



Elkford Phase 1 Report

March 2004

Presented to: The District of Elkford
Presented by: The Elkford Chamber of Commerce & CFDC of SE region of BC
Conducted: February 26, 2004.

Business Vitality Initiative Developed & Facilitated by:

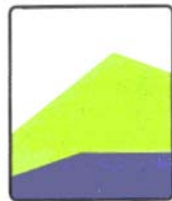
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Make Tracks to...
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Wilderness Capital of BC



The Elkford Chamber of
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Community Futures
Development
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East British Columbia

Building prosperous communities



Executive Summary	5
The BVI.....	5
Community Profile	5
Elkford Section Scores	6
Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities	6
Other Comments.....	6
Recurring Themes	7
Possible Courses of Action.....	8
 Introduction	 10
 Methodology.....	 11
 Focus Group Results	 13
What are the things that make it easy to do business in your community?... 13	
What are the things that can be improved to help businesses in your community?..... 14	
 Respondent Profile.....	 15
 Community Profile.....	 19
Community Description	19
Community Strengths / Assets	20
Reasons for Residence	20
Directions for Improvement.....	21
Unique in Relation to Other Communities	22
Elkford Section Scores	23
Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities	23
 Section 1: Opportunities & Attitudes	 26
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	26
Qualitative Comments	29
<i>Strengths.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Improvements.....</i>	<i>30</i>
 Section 2: Quality of Life.....	 31
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	31
Qualitative Comments	34
<i>Strengths.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Improvements.....</i>	<i>34</i>

Section 3: Education & Training	35
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	35
Qualitative Comments	38
<i>Strengths</i>	38
<i>Improvements</i>	38
 Section 4: Innovation	 39
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	39
Qualitative Comments	42
<i>Strengths</i>	42
<i>Improvements</i>	42
 Section 5: Leadership, Teamwork & Networking	 43
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	43
Qualitative Comments	46
<i>Strengths</i>	46
<i>Improvements</i>	46
 Section 6: Role of Government & Organizations.....	 47
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	47
Qualitative Comments	50
<i>Strengths</i>	50
<i>Improvements</i>	50
 Section 7: Money, Capital & Funding	 51
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	51
Qualitative Comments	54
<i>Strengths</i>	54
<i>Improvements</i>	54
 Section 8: Infrastructure & Business Services.....	 55
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	55
Qualitative Comments	58
<i>Strengths</i>	58
<i>Improvements</i>	58
 Section 9: Communication & Connectivity.....	 59
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	59
Qualitative Comments	62
<i>Strengths</i>	62
<i>Improvements</i>	62



Section 10: Markets & Marketing	63
Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions	63
Qualitative Comments	66
<i>Strengths</i>	66
<i>Improvements</i>	66
Conclusion	67
Appendix A. The BVI Story	68
Appendix B: Detailed Data Methodology	70
Appendix C: Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities	73
Appendix D: Highest Scoring Questions	74
Appendix E: Lowest Scoring Questions	75
Appendix F: Highest Number of Don't Know Responses	76
Appendix G: Highest Positive Deviation from Average	77
Appendix H: Highest Negative Deviation from Average	78
Appendix I. Phase 1 Session Attendance	79
Appendix J. Difference between Elkford and BVI Community Average	80
Appendix K. Gut Check 12	82
Appendix L. List of BVI Communities to Date	83
Appendix M. Additional Qualitative Comments	84



Executive Summary

The BVI

The Business Vitality Initiative (BVI) helps communities to assess their capacity to work with and support entrepreneurs, and to foster small business growth. The tool measures the perceptions of community leaders, business people and citizens about the current business environment in their community and compares the results to an average of other B.C. communities¹ to determine possible short, medium, or long-term actions the community can undertake to improve its business friendliness.

The District of Elkford, The Elkford Chamber of Commerce and Community Futures Development Corporation of South East BC, the community partners, were asked to select and invite the community participants. These participants were to be 50% business people, 25% local leaders and 25% citizens, representing a diversity of interests, ages and perspectives in the community. On February 26th, 23 citizens of Elkford participated in Phase 1 of the BVI.

