

# **Benton Believes** Benton County Comprehensive Plan Project

Community Priorities: Public Engagement Phase 1



## Phase 1 Public Engagement

### **CPAG Meetings**

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group

- 3 workshops to create an outreach plan
- 3 workshops to discuss:

What are drivers of change?

What are robust preparation strategies?

Why does Benton County need to update the <u>Comprehensive Plan?</u>

### **Public Survey**

- Open from March 3th to April 4th, 2025
- Offered in English and Spanish
- Received 409 responses

Asked Benton County: What is most important for Benton County to plan for?

## **Public Workshops**

4 meetings held between March 3th to April 4th, 2025 in:

- Wren, NW Benton & Mid-Benton
- South Benton
- North Benton
- Alsea

Asked Benton County: What should Benton County keep and what should change? Phase 1 Public Engagement

**Community Priorities Survey** 



## **Public Outreach Survey**

Survey Date: March 3th - April 4th, 2025

#### Survey Responses: 409

- Offered in English and Spanish

### In which Benton County city or community do you live?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES			
Corvallis	47.86%	168		
Philomath	15.10%	53		
Alsea	11.68%	41		
Kings Valley	5.98%	21		
Alpine	4.84%	17		
Monroe	3.99%	14		
Adair	3.42%	12		
Wren	2.85%	10		
North Albany	1.42%	5		
Bellfountain	0.85%	3		
Greenberry	0.85%	3		
Blodgett	0.57%	2		
Summit	0.57%	2		
TOTAL		351	% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%	60% 70% 80% 90

## Which age group do you belong to?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES										
60-69	31.79%	117									
70+	31.25%	115									
50-59	14.67%	54									
40-49	13.04%	48									
30-39	6.25%	23									
20-29	2.99%	11									
19 and under	0.00%	0									
TOTAL		368	196 109	6 20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90% 1009

## How would you describe your racial and/or ethnic identity?

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES						
White		80.17%	291					
Prefer not to answer		12.67%	46					
Another race (please specify)	Responses	5.23%	19					
American Indian or Alaskan Native		2.48%	9					
Asian or Asian American		1.93%	7					
Hispanic or Latino		1.38%	5					
Middle Eastern or North African		0.55%	2					
Another race		0.55%	2					
Black or African American		0.28%	1					
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander		0.28%	1					
Total Respondents: 363				D% 10% 1	20% 30%	40%	50% 60	0%

## Q1. What are the top 3 priorities the Comprehensive Plan should focus on?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Protecting natural resources, water availability and quality, and farmland	65.19% 264	
Ensuring affordable and diverse housing options	53.83% 218	
Supporting local businesses, agriculture, and job opportunities	46.42% 188	
Improving roads, transportation, and infrastructure	<b>38.52%</b> 156	
Strengthening public safety, emergency services, and healthcare access	33.58% 136	
Enhancing parks, recreation, and community spaces	26.91% 109	
Expanding economic and workforce development opportunities	15.31% 62	
Expanding access to high-speed internet (broadband)	6.67% 27	
Total Respondents: 405		0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

## Q2. What specific types of growth or development would you like to see?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSE	S
More local businesses and small-scale retail	64.79%	265
More small-scale housing options (duplexes, cottages, senior housing)	57.95%	237
Improved roads and transportation options	53.30%	218
Expanded agricultural support (markets, co-ops, agritourism)	52.81%	216
More recreational opportunities (trails, parks, public spaces)	42.05%	172
Expanded broadband and technology infrastructure	22.98%	94
More single-family housing on large lots	19.32%	79
Total Respondents: 409		

# Q3. What aspects of the community's character and way of life are most important to preserve to ensure quality of life?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Small-town feel and close-knit community	47.52% 192
Access to farmland, open spaces, and natural areas	45.30% 183
Locally owned businesses and rural industries	44.31% 179
Safe neighborhoods and low crime rates	39.60% 160
A calm, quiet, peaceful atmosphere	36.63% 148
Access to good schools and services	33.17% 134
Traditional events, culture, and community gatherings	20.30% 82
Low levels of population nearby	9.65% 39
I'm more unsatisfied with community character and would like many changes to enhance quality of life	4.46% 18
Total Respondents: 404	0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

