern would be to play on/improve the historical buildings in the town area, and have more modern shopping on the outskirts.
- 6 C's Shopping Center

  Stop big Commercial companies coming in and Redevelop downtown bring back small businesses instead of hurting them. Giving tax breaks to big corporations!
- East

- There are a lot of empty retail stores on Bridge and Main Streets. Care is needed in supporting new businesses. Continue to develop the old manufacturing buildings along the railroad. Begin to develop where the Amtrak station will be situated.
- Independence Ave
  Harmony Crossing
- The above questions are nearly all dependent on their location as to the nature of their impact!. However, we have a business park on Independence that is grossly underused. The prime building has NEVER been used for business, , only gov't and quasi gov't., and apparently is now to be turned over to Social Services for more of the same. Move CVCC to one of several Centertown options, and persuade the County to seriously pursue Centertown options for Soc. Svcs., then put a real job creating industry/business into the Biz. park.
- Downtown or revitalize the 6's area.
- Repurpose existing properties first, improve things that already exist, bring retailers into existing spaces, then expand if necessary. Lodging best along major arteries.
- The town has plenty of commercial businesses, advertising for those businesses needs to be more available and the town residents need to support more. Push advertising for these businesses and encourage residents to visit. We have lots of small businesses including gift shops, coffee shops, and restaurants; they get forced to shut down due to a lack of support from our community.
- In existing commercially zoned areas.
- 460 Corridor & Old warehouse area.
- In the currently vacant and dilapidated buildings. We desperately need ample parking right now, and more if there is development.
- I think it is terrible that we drive through 'downtown' and most of the street level units are EMPTY. We will see people from out of town walking around and there is no where to shop of weekends. No food or drink...no place to park.
- Repurposing existing commercial buildings would be ideal. Bringing jobs would be good for the community and for the people who live in Bedford.
- By the rail line, by new armory, by Lowe's
- Independence Boulevard, orange street area.
- Wherever there are existing commercial buildings. Too much land is being developed when there are other options available.
- Central to downtown
- the old Rubatex and Frank Chervan buildings and Independence Ave.
- Repurposing. And new
- In the area of Sam Moore, Frank Chervan and the areas near The Old Rubbatex . Help boost existing businesses and expand new Industrial growth . Our young people want stable jobs that will create a positive infrastructure.
- Center town and along Longwood

- The existing industrial parks need to be utilized and promoted.

  There is a need for a large ag center in the county and the town has several properties that would be great for one. A ag center would allow for more large events like concerts, rodeos, county fair, equipment expos, 4h and horse shows. At our core we are an agricultural community we should be doing our part to serve the farms and families that want to grow them.

  Investing in the next generation is never a waste.
- Downtown. All along the railroad. Follow the fiber optics. Advertise the fiber optics.

  The old warehouses.

  Macon street.
- Repurpose old buildings in town in community centers, art galleries, restaurants, coffee shops, etc. Offer grants to do so.
- revitalize downtown
- Everywhere near railroad tracks
  i.e. former Wheelabrator, former Coffee&Saunders area etc
- Lively downtown would be a positive
- technology park, cvcc campus, little Otter park.
- As close to the center of town as possible. Downtown needs attraction (which it has) but also needs to not appear like a ghost town.
- 460 West of Town
- Repurpose the existing buildings
- Over by the farmers market
- Outside of town or in abandoned buildings. The old rubber plant next to "Beales" would be a great start. The 620 could have been one.
- Repurpose old buildings. The old rubber tex buildings that are not being used are just rotting. Bedford could use a Kroger near royal farms "shopping center" that was supposed to come and never did. In between Lowe's and Walmart is commercial land. Independence blvd is going to get ridiculously over crowded if more commercial businesses come through. People already go 55-60 mph through there. Lights need to be added if that whole area gets built up.
- West side along rr tracks...Macon Street
- Repurposing buildings
- Downtown!
- Where old rebated is and along railway
- nowhere. I can buy clothes, groceries, alcohol, gas, vehicles, outdoor/farm equipment, etc all within Bedford. We do not need more stores

- On 460 in development by national guard training center.
  Reuse of Beale's building.
  Restoration or redevelopment of entire building that currently houses Dirt Road Treasures
- No commercial is needed in the Bedford town area. We currently have an industrial park we can't get leased or sold in the Bedford County area. No data centers either. We don't have the infrastructure to support and even if they promise to provide it, it's not for our benefit. Do your research on other areas before bringing commercial to this area. Retail and restaurants yes, industrial commercial, no.
- Our downtown is suffering. There is NOTHING to do or draw people to spend money. So many empty spaces!!
- County
- Behind Royal Farms

Question 4

- ***What would improve quality of life in the Town of Bedford?***
- *243 responses*

- More residential and commercial development. In addition, attracting better employers that offer better pay and benefits. Improve the Loop, since almost everyone in Bedford has used this at one point in their lives.
- Would be great again to focus on walkability to shops, restaurants, health, hiking trails, bike lanes and overall creating more healthy living in the town of Bedford that is for everyone. Also, give us back the train stop in Bedford for pedestrians wanting to ride the Amtrack to DC and other destinations. That would be awesome.
- Stop taxing Town Citizens for functions they are also taxed for by the County. Remove these items from your books.
- Bring back curbside recycling, add a greenway, have landlords/owners maintain their properties.
- Innovative and attractive use of the vacant store space on Bridge Street; tending to the walking trails at Liberty Lake Park; simple, welcoming landscaping at the different roadway entrances to the town; incentives for people who own homes, business buildings, or properties in town to clean up, repair, and spruce up their properties.
- More vibrant /bustling centertown
- A variety of grocery shopping, and other shopping
- More growth. When the sun goes down in Bedford.. there is nothing to do. There are not enough good parks and playgrounds.. there are no bike lanes.. the downtown area is filled with empty buildings. The new mural looks great though- we need more art in downtown.
- A greeway. A decent hotel (I know it's coming). Better parking downtown. More color and plants downtown, more shopping. An outdoor recreation store to benefit from the proximity of the peaks, the AT, and the parkway, more things for youth and families to do, increase sales tax but lower property tax
- Variety of restaurants
- Access to regional transit - work-from-home trends are in flux right now, but on the whole it appears it's here to stay for some jobs. There's no reason why Bedford couldn't have the best of both worlds, allowing people to live and work in a beautiful community while still remaining connected to major urban centers for occasional in-person requirements
- In some ways a lot worse, if you consider that Centertown is now becoming a ghost town thanks primarily to 2 bldg owners in particular, and Town mgmt inability to come up with workable solutions. Filling these with viable businesses and housing, and creating more opportunities for food, music and entertainment would be big catalysts for tourism and sustainable growth.
  Youth activities has been a major problem for decades (your survey asks precious little about that topic). A public swimming pool well run, perhaps by the Y, would be a huge

asset for the Town, our families and kids. The soon to be vacated School Bus Garage adjoining Edmund Street Park/ Susie Gibson School could be an ideal location.

- Town of Bedford as exceptional events. The old baseball field on Orange Avenue - has anyone thought of using it as a dog park since it is no longer being used.
- Industrial jobs
- less slumlords driving out business
- More business and Family entertainment. Things to do to keep people in Bedford in early evening and weekends.
- Bring back recycling. Enforce littering laws. Enforce pet laws - make people clean up after their dogs. Do something about cats running around and destroying people's property. Clean up the garbage idiots throw out along the streets. Enforce the law about not leaving grass clippings on the streets and sidewalks. Make sure everyone cleans their sidewalks of leaves and snow. Walking can be dangerous in this town.
- Something for young people to do to stay out of trouble.
  More retail clothing stores
  Someing for young adults , movies Bar etc
- There has to be a sense of urgency in improving all aspects of development for this town. Each category is suffering in one way if not multiple.
- A vibrant downtown area with a variety of shopping and dining
- More advertising of community events, more shopping choices in empty shopping centers such as clothing/shoe stores, local money allocated for Peaks of otter resort, more cooperation, support and collaboration between government and local Airbnb, short term rental owners here in Bedford.
- Not much to improve on. It's great!
- More places to go for food, minor league team(s)/professional sports, more live music downtown
- Leaving it alone. Quality of life is what an individual makes of it anyway.
- Make renting out downtown space more affordable. Wake up and refresh the empty buildings in downtown Bedford.
- Less apartments and townhouses, better animal shelter, animal control, and more to reduce drugs.
- Add some entertainment venues, add the train station back and more community events
- Better shopping options besides Walmart and Dollar General, and more employment opportunities, factories and manufacturing options
- The renovation of all deteriorated downtown buildings, both floors. The renovation and repurpose of all empty and deteriorating mills and former industrial buildings.
  The construction of a new Police Department, or renovating an existing town structure to accommodate the PD, under $5 Million.
  Incentives to attract businesses and manufacturing to create good paying jobs.
  Erect more parking garages behind the existing lot and behind PD and courthouse.
  Revisit the idea of an Amtrak stop, simple metal roofed structure on platform with a

ticket kiosk and lighted parking lot. Do research on similar town stops and get that cost down.