This report summarizes the first phase of the BVI. Phase 1 included the assessment of the community's apparent small business resources and potential through a survey and a focus group session. Phase 2 will be open to the entire community with the purpose of setting priorities for improvement, and jump starting the community to action. Phase 2 will be held on Tuesday March 30, 2004 at the Recreation Centre – Banquet Room from 6 to 9 pm.

Community Profile

Participants were asked to describe their community. The majority of responses were positive. According to respondents, the community of Elkford² is *beautiful, quiet / peaceful, scenic, and friendly*. When participants were asked to identify key strengths, the top response was *outdoor activities*. In addition, *people (caring / diverse), the mines, beauty, location, wilderness and scenery* were mentioned as strengths. When participants were asked why they lived in Elkford, *employment and beauty* were the reasons mentioned most. Other reasons included *lifestyle, safety, and family-friendly*. When asked what makes Elkford unique in relation to other communities participants indicated *remote location, friendly people, mining influence and outdoor activities*.

¹ See Appendix L for a list of BVI communities to date.

² Residents were asked to define what geographical area they considered to be their community prior to the start of the session. It was agreed for the purpose of answering questions on the BVI that the community would follow Elkford boundaries.



Elkford Section Scores

The community of Elkford's highest scoring sections were: *Quality of Life* (53), *Infrastructure & Business Services* (52), and *Opportunities & Attitudes* (45). Remaining sections scored below mid-range, including: *Leadership, Teamwork & Networking* (36), *Markets & Marketing* (36), *Communications & Connectivity* (34), *Innovation* (33), *Education & Training* (29), *Government & Organizations* (29), and *Capital & Funding* (25). The total average score for all sections was 37.

Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities

A comparison of Elkford scores to other BVI communities revealed the community of Elkford is *below average* on all of ten BVI sections.³ More specifically, sections falling below the all-community average by less than 25% indicate *areas of potential strength*, including: *Infrastructure & Business Services* (-16%), *Innovation* (-19%), *Quality of Life* (-21%), *Opportunities & Attitudes* (-22%), *Leadership, Teamwork & Networking* (-23%), and *Education & Training* (-25%). Sections falling below the all-community average by more than 25% indicate *areas of potential concern*, including: *Markets & Marketing* (-28%), *Communications & Connectivity* (-31%), *Capital & Funding* (-34%), and *Government & Organizations* (-40%). Elkford also scored *below average* on total score by -25% and scored the lowest compared to other communities on 7 of 10 sections⁴, highlighting a number of potential areas where improvement efforts could be directed.

Other Comments

Participants decided prior to beginning the survey that for the purposes of the questionnaire the community should be defined as Elkford (following established boundaries).

According to absolute score, Elkford scored well in the areas of *Quality of Life*, *Infrastructure & Business Services* and *Opportunities & Attitudes*, indicating specific community assets that should be considered when considering directions for community action(s). Both high and low scoring sections are important to consider when choosing priority courses of action.

³ See Appendix L for a list of BVI communities.

⁴ See Appendix C for Elkford scores compared to other BVI communities by section.

Recurring Themes

The following recurring themes were identified throughout the BVI, highlighting areas for the community to potentially focus action on.

- Natural beauty – the beautiful, scenic environment were mentioned as assets, including clean air and water
- Sense of Community – assets included the citizens of Elkford (friendly, caring, committed), word of mouth communication, and festivals / events (ie. Wilderness Days)
- Proximity to Alberta – potential to draw Albertans to community, although PST is considered an area of concern
- Lifestyle – recreation facilities and outdoor opportunities mentioned as assets (including ski hill and golf course), although concern was expressed around some residents being resistant to new recreationalists
- Downtown revitalization – mall was mentioned specifically
- Influence of mines – perceived as a strength in relation to potential for community contribution (ie. innovation, youth work experience, events sponsorship), and also an area of concern (ie. 4 x 4 shifts discourage sense of community and encourage purchasing of goods / services elsewhere)
- Buy local – 4 x 4 mining shifts, lack of available goods & services, and PST mentioned as a barrier – leakage mentioned as a significant area of concern
- Local government viewed as accessible and committed - recommendations included educating council in areas of capital and markets, increased support for business, cooperation across sectors (especially school trustees), and addressing high taxes (commercial & residential)
- Education & Training – Chamber to take more proactive role, community to focus on keeping remaining schools, and increase business training options
- Location – remote location was considered an asset, although a number of recommendations included the development of Highway 43 to Alberta
- Local businesses – increased cooperation across businesses, require additional support (especially capital & marketing), and increase availability of retail goods & services
- Wilderness Brand – outdoor activities / location were mentioned as a key asset with the recommendation for more aggressive branding of Elkford as the “Wilderness Capital of BC” – including marketing outside of region
- Recruit new businesses – high potential for new businesses to come to Elkford in light of limited goods & services, affordable property, and beautiful location

