

Community Needs Response Plan

2018-2021

Adopted 9/28/2015
Revised 12/16/2015
Revised 11/26/2018

Bennington Public Library Board of Trustees

Library Mission Statement:

The mission of the Bennington Public library is to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen community. To deliver on this promise we rely on three great resources—our staff, our collection, and our physical space.

Library Vision Statement:

The Bennington Public Library creates opportunities to engage, connect, and discover.

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Introduction/Strategic Planning Team

Strategic goals and objectives were created based on community needs and library service priorities identified in 2013. In the fall of 2018 the Bennington Public Library accomplished its number one long term goal of building a larger library and community conference center; thereby providing the community with much needed meeting space. However, not much has changed over the last three years in terms of pressing community issues. Concerns such as managing rapid growth, high property taxes and economic development are still significant issues that need to be addressed. This document, now known as Bennington Public Library Community Needs Response Plan includes minor revisions based on the most current available information and new and revised goals and strategies. In compiling the revisions, the library director consulted with and solicited feedback from members of the planning team. The planning team consisted of library board members, the library director, library staff, and library friends and volunteers.

Community Profile

The Bennington Public Library legal service population (assigned by Nebraska Library Commission for statistical purposes) for the year 2017/18 is 3,491. According to the 2016 ACS 5-year Population Estimate the population of the City of Bennington is 1,608.

| Subject | Bennington city, Nebraska | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------|-------------------------|
| | Estimate | Margin of Error | Percent | Percent Margin of Error |
| SEX AND AGE | | | | |
| Total population | 1,608 | +/-195 | 1,608 | (X) |
| Male | 729 | +/-107 | 45.3% | +/-3.5 |
| Female | 879 | +/-118 | 54.7% | +/-3.5 |
| Under 5 years | 114 | +/-43 | 7.1% | +/-2.3 |
| 5 to 9 years | 173 | +/-50 | 10.8% | +/-2.8 |
| 10 to 14 years | 96 | +/-26 | 6.0% | +/-1.5 |
| 15 to 19 years | 116 | +/-37 | 7.2% | +/-1.8 |
| 20 to 24 years | 77 | +/-39 | 4.8% | +/-2.2 |
| 25 to 34 years | 241 | +/-71 | 15.0% | +/-4.0 |
| 35 to 44 years | 169 | +/-43 | 10.5% | +/-2.5 |
| 45 to 54 years | 229 | +/-58 | 14.2% | +/-3.0 |
| 55 to 59 years | 96 | +/-45 | 6.0% | +/-2.8 |
| 60 to 64 years | 69 | +/-25 | 4.3% | +/-1.7 |
| 65 to 74 years | 117 | +/-36 | 7.3% | +/-2.3 |
| 75 to 84 years | 68 | +/-29 | 4.2% | +/-1.8 |
| 85 years and over | 43 | +/-23 | 2.7% | +/-1.4 |
| Median age (years) | 34.4 | +/-4.0 | (X) | (X) |

| | | | | |
|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| 18 years and over | 1,156 | +/-136 | 71.9% | +/-4.3 |
| 21 years and over | 1,091 | +/-128 | 67.8% | +/-4.1 |
| 62 years and over | 281 | +/-55 | 17.5% | +/-3.6 |
| 65 years and over | 228 | +/-52 | 14.2% | +/-3.2 |
| | | | | |
| 18 years and over | 1,156 | +/-136 | 1,156 | (X) |
| Male | 525 | +/-77 | 45.4% | +/-3.3 |
| Female | 631 | +/-79 | 54.6% | +/-3.3 |
| | | | | |
| 65 years and over | 228 | +/-52 | 228 | (X) |
| Male | 97 | +/-29 | 42.5% | +/-7.3 |
| Female | 131 | +/-33 | 57.5% | +/-7.3 |
| | | | | |
| RACE | | | | |
| Total population | 1,608 | +/-195 | 1,608 | (X) |
| One race | 1,552 | +/-187 | 96.5% | +/-2.7 |
| Two or more races | 56 | +/-45 | 3.5% | +/-2.7 |
| | | | | |
| One race | 1,552 | +/-187 | 96.5% | +/-2.7 |
| White | 1,498 | +/-188 | 93.2% | +/-4.4 |
| Black or African American | 40 | +/-42 | 2.5% | +/-2.6 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Cherokee tribal grouping | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Chippewa tribal grouping | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Navajo tribal grouping | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Sioux tribal grouping | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Asian | 14 | +/-18 | 0.9% | +/-1.1 |
| Asian Indian | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Chinese | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Filipino | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Japanese | 3 | +/-4 | 0.2% | +/-0.3 |
| Korean | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Vietnamese | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Other Asian | 11 | +/-17 | 0.7% | +/-1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Native Hawaiian | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Guamanian or Chamorro | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Samoan | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Other Pacific Islander | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Some other race | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Two or more races | 56 | +/-45 | 3.5% | +/-2.7 |
| White and Black or African American | 33 | +/-26 | 2.1% | +/-1.6 |
| White and American Indian and Alaska Native | 23 | +/-37 | 1.4% | +/-2.2 |
| White and Asian | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Black or African American and American Indian and Alaska Native | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| | | | | |
| Race alone or in combination with one or more other races | | | | |
| Total population | 1,608 | +/-195 | 1,608 | (X) |

| | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| White | 1,554 | +/-192 | 96.6% | +/-2.7 |
| Black or African American | 73 | +/-57 | 4.5% | +/-3.5 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 23 | +/-37 | 1.4% | +/-2.2 |
| Asian | 14 | +/-18 | 0.9% | +/-1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Some other race | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE | | | | |
| Total population | 1,608 | +/-195 | 1,608 | (X) |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | 10 | +/-10 | 0.6% | +/-0.6 |
| Mexican | 7 | +/-10 | 0.4% | +/-0.6 |
| Puerto Rican | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Cuban | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Other Hispanic or Latino | 3 | +/-5 | 0.2% | +/-0.3 |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | 1,598 | +/-195 | 99.4% | +/-0.6 |
| White alone | 1,488 | +/-186 | 92.5% | +/-4.2 |
| Black or African American alone | 40 | +/-42 | 2.5% | +/-2.6 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native alone | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Asian alone | 14 | +/-18 | 0.9% | +/-1.1 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Some other race alone | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Two or more races | 56 | +/-45 | 3.5% | +/-2.7 |
| Two races including Some other race | 0 | +/-9 | 0.0% | +/-1.2 |
| Two races excluding Some other race, and Three or more races | 56 | +/-45 | 3.5% | +/-2.7 |
| Total housing units | | | | |
| | 670 | +/-71 | (X) | (X) |
| CITIZEN, VOTING AGE POPULATION | | | | |
| Citizen, 18 and over population | 1,156 | +/-136 | 1,156 | (X) |
| Male | 525 | +/-77 | 45.4% | +/-3.3 |
| Female | 631 | +/-79 | 54.6% | +/-3.3 |