Incorporate more maintenance free trees, landscaping and green areas for lack luster run down areas and entrances to town. The 460 medium needs better upkeep. Plant wild flowers on the mediums and right of ways.

- Enforce laws. People throw litter out of cars on all the streets. People leave grass clippings on sidewalks and streets. People don't clean up after their dogs. People let their cats run loose, digging up flower beds and killing birds. People don't recycle. People park on sidewalks. Sidewalks are a mess - broken, heaved up over tree roots. Town employees don't know anything about all the plants here. Stop cutting off the crepe myrtles. Trim forsythia in the cemetery in the spring, not in November, for heaven's sake. Take care of the other bushes and trees in the cemetery. They're a mess. Instead of trimming, the workers just chop them off. It looks awful. Why are the sidewalks in this town so willy-nilly? They start and stop on one side of the street or aren't even there in some areas. It's hard to walk the beautiful neighborhoods when there aren't decent sidewalks.
- More shopping, and eating establishments in Bedford, not fast food, but good sit down meals and not just a walmart or dollar general.
- Vibrant Downtown; more housing options for younger families; more restaurants; bike facilities/lanes; continue adding sidewalks.
- Having a railway station in Bedford would be a huge boon to the community. Additionally, having public transportation options to Lynchburg and Roanoke on a regular basis would facilitate travel. Having shuttles, or other transportation options to the regional airports would also help. Currently, they’re very limited transportation options to get around town. Having a circulator bus that makes a routine loop from downtown to the Walmart shopping area, for example, would be helpful.
- Lower our taxes and listen to the people at town meetings. We did not want to be annexed and have seen no benefits.
- Too high taxes stop with town and country in town paying why not include all county’s to pay both ?
- Renovation. Boutique shopping. Better parks. Example : Floyd and Altavista. Floyd has stayed in its history and thrives. Altavista: English park. Enough said
- More doctors, entertainments such as movie theater, playhouse that holds regular programs, something to do at night so we don't have to drive to another town or city.
- Opportunities for employment(and not a store that hires 2 people) significant enough to have a positive economic impact. Empty business fronts, nail salons, loan centers, and pawn shops are telltale signs of a town that is struggling.I would like to see improvements in downtown storefronts, actual businesses in them, improved schools(many are falling apart), improved rec centers and offerings for children and adults, restaurants that are open in the evenings and on weekends, a police force that actively pursues criminals, especially related to drug trafficking in our area and domestic violence offenders. We

need more social services workers and school counselors since our children are struggling with mental health

- More money moving - more jobs, more shops, more restaurants, more events.
- Affordable housing it feels like Bedford isn't going to be for the people who grew up here with the outlandish unaffordable housing and the new builds being so over priced when there is no work opportunities to make the kind of money to afford this housing
- Recycling would be nice to have again, even if just 1 to 2 times a month. More things to do in town for families and especially young kids. Something ADA/autistic friendly would be really nice as there isn't much in our area at all.
- Transitioning away from overhead power lines would certainly beautify the town and jmprove the reliability of electricity, but I'm sure it would be very expensive.
  A shuttle up to the peaks would be nice as well. This could help to relieve parking congestion at sharp top and encourage more visitation to the parkway.
  An amtrak train stop would be very nice as well.
- Family style restaurants that actually stayed open in the evenings. Youth programs that are not sports related.
  A community center open to everyone in the community, with access to Internet. An arcade with video games. Extra learning facilities not funded by the government.
- More restaurants and nightlife in centertown. More retail businesses and professional services in centertown.
- Appearance
  More buildings occupied by business and industry
  The ability for council, business owners, community leaders and residents to share a common goal for the betterment of Town of Bedford
- Revitalize the downtown and entertainment for adults and families
- Better housing and better careers for those living in the town. There have been a few businesses such as fostek that provide good jobs but most people I know commute out of town to work.
- speed limit enforcement. a college or other institute of higher learning
- Traffic to include commercial vehicles has increased considerably along the major avenues coming into the town including Longwood, Bridge St and Main St. Many of the older homes are suffering because the increased speeds and weight of the vehicles "vibrate" the ground and are causing cracks and settling in the foundations and walls of these majestic homes. More dining options with establishments staying open later in the evenings but recognize this may happen as we get more residential units built. Also would be nice to have options to just "hang out" - possibly listening to live music, playing games, or sipping coffee, tea or a beer. Don't know how to solve this but owners of downtown storefronts who do not have an occupant for extended periods of time are a detriment to downtown. Options to keep active such as pickleball courts. A larger gathering place in town for functions such as live music, etc
- More options for shopping other than having to go to Lynchburg or Roanoke

- More jobs and places to live
- A store such as Target. An upscale grocery store. A Theater.
- Transportation- cabs, better bus stops
- Speed limits for residential areas enforced to 25 mph.
  Bike lanes.
- The train to no blow it's horn when coming through the crossing near downtown.
- Better kids activitys, play structures, museums, and a better grocery store like kroger.
- Enlarge town foot print tax base
- Activities to do in town.
- Not sure,
- Activities and facilities to facilitate community involvement (read above)
- Improved neighborhood parks, and more restaurants
- More access to activities such as bowling/movies. and better grocery stores
- Get in more small businesses and restaurants. Quit trying to pack all the housing into small areas with no yard, no charm, they are not an improvement for Bedford. We are already mainly a seniors community, add to this to make it a better town. We need more recreational and restaurant options that attract seniors. This will in turn attract more younger people to work in these types of fields.
- More grocery options, more retail, more restaurants
- Indoor activities in the winter. Parking downtown would be great.
- Having more retail and restaurants. Having more parks and walking trails.
- Become inviting to business
- Bedford is an amazing town! Growing little by little is one of its strengths. Again if we didn't have an influx of people moving to our amazing town and complaining we would continue to be grateful and slowly continue to grow in a way that helps not in the long run harms our home. Suddenly we need new roads, shopping, housing and whatever else. Move to Lynchburg or Roanoke and please leave our amazing community alone!
- More renovations for older homes and communities. More charitable organizations for low income people and senior citizens.
- No High Density Housing
- Limiting speed limits in high-density neighborhoods. Stop allowing high-density subdivisions in small neighborhoods! Change R1 in already crowded neighborhoods from 10,000 SF lots. This is considered a low-density residential when it's less than 1/4 of an acre!
- Updating and beautification. Look at other small towns in other states and how nice they look with their outdoor cafes and shops. Business's need to be open better and later hours.
- Sidewalks maintained better. More sidewalks and maybe even a bike path.
- More transportation, more retail, and more entertainment options
- Improve parking downtown for businesses to see more foot traffic

- The Elks Home needs to be investigated, they're taking money from them, they have employees that have no business working there . When something is reported they always find a way around it . Someone undercover needs to work there to see everything that goes on. These residents deserve the absolute world and get nothing of the kind.
- jobs, better high school, affordable housing
- More libertarian food sales, no inspection or regulations so adults are treated like adults.
- Better shopping option, more employment opportunities, newer housing options
- Train Station; better sidewalks for walking around town and along Longwood Ave; more variety of stores in the center of town (not just antique stores); places to go in the evening
- A department store other that Walmart that offers reasonable prices and availability of clothing, shoes and household items. More parking downtown
- Lower taxes on homeowners
  Remove chlorine from the water supply.
- More shops and restaurants
- I suggest beautifying downtown and the loop with more lighting, better sidewalks and manicured landscaping. Maybe even add a bike path.
- More shopping downtown, Bigger food store, hotel that is clean, more support for the Farmers Market on Saturdays
- Add recycling back, add general department store back
- Do not spend a lot of money planning a new police station when the architectural plans far exceeded the affordability. Investigate combining the expansion of the sheriff's office with a move of the Bedford PD.

  Make sure the massage parlor that was busted for illegal activities does not reopen.

