

City of Benkelman

2018 Community Attitude/Needs Assessment Survey

[Faint, illegible text from a survey form, likely containing questions and response options.]

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Identifying needs and prioritizing objectives is a crucial aspect of the prosperity of Benkelman, and the City must work to constantly assess and improve the City's infrastructure and housing needs. The City of Benkelman has taken the first step in prioritizing objectives by completing an income survey. The overall goal of the survey is to assess the financial need of the community. In order to meet Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) requirements, the City would need to have a Low-Moderate-Income (LMI) of 51%. Before the survey, the City was at 46.67% Low-to-Moderate (LMI) persons according to the 2010 United States Census Bureau.

A random sample survey was chosen based on Benkelman having more than 200 households within City limits, and to determine the sample size, an online random number generator showed a total of 223 surveys would need to be collected. An oversample list was also generated in case of unreachable residents or non-responders, which resulted in a total of 268 surveys delivered. Four different attempts were made to collect surveys beginning in April 2018 through August 2018, including three door-to-door and one mailing. The distribution efforts resulted in 223 returned surveys, and surveys were returned to Miller & Associates for tabulation. Final results indicate the City of Benkelman with a 51.52% LMI population, which qualifies the City for Community Development Block Grant funding.

The City of Benkelman would like to thank all of the residents and community leaders who participated in the income survey. Your input and participation are vital to the future development of the community.

Prepared By:


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(Please place a checkmark in the appropriate box)		Excellent	Good	Poor	No Opinion
1.	Overall appearance of the City	2 (1%)	121 (55%)	95 (43%)	2 (1%)
2.	Overall appearance of downtown area	4 (2%)	149 (69%)	62 (28.5%)	3 (1.5%)
3.	Overall performance of the City Council	10 (5%)	124 (57%)	53 (24%)	32 (14%)
4.	Condition of the City streets	1 (1%)	13 (6%)	205 (93%)	2 (1%)
5.	Condition/adequacy of local park	46 (21%)	163 (74%)	7 (3%)	5 (2%)
6.	Condition/adequacy of swimming pool	28 (13%)	152 (69%)	23 (10%)	18 (8%)
7.	Condition/adequacy of public library	99 (44%)	111 (50%)	2 (1%)	11 (5%)
8.	Condition/adequacy of Senior Center	50 (22%)	143 (65%)	4 (2%)	24 (11%)
9.	Condition/adequacy of community center	19 (9%)	136 (64%)	21 (10%)	37 (17%)
10.	Condition/adequacy of City water system	14 (7%)	132 (61%)	63 (29%)	6 (3%)
11.	Adequacy of ADA accessibility in public places	15 (7%)	140 (65%)	25 (12%)	34 (16%)
12.	Adequacy of fire protection	60 (27%)	145 (66%)	8 (4%)	7 (3%)
13.	Availability of rental housing	0 (0%)	29 (13%)	166 (75%)	26 (12%)
14.	Availability of homes for sale	3 (1%)	117 (53%)	73 (33%)	26 (12%)

15. Do you live in a: House [207 – 93%] Apartment [6 – 3%]
 Mobile Home [8 – 3%] Other [2 – 1%] *Specify: Manufactured Home; Motel*

16. Do you own or rent your home? Own [186 – 84%] Rent [35 – 15.5%] Rent-to-Own [1 – .5%]

17. What is your current employment status? Full-time [119 – 54%] Part-time [22 – 10%]
 Retired [67 – 30%] Unemployed, but job-hunting [3 – 1%]
 Other [10 – 5%] *Specify: Disabled, own Business, helping folks, self-employed, stay-at-home mom*

18. If you are employed, what is the zip code for where you work?

ZIP CODE EMPLOYMENT LOCATION		
Zip Code	Total	%
69021	132	91%
69033	6	4%
69001	3	2%
69041	1	.75%
69044	1	.75%
67731	1	.75%
80758	1	.75%

19. How many persons in your family are 65 years of age or older?

Persons 65 of Age or Older in Family		
#	Total	%
0	135	61%
1	51	23%
2	35	15.5%
3	1	.5%

20. Is anyone in your household disabled?
 No [196 – 89%] Yes [25 – 11%]

If Yes, # of Disabled Persons		
#	Total	Total Persons
1	19	19
2	3	6

21. What is your sex? Male [88 – 40%] Female [119 – 53%]
 Prefer not to disclose [16 – 7%]

22. Are you: Head of household [173 – 78%] Spouse of head of household [46 – 21%]
 Other [2 – 1%] *Specify: Joint head, equal*

23. What is your age?

AGE		
Age Group	Total	%
Under 19	1	0.5%
19-24	5	2%
25-34	21	9.5%
35-44	33	15%
45-64	79	35%
Over 65	84	38%

24. How long have you lived in the community?

Residence Years		
# of Years	Total	%
< 1 year	7	3%
1-5 years	31	14%
6-10 years	30	14%
11-20 years	35	16%
21+ years	119	53%