Possible Courses of Action

The following are some possible courses of action that the community could undertake to improve its business friendliness. They are derived from the responses of the focus groups and questionnaire.⁵

Short Term Actions

- Basic business jump-start
- Downtown revitalization
- Recognition of existing business (i.e. innovation / entrepreneurship award)
- K-12 Entrepreneurship Program (elementary & secondary strands)
- Inventory of what is available with aim to find joint-marketing opportunities, import substitutions, buy local opportunities
- Buy local program
- Introduction to finance workshop
- Work with Community Futures to ensure community presence (i.e. mentoring, counselling, training)
- Youth identification session
- Professional branding
- Leadership development program for youth
- Work with mines to jointly partner and sponsor youth trades program

⁵ Note: *Short term* refers to *within 6 months*, *medium term* refers to *6 months to 2 years*, and *long term* refers to *3 to 5 years*.

Medium & Long Term Actions

- Utilize mines to lever innovation and opportunities
- Community and mines to come together around 4 x 4 schedule and other issues (possibly start by mines sponsoring downtown
- Develop strategy to attract new business to the area
- Increase coordination across sectors through regular networking sessions (ie. breakfast meeting series)
- Develop strategy to market Elkford out of the area - 'open for business'



Introduction

Twenty-three (23) citizens representing Elkford took part in the Business Vitality Initiative on February 26, 2004. Through a survey and a focus group session, the BVI helps communities assess their capacity to work with and support entrepreneurs, and to foster small business people and citizens about the current business environment.

Elkford is the eleventh community that has taken part in the BVI. The second session of the BVI, *Focus and Action*, involves reporting findings to the community and setting priorities. Following session two, the community sponsors (The District of Elkford, The Elkford Chamber of Commerce, and CFDC of Central Kootenay) will be available to offer assistance to the community in locating resources according to identified priorities / actions.

The role of Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Kootenay (CFDCCK), as the deliverer of the BVI, is to help communities identify priorities aimed at improving business-friendliness, and to assist communities in taking action. It is hoped that communities can use the results of the BVI, and related supports, to make a real difference in their business friendliness.

The sponsoring organizations booked and coordinated the venue, selected and invited participants, and established communication about the BVI within the community.

Methodology

The community sponsors were asked to select participants from the community made up of 50% business people, 25% local leaders and 25% citizens (representing a range of interests, ages and perspectives in the community). Following an overview of the BVI, participant introductions, and a review of the agenda, participants asked to define the geographical boundaries of their ‘community’⁶.

The first section of the two-part test asked the participants to rate their community by agreeing or disagreeing with a series of statements about qualities contributing to entrepreneurial capacity. Each statement was framed in a positive context (e.g. *Marketing services in my community are affordable and accessible*). Participants were asked to rate the statement with one of the following: *strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, don’t know*.

The 99 statements, all important factors in building entrepreneurial capacity, were grouped together into 39 indicators such as *Leadership Development Opportunities*. These indicator areas were then further grouped into 10 sections:

- Opportunities & Attitudes
- Quality of Life
- Education & Training
- Innovation
- Leadership, Teamwork & Networking
- Role of Government & Organizations
- Money, Capital & Funding
- Entrepreneurial Infrastructure & Business Services
- Communication & Connectivity
- Markets & Marketing

⁶ Residents were asked to define what geographical area they considered to be their community prior to the start of the session. It was agreed for the purpose of answering questions on the BVI that the community would follow existing Elkford boundaries.