  Make sure housing development is done in accord with true community needs not density that developers want to make more profit. Also assure that developers post significant assurance bonds to adhere to development requirements. See the 45 acres of threatened R1 developer wishes to do R3 near Governors Hill.
- A homeless facility. Because we have people living in the woods around the town.
- More activities that are geared towards younger children and utilize existing facilities better. We have the facilities, just not kept up and youth programs have all but ceased operations. Better maintenance of sidewalks and lighting.
- Interconnecting walks of adequate width and curbs & gutters. Todays public likes to walk and it is growing. Population young and older. Get rid of overhead electric and remember ornaental lighting in business, commercial and RESIDENTIAL areas.
- More community outreach
- A better night life
- Better parks and recreation program for the kids. Better youth sports programs. More restaurant options (that aren't Mexican based, this town can only handle so many Mexican restaurants). Liven up the downtown Bedford area, make it enjoyable for the

young adult aged community. The age group 25-35 or so. Doing so will keep Bedford up and going and keep people from wanting to leave the first chance they get.

- All age recreation
- More business's
- Get up to 2024 and stop functioning like it's 1960. Develop downtown with incentive for business/shops/interesting places for people to be. Prevent the "roll up the carpet at 5p and enhance evening/weekend things to do. Folks work m-f 8-5p and need activity/food/entertainment and fun things to do outside of these hours
- Much greater community involvement in all areas of town governance.
- More things to do: Bars, shopping, movie theater.
  Transportation: cabs, more bus routes
  Community: barely any Uber or door dash drivers, people don't help each other like they used to.
- Infrastructure improvements
- Infrastructure for water and sewer
- Tax the absent downtown property owners and fine thme for every year they do not have a viable business in their space.
- There are major improvements needed for the safety of walkers/runners around the loop and downtown as well as the lack of sidewalks and lighting at cut through points such as stone street, Plunkett Street, Grove Street, orange Ave and others. The pedestrian traffic on the roadways due to lack of sidewalks is an immediate issue. Old deteriorating sidewalks and poor lighting has caused numerous injuries to pedestrians in town and is a growing concern of many.
- Building up the entire town to bring in a younger crowd
- More community events, programs for youth, bringing life into Downtown Bedford by adding more shopping options (besides antique shops)
- More employment opportunities. Bedford is a community I want to raise my children in but I don't like having to commute to Roanoke or Lynchburg for a job that pays well enough to afford the quality of life I desire.
- Having more entertainment to do such as bowling or a movie theater. I hate having to plan those kinds of thing around my work schedule working it in Roanoke. It would be nice to go see a movie on my day off or after work and not have to drive 45 or 30’minutes.
- A movie theater, a bowling alley, a mall or some type of shopping center, a bounce house for children Or some type of indoor playground for them. a buffet restaurant of some sort would be an excellent additions to Bedford! We are in desperate need of updating in this town! A lot of people move away from bedford although it is beautiful, but there are literally no job opportunities for young people in this town. There all no real weekend activities that families can partake in. Bedford, residents must travel to Roanoke Or lynchburg, which is sometimes inconvenient.
- Permanent public transportation. Train service will be a bonus.

- To many taxes for town residents. Tax officials and tax office are out of connection with local residents. No one should be paying double taxes and no one should be paying taxes on cars every year. It's double jeopardy
- Public places for people to gather, particularly youth and young adults. Non-medical transportation services for seniors and adults who cannot drive. Fun things to do for youth of all ages (bowling alley). Ethnic food, including Indian and sushi. More buildings filled downtown of course. More community art and public statements of culture.
- Vibrant downtown, train station, Greenway trail and mandatory bicycle lane development on any new or renovated road. Decrease motivation for vacancy in downtown storefronts by offering matching incentives for renovation.
- More grocery store options, more options for dining and other activities downtown, better education, and more job opportunities via industry. Also, more inclusive parks.
- More things to do especially with our youth
  Shopping , food , movies , bowling etc
- Quit turning the town into a housing development. They're all these new homes with little to no new jobs.
- Citizens to welcome change.
  Improved parks and opportunities for young peopel to gather.
  Improve the look of Centertown storefronts and actively work to rent and occupy the buildings.
  Citizens respecting each other and working together.
- Places to shop so we don't have to continuously travel to Roanoke or Lynchburg to get quality goods. We need places of entertainment and activities such as movie theatres and bowling alleys.
- A trail similar to the blackwater creek trail in Lynchburg
- lower taxes! Have to pay to Town and County! Older people can't afford extra taxes. Apartments / townhouse rent too high!
- Not sure.
- Two key areas are
  1. something for the 30 to 40 year old people with families.
  2. Something for late afternoon and night activities.
  Parking with good lighting.
  A place to eat dinner with the family (not an other fast food chain).
  A small park environment with seating and maybe a dog park.
  Outdoor sporting store, bikes, guns, clothing, camping etc.
- Greenways like in and near Raleigh. So many options to ride your bike and walk around areas of lakes parks and forest.
- Build an outdoor pool for the kids
- We have quite a few festivals and organizations have started doing more family events which is fantastic. I really think we could use more family entertainment like mini golf or

bowling. I would love to see the parks get more TLC around the playgrounds. And the road 221 coming into town needs repaving in some places.

- More sidewalks for people who like to walk around! Also more apartments/Home Towns to be built
- Quality restaurant options, entertainment, quality gym, less antique stores and more useful stores downtown
- More jobs, more activities for kids, more food options and somewhere to shop
- More things to do besides restaurants, including a movie theater and bowling alley.
- A nice campgrounds in the area would be great..
- You have to have good jobs to support good communities and families.
- Bowling ally, movie theater, skating rink. More grocery options
- -- We would like to have integrity among leadership to set good moral examples for our young generation, especially when town activities & events are planned.
  -- Also, we were certainly not pleased to have "In God We Trust" removed from our city's police cars.
  -- Our goals should be to convey the highest standards possible to exude good character.
- I have loved Bedford forever, most kids my age can't wait to "get out", however I never wanna leave this amazing town. Growing it to much could take away from its small town charm and character
- More variety of shopping options
- Better paying jobs. A community that puts more emphasis on infrastructure than artistic aesthetics.
- Lower
  Taxes.
- More sidewalks, especially to and around parks (such as between 460 and falling Creek Park on Link Road and around Liberty Lake Park)
  A better farmer's market or a community oriented food market that sources local farm products.
  Public pools and water play areas, especially areas that will offer water safety/swimming lessons.
- Access to better selection of healthy food choices, grocery stores. Need LOW density housing. Need only 1 county tax. The Town residents are double taxed and it's wrong.
- More things for youth to do.
  More jobs.
  Traffic light at intersection of Industrial Ave and Burks Hill.
  Traffic light near Royal Farms.
  Don't require town residents to pay town and county real estate taxes.
- More options for people with disabilities to get around
- More diversity in shops. I have to go to Lynchburg or Roanoke for any major shopping, including a decent grocery store.

- Add higher quality restaurants
  Add more franchise restaurants as well
  Add more apperal shopping options
  Add some entertainment options such as bowling
- Maintaining all the ball fields available
- Higher paying jobs, More grocery shopping options(Aldi), clothing stores, alternative medicine/holistic, roadside trash/carcass clean up, leash law/stray animal control(biggest issue).
- This town and many things before it turned in a Ghost Town. More stores and thriving businesses besides consignment shops antique store. It's a joke the stores don't open everyday. It's whenever they want to open. That's not a business. You have 2 consistant places that open Rapid Printing store and also Arthur's jewelry. But we what we really have here in town is just churches, banks, and fast food, that's it.
- Clean up the parks and walking paths in them. Lower downtown rent would entice more shops opening.
- Things to do. Anything at all.
- Cut property taxes.
  Force slum landlords to upgrade their buildings in downtown retail area.
  Better restaurants.
- a train station

  Access to public transportation
- More industry for jobs. More commercial businesses for the availability of goods. Youth activities and better sports programs. Tear down buildings that are not repairable to make room for new buildings. Much of Bedford looks dilapidated.
- More options for Retail/Dining.
- It could be better
- We need an art & entertainment location with the loss of the auditorium at the Middle School for both the Community Orchestra & LTP's and other groups! Retail stores are needed other than antique or novelty ones. I would like to be able to shop for clothing other than Walmart or traveling to Lynchburg or Roanoke!
- New Business is in the downtown area. More free functions for underserve children. An initiative to improve the life underserved children, and Mental Health.
- nothing
- More events/ programs for the 65 and up residents
- To have more stores Businesses downtown and restaurants. Very few good choices for dinner.
- A new upscale restaurant for Lunch and dinner.
  An upscale residential senior community.
  A new residential neighborhood with clubhouse/pool/playground/multiple use courts/ walking trails.