The library is located in Douglas County, northwest of Omaha and is within the boundaries of the Bennington Public School District. The greater Bennington community (68007 zip code) is growing with the addition of housing in new developments in surrounding unincorporated Douglas County. According to the 2016 ACS 5-year Population Estimate the population of the 68007 (Bennington) zip code is 9,247 and includes 3,095 households with the majority of housing units occupied by 4 or more people, married-couples age 34-64, and almost half occupied with children under the age of 18.

| Subject | ZCTA5 68007 | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Occupied housing units | | Owner-occupied housing units | | Renter-occupied housing units | |
| | Estimate | Margin of Error | Estimate | Margin of Error | Estimate | Margin of Error |
| Occupied housing units | 3,095 | +/-169 | 2,737 | +/-171 | 358 | +/-94 |
| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | | | | | | |
| 1-person household | 16.3% | +/-3.4 | 10.7% | +/-2.8 | 58.4% | +/-15.8 |
| 2-person household | 27.9% | +/-3.8 | 29.3% | +/-3.9 | 17.3% | +/-12.9 |
| 3-person household | 19.1% | +/-3.3 | 19.5% | +/-3.8 | 15.9% | +/-12.4 |
| 4-or-more-person household | 36.7% | +/-3.2 | 40.4% | +/-3.5 | 8.4% | +/-6.8 |
| OCCUPANTS PER ROOM | | | | | | |
| 1.00 or less occupants per room | 99.5% | +/-0.6 | 99.7% | +/-0.5 | 97.5% | +/-3.6 |
| 1.01 to 1.50 occupants per room | 0.4% | +/-0.6 | 0.3% | +/-0.5 | 0.8% | +/-2.4 |
| 1.51 or more occupants per room | 0.2% | +/-0.3 | 0.0% | +/-0.7 | 1.7% | +/-2.9 |
| HOUSEHOLD TYPE (INCLUDING LIVING ALONE) AND AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER | | | | | | |
| Family households | 81.0% | +/-3.8 | 87.5% | +/-3.0 | 30.7% | +/-14.8 |
| Married-couple family | 69.0% | +/-3.6 | 76.9% | +/-3.6 | 8.9% | +/-6.1 |
| Householder 15 to 34 years | 16.6% | +/-3.3 | 18.5% | +/-3.6 | 2.2% | +/-2.2 |
| Householder 35 to 64 years | 46.1% | +/-3.7 | 51.6% | +/-3.9 | 4.2% | +/-4.7 |
| Householder 65 years and over | 6.3% | +/-1.5 | 6.8% | +/-1.7 | 2.5% | +/-2.3 |
| Other family | 11.9% | +/-2.9 | 10.6% | +/-2.9 | 21.8% | +/-13.2 |
| Male householder, no wife present | 3.8% | +/-1.9 | 2.9% | +/-1.4 | 10.9% | +/-12.5 |
| Householder 15 to 34 years | 0.8% | +/-0.8 | 0.7% | +/-0.8 | 1.7% | +/-2.9 |
| Householder 35 to 64 years | 2.9% | +/-1.7 | 2.1% | +/-1.2 | 9.2% | +/-12.4 |
| Householder 65 years and over | 0.1% | +/-0.2 | 0.1% | +/-0.2 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| Female householder, no husband present | 8.1% | +/-2.5 | 7.7% | +/-2.7 | 10.9% | +/-6.6 |
| Householder 15 to 34 years | 1.5% | +/-0.8 | 0.7% | +/-0.6 | 7.8% | +/-5.6 |
| Householder 35 to 64 years | 6.3% | +/-2.4 | 6.8% | +/-2.7 | 3.1% | +/-3.9 |
| Householder 65 years and over | 0.2% | +/-0.3 | 0.3% | +/-0.3 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| Nonfamily households | 19.0% | +/-3.8 | 12.5% | +/-3.0 | 69.3% | +/-14.8 |
| Householder living alone | 16.3% | +/-3.4 | 10.7% | +/-2.8 | 58.4% | +/-15.8 |
| Householder 15 to 34 years | 2.0% | +/-1.7 | 0.6% | +/-0.8 | 12.8% | +/-10.8 |
| Householder 35 to 64 years | 9.9% | +/-2.9 | 8.0% | +/-2.3 | 24.0% | +/-13.9 |
| Householder 65 years and over | 4.3% | +/-1.3 | 2.1% | +/-1.0 | 21.5% | +/-9.7 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| Householder not living alone | 2.8% | +/-1.9 | 1.7% | +/-1.1 | 10.9% | +/-13.4 |
| Householder 15 to 34 years | 1.8% | +/-1.8 | 0.7% | +/-0.7 | 10.9% | +/-13.4 |
| Householder 35 to 64 years | 0.7% | +/-0.7 | 0.8% | +/-0.8 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| Householder 65 years and over | 0.2% | +/-0.2 | 0.2% | +/-0.2 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| FAMILY TYPE AND PRESENCE OF OWN CHILDREN | | | | | | |
| With related children of householder under 18 years | 48.7% | +/-3.6 | 53.5% | +/-3.7 | 12.6% | +/-7.4 |
| With own children of householder under 18 years | 47.5% | +/-3.6 | 52.0% | +/-3.7 | 12.6% | +/-7.4 |
| Under 6 years only | 14.4% | +/-3.0 | 15.9% | +/-3.3 | 3.4% | +/-4.2 |
| Under 6 years and 6 to 17 years | 10.5% | +/-2.5 | 11.5% | +/-2.8 | 3.4% | +/-4.2 |
| 6 to 17 years only | 22.5% | +/-3.4 | 24.7% | +/-3.7 | 5.9% | +/-4.6 |
| No own children of householder under 18 years | 1.3% | +/-0.7 | 1.4% | +/-0.8 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| No related children of householder under 18 years | 51.3% | +/-3.6 | 46.5% | +/-3.7 | 87.4% | +/-7.4 |