# Q5. Which of the following changes should the Community Comprehensive Plan help Benton County prepare for?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Natural Disasters & Climate Change: Risks from earthquakes, wildfires, and drought	73.64% 285	
Population & Changing Demographics: More people moving in or out, changing community needs	62.27% 241	
Government & Funding Priorities: Changes in state and federal policies and funding	54.01% 209	
Economic Shifts: Growth or decline of key industries	47.80% 185	
Technology & Remote Work: Advances like AI, driverless cars, and remote jobs	14.21% 55	
Total Respondents: 387	D% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%	809

# **Q6.** Which of these scenarios do you think is most important to prepare for?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Housing Availability & Affordability: Population changes could affect housing demand and the need for new types of development	53.66% 132	
Land Use & Development: Population shifts could influence the need for housing, agricultural land, forestry, and waste management planning	47.15% 116	
Public Services & Infrastructure: Changes in population size may impact demand for transportation, parks, roads, water, and other public services	43.50% 107	
Evolving Community Needs: Population changes may impact local businesses, schools, healthcare, and recreation	38.62% 95	
Something else? Please specify. Responses	10.16% 25	
Total Respondents: 246	2% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%	b

Q7. How might new technology and remote work impact Benton County? Which of these should we prepare for most?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES					
Rural Housing & Economy: Remote work could increase demand for rural housing while also supporting different local businesses and expanding job opportunities in new areas.	<b>50.38%</b> 132					
Community Connection: As more services and jobs move online, in-person interactions may change, creating both challenges and new opportunities for community engagement.	44.66% 117					
Internet & Infrastructure: Improved access to high-speed internet could boost education, business growth, and remote work, but gaps in coverage may create disparities.	40.84% 107					
Energy & Resource Use: Expanding industries like data centers and high-tech agriculture could create jobs and economic growth while also increasing demand for electricity and water.	40.46% 106					
Total Respondents: 262		0% 10%	20%	30%	40%	50%

Q8. As the regional and local economies evolve, what should Benton County prepare for most?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Land Use & Business Growth: New and existing industries may compete for space and resources, influencing how land is used and developed.	63.50% 207	
Infrastructure & Services: Growing industries may bring new investments and jobs but could also require upgrades to utilities, broadband, and transportation.	50.31% 164	
Workforce Changes: As industries grow and shift, new job opportunities may emerge, requiring a shift in workforce training and skill development.	38.04% 124	
Agricultural Innovation: Advances in farming and automation may create new efficiencies and opportunities while also changing traditional practices and land use.	25.46% 83	
Total Respondents: 326		0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

### Q9. How should Benton County prepare for climate and environmental challenges?

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPON	ISES								
Natural Resource Management: Support wildfire prevention, watershed pr and sustainable land use practices to reduce environmental risks.	otection,	64.78%	241								
Disaster Readiness & Response: Strengthen and invest in emergency plan warning systems, and community preparedness efforts to reduce risks.	s, early	41.94%	156								
Infrastructure Upgrades: Invest in resilient roads, water systems, and ener infrastructure to withstand natural disasters and climate impacts.	gy	41.67%	155								
Resilient Land Use & Development: Guide new development away from hig areas and plan for rebuilding strategies that improve long-term safety.	gh-risk	33.60%	125								
Something else? Please specify.	Responses	6.99%	26								
Total Respondents: 372				0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	

# Q10. How should Benton County prepare for shifts in public and/or government priorities?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES							
Strengthening Public Engagement: Foster trust and transparency in local government decision-making by improving community outreach and participation.	54.20% 200							
Sustainable Infrastructure Investments: Advocate for continued investment in transportation, public transit, and infrastructure that supports community mobility and sustainability.	51.76% 191							
Update Development Code: Update zoning and land use regulations to better align with evolving environmental standards and government policies, ensuring a balance between development interests and sustainability.	44.44% 164							
Diversified Funding Sources: Explore funding opportunities at the non-profit, local and state levels to support housing, social programs, and economic development.	29.27% 108							
Total Respondents: 369		2%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	(