- More reasonably priced housing options, possibilities for employment at a larger variety of pay scales, more money invested in education, more dining options, more entertainment options
- We really just want our taxes to go down and have more stuff to do.
- Merge the Town and County and eliminate the Town: make it a village. There is no need for a town bureaucracy or police force. The County can handle all of this and eliminate the waste created by the town taxes a and bureaucracy.
- While we should always work hard to maintain and make improvements on the town I do not think that building it's size is an improvement. I believe people come here for the small town charm. Let's concentrate on repurposing old structures, improving/building on to community parks/natural areas, and listening to the town members wants/needs.
- Lower personal property taxes!!!!
- Having more small businesses in downtown, repurposing commercial buildings and preserving the history of those, preserving the fields and open spaces, not building new unnecessary buildings that take away from the small town charm.
- Focus on maintaining and refurbishing existing structures while maintaining their historical integrity. Continue with upgrades on existing housing structures that have come to grave disrepair.
- A viable downtown venue (theater, shops, community center) without empty buildings and broken windows.
- Greenways, sidewalks to falling creek park!
  Bicycle paths
- Complete replacement of current administration with group that has community wellbeing at heart.
- Bring in new commercial businesses to fill the vacant storefronts
- Need a train station, shopping options other that antique stores, grocery like Kroger's, restaurants (open on Sundays) community swimming pool, bowling alley, movie theatre.
- Greenways for cycling connecting points around town, more trees and greenery downtown, a community pool, more entertainment and dining options downtown, more shopping options, a mid-size music venue similar to the Harvester, an active theater/auditorium seems to be missing from the downtown landscape, anything that would reinvigorate downtown particularly beyond daytime hours, more local transportation options would help. To get all of this we mostly need the jobs to attract young people to our town and perhaps a state of the art workspace facility to attract a remote workforce looking to work digital and live analog. Ha! There's your slogan.
- restore downtown w ability to park and closed walkways; improve downtown traffic pattern
- Parks and greenways. That is a glaring deficiency for an area with so much outdoor beauty. The area surrounding the D-Day memorial is town owned and would be a nice spot for a park or greenway.

Connecting neighborhoods to town via sidewalks and bike lanes. Currently, sidewalks and bike lanes tend to start and end in very peculiar locations and are not convenient.

Secure an Amtrak stop. Would do much much to bring people to Bedford.

More local restaurants and services. The majority of local businesses in town are antique shops. Take all these abandoned buildings in town and attraction local shops. Butcher shop, a brunch restaurant, and a bookstore all come to mind as I've options in a small town.

Put stipulations on owners of these dilapidated or long term vacant buildings that they have to either fix them up or sell them. Have that be the case for residential houses in town as well. Otherwise, the town is underutilized and deteriorating.

- No county taxes.
- More businesses to shop at and restaurant choices downtown. The less I have to drive to shop, or frequent Walmart, the better. Keeping my money in town is important to me. I'd love to see more community spirit and businesses working together during the year. Hard to do when every other storefront is empty.
- I would find a way to consolidate the Town/County/Chamber associates to get them all on the same page with one goal in mind...GET INDUSTRY into Bedford County! Downtown looks like a ghost tow. We have 3 different agencies (I assume) working for the same goal, and yet there seems to be little or no progress. BTW I've lived here my entire life....We can't survive on electric income, antique stores and re-purposed apartment buildings forever....If it wasn't for the electric departments income into the budget, what would the Town survive on....taxes?
- Slightly more commercial options while still prioritizing green space and parks
- More diverse areas for shopping and small businesses
- More local eats, and activities.
- Local businesses for children activities, places for children to visit and play to avoid resulting to trouble
- Stop trying to build town homes and subdivisions. Leave Bedford a more rural area.
- More things to do after work hours
- Planet Fitness or similar
- More small businesses
- Putting large grates over huge deep holes in the streets near downtown, by Farmers Market and in front of massage place.
- Increase walkability. More sidewalks and a Greenway. Diversity is great, embrace it. More Arts programs.
- Honestly, our town council should have business minded people offering suggestions and leading by examples., not the petty sign stealing, yelling and arguing with citizens and fighting amongst council members we currently have on our town council.

More emphasis on working with the county instead of fighting or ignoring the county.

Combine some of the services and positions of the town and county to have more resources to accomplish the challenges we face by saving tax dollars for duplicate services.

- Entertainment.
- More youth and kids programs- like splash pads
- More restaurants and shopping.
- Bedford is a dying town. We need more things for young families to do. Antique stores, and banks are not needed in the town, we have plenty. Bedford needs a place where parents can take their kids to have fun and not have to go to Lynchburg or Roanoke to do it. I have lived in Bedford my whole life and things have not changed. There has never been anything for kids to do, which leads to kids getting into trouble because of the boredom they face. We need a movie theater or bowling alley. We also need another store on the west end of town for groceries. Kroger or Target would be a nice addition to the town.
- Additional retailers, additional transportation services, more parks and entertainment options.
- More local vendors , kids activities; bowling alley, arcades
  Less antique and vintage stores
- More shopping and restaurant options as well as more medical providers/facilities.
- Bicycle paths.
- Activities for youth. Sports events for teens, Bowling Alley, there is a Duck Pin Alley on S.Bridge, not being used, movie theater or outside theaters. Ways for community to come together with their families.
- Rental and low cost housing is needed to encourage new employees to live in the town. Recreational activities for families like skating rink, a movie house, a swimming pool, safe and fun places for teenagers to go. More leaders of town and county and business leaders need to support cultural and recreational programs. Attend events, sponsor events.
- Improve downtown. It's shameful
  Bike lanes
- A vibrant and vital Centertown that recognizes the importance of its historic buildings and insists on their preservation; a public swimming pool, ideally open year round, for major youth activities, among others; one or more public performance venues, indoor and out; viable neighborhood organizations to lobby Council and Town Admin. for needed amenities, with perhaps some Council members elected from separate districts; more support for YMCA preschool and other quality programs; More support from the Town for all the non-profits who provide the quality of life cultural, social, and recreational programs; i.e, Bower, Wharton, YMCA, Farmers Mkt., etc.
- Train station. Taxi, more sidewalks and bicycle paths. Better grocery and retail.

- Less empty buildings downtown. Retail availability more days a week. Most shops are open a just few days per week.
- Accessibility; the entire town of Bedford suffers from lack of accessibility for wheelchair users—there are no easily accessible, publicly maintained outdoor spaces for extended recreation due to sharp inclines and rough terrain, and sidewalk accessibility in the "downtown" area is infringed upon by utility poles even when you have someone to assist you with the inclines.
- The quality of life is pretty perfect, the only thing I can say is for the otter bus users it would be nice for all the stops to have a bench and canopy.
- Commercial property owners who are proud of their properties and maintain them properly. A higher tax rate to support better maintenance of public areas.
- Kroger's, restaurants like the Social Club (now closed), wine bar, summer outdoor live music on Friday evenings, summer downtown art/craft/food trucks/farmers market (in the downtown streets) with live music
- A dog park
  Adequate parking
  Opportunities for youth
- vibrant small businesses that can survive downtown. Free Wifi downtown. Better cell phone coverage.
- Taxes doubled for those annexed that were county and are now town but the benefits aren't identifiable. Over the past 10 years the most significant additions to the town is the Bower Center. There are only a couple of restaurants that aren't fast food so limited options. No where to shop other than Walmart and a couple of local places with limited hours.
- Improve the central business district to provide more dining, shopping, and recreation opportunities for adults
- More neighborhood green space, bike paths.
- More jobs, new businesses and manufacturing.
- I love the outdoors and I would love to see a park with trails for walking and appreciating the beauty of nature around us.
- Updated Animal Shelter, creation of a local animal spay/neuter clinic and low cost vet care
- No more growth, but instead a focus on vitalizing and making Centertown more attractive. .
- Meals on wheels availability to seniors.
- Finding ways to keep our young people here without the cost of losing our hometown atmosphere.
  I have been deeply disturbed and disappointed at the loss of Family owned businesses over the years. I've lived here for 25 years and my children grew up going to Coffe and Saunders, Bedford Hardware and the bookstore that was in town.
  My grandkids will never know the treasures that Mr. Bill had in his unique hardware

store.
Or checking out the farm equipment and little whatnots at Coffee and Saunders and to sit and play checkers. 😔

- Fruit trees
- Restaurant options with reasonable pricing and consistent hours
- Attitude. From the top down. Change. A little glimpse of sparkle and hope from leadership. Leadership that's present and supportive. Incentives to bring in businesses that would support citizen needs and the tax base in the long run. Support for small business from leadership.
- More shops, coffe shops . Galleries with evening hours in town.
- Revitalization of downtown.
- Maybe a water park with slow water trail, water slides, water spouts, pool.
- Eliminating property taxes would be fantastic and this isn't a joke. Figure it out and that would be a breakthrough.