The population is relatively affluent with a median household income of \$99,769. Less than 10% (8.76%) of students in the Bennington Public School District are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The community is growing due to its proximity to Omaha where most residents work and the perceived high quality of education available to residents in the Bennington Public School District.

| Subject | ZCTA5 68007 | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Occupied housing units | | Owner-occupied housing units | | Renter-occupied housing units | |
| | Estimate | Margin of Error | Estimate | Margin of Error | Estimate | Margin of Error |
| Occupied housing units | 3,095 | +/-169 | 2,737 | +/-171 | 358 | +/-94 |
| HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2016 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS) | | | | | | |
| Less than \$5,000 | 1.3% | +/-1.0 | 0.3% | +/-0.3 | 9.5% | +/-8.3 |
| \$5,000 to \$9,999 | 2.0% | +/-1.4 | 0.4% | +/-0.7 | 14.0% | +/-11.2 |
| \$10,000 to \$14,999 | 1.6% | +/-1.2 | 0.1% | +/-0.2 | 12.6% | +/-9.8 |
| \$15,000 to \$19,999 | 1.6% | +/-0.9 | 1.1% | +/-0.9 | 5.3% | +/-4.2 |
| \$20,000 to \$24,999 | 1.8% | +/-1.2 | 1.4% | +/-1.4 | 5.3% | +/-3.8 |
| \$25,000 to \$34,999 | 2.7% | +/-1.3 | 2.4% | +/-1.3 | 5.6% | +/-4.7 |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999 | 6.1% | +/-2.6 | 6.2% | +/-2.8 | 5.9% | +/-5.7 |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 13.6% | +/-3.1 | 12.3% | +/-3.0 | 23.2% | +/-13.9 |
| \$75,000 to \$99,999 | 19.5% | +/-3.7 | 20.2% | +/-3.9 | 14.5% | +/-13.1 |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 25.2% | +/-4.4 | 28.1% | +/-4.9 | 3.6% | +/-3.8 |
| \$150,000 or more | 24.5% | +/-4.1 | 27.6% | +/-4.8 | 0.6% | +/-1.2 |
| Median household income (dollars) | 99,769 | +/-5,883 | 108,343 | +/-5,813 | - | ** |
| MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS | | | | | | |
| Less than \$300 | 2.1% | +/-1.0 | 1.1% | +/-0.7 | 9.2% | +/-6.5 |
| \$300 to \$499 | 1.7% | +/-0.8 | 1.4% | +/-0.8 | 4.2% | +/-3.3 |
| \$500 to \$799 | 13.9% | +/-3.2 | 10.5% | +/-3.2 | 39.4% | +/-14.6 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|
| \$800 to \$999 | 6.0% | +/-2.5 | 5.6% | +/-2.7 | 8.7% | +/-6.7 |
| \$1,000 to \$1,499 | 27.2% | +/-3.5 | 27.8% | +/-3.9 | 22.6% | +/-16.4 |
| \$1,500 to \$1,999 | 21.1% | +/-3.5 | 23.2% | +/-4.0 | 5.0% | +/-5.6 |
| \$2,000 to \$2,499 | 15.2% | +/-2.9 | 17.2% | +/-3.2 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| \$2,500 to \$2,999 | 5.1% | +/-2.0 | 5.5% | +/-2.2 | 2.5% | +/-2.7 |
| \$3,000 or more | 7.7% | +/-2.3 | 7.6% | +/-2.4 | 8.4% | +/-6.1 |
| No cash rent | 0.0% | +/-0.6 | (X) | (X) | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| Median (dollars) | 1,487 | +/-66 | 1,568 | +/-76 | 788 | +/-166 |
| MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS | | | | | | |
| Less than \$20,000 | 5.1% | +/-1.9 | 1.6% | +/-0.8 | 31.8% | +/-13.9 |
| Less than 20 percent | 0.8% | +/-0.5 | 0.8% | +/-0.6 | 0.8% | +/-1.5 |
| 20 to 29 percent | 1.3% | +/-0.8 | 0.1% | +/-0.2 | 10.3% | +/-7.5 |
| 30 percent or more | 3.1% | +/-1.6 | 0.8% | +/-0.6 | 20.7% | +/-12.0 |
| \$20,000 to \$34,999 | 4.6% | +/-1.8 | 3.7% | +/-1.9 | 10.9% | +/-5.6 |
| Less than 20 percent | 0.2% | +/-0.3 | 0.3% | +/-0.3 | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |
| 20 to 29 percent | 1.0% | +/-0.6 | 0.7% | +/-0.5 | 3.6% | +/-3.2 |
| 30 percent or more | 3.3% | +/-1.8 | 2.8% | +/-1.9 | 7.3% | +/-5.2 |
| \$35,000 to \$49,999 | 6.1% | +/-2.6 | 6.2% | +/-2.8 | 5.9% | +/-5.7 |
| Less than 20 percent | 0.8% | +/-0.6 | 0.8% | +/-0.7 | 0.6% | +/-1.1 |
| 20 to 29 percent | 2.6% | +/-2.2 | 2.7% | +/-2.4 | 2.2% | +/-3.6 |
| 30 percent or more | 2.7% | +/-1.3 | 2.7% | +/-1.3 | 3.1% | +/-4.2 |
| \$50,000 to \$74,999 | 13.6% | +/-3.1 | 12.3% | +/-3.0 | 23.2% | +/-13.9 |
| Less than 20 percent | 3.7% | +/-1.3 | 3.1% | +/-1.3 | 8.1% | +/-5.8 |
| 20 to 29 percent | 7.3% | +/-2.3 | 6.4% | +/-2.0 | 14.5% | +/-13.9 |
| 30 percent or more | 2.6% | +/-1.6 | 2.8% | +/-1.8 | 0.6% | +/-1.2 |
| \$75,000 or more | 69.2% | +/-3.8 | 75.8% | +/-4.0 | 18.7% | +/-13.5 |
| Less than 20 percent | 49.2% | +/-3.6 | 53.9% | +/-4.1 | 13.4% | +/-13.2 |
| 20 to 29 percent | 15.1% | +/-3.0 | 16.6% | +/-3.4 | 3.1% | +/-3.6 |
| 30 percent or more | 5.0% | +/-1.7 | 5.3% | +/-1.9 | 2.2% | +/-2.1 |
| Zero or negative income | 1.3% | +/-1.0 | 0.3% | +/-0.3 | 9.5% | +/-8.3 |
| No cash rent | 0.0% | +/-0.6 | (X) | (X) | 0.0% | +/-5.4 |

The economy is largely driven by Property Taxes and small businesses in small downtown and light industrial areas. Types of businesses include a number of bars and fast food restaurants, a bank, daycare, dentists, chiropractor, physical therapist, auto repair shops, storage units, and a retirement community which provides services for independent seniors, assisted living and memory care.