25. Do you feel Benkelman would benefit from hike/bike trails? Yes [91 – 45%] No [111 – 55%]

26. Please list any comments regarding this survey or other related matters:

AMENITIES
The museum is a very underused asset- so much info available. Also, huge KUDO's to the city sanitation workers for their efforts in keeping our city clean & attractive. I have witnessed first hand them going above and beyond loading my neighbors excessive trash.
Shopping is horrible in this town. Walking path is highly needed. Vehicles drive way too fast around town, I don't feel safe walking outside.
I am extremely impressed with the Library. Benkelman is a great little town. Benkelman is my home town.
The City should look into purchasing Leflers property for a community park
Drive thru mail box, streets are rough
No splash pad
A splash pad is ridiculous when the pool needs improvement first!
Community Center too expensive for the average citizen to use facility.
If money available, City would benefit from hike and bike trails
Local park in fair condition
In town hike and bike trails
Swim pool too expensive

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT
Need to repair several buildings on Main Street and repair the streets.
There are too many vacant buildings in the downtown area that could be put to use for new businesses to create more job opportunities for people seeking employment.
There are four buildings on main street falling down- bricks are falling off, windows need to be boarded up because they are broken out. Don't need a splash pad.
Poor appearance with unoccupied store fronts
West corner building in downtown has upper windows out for years

ECONOMY
Allow businesses to come to town to create more jobs
Bring in new industry so the town can grow. Tear down the vacant houses that are a sore eye in the community. You spent money (\$54,000) on a dump truck, how about fixing the streets.
Not a town that welcomes then sustains new business. City employees not interested in working to improve community- just drive around all day.
We need new business for more sales tax. Streets are terrible.
We need good jobs for people to come in to town- better stores for shopping

HOUSING / NEIGHBORHOODS

Where we can move Mobile Homes in town on our lots or not and shouldn't have to go thru the paperwork-don't have to for a house. It's a home for someone like a house. Our choice.

Need to clean up old houses & lots. Work on bringing businesses in. Need affordable housing that isn't dilapidated. Need better paying job opportunities.

Continue to burn down vacated, old homes and scrape off. Fix our streets; Is there handicap accessible restroom (public) downtown? Bring business to downtown and outlying areas; Keep the good, old boys away!

Vacant lots are deplorable, houses falling down, tree & limbs plus junk. No control by City to clean-up lots or penalize. Weeds everywhere. Absolutely no pride in City or effort to keep streets drivable.

Availability of rental housing is terrible

Availability of homes for sale is awful

CBA did a nice job of getting rid of old houses, but now they need to keep the empty lots free of weeds-along the property lines- and especially on the main route through town- A St., Chief St., etc.

Please continue the demo of old houses. Stop patching the streets and "fix" them. These are the 2 things friends and family reference every time they come to town. Same with yard care, clean-up, demo-cars, snow removal, etc. Why aren't they enforced?

The town has a shortage of lots to build new homes on, because it was decided to change the zoning to allow people to build large steel buildings on residential lots with having a primary residence on the lot.

There are several properties in very poor condition that need to be addressed. A lack of businesses and housing for rent or to own us also concerning.

Follow up on violations of junk cars, unsafe buildings, clean up dilapidated buildings, and yards.

INFRASTRUCTURE

As far as biggest opp. For me is the condition of the streets. I know too from moving to town 5 yrs. ago, that finding a newer home to purchase or rent is also hard to find. I feel the City Council disagrees or fights new ideas instead of noising with an open mind.

Fix out streets, make the city attractive to travelers, bring in shopping so we don't have to go to McCook to get clothes and groceries. Fire current City Council and start over.

The street curb and gutter system, along with new Flood prevention are needed throughout the entire City. There are multiple buildings that should be condemned. The City crew only drives around all day accomplishing nothing.

A big plus would be to find a way to improve the streets- a fundraiser - any way possible.

Roads need to be tore up and redone.

The roads in town need much attention

Could fix alley road behind us (1009 Chief St) That's the only way in & out.

Side streets terrible- no plated vehicles, roads torn up

Bad weather made condition of city streets poor

Condition of city streets very poor

The City streets suck- much property need cleaned up, wouldn't get away with it in Imperial

City streets are awful

We need better roads

Pot holes in streets. People using downtown store fronts as storage units. Not allowing major new business growth in community (dollar store, chain establishments, etc.) Real estate valuing properties over priced. Lack of jobs. Smell of town is horrible- due to spoiled drain at fairgrounds.

Finally adequate water system

Comments continued on next page

INFRASTRUCTURE [Continued]

Plan to repair & resurface city streets and place weigh limits on streets in residential areas- provide funding to expand for new business

As in all small towns, appearance varies with area, but real efforts are being made to eliminate "blighted" areas- seems promising- location on hills makes the job tougher, especially streets and weed control. Efforts are being made to improve streets, but age is a problem.