  Second in priority: stimulating downtown with extremely low cost "storefront" space for entrepreneurs and creatives to experiment. Even including pop-ups. A fully equipped "turnkey" restaurant space for short-term access by foodpreneurs would also be interesting to think about.

  It's very disappointing that even coffee shops and local print shop have had a very hard time surviving in downtown (thinking about the closures that have taken place.) Really terrible.
- Bike lanes, better and wider sidewalks, more encouragement for businesses in center town, LOWER TAXES.
- no more forced annexation, removal of abandoned houses and structures.
- Young people are graduating high school and have limited options to stay in the immediate area. More jobs would help; jobs that are not retail.
- More shopping areas, more things for adults and children to do
- Fewer empty storefronts and attention to aesthetics downtown - sidewalk repair, trashcans, weeds
- Better restaurants and a full downtown
- Access to the lakes and rivers
- 1. More affordable homes. $350,000+ is too much for most folks that work in the area. Rent over $900 a month is insanity.
  2. Pick who is taxing property.. town OR county.
  3. Clean up/Upgrade parks. Maybe put up some signs and advertise the areas..
- Affordable housing
- More grocery store options. There's no Kroger in the town of Bedford. Have more things to do like a bowling alley, public outdoor swimming pool, bars younger people can relate to. Different restaurants. Something fun for kids to do, jump parks.

- A population with more discretionary income to support more restuarants and stores
- Engagement of the historical opportunities, increased store fronts, train station, better advertising in the tourist areas
- It seems that the Town Council and the Parks and Recreation don't seem to want to do the necessary repairs and upkeep to keep our town looking as well as it did 10 years ago. The parks used to be beautiful. Now they look like they haven't been used or taken care of in years.
- Restaurants and development of downtown!
- More things to do, more street festivals,
- If tractor trailers and other vehicles followed the road signs and speeding for Longwood ave. There are too many families and young children and elderly people that utilize the sidewalk in this area for people not to comply.
- nothing
- Another large grocery option & retail stores. Dry cleaning. A few more non chain dinner restaurants with parking.
- Needs more dining and shopping options to make this area a destination location to go along with the enjoyable outdoor activities.
- More downtown life! Things to do and support downtown.
- Fill the empty storefronts in downtown. Bring in stuff for youth to do on all sides of the town.

Question 5

If you have lived in the Town of Bedford for five years or less, what improvements would you like to see?

143 responses

- N/A
- I have lived in the town of Bedford longer than 5 years.
- CVCC build a larger facility or Move Main Campus to Town for all ages with multiple offerings with afternoon classes to draw in Employers and allow Town and County residents to improve their lives and education for better jobs and increased incomes. Build this then you will get an AMTRAK from need.
- Definiteneed to improve Centertown Bedford. Too many empty stores and need more parking spaces.
- I have lived in Bedford for just over four years. I love this town and tell everyone I know how much I love it. My suggestions for improvements are in the last answer. I hope whatever changes are made, the small-town, friendly, patriotic, and warm feel of the town will not change. I hope the outdoor spaces (parks, etc.) will be maintained well and be more inviting for families and people of all ages to gather.
- I live in Bedford county but regularly visit and spend time in the Town. I'd just like to see the centertown buildings and stores to stay successful. That I think is going to be a collaborative effort for Bedford county to have destination experiences, and then partner with town businesses to encourage people to visit centertown during their visits.
- A variety of grocery shopping and other shopping.
- Faster growth to inspire more businesses and facilities to the area. I do not like having to drive to Roanoke or Lynchburg for the majority of things.
- I've lived here for 20
- Keep out the plazas
- N/A
- Retail entertainment
- N/A
- A face-lift of town and some of the people in control
- Why five years or less? I've lived here the majority of my life but still know the importance of growth. I find this question very offensive. I do travel and see what is working in other areas and small towns.
- Better sidewalks! Walkability should be key in this town!

  I would like to see longwood ave improved. Instead of a 35mph zone, it should be made into a single lane road, with a median in the middle (with trees and such) to indicate to drivers that they're entering a small town. Too many people speed through that area.
- .

- N/A. Leave it alone. We don't need everything Roanoke or Lynchburg has and they are close enough to drive to, to do anything.
- More shops in downtown with regular working hours and open more. We call it Bedford time here because you never know what and when a business is going to open that day or closed. Amazing there is so set schedule.
- A decent, affordable department store. TJ Maxx would be great!
- Water and sewer extensions to annexed area; more neighborhood parks; additional community programs/events downtown.
- Transportation, options, of variety of additional residential housing options that blend in and maintain the character of the current community, additional commercial and retail shopping options downtown.
- More places to work at industry and shopping
- There are issues with curb appeal like trimming trees away from power lines and from blocking line of site while driving, ample free parking downtown for when those empty storefronts become thriving businesses again, stores that don't close before 3pm, since most people work 9-5, more restaurants, signs on the way in and out of town on 460, 221, 122 displaying stores, restaurants, gas stations, and lodging that are available in and around town. The only signs you see at our exits are for the National DDay Memorial. Why don't I see a sign for the Olde Liberty Station, Bella's, OIP, or the Blue Lady Cafe? Shell Station or BP? Peaks of Otter Lodge?
- N/a
- I do not live in the town, I live in the county. I grew up on Oakwood Street, my husband and I owned a business in the town from 1986 to 2015. I would.like to see business owners catch a break on the realestate, machinery and tools, and personal property taxes to be able to afford doing business in our small town. More land to be designated to parking areas and businesses need to have reasonable hours of operation and make their store fronts appealing to the public. There are a lot of empty, run down buildings that don't look attractive . There is also current projects within the town that need to be pushed to complete, such as the hotel and apartments at the old Middle School and the new business coming to the old Fisher's building. There is a large building next to Beales ,not sure who owns it now but the town should encourage the property owner to make it affordable for.someone to purchase, it does no good to have empty buildings run down taking away from the towns appearance.
- More money funneled to attracting new businesses instead of spending everything on the downtown area.
- n/a
- More option for high speed internet, more street lights on Oakwood
- More place for young and old to go to for entertainment.
- Some of it just depends on demand and if people move here. If they do, fixing up old or sketching businesses or buildings for new businesses or homes
- Transportation, a Train Station,an adult Park or place that only adults hangout

- Shopping for everyday needs is a must. Having to drive into Roanoke or Lynchburg isn't always convenient.
- More retail and restaurants, more wooded public areas and walking trails.
- Wow I cannot imagine the answers you will receive!
- More programs or pilot programs for senior citizens and disabled people. We need homeless shelter.
- More support for downtown businesses
- Treatment of senior citizens
- Snaring of deer in town to reduce population without risk to people. Make safer to drive and to grow plants of all kinds on ones property.
- See above
- More shops and restaurants. Clean up moldy and disheveled buildings downtown.
- We need an alternative to Food Lion/Walmart.
  We need a hotel to accommodate visitors, which I heard is in the works.
  We need to spruce up downtown. It looks vacant, some stores look rundown down to paint, dirty windows etc.
- Support for the police department, especially to help with drugs that run thru our town between Lynchburg & Roanoke.