Phase 1 Public Engagement Community Meetings



## Public Outreach Workshops

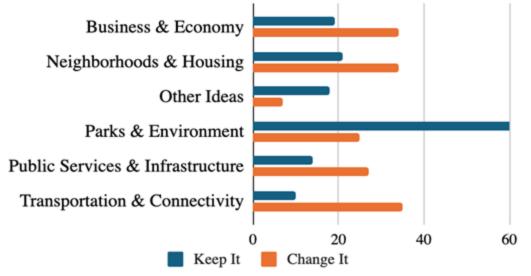
#### Number of meetings: 4

- Wren, NW Benton & Mid-Benton
- South Benton
- North Benton
- Alsea

### **Total Participants:** 44

# **Community Priority Workshops**

At the community priority workshops, residents were invited to reflect on features of Benton County that they want to see preserved or change. Comments were grouped by category areas and tallied by "Keep it" or "Change it".





## Community Priority Workshops, Sample Responses

Common Ideas	Keep It	<b>Change It</b> Big box stores, living wage jobs, more businesses to support county communities			
Business & Economy	Protect local businesses, locally owned farms, commercial nodes				
Neighborhoods & Housing	Walkable, low density, community fabric	Housing cost and diversity of options, unhoused population, local control			
Transportation & Connectivity	Small town feel, rural	Cultural activities, gov't outreach to citizens			
Parks & Environment	Green space, access, farm and forest land, county parks	Trailhead parking, more trails, community rec - local parks and playgrounds			
Public Services & Infrastructure	County library, rural fire dept	Broadband, more resilient electric, water storage for wildfire suppression, rural medical care			
	Low traffic, lack of congestion	Rural transportation options (bike, bus, etc), growing traffic / freight			

Phase 1 Outreach

# **Benton Believes Website**

#### About the Project



#### Updating the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan is a document that outlines the County's longterm vision and goals for future development, including land use, transportation, housing, public facilities and more. It is a blueprint for how a community wants to grow and evolve over time, incorporating resident input and considering current situations.

Right now, the County uses the 2007 Comprehensive Plan.

Updating the comprehensive plan is a multiyear process.

Phasel Aug 2024 Alag 2026	HERE	Jule 2035	- fut 2025 🛶	Phase 2 Part 2023: December 2027, dependent on Papers & 4 Providing						
PRETRAMING		APPROVAL	APPROVAL & FUNDING		WELINE IT CONTRACTOR AND CALM PROTECTS				-9,15 811177516	
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#### **Gathering Community Input**

This process began with collecting guidance from community groups throughout Benton County. The Community Partner Advisory Group steered conversations around core elements of the comprehensive plan like community priorities and key areas of impact.

As the comprehensive plan update process continues, this group will continue to help steer community involvement and identify key components for update.

See meeting minutes and documentation »





- + What are the opportunities to get involved?
- + How does the Comprehensive Plan impact me?

- + How will this change what is in place, and when will I see those changes?



#### **BentonBelieves Comprehensive Plan**

#### Benton County is updating its **Comprehensive Plan**

The Benton County Comprehensive Plan update will shape land use for the next 20 years or more, and every member of the community can contribute to creating it.

Learn about the project »

#### **Quick Links**



#### Find resources

Get information about past comprehensive plans, the State of Oregon's Land Use Planning Goals and the County Community Development department.

Find helpful documents »



#### Review the 2007 Plan

The County currently uses a Comprehensive Plan that was ratified in 2007. We've created a summary of the plan for a high-level overview of the document.

Check out the 2007 Plan »

We want to see YOUR Benton County. Enter our contest by submitting your favorite photo(s) showing how our community experiences our natural and built

Benton 360° Photo Contest

environments. Cubmit a shots a

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**



- + Why now?
- + What is the process for creating a comprehensive plan?



Phase 1 Outreach

# **Benton 360 Photo Contest**

#### Benton 360

## HELP SHOWCASE BENTON COUNTY FROM EVERY ANGLE

**Benton** 360° Countywide Photo Contest **OPEN UNTIL AUGUST 8, 2025** 

Submit digital photos in exchange for photo credit in a variety of County contexts (like social media, website and the County's Comprehensive Plan), a contact link and **a chance to win cash prizes.** Upload photos before August 8, 2025 for a chance to win!

LEARN MORE