The City had FEMA funding & was to put new sewer in all houses in affected areas & mu old house didn't rally need sewer so James Summers made an agreement with me to put millings in my driveway & not put sewer in my old house & he has not fulfilled the agreement! I feel he needs to fulfill his part of the agreement or come & put sewer line to my old house. It was FEMA money used to fix the sewer problem. Please address this issue! I also want to express my concern in regards to the City ripping my water main out of my house when fixing the sewer issue. They also rerouted my sewer from my house through my yard and they have destroyed my nice lawn that I had and now I have weeds & stickers, I have never had stickers in my yard. I have prided myself on NOT having stickers! I feel something needs to be done about this! Filling my driveway with millings to make it level definitely needs to be completed ASAP! Please let me know what can be done with these problems!

CITY

Benkelman City Council practices Protectionism by not allowing new businesses into our community. City Council member has used her position to harass citizens. We need new representatives.

I don't know anyone on City Council. Empty buildings on Main Street. Lots of potholes.

The appearance of the town is an embarrassment. Weed bad streets. Homes in shambles. Their should be policies to keep lots and houses cleaned up with pride for our town.

City dump truck leaks shrapnel all over town (easy fix- close traps). Recycle center needs to be open 24/7. Alleys need work.

The governing body (or persons) need to quickly dispose of or remodel vacated properties that are eye sores or health, sanitary risks. Tear (or remodel) them down and sell the lots for new construction.

Need City wide clean up day

We need Mayor and Council that want the town to be better and not want certain types of business to not settle here.

Bring back city wide clean-up day

City ordinances redone several years ago. Feel ordnances need to be reviewed. Blight areas, which there are many, need to be dealt with in a timely manner.

I know City Council is working on current problems. I feel we do not need \$100,000 homes. The wage scale is not high enough to pay for that price of home. We need everyday people & homes to go with less than average wages. \$10.00 an hour does not pay the bills and we have a lot of older people.

Please lift watering restrictions.

This City is a joke, the City Bill increased 12% for July. We pay more than bigger cities. Our fire protection took 22 minutes to put water on a house fire. Would you feel safe?

The Mayor needs to clean up his mouth. Old run-down houses need dealt with....tear them down & build new ones instead of just building new houses on empty areas- I heard that was being considered.

For a small town the town is in good shape. It would be great if people would clean up their yards and make their neighborhood look nice!

I think our City employees need to go back to the other building- they need to work 40 hours weekly- not take off for funerals & because their street isn't cleaned off more - the stripes need painted on Main Street more often

Comments continued on next page

CITY [Continued]
From horses to cats and dogs no regulations on them, Weeds and junk lots, if you have to ask you know you are not doing a good job, Benkelman shit hole of south west Nebraska
Utilities are too high. Period. No subdivision- get a grocery store please.
Somebody needs to manage this town. We have a large city crew and nothing is getting done. Streets are junk. We need a swimming pool! Don't think we need to do the water park, it is too expensive and it won't be used as much as the pool. Need to clean up junk lots and sell them to other people. We love Benkelman!
Overall lack of ambition and concern for City by city employees highly concerning
Very poor appearance of City
City water system too expensive
City water tastes
Do we have a community center???
In my opinion, I believe our City workers would get more done if they worked together on any/all projects instead of saying "that's not my department". In this small town we'd be better off if they worked together!

MISCELLANEOUS
In addition to Quality of "Condition/Adequacy", I believe that the expense of these services should also be rated.
I resent my household being characterized as random.
Go back to the old sign instead of realize your potential as there is no potential without growth
I believe the Community does what they can with the resources they have available of my 39 years on this earth; 29 of them have been spent here and the struggles when I was young are the same struggles faced today. Aging workforce yet not much for the young to return to.
I think you should not have to put another person's income on the grant. It should be just the Owner's income. I feel the survey is a waste of time because the streets will not be fixed or no one will take control to fix the community
Slow fire protection
No fire training

27/28. Survey income information:

What is your Family Size?	Here is your income limit
1	\$35,100
2	\$40,100
3	\$45,100
4	\$50,100
5	\$54,150
6	\$58,150
7	\$62,150
8+	\$66,150

LMI Tabulation Spreadsheet						
CITY of BENKELMAN - 2018 Income Survey						
	Families with Low-Mod Incomes			Families Above Low-Mod Incomes		
Family Size	Total Families	Total Persons	%	Total Families	Total Persons	%
1	51	51	43.22%	36	36	34.29%
2	41	82	34.75%	42	84	40.00%
3	13	39	11.02%	13	39	12.38%
4	8	32	6.78%	8	32	7.62%
5	2	10	1.69%	4	20	3.81%
6	0	0	0.00%	2	12	1.90%
7	1	7	0.85%	0	0	0.00%
8	2	16	1.69%	0	0	0.00%
TOTALS	118	237	100%	105	223	100%
LMI %	51.52%			48.48%		
Mean	2.00847			2.12381		
Median	2			2		
Mode	1			2		
Overall Mean	2.0627803					
Overall Median	2					
Overall Mode	1					