The Bennington school district serves the town of Bennington as well as many unincorporated housing developments and some rural residents. The district currently has one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools. A fourth elementary school will open in 2019. All school campuses have libraries with professional staff and access to information through books and technology. The Bennington Public School District's total 2017-18 enrollment was 2671 students, a 33.5% increase from just three years ago.

The City of Bennington has outdoor recreational facilities consisting of three parks, soccer and baseball fields and one basketball court. There are many youth sports organizations active in the community. Active civic groups help to sponsor activities and events. Those organizations include the Lions Club, Jaycees, GFWC Woman's Club, American Legion Post and Auxiliary, Bennington Community Foundation, Friends of the Library, etc.

Communications include the Douglas County Post-Gazette, published weekly in neighboring Elkhorn and the Omaha World Herald. News of local events and activities is reported quarterly in the school district's *Horizon* Newsletter. Each school publishes a monthly newsletter for parents and guardians

Community Needs Assessment

Community needs and library service priorities were identified through a community needs survey and community focus groups in 2013. A review of this list determined the needs of the community in 2018 are no different than they were at the time of the last survey,

Top Ten Critical Issues Facing Bennington

1. Managing the challenges related to **rapid growth**. Many of the following topics relate to this issue.
2. **High property taxes**.
3. **Economic development**—need for building up existing businesses and attracting new businesses to provide additional City revenues and meet consumer needs—keep people in town to support local businesses rather than businesses in Omaha.
4. **Preserving Bennington's small town atmosphere** while attracting businesses which contribute to the quality of life as well as provide a deeper tax base.
5. **Fear of annexation** by Omaha (less talk of this in recent years).
6. Need for a more **welcoming atmosphere** to assist in the assimilation of new residents and unifying incorporated Bennington and unincorporated Bennington residents.
7. **Recreation facilities, community pool**, activities for children who reside in both incorporated and unincorporated Bennington.
8. More and larger **community meeting spaces**/larger and up-to-date public library to **serve as well as attract people** who live south of the Bennington city limits. (This need was addressed by the library with the renovation and expansion of the library and community conference center. Time will tell how completely the need will have been fulfilled.)
9. **Leadership/lack of long term vision** by city leadership – healthy balance between short term needs and long-term goals.
10. Need for more **philanthropic support** for projects not funded through tax dollars. (The 2014-17 library expansion campaign demonstrated the ability and resolve of community members to contribute time, talent and treasures to support community causes.)

Library Service Priorities

1. Visit a comfortable place: Physical and virtual spaces
2. Create young readers: Early literacy
3. Stimulate imagination: Reading, viewing and listening for pleasure
4. Connect to the online world: Public Internet access
5. Know your community: Community resources and services
6. Satisfy curiosity: Lifelong learning
7. Understand how to find, evaluate, and use information: Information fluency
8. Express creativity: Create and share content
9. Make informed decisions: Health, wealth, and other life choices
10. Learn to read and write: Adult, teen, and family literacy
11. Be an informed citizen: Local, national, and world affairs
12. Discover your roots: Genealogy and local history
13. Succeed in school: Homework help
14. Build successful enterprises: Business and non-profit support

Library Profile

Library Mission Statement:

The mission of the Bennington Public library is to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen community. To deliver on this promise we rely on three great resources—our staff, our collection, and our physical space.

Library Vision Statement:

The Bennington Public Library creates opportunities to engage, connect, and discover.

SWOT Assessment

The library profile was created to discover strengths and weakness. The methods used were a patron and board survey and focus groups.

Internal environment

Strengths

1. Excellent location on main street
2. Friendly staff with good customer service
3. Supportive Friends of the Library group
4. Several dependable volunteers
5. Programming for all ages, including Book clubs, storytime, summer reading
6. Community oriented
7. Dedicated board
8. Great collection based on variety and demand
9. Up to date technology including Wi-Fi and digital collection
10. Budget is stretched with county support and grant funding

Weaknesses

1. Limited space to expand collection to meet the needs of service population.
2. Limited number of desktop and laptop computers and physical space to expand computer access for library users.
3. Difficulty in keeping up with technology, including trained staff
4. Limited hours
5. Library's current signage (addition of an external monument sign not possible until the completion of the 2020 156th Street Improvement Project).
6. General lack of visionary support from some city leadership
7. Limited city budget
8. Limited teen and adult services
9. Limited staff hours (due to budget 7)
10. Limited staff workspace

External environment

Opportunities

1. Growing community
2. Affluent community
3. Private funding resources available
4. Technology advancements
5. Strong spirit of volunteerism in the community
6. Active service organizations
7. Availability of Social media and marketing resources

Threats

1. Competition for fundraising dollars
2. Taxpayers perceive current taxes as too high
3. Federal government funding has produced concerns

4. Limited city budget – competition for public funds
5. Technology tools and equipment continually advancing and changing
6. Public misconceptions regarding technology as it relates to the relevancy of libraries
7. Rumors and misinformation lead to uninformed citizenry
8. Divisiveness in the community/vocal objectors
9. Competition of Omaha businesses and services
10. Leadership and visionary deficiency

Library Budget

The 2018-19 fiscal year budget is \$145,505. The percentage of local city government support is determined by the bi-annual distributions it receives from the Douglas County Library Fund. In 2017-18 the City of Bennington contributed 57% of the library's total operating budget. The remaining revenue is provided through state aid, fees collected by the library, and donations or grants received. The city's limited tax revenue and long-term debt payments greatly limit the city's ability to contribute to the operation of the library as well as projects over and above operating expenses.

STRATEGIC GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Goal 1 - seeks to address the following Community Needs

- Managing the challenges related to rapid growth.
- Recreation facilities, community pool, activities for children who reside in both incorporated and unincorporated Bennington.

1. Partner and collaborate with local and community entities, volunteers, and professionals to develop youth programming which addresses the needs of children (and parents/guardians) in the areas of early literacy, STEM and teen engagement.