  Equal treatment for or removal of requirements for an HOA - see the history in & near Governor's Hill, phase 1 & 2 not done the same by the town & county, and the proposals for "phase 3."
- Empliment a town law on how many vehicles a person can have parked on the street in front of their residence. And what kind of vehicle.
- NA
- More fun stuff
- I've lived here my entire life.
- Additional food resources. Better traffic flow around Burks Hill Road and the Walmart intersection, more boutique stores in downtown with better hours to serve those who work during the week.
- Business brought back to downtown
- Evening and weekend places to be, things to do.
- N/A
- Transportation is the number one issue in my opinion. I have very limited employment options because of transportation issues. Police are bothersome here as well. I've only lived here 3 years and I've been harassed or treated unfairly in situations where I needed help, and as a black man that is incredibly uncomfortable for me.
- Sidewalk repairs. Replacement of old water and sewer lines. Broadband.
- Better schools
- Businesses down town.
- Everything mentioned at the top of this survey

- Improved shopping options, businesses moving into the empty stores in Downtown Bedford
- N/a
- More things to do! And different business that aren't that same old antique stores
- Buffet restaurant, and shopping
  Centers, the only place that we have to buy clothes is Walmart.
- N/A
- Bike lanes, train stations, business/ technology park to bring in tech workers to this beautiful area.
- See previous answer.
- More businesses, better ran rec department
- We lived in Bedford 64 years. We were recently annexed into the town. We have noticed a decline in the downtown businesses for over the past 30 years. All the businesses have closed or moved. We would like to see more clothing and hardware stores return. Bedford needs more industries for people to work at and have jobs. There's no need for additional residential growth if there's nowhere for people to work.
- Traffic flow in/out of walmart
- I don't live in town.
- More attractions for young people. More shopping other than antiques and junk stores. Movie or bowling.
- more places to eat dinner
- Same thing as before, more competition for rental/ Home Towns
- Same as above answer
- Cutting grass coming into town on the off ramps and more christmas decorations in the town...kinda lacking
- Same as above
- Shopping other than Walmart and Thrift stores.
- Have lived here since 1966 (first year of total integration when Klans was still active) and almost moved 2nd year. Stayed and even with our reversions from town to city and back, still here and GLAD!
- Better jobs. Better sidewalks. Road improvement . More and better signs showing where to park.
- Was annexed from county would like to see street lights & Sidewalks
- Restore more of the old buildings
- More shops. And, I would appreciate the electric department to enter 2025 with online bill payment that doesn't cost. It's easy to set up. Why hasn't it been done??
- Basically same as above
- Stray animal management and leash laws. I've lived a a few other states and this is the worst stray and pet control I've ever seen. Pets are wondering in the roads and on other

peoples properties constantly. I've seen pets get hit by cars and see them on the side of the road all the time. It's a serious issue here.

- Basically working on having the attraction of a real town. Look at Wynhurst and other places to see how to develop a small town. But Main Street is too small, it's not going to be very much.
- Things to do for young people.
- Growth of commercial/retail/dining/lodging etc.
- See above answer.
- Nothing Its great now!!!
- Businesses and restaurants downtown and another development of patio homes (like the Villas) somewhere in town.
- Besides the well-maintained government buildings and banks, the downtown area is embarrassing. There are too many vacancies and shabby-looking storefronts.
- Existing projects completed faster.
  Vacant buildings and all downtown buildings freshly painted/ and in good repair.
  A public private golf course. Not just a private course.
  A new residential delopement.
- (Over 5 years)
- Elimination of the Town.
- I LOVE Bedford. I have been here since March 1, 2020 and utilize everything I can within Bedford such as grocery shopping, Doctors, Dentist, Funeral services, employment, State services, Court Services. On the rare occasion I can't do/find something I need, I have no issue going to Lynchburg/Roanoke for it. I can understand and see a need for some intelligently planned child/teen/family activity options/needs such as a small (pref private or the appearance of private) movie theater, bowling alley, arcade, etc so the teenagers have more to do than drink in a field as night/weekend activities.
- Lower personal property taxes!!!!
- Pressure wash the sidewalks, bring new small businesses to downtown, bring a train station back, repurpose abandoned buildings or rundown homes.
- Pressure washing sidewalks. Requirement for business/building owners to maintain their properties with historical integrity, whether occupied or vacant. Focusing on one single identity for the town as a quaint, small, historical landmark which includes unique shopping opportunities and/or unique satellite stores.
- N/A
- Train station movie theater
- NA been here for over two decades
- N/A
- I have lived in Bedford for more than 5 years.
- na
- N/A

- I have been here one year and wish there was more commercial spaces for food/groceries. More promotion of community events and more parks/walking trails. I wish there was also more options for internet/utilities
- More affordable housing
- Less big residential and more things to do
- Children revolved businesses
- Worry about fixing existing areas and stop trying to build up. The town itself could be cleaned and refurbished, the parks are neglected and dirty. Clean up and fix those areas.
- Driver being more aware of pedestrians
- More businesses in town
- Make sure buildings are renovated safely, not just a quick patch up but actually removing asbestos and lead paint. Actually finding the sources of mold problems and fixing them.
- Make it more welcoming to new people. Be more open to diversity and people who are different. Increase walkability and outdoor soacea.
- Better Maintenance on the roads and more jobs.
- Roadways repaired, sewer system developed, more street lighting.
- I've lived here for 12 years.
- I would like to see some improvement to the way the town looks. when you come in from the county it looks bland.
- Why not from those who've been here longer? Twenty years ago Bedford was a serious contender in the All American Cities competition in Kansas City. Now? Hardly. The Town administration and Council no longer have the vision and enthusiasm to make us a great town. Maybe these individuals are waiting for an Amtrak station to jump start our community...and maybe it will, tho with our present lackluster attitude the subsequent growth may be out of our hands at that point. As pointed out earlier, most of the visible improvements in our community are coming from non-profits, not the Town Admin. At some point we need to roll the dice and invest money where it can have a serious positive payback...maybe even, God forbid, raise taxes in order to allow our fair and beautiful town to begin to achieve the potential quality of life that might actually make our children want to return here to live and raise their own families.
- N/a
- If new parks are established, picking land that's more level would be ideal for accessibility. Paving at least some of the more level existing trails would be a good investment for accessibility.
- I would love it if we could get recycling bins in addition to our trash bins that get picked up weekly as well! I would also like to restate my opinion on the taxes we pay in the town, the county should be charged county taxes and the town should be charged town taxes that cost approximately $50 more each half than the cost of the county taxes.
- N/A
- Fiber connection to internet in my house. A local greenway walk/bike path in town (must be lengthy)

- N/A
- x
- More restaurant options, that are not fast food, more middle class apartments/townhouses, more festivals/events. It's very boring. Maybe Friday concerts in the summer! Vinton has done a great job revamping its downtown- we could take pointers from them!
- More sidewalks, better transit, and the Amtrak station. The hilltop neighborhood needs continued public investment to keep it vibrant.
- More single family development with half acre lots to bring better jobs.
- I would like to see more shops open in the town center, better dining options and a park or green space with walking trails. I'm also disappointed with the increase in taxes and we still have to pay for trash pickup. If we don't pay for trash service we are not eligible for spring/fall cleanup pickup and i don't think that's fair.
- Been here 20
- NA
- More affordable housing. More effort to maintain space within township on the job availability
- Fruit trees, benches along sidewalks
- Offer grants to help mom & pop businesses get started in town.
- N/A
- Not applicable
- no double taxing of residents of Bedford Town and Bedford County. Water quality too much chlorine in the water affects flavor and fading of clothes.
- Movie theater / better restaurants / full downtown shopping area
- Revamp of downtown
- See above.
  Maybe a bar/restaurant open past 11pm.
  Move Dunkin to the Walmart side of 460.
  Bring Royal Farms in town.
  Better run social media page for events and community.
- Better store front businesses, more opportunities for local businesses
- Restaurants and developments downtown! Make owners of vacant buildings get out of the way.
- More grocery stores and restaurants in town
- A park or splash area within the 3 mile walking loop for families to enjoy during summer months and year round in nice weather, within walking distance from downtown and neighboring neighborhoods.
- no change

Website Comments

The following comments were submitted through the online review of draft plan materials. Prompts are retained for context, and comments are reproduced as submitted with light formatting for readability.

Website Comment 1

Prompt: *Share your thoughts, ideas, or concerns about Bedford's 2045 Comprehensive Plan update to help shape the town's future.*

More green space throughout the township.
Walkable parks and playgrounds.
More, improved sidewalks to encourage pedestrian access and use throughout town and outside town.
Safe bicycle lanes to promote alternative access
to businesses and green spaces.
BUG is fantastic! More of these food producing site.
Better access to recreational sites for teenagers. Access mostly requires cars to get to the skate park and bike park out toward Falling Creek Park. I certainly wouldn't permit my kids and grandkids to bike to these parks.
Support more walkable restaurants and social sites in town—bowling, arcades, table pool, fitness centers. Tax breaks for all; assist with grants.
Buildings in center town are becoming decrepit—the town looks "seedy". Encourage owners to renovate and update for future tenants and businesses.