If all respondents *strongly agreed* to a positively worded statement, the question score would be 100. If all respondents *strongly disagreed* with the statement, the question score would be 0. A neutral response (*neither agree nor disagree*) would be scored as 50. A score over 50 would indicate that there is a perceived good capacity, while a score less than 50 would indicate a perceived lower capacity.⁷

The second part of the survey collected qualitative information about the issues, strengths and weaknesses within the community. (e.g. What are 3 words or phrases that describe your community? What is your community's greatest strength in terms of its markets?") The participants were given as much time as they needed to complete the questionnaire with the facilitator, Mike Stolte, being available to answer any questions. The response time ranged from 25 minutes to approximately 80 minutes, with an average time of 60 minutes. A short snack and networking break followed the questionnaire.

Following the break, participants were broken into small groups to further assess the community's entrepreneurial strengths and areas for improvement. Two groups were asked to answer one of the following questions (or both questions if time allowed):

- What are the things that make it easy to do business in your community?
- What are the things that can be improved to help businesses in your community?

In all instances the word business was defined as including existing, start up, expanding and those businesses that could be attracted to the community.

⁷ Refer to Appendix B for a detailed data methodology.

Focus Group Results

What are the things that make it easy to do business in your community?

- outdoor activities (9)
- reasonable pricing
- Honest, friendly and safe (2)
- Young town
- Plenty of undeveloped service lots
- Good infrastructure
- Road to Elk lakes goes through town
- Plenty of affordable recreation for all ages
- Potential for new business (2)
- Good shipping opportunities (2)
- Land prices
- High employment rate
- Stable employment
- Know the people you do business with
- Local shopping
- Road access is good from Hwy 3
- Internet access is good
- Opportunity – lots of business services and products not currently being provided
- Home based business that would reflect much deeper business environment with space
- Curling, swimming, hockey , skiing, outdoor sports
- Healthcare at primary level
- Low crime rate
- Shift in demographics is providing new sense of energy, new ideas, many kids coming back as adults
- Excellent infrastructure for preteen youth



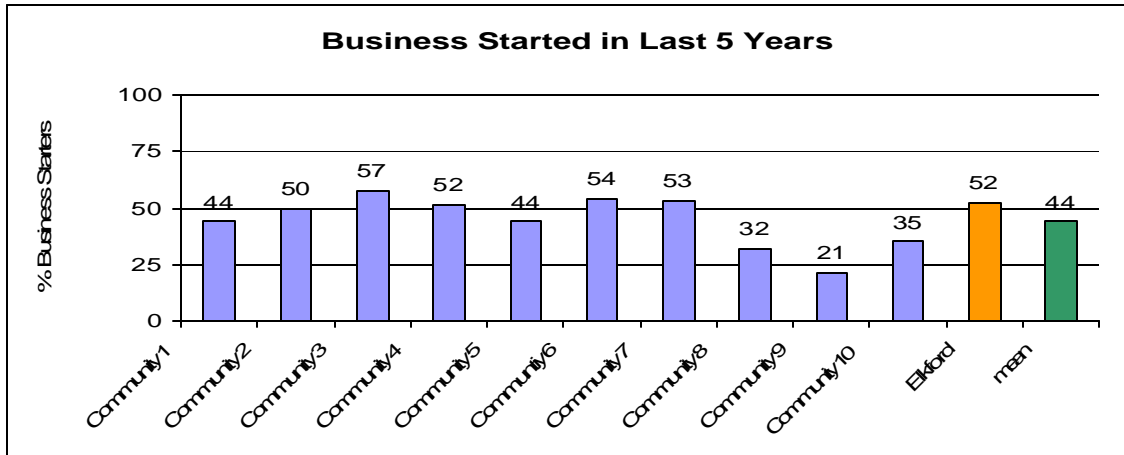
What are the things that can be improved to help businesses in your community?

- Facelift on business community / downtown revitalization (4)
- Global exposure / market Elkford out of area (2)
- Address taxes / lower taxes (2)
- More retail stores
- Focus on Elkford as a destination
- Seniors housing/assisted living
- Follow business licensing by law – enforcement
- Increased communication
- Improved education
- Extend hours of business
- Improved transportation
- Seniors housing
- Better communication on what taxes are used for
- Community events calendar
- Marketing specialist
- Alpine training center
- Sell Elkford as a great place to raise a family
- Buy local program
- Cooperation with mine – incentives for out of town workers to live here
- Change or re-vise current bylaws to allow for easier start up
- Better advertisement and promotion of local business' for new families or citizens (eg welcome wagon)
- More/better signage
- Better marketing of businesses / increase awareness of existing business
- Make business / office space available