- A. Enhance early literacy programs to meet the needs of a growing population of young families--STEM, music and movement, etc. (By fall 2019 - Library Specialists)
- B. Create ways to intentionally educate parents regarding ECRR (By fall 2019 – Library Specialists)
- C. Continue to enhance the library's summer reading program to encourage increased attendance. (Spring 2019-21 – All library personnel)
- D. Formally and/or informally survey local middle and high school students to determine the timing and types of library programs and services that will create a welcoming environment for teen use of the library and peer engagement. (By fall 2019 – Library Director and Library Staff)
- E. Plan and implement an ongoing schedule of teen programs. (Library Specialist)
- F. Create a teen advisory board. (Library Specialist)

Goal 2 - seeks to address the following Community Needs

- Preserve Bennington's small town atmosphere while attracting businesses which contribute to the quality of life as well as provide a deeper tax base.

- Economic development—need for building up existing businesses and attracting new businesses to provide additional City revenues and meet consumer needs—keep people in town to support local businesses rather than businesses in Omaha.
- High property taxes.

2. Partner and collaborate with local and community entities, volunteers, and professionals to develop adult programming which creates a welcoming atmosphere for creativity, networking, lifelong learning, and community engagement.

- A. Engage local experts to present relevant educational programming for local entrepreneurs and small business owners. (Fall 2019 - Library Director, Library Staff, Friends of the Library)
- B. Partner with local and regional officials/experts to provide forum style presentations on issues regarding taxes, rapid growth, annexation, etc. (Library Director and Library Board)
- C. Host a candidate debate or forum to educate and inform the public of candidates and issues relating to local and general elections. (Library Director, Library Board, and Friends of the Library)

Goal 3 seeks to address the following Community Needs

- Preserve Bennington’s small town atmosphere while attracting businesses which contribute to the quality of life as well as provide a deeper tax base.
- Recreation facilities, community pool, activities for children who reside in both incorporated and unincorporated Bennington.

Goal 3 - Increase community awareness and general use of the library and its services.

- A. Reach out to school administrators and teachers by inviting their students for library tours. (Fall of each school year – Library director and Library Staff)
- B. Encourage kindergarten classes in all Bennington elementary schools to schedule community field trips modeled after Heritage kindergarten teacher Mrs. Allen’s program. (By fall 2019 – Library Director)
- C. Create a realistic schedule to reach every elementary student in the district over the next three years. (By fall 2019 - Library Director and Library Staff)
- D. Partner with preschools to distribute invites to parents to attend special storytime events.
- E. Increase operating hours. (By 2020 - Library Director and Library Board)
- F. Develop strategic marketing plan and policies. (By Spring 2019 – Library Director and Library Staff)

Evaluation

A review and evaluation of the plan will take place annually in September by the library staff, library board and representative(s) from Friends of the Library. Each goal and objective will be assessed to determine whether benchmark progress has been made. If the objective has not been met, steps will be outlined to modify the objective or to assess what further actions will be needed to meet the measure.

Appendix A

Q6 What would you say is the most critical issue facing Bennington today?

Answered: 251 Skipped: 125

Responses Date

- 1 growth and a bigger tax base 12/23/2013 7:54 AM
- 2 taxes, budget, use of the fire station 12/19/2013 9:10 PM
- 3 growth of community and meeting the demands produced from this growth 12/19/2013 4:16 PM
- 4 Lack of businesses to generate tax revenue. 12/19/2013 2:49 PM
- 5 Better overall city facilities. Generally has a small town feeling. Expanding is usually a good idea for the city tax issues and overall budget.
12/19/2013 12:27 PM
- 6 House taxes for area 12/19/2013 11:38 AM
- 7 none 12/18/2013 2:47 PM
- 8 Not enough businesses 12/18/2013 2:47 PM
- 9 Keeping their own identity separate from Omaha. 12/18/2013 10:37 AM
- 10 keeping crime low 12/18/2013 10:21 AM
- 11 lack of shopping 12/18/2013 9:18 AM
- 12 It seems to be growing and could use a grocery store and the library seems to be busy and needs to be expanded.
12/18/2013 2:03 AM
- 13 People are being stupid and running out on the road when clearly a car is coming and not seeing them in the dark.
12/17/2013 10:08 PM
- 14 Downtown district lacks family friendly restaurants 12/17/2013 8:46 PM
- 15 Keeping up with the population growth both in the schools and in the community. 12/17/2013 7:40 PM
- 16 Not getting incorporated into Omaha 12/17/2013 4:33 PM
- 17 Slow Economic Development & the lack of support by the mayor for the Library Improvements. 12/17/2013 3:55 PM
- 18 Parking for events. Practice facilities for outdoor spring and fall sports are difficult to schedule due to number of teams needing them. No public pool.
12/17/2013 1:41 PM
- 19 Omaha trying to annex it. 12/17/2013 10:45 AM
- 20 i would guess small business growth and viability 12/17/2013 10:19 AM
- 21 Schools system keeping up with growth, facilities are not comparable to Elkhorn, Gretna or Blair. 12/17/2013 10:09 AM
- 22 Growth 12/17/2013 10:04 AM
- 23 Fast Growth 12/17/2013 9:21 AM
- 24 keeping the small town atmosphere alive 12/16/2013 11:09 PM
- 25 Rapid growth 12/16/2013 9:48 PM
- 26 Maintaining small town friendly feel as city continues to grow. 12/16/2013 9:46 PM
- 27 Economic development. The need for tax revenue sources besides property taxes. A plan and vision for the future.
12/16/2013 9:24 PM
- 28 Growth and making room in the schools for new kids 12/16/2013 9:00 PM
- 29 Not much to offer for shopping 12/16/2013 8:30 PM
- 30 I think the lack of economic development is the most critical issue at this time. 12/16/2013 8:29 PM
- 31 Growth issues and higher property taxes. 12/16/2013 7:40 PM
- 32 financial responsibility of city government 12/16/2013 7:22 PM
- 33 handling the growth and staying a small community 12/16/2013 7:16 PM
- 34 How to accept the growth of the community and grow responsibly. 12/16/2013 7:06 PM
- 35 School crowding...I think the city boundaries are too far, need a pool/splash park 12/16/2013 5:58 PM
- 36 N/A 12/16/2013 5:40 PM
- 37 Growth 12/16/2013 4:46 PM
- 38 Growth and new people coming to the community 12/16/2013 4:03 PM
- 39 Providing services for the people who live there 12/16/2013 3:14 PM
- 40 Managing growth 12/16/2013 3:08 PM
- 41 The multiple accidents that happen on the highway. 12/16/2013 3:07 PM
- 42 The idea that change is not good and the amount of people willing to get involved. 12/16/2013 2:53 PM
- 43 no rec center 12/15/2013 7:30 PM
- 44 growth of the community and surrounding areas. 12/15/2013 6:47 AM
- 45 Keeping up with growth - schools 12/14/2013 5:25 PM