Website Comment 2

Prompt: *Share your thoughts, ideas, or concerns about Bedford's 2045 Comprehensive Plan update to help shape the town's future.*

This town desperately needs to bring in new businesses that gives people something to do, like a top golf or other entertainment center. The lack of things to do in this town is leading people to substance abuse.

Website Comment 3

Prompt: *We invite you to review the draft plan and share feedback below. Please let us know what comments you have that will help refine the goals and strategies, and specify which goal/strategy you are commenting on. Page or section references are encouraged.*

First, getting an Amtrak station DONE in Bedford is a must. The tourusm, the business commuter, the family excursions is a money maker for Bedford. Secondly, partnerships with existing industry, expanding trade school, expanding CVCC curriculum is worthy of Bedford grants, worthy of growing Bedford revenue streams (annexation, 3 new to fairly new apartment buildings, Governor Hill development, Villas of Oakwood development, etc.). Good job opportunities in Bedford may never be fully realized. However, Bedford is a bedroom community that is benefiting from 2 hotels under construction, some but not enough full service restaurants/cafes, and as previously mentioned mire housing under development. I am sad to read the low ownership % your statistics claim. More household income can change that!

Website Comment 4

Prompt: *We invite you to review the draft plan and share feedback below. Please let us know what comments you have that will help refine the goals and strategies, and specify which goal/strategy you are commenting on. Page or section references are encouraged.*

I like the fact that Bedford is trying to create vision for the future and looking at making much needed changes- my concern is that if immediate issues such as lack of jobs are not addressed now, this will all be for nothing. According to the demographics in the plan, only 879 people hold retail/trade jobs in Bedford, and in most instances the trade jobs are the ones that pay well and complement affordability for housing when someone is bringing home that stronger income. I attended the meeting last night and when watching it back on YouTube, you can tell that the "leaders" of the Town that attended as well as those on the planning commission simply do not care about the feedback or concerns of the citizens that pay their salaries and until that changes nothing in this municipality will ever change. Again, while it is nice to see how phases can be laid out to follow and implementation can flow to make improvements, a history of failing to execute any previous plans/ideas, consistent budget restraints or a complete lack of balancing a budget leaves citizens & businesses concerned that nothing will be any different this time. Generating more jobs, incentivizing new businesses to open and encouraging existing businesses to continue to operate in Bedford will help generate more capital for projects naturally and allow more flexibility for the Town to complete projects. The initial focus seems to also be on downtown businesses & revitalizing those buildings to fill them. At the end of the day the Town does not own that Real Estate, and refurbishing or revitalizing storefronts downtown will only create a larger mess with the handful of property owners downtown who already want to charge too much to rent out their spaces (which is why they are vacant now). Parking will also be a huge cost for improvement before any tourism or visitation downtown for shopping, eating, etc. would help financially. Those buildings also will not generate a large number of jobs even if refined, whereas if attention is focused immediately on the land use map areas that are grey for Industrial/Manufacturing to attract businesses & existing businesses to grow they will see a better financial result with tax revenue increases and job creation going hand in hand with increasing housing affordability. I want Bedford to be an amazing place for people to live & work, I want to see a lot accomplished in this plan and have it take place to make Bedford a better place to visit & spend money. I just think a lot of business owners and citizens want to see leadership for the town & the zoning commission execute a plan while being fiscally responsible, listening to their constituents & not having the “I know better than you” attitude that showed in the meeting last night. Grant money is not free no matter how you shake it & the ripple effect of it hits all taxpayers, so respect for their opinions voiced should be valued whether they agree or not.

Website Comment 5

Prompt: *We invite you to review the draft plan and share feedback below. Please let us know what comments you have that will help refine the goals and strategies, and specify which goal/strategy you are commenting on. Page or section references are encouraged.*

There is a lot left to be desired by the towns current and future growth and execution of such plans. There is lots of taxpayer money wasted on projects such as the road on Burks hill/122, sidewalks and pickleball courts. That money could have been used to help attract new business and/or growth of current businesses in the town. Mary Zirkle has not been effective in her position and is a lot of talk and no action when it comes to plans. She has her foot on the towns neck and the town will never grow into what it could be with her in that position.

Website Comment 6

Prompt: *We invite you to review the draft plan and share feedback below. Please let us know what comments you have that will help refine the goals and strategies, and specify which goal/strategy you are commenting on. Page or section references are encouraged.*

Thank you for all of your efforts to prepare this 2045 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Bedford and for this opportunity to comment and provide input. I have several general comments and section-specific comments, below.

General Comments:
It is hard to envision what the world, national, or local economy will look like 20 years from now and how economic, technological and demographic changes will impact Bedford. There are some constants that will remain, however—our proximity to and connection to nature, our connections to each other, and the need for the town to provide basic services for day-to-day living to our residents. We need to preserve what we have, protect our assets moving forward, and create an environment where residents and the town can prosper.

While the current draft Comprehensive Plan does a good job of laying out our current situation and challenges, it did not answer the key question, "Where do we want to be in 2045?" What do we want the town to look like, what kinds of businesses do we want to encourage, what kind of environment do we want to create, what kind of people do we want to attract? The Town has a rich legacy and proud and storied history with the Bedford Boys; looking towards the future, what do we want to add to that legacy and how do we create a new vision for our town? What do we want Bedford to be known for in 20 years? To quote Lewis Carroll, "If you don't know where you are going, any road will take you there."

Do we want to be known for the best schools in the region, as a great place to raise a family? Do we want Bedford to be known as an adventure destination and the gateway to the Blue Ridge and the Peaks of Otter? An artists' destination? A town with a festival for every season? A healthcare center of excellence? A retirement community? A bedroom community for Lynchburg and Roanoke? An industrial manufacturing town? All of the above?

Different visions will determine our priorities for activities and funding. A retirement community needs senior-accessible and affordable homes, assisted-living and nursing facilities, healthcare, and restaurants. Families need affordable homes, parks and recreation, good schools, community activities and events. It helps to focus on two or three attributes to help prioritize efforts and funding. This will determine priorities, timing of projects, and funding resources. At the same time, we can address some of the low hanging fruit, however, if we want to intentionally build for the future, we need to keep the long-term, high priority projects front of mind, and start planning, working and saving for those now and focus our activities towards that future.

Bedford has tremendous potential to grow and develop in a number of strategic areas—improved and expanded tourism offerings, revitalized retail and services downtown, enhanced art offerings and festivals that will attract outside visitors and income, small and light industry, and others. We need to find ways to bring in outside visitors and funds to sustain and grow the town's economy. The town has tremendous potential and, by bringing together residents, businesses, town government and other organizations, we can build a better future.

Finally, to successfully implement a strategic plan, it needs to have a detailed timeline and specific costs identified and projects should be prioritized to ensure that infrastructure is addressed, opportunities are created, and the town continues to move towards its vision. Identifying sources of funding and partners to implement various parts of the vision are also key.

Section-Specific Comments:
Chapter 2: Key Issues and Opportunities
p. 11 The issues identified as Weaknesses are all opportunities for the town to explore, develop and address. Identifying the types of industries/services desired in Bedford and then actively seeking out and encouraging those to locate here; working with developers to build housing suitable for both the

short and long term (a mix of apartments, townhomes, single story, and single family homes, at various price points); addressing aging infrastructure, starting with the most urgent issues and having a structured plan for investment over time will alleviate both short and long term problems; identifying and initiating youth recreation programs and services for seniors; and bringing natural gas to town for both industry and residents as an alternative to increasingly expensive electric heating costs will all help move the town forward. In addition, a focus on sustainability, tourism and will bring in outside funds and stimulate the local economy.

P. 13 I suggest another Goal to add here–Tourism. Bedford has tremendous tourism potential, between the Blue Ridge, the D-Day Memorial, Centerfest and other festivals.
Bedford can work to expand Centerfest, Christmas Parade, other festivals to grow from local festivals to regional/state-wide events. External marketing is key as we would need to attract outside visitors, funding, and support. Given that the D-Day Memorial had 60,000 visitors in 2025 and the Bedford Boys Memorial had only 21,000, there is an opportunity to entice an additional 40,000 visitors per year to downtown. This can be done with the implementation of a shuttle bus between the new hotel, the Memorial and the museum. Sample itineraries for "One Perfect Day in Bedford", "Two Perfect Days in Bedford" and "Three Perfect Days in Bedford" that include historical, natural, art, retail and dining opportunities could be developed and disseminated through the Welcome Center to encourage visitors to stay, explore and spend. This activity can be implemented immediately to start boosting tourist opportunities and income.