46 Keeping up with the demands of our growth. 12/14/2013 10:55 AM
47 need bigger/better library facility & additional/updated computers 12/14/2013 10:06 AM
48 BENNINGTON'S DEBT 12/14/2013 7:21 AM
49 We need a real downtown area, a town center, to draw people into town. Renovation of current buildings would help.
12/13/2013 9:05 PM
50 lack of pool 12/13/2013 9:02 PM
51 Shopping 12/13/2013 6:27 PM
52 Lack of business tax base. 12/13/2013 4:36 PM
53 I think Bennington needs more community space. 12/13/2013 10:39 AM
54 keeping up with growth in the town and surrounding area 12/12/2013 8:18 PM
55 expanding Library in former Fire Dept . bldg. 12/12/2013 1:28 PM
56 Need more entertainment Opportunities 12/12/2013 11:44 AM
57 Growing community 12/12/2013 7:49 AM
58 property tax rate as there are few businesses to collect sales tax and other taxes from. 12/12/2013 5:25 AM
59 Growth 12/11/2013 9:22 PM
60 Not enough recreation facilities 12/11/2013 9:03 PM
61 growing community 12/11/2013 8:19 PM
62 keeping the small atmosphere while growing 12/11/2013 2:47 PM
63 Need to have public facilities keep up with the increasing population needs. 12/11/2013 1:59 PM
64 The growth of the town and school district 12/11/2013 12:36 PM
65 need things to do for the children and teens that are positive 12/10/2013 9:23 PM
66 needs a city swimming pool 12/10/2013 9:17 PM
67 Although I think it is getting better, the Bennington community has not been real receptive to the growth in the past. I would like to see reasons for housing communities south of town to be involved in things in town. Don't lose your residents south of town!
12/10/2013 3:13 PM
68 Being able to keep the "hometown" feeling as Bennington continues to grow. 12/10/2013 2:28 PM
69 lack of police service 12/10/2013 1:27 PM
70 taxes 12/10/2013 11:19 AM
71 Budget issues 12/10/2013 10:59 AM
72 Bennington has grown in size over the last 10 years but city services, libraries and parks have remained unchanged and often times cannot accommodate the volume change.
12/10/2013 10:23 AM
73 Not sure, since I don't live in the actual town 12/10/2013 9:29 AM
74 Need more activities for children and a better downtown area. 12/10/2013 9:00 AM
75 Accommodating growth of nearby housing developments. 12/10/2013 8:59 AM
76 Providing better public facilities i.e. Library, swimming pool, YMCA, and grocery store 12/10/2013 8:37 AM
77 Lack of commercial development in and around town. 12/10/2013 7:40 AM
78 Growth 12/10/2013 7:00 AM
79 not sure 12/10/2013 6:18 AM
80 I don't really think of Bennington as a shopping or eating place - the "town" seems very inclusive of their downtown residents.
12/10/2013 2:51 AM
81 Integrating life-long Bennington residents with those who are newer to the community or live in the "suburbs" of Omaha that feed into the Bennington School system. Sometimes those who live outside of the city limits are not considered Bennington residents by the "old-timers" though our tax money goes toward the city and school system just the same as theirs does.
12/10/2013 12:15 AM
82 Providing adequate service to locals. Attracting locals to use Bennington Services and Restaurants.
12/9/2013 10:47 PM
83 The library is so small I think with more space there would be more opportunities for more families to come and enjoy this library.
12/9/2013 10:20 PM
84 No recreational activities for kids and teens outside of school sports. 12/9/2013 10:16 PM
85 Annexation by Omaha, do not want to see that happen. 12/9/2013 10:06 PM
86 Keeping up with current trends. I feel that Bennington tries to hold on to ways that are more old school. The big thing is keeping up with trending technological advances as well
12/9/2013 10:01 PM
87 ridiculously high property taxes 12/9/2013 9:53 PM

88 Being annexed 12/9/2013 9:37 PM

89 Finances 12/9/2013 8:54 PM

90 Running out of room for things. A town rec center would be nice with a pool, etc. 12/9/2013 8:43 PM

91 No coffee shop. 12/9/2013 8:41 PM

92 Maintains small town feel with tr growth around the community 12/9/2013 8:38 PM

93 Keeping up with growth 12/9/2013 8:37 PM

94 Crowding 12/9/2013 8:30 PM

95 Amount of space provided for the community to gather for numerous activities (general recreation, learning, public safety)
12/9/2013 8:20 PM

96 no swimming pool that is crazy 12/9/2013 7:56 PM

97 Property taxes 12/9/2013 7:55 PM

98 schools 12/9/2013 7:52 PM

99 growth in population, especially as it relates to the schools 12/9/2013 7:51 PM

100 Town growth 12/9/2013 7:45 PM

101 The rapid growth. 12/9/2013 7:38 PM

102 How to prioritize limited resources 12/9/2013 7:37 PM

103 There are no businesses to keep people in town - so everyone goes to Omaha for everything. 12/9/2013 7:36 PM

104 No recreational facilities for kids (pool, rec center) 12/9/2013 7:34 PM

105 accommodating growth while maintaining the small-town atmosphere 12/9/2013 7:32 PM

106 Lack of growth 12/9/2013 7:26 PM

107 Managing growth 12/9/2013 7:24 PM

108 Growing economic development. 12/9/2013 7:23 PM

109 Lack of business to draw consumers to the city 12/9/2013 9:54 AM

110 Vibrant business for downtown as we are so close to omaha 12/9/2013 7:22 AM

111 supporting local businesses 12/8/2013 5:34 PM

112 The fact that we do not have a swimming pool. I am not that personally concerned, since we have a neighborhood pool, but I've heard various complaints through the school system. I would have said a better fire fighters location, but I'm happy they are building a new center.
12/7/2013 8:05 PM

113 Managing growth 12/6/2013 1:41 PM

114 LACK OF SIDEWALKS IN PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY 12/6/2013 11:31 AM

115 That's a hard question to answer, I think personally from a standpoint of a child there isn't one. But, there may be things I have never been introduced to.
12/5/2013 5:01 PM