Chapter 3: Demographics
p. 17 Given the aging population, both in Bedford and the country, there are opportunities to invest in both eldercare and youth retention. The town could work with CVCC to expand their programs, especially in nursing, to provide trained employees for nursing homes and the hospital, which are higher paying jobs than entry-level or retail opportunities. This would be an opportunity to train youth for and fill these positions. To support an aging population, organizations could invest in healthcare and retirement developments. Meanwhile, the town can reimagine schools (charters, vocational and theme schools, and attracting private students) to educate students and prepare them for skilled jobs in the future.

P. 23 National demographic predictions state that the country will be a majority minority country by 2050. How will this impact Bedford's demographics? We will want to attract young families to grow the town even as the current population ages in place.

P. 24, para. 2, There is a typo in the last sentence "opportunities"

Chapter 4: Economy
P. 25 $91,000–this number does not match with the same statistic on p. 20 ($80,000). These number also do not correspond with the numbers in the town's 2025-2026 budget document. Please check all numbers and statistics to ensure they are consistent within and across all documents.

P. 26 The sectors in the table do not correspond with the sectors in the 2025-2026 budget document. Please compare and ensure correct and consistent numbers across all documents.

P. 31 Moving forward to implement the Downtown plan should be one of the town's highest priorities to generate business and stimulate the economy downtown. The 460 business corridor bypasses downtown and we need to ensure that there is a balance and shopping opportunities in town as well. There is a national organization called EforAll that helps educate and develop entrepreneurs and small business owners. The town could look into bringing this organization to Bedford to help stimulate and support local businesses.

Chapter 5: Housing
P. 34 Increasing home-ownership should be a goal over the next 20 years. There are financial

programs for first-time home-buying veterans and teachers and the town can amplify these programs and assist people to take advantage of them.

P. 35 For future developments, the town can negotiate with developers seeking zoning or other concessions to ensure that a portion of the new homes being built meet the then-current demographics of the population and provide a diversity of options in size and price-points to appeal to a wide range of demographics.

Chapter 6: Community Facilities and Services
P. 42 The Comprehensive plan references several Capital Improvement Program investments included in the 2025-2026 Adopted Budget. We are halfway through the 2025-2026 budget year–have these projects been funded (municipal roof and lobby renovation) yet? If not, why not and what is the timeframe for funding and completing them? Additional CIP projects to replace public works fleet and equipment are also referenced in the Comprehensive plan but it is unclear whether these have been funded and purchased yet and, if not, what the timeframe is to complete these projects. Please clarify.

P. 44 Has an analysis ever been done concerning options for electricity provision in the town? Are there any plans for additional power generation in the town itself–solar, wind, natural gas, hydroelectric? Would it be more cost-effective for the town to purchase its electricity directly from AEP and eliminate the co-op?

P. 44, last paragraph, cites four goals in the police department's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. It lists "enhancing public safety" as the last of the four goals–shouldn't this be the first priority of the police?

P. 45 Police–The Comprehensive plan references several Capital Improvement Program investments included in the 2025-2026 Adopted Budget. We are halfway through the 2025-2026 budget year–have these projects been funded (police department renovations, PD support services building improvements, in-car & body camera system, etc.) yet? If not, why not and what is the timeframe for funding and completing them? Please clarify.

P. 46 Fire–There is no provision in the Comprehensive plan to provide for a Fire Department with fully-funded staff. Is this a goal for 2045? If so, how will this be funded and implemented?

P. 46 Fire CIP–We are halfway through 2025-2026 budget year–which have been funded and which have not? What are the plans to fund these and the timeframe?

Chapter 7: Infrastructure
P. 51 The Comprehensive plan references several Capital Improvement Program investments included in the 2025-2026 Adopted Budget. We are halfway through the 2025-2026 budget year–have these projects been funded (transmission and distribution line improvements, etc.) yet? If not, why not and what is the timeframe for funding and completing them? Please clarify.

P. 53 As a goal for Bedford, I would recommend adding free wifi to cover the entire downtown area so that visitors, businesses and residents can connect while they are downtown. This service would enhance the visitor experience and encourage residents who are working and living downtown.

Chapter 8: Transportation
P. 66 Route 43 is a Scenic Byway. Bedford can leverage this for tourism purposes and market the attractions and businesses along it.

P. 71 The table at the top of the page, the Total numbers do not add up with the numbers listed in the columns above.

P. 71 In 2019, the CVPDC prepared the Bike/Walk Plan with projects for sidewalks and pedestrian facilities. What is the current status of the projects outlined in this plan? How many of the proposed

sidewalks were installed? What are the plans/funds/timeline to complete installation of these projects?

P. 74 The installation of a new Amtrak station in town should be pursued as vigorously as possible as this will enhance tourism and enable residents to commute easily to Lynchburg and Roanoke and beyond. Bedford could also become an employment hub for those commuting into town.

P. 75 The Comprehensive plan calls for identifying permanent funding for the Otter Bus and should contemplate expanding its route and the number of days of service over time.

P. 79 From the table, it indicates that the town has $222,000 remaining for new sidewalk construction in town. What are the plans for this money–the priorities for installation, the timeframe for completion?

P. 81 Strategy 1E–Parking needs to be addressed in downtown in particular through enhanced signage and designation of spaces for visitors only. There is no mention in the plan for installing electric charging spaces downtown. Has this been evaluated? They will likely be needed within the next 20 years.

Chapter 9: Parks and Recreation 82
P. 87 Use of the reservoir property for recreational purposes is contemplated, however, how will this work if the adjoining land is sold as currently being discussed? What provisions will be made to ensure there is no degradation of water quality?

P. 87 The idea to build a community pool/recreation center is great! What plans/funds/timeline would this be on?

Better cooperation between the town and the county to maximize use and maintenance of parks and recreational spaces would enhance offerings to the town at minimal cost.

P. 88 What is the status of the CIP projects included in the 2025-2026 budget (Liberty Lake Park restrooms, dredging, etc.)? Have these been completed yet? If not, why not and what is the timeframe?

Chapter 10: Community Identity and Partnerships
P. 89 There is an opportunity to expand Centerfest, the Christmas Parade, and other festivals to grow them from local festivals to regional/state-wide events and increase tourism in town.

P. 90 Starting by establishing an events committee is a good start. Until we see an increase in attendees and participation, there is limited funding for a dedicated position, however, this could be reconsidered when the demand is enough to justify it. Currently, contracting out the coordination of events works. External marketing is key to attracting outside visitors and funding support.

P. 93 The town could work with the BARC and/or BACC to set up a Volunteer Fair (similar to a job fair) and invite youth, adults and seniors to participate to learn about all of the non-profit organizations in town and their volunteer needs. Participants could sign up for the organizations/activities that interest them the most. This would promote volunteerism and community cohesion and help these organizations identify some of the additional labor support they need.

Chapter 11: Land Use and Growth Management
p. 103 An inventory of empty lots and land use is essential to understand where opportunities lie and to plan for proactive, managed growth.

P. 104 What is the monitoring plan for the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization plan? How is the town measuring and promoting progress towards downtown revitalization?

Chapter 12: Implementation

P. 107 The table needs additional refinement as the strategies listed are not prioritized in terms of timing, funding or importance. The next step would be to prioritize the activities within each goal and overall and then identify potential funding sources and a timeframe for each. Annual town budgets must take these funding needs into consideration so that the plan can be implemented in accordance with the proposed timeline. The plan and strategies should be reviewed each year to determine their relative priority and retain focus on the overall strategic goals.

Chapter 13: Tourism

I recommend that an additional chapter be added before the implementation plan devoted strictly to tourism to highlight the possibilities and opportunities to develop this sector. This could include sub-headings for historical tourism (D-Day Memorial, Bedford Boys Tribute Center, Bedford Historical Museum, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Avenel, etc.); outdoor tourism (Blue Ridge Parkway and Peaks of Otter drives and hikes, Smith Mountain Lake State Park activities, etc.). There are numerous opportunities to enhance adventure tourism–i.e. building canopy walks, zip lines, other activities; and cultural tourism, including wineries, orchards, artist's studios and art venues, Farmer's Market, etc. There is significant potential in these areas and these would bring in outside visitors and funds to boost the local economy.