116 Very high taxes and the amount the city is already in debt. 12/5/2013 4:22 PM

117 its small 12/5/2013 3:33 PM

118 I am not sure 12/5/2013 3:30 PM

119 Need an activity center 12/5/2013 1:25 PM

120 Minors using drugs 12/5/2013 12:44 PM

121 none 12/5/2013 12:19 PM

122 I would say not having a pool or other shopping choices because some people don't have a car and would want to do activities instead of being inside all of the time. Having a pool is another option for jobs and being able to hang out with friends.
12/5/2013 12:19 PM

123 Too many kids, not enough space 12/5/2013 12:19 PM

124 no food 12/5/2013 12:19 PM

125 Theft or Bullying in Schools 12/5/2013 12:19 PM

126 I think Bennington needs more places to shop and buy things. 12/5/2013 12:19 PM

127 Population increasing howvver community supports and facilities not adequate. Kids need community resources, places for activities, learning and local jobs to keep them out of trouble.
12/5/2013 12:03 AM

128 Growing so rapidly, schools not remaining the small class sizes people desired and drew them to Bennington in the first place.
12/4/2013 9:19 PM

129 How to keep the small-town living atmosphere. 12/4/2013 7:41 PM

130 Library is too small. 12/4/2013 6:38 PM

131 We are need more places to come together. Pool, library, community center. We need more for the youth to do and to keep our money local to support our community.
12/4/2013 5:44 PM

132 growth and taxes 12/4/2013 5:16 PM

133 Growing the city along with the population. 12/4/2013 3:29 PM

134 Managing growth while maintaining the small town atmosphere that we all moved here for. Sometimes there is an underlying old vs new Bennington attitude. 12/4/2013 1:54 PM

135 High taxes 12/4/2013 11:37 AM

136 I really think we need to have more community events. We need to bring all of Bennington together. We need to be connected with a sidewalk from State street to the Bennington town. When that connection takes place you will have more families bike, run, walk to town increases business and become more involved. We need things that not always cost, not all of us have a big budget. We can expand our library space. We can have family friendly things to do on weekends to enjoy. Not all of us want to use our free time at a bar. Maybe research other community or activities that places like village point or community centers have done to start here in our town. We shouldn't be driving away when we can build up our community. Even home depot does a craft. We need to doll up our downtown. We can use more things to do for all ages. 12/4/2013 10:19 AM

137 Keeping up with recent population expansion 12/4/2013 8:57 AM

138 Residents do not support local businesses and drive to maple st. area Instead. 12/4/2013 6:58 AM

139 More lively downtown scene and cleanliness. 12/4/2013 6:46 AM

140 Losing that small town community feel as Omaha seems to grow closer and become more developed around Bennington. 12/3/2013 10:52 PM

141 Keeping/attracting Business downtown 12/3/2013 10:28 PM

142 Money to provide basic services to city and surrounding people. 12/3/2013 9:36 PM

143 n/a 12/3/2013 9:34 PM

144 maintain a small town atmosphere 12/3/2013 9:03 PM

145 Growing with the population. 12/3/2013 8:03 PM

146 Becoming a part of Omaha city limits 12/3/2013 6:54 PM

147 Need bigger library 12/3/2013 5:39 PM

148 Need for more schools as we are growing fast. Avoid, at all costs, being annexed by Omaha. 12/3/2013 5:31 PM

149 it would be nice to have a full service grocery store so we don't have to drive into omaha. 12/3/2013 5:28 PM

150 I notice that the high school has quite a bit of not good things- pregnant students, thug-like behavior, this drives me and others away. 12/3/2013 5:01 PM

151 Fast paced growth 12/3/2013 2:51 PM

152 Growth 12/3/2013 2:24 PM

153 Taxes and debt, which creates inability to improve the town, which would draw people into town, to support businesses. We need futuristic vision for the city, for the community, not just the buildings & business, but the community, to improve and keep it a great place to live. 12/3/2013 1:45 PM

154 The library expansion 12/3/2013 1:19 PM

155 Need for a grocery store 12/3/2013 12:16 PM

156 I'm new, so not sure. 12/3/2013 11:47 AM

157 need more schools 12/3/2013 11:29 AM

158 Need community rec center w pool 12/3/2013 10:37 AM

159 drug houses with no adult supervision 12/3/2013 10:34 AM

160 population growth; small schools 12/3/2013 10:33 AM

161 Facilities like the library, school and church have to keep up with the growth of the community.Space to meet in larger groups is necessary to keep the small town atmosphere-- let people get to know each other. 12/3/2013 10:05 AM

162 I have not been living in Bennington long enough to have noticed any critical issues. 12/3/2013 9:48 AM

163 No comrade tie between Bennington and the neighboring communities 12/3/2013 9:43 AM

164 no community center/ city pool 12/3/2013 9:23 AM

165 Lack of funds for the amount of people using the area 12/3/2013 9:21 AM

166 attracting people to the city from the area developments that lie south of the city 12/3/2013 9:17 AM

167 School enrollment numbers increasing. 12/3/2013 9:16 AM

168 Urban sprawl. Lots of outlying subdivisions (including ours). How do you maintain the small town atmosphere. 12/3/2013 7:49 AM

169 Maintaining it's identity as the city of Omaha spreads further northwest. 12/3/2013 7:04 AM

170 Size of class rooms in school 12/3/2013 6:41 AM

171 GROWTH IN SCHOOL POPULATION AND TAXES 12/3/2013 6:26 AM
172 Rapid growth and access to community resources: pool, community center, library, sports facilities 12/3/2013 6:06 AM
173 The ability to keep up with the growth. 12/2/2013 10:41 PM
174 Lack of attention for all the great things going on in this town. 12/2/2013 10:31 PM
175 Activities for the community. Lack of meeting space and community facilities 12/2/2013 10:06 PM
176 Meeting the needs of the growing population, in terms of public recreation and educational facilities for children.
12/2/2013 9:47 PM
177 Needs a community center, gym and pool 12/2/2013 9:42 PM
178 N a 12/2/2013 9:08 PM
179 how to manage growth and keep rural qualities 12/2/2013 8:39 PM
180 keeping up and not letting Omaha take over 12/2/2013 8:36 PM
181 Downtown needs more variety 12/2/2013 8:33 PM
182 Handling the growth 12/2/2013 8:23 PM
183 No pool 12/2/2013 8:14 PM
184 keeping property taxes down 12/2/2013 8:13 PM
185 providing public services 12/2/2013 8:00 PM
186 Athletics for kids 12/2/2013 7:59 PM
187 Being Annexed with Omaha 12/2/2013 7:43 PM
188 I feel the most critical issue is the close mindedness of some of our residents and council. As a city, we need to decide what Bennington wants to be. What it wants to look like and what it wants to be known for. Then start taking steps to give this city it's own character. Right now it's just a town that is growing and has no definition or vision. As a whole we tend to make decision based on the hear and now, or who we don't want to make mad, very rarely to we look far enough down the road to make the work/changes we do now worth something in the future. Bennington needs a plan and a council that supports identity and is not afraid to make that plan happen.
12/2/2013 7:33 PM
189 Need more recreational activities for kids. (Swimming pool or YMCA) 12/2/2013 7:27 PM
190 Keeping that hometown feel 12/2/2013 6:55 PM
191 All residential. Very little business. 12/2/2013 6:53 PM
192 Updating the downtown area and bringing in new businesses 12/2/2013 6:48 PM
193 taxes 12/2/2013 6:19 PM
194 being taken over by omaha 12/2/2013 6:16 PM
195 Having enough school space once the 4th grade class and younger enters middle school. 12/2/2013 6:03 PM
196 Willingness of citizens to support community improvements....schools, pools, library, athletic facility
12/2/2013 5:51 PM
197 Getting a handle on its budget. 12/2/2013 5:42 PM
198 growth and how to adapt 12/2/2013 5:40 PM
199 Growing as fast as it's surroundings. Keeping up 12/2/2013 5:36 PM
200 Keeping up with the growing population 12/2/2013 5:12 PM
201 Annexation????? 12/2/2013 5:03 PM
202 Library, recreational facilities, schools, fire, police keeping up with continual growth 12/2/2013 4:56 PM
203 Budget, taxes and an unattractive downtown with little parking. 12/2/2013 4:35 PM
204 High taxes! We have one of the highest tax levies in the metro, and Omaha is one of the highest around.
12/2/2013 4:21 PM
205 Maybe that the library could be larger to accomodate more book selection and programs 12/2/2013 4:16 PM
206 growth 12/2/2013 4:08 PM
207 Building a new library and school 12/2/2013 4:03 PM
208 Indoor recreational facilities and attracting new businesses to community. 12/2/2013 3:47 PM
209 lack of business or resources for our youth..ie sports facilities to practice, or places for youth to hang out.
12/2/2013 3:43 PM
210 The library expansion 12/2/2013 3:40 PM
211 Overall lack of town infrastructure. Examples include -Recreational space - The quality of the sports facilities are horrible. -No Community Center -Lacks quality library -No small grocery store/gas station/convenient store/coffee shop in centralized 156 & State area.
12/2/2013 3:24 PM
212 Growth at exponential rate 12/2/2013 3:18 PM
213 No public pool 12/2/2013 3:16 PM

214 Road safety 12/2/2013 3:07 PM

215 Needs more small business 12/2/2013 3:03 PM

216 Money 12/2/2013 3:00 PM

217 Using the tax dollars from the constituents wisely and carefully. 12/2/2013 2:56 PM

218 Schools being overcrowded. 12/2/2013 2:52 PM

219 Planning for future growth of the community and inevitable change that will be coming in ensuing years. School and city leadership, plus other town civic groups need to meet to create a plan for vibrant growth and opportunities.
12/2/2013 2:47 PM

220 Drawing new business and increasing our tax base. Opportunities to add resources for the whole community.
12/2/2013 2:41 PM

221 Keeping our own unique atmosphere while still expanding. 12/2/2013 2:39 PM

222 Need a closer place to shop for groceries-not Cubby's. 12/2/2013 2:37 PM

223 The library is very small 12/2/2013 2:33 PM

224 Not being engulfed by Omaha-holding their own as a small town. 12/2/2013 2:23 PM

225 Teen pregnancy. Gun control for teenagers. 12/2/2013 2:19 PM

226 Downtown needs a revival 12/2/2013 2:06 PM

227 Growing demand on public services and infrastructure 12/2/2013 2:05 PM

228 None 12/2/2013 2:02 PM

229 Keeping up with the rapid growth of the town. 12/2/2013 1:50 PM

230 Amount of elementary students vs current size of highschool 12/2/2013 1:32 PM

231 Mabey having a community pool. 12/2/2013 1:30 PM

232 maintaining that "small, hometown" feel 12/2/2013 1:29 PM

233 Bennington Library is too crowded. 12/2/2013 1:27 PM

234 Balancing the public services necessary to support the dramatic rise in population. 12/2/2013 1:27 PM

235 Residential areas are fast-growing but downtown is not. 12/2/2013 1:20 PM

236 Growth and disappearance of small town feel 12/2/2013 1:20 PM

237 With Omaha so near, Bennington cannot do everything for everyone. we need to prioritize and that is not simple. with Saddlebrook Library and Elkhorn nearby, we may not achieve the ultimate. could we gain from joining Omaha public Library?
12/2/2013 1:16 PM

238 Mixed Blessing - Urban sprawl ... community increasing in size loses small town feel. 12/2/2013 1:13 PM

239 To stay up and current with our public services with Omaha surrounding us. 12/2/2013 1:12 PM

240 Rapid Growth and the ability to service that as a community in a small town way 12/2/2013 1:10 PM

241 Keeping up with the expanding population without increasing taxes 12/2/2013 1:09 PM

242 The unwillingness of city government to think more progressively. 12/2/2013 1:07 PM

243 lack of facilities such as pool, basketball courts, community center 12/2/2013 1:07 PM

244 Lack of area to entice businesses to come to Bennington instead of Omaha 12/2/2013 1:07 PM

245 The numbers of people who are choosing Bennington as their place to live. The city of Bennington has to find a way to keep up with the growth and to offer more services here in town so everyone doesn't have to spend their money in Omaha. We need to find a way to keep our spending dollars here in town.
11/24/2013 8:58 PM

246 Economic development 11/19/2013 4:03 PM

247 attracting new businesses 11/14/2013 12:37 PM

248 The City's financial situation and leadership Also, keeping the best parts of what we have, but updating and offering more
11/14/2013 11:05 AM

249 rapid growth 11/14/2013 9:01 AM

250 Growth and how to accommodate it 11/13/2013 5:07 PM

251 The need to plan for the future, especially in term of economic development to fund city services such as the library and public recreation facilities.
11/13/2013 3:13 PM

Sources

<https://factfinder.census.gov/>

<https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/data-reports/>

Bennington Public Library Community Needs Survey (November/December 2013)

Bennington Public Library Community Focus Group (October/November 2013)

<http://nlc.nebraska.gov/libaccred/>