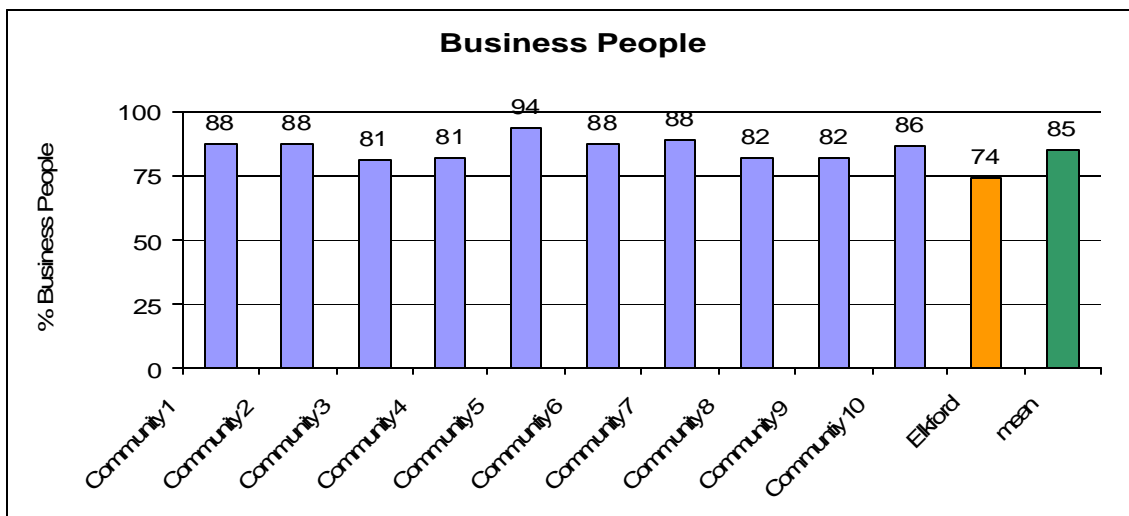
Respondent Profile

The participant population is described below. Of the 23 participants,

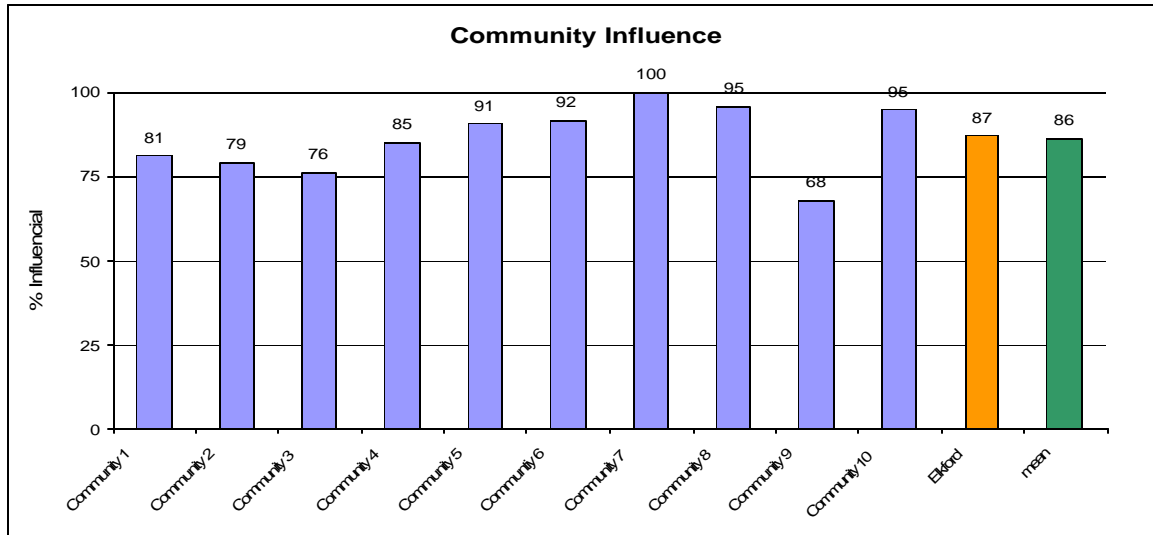
52% of respondents had started a business within the last 5 years. In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford's assessment session included more new business people than the all-community average of 44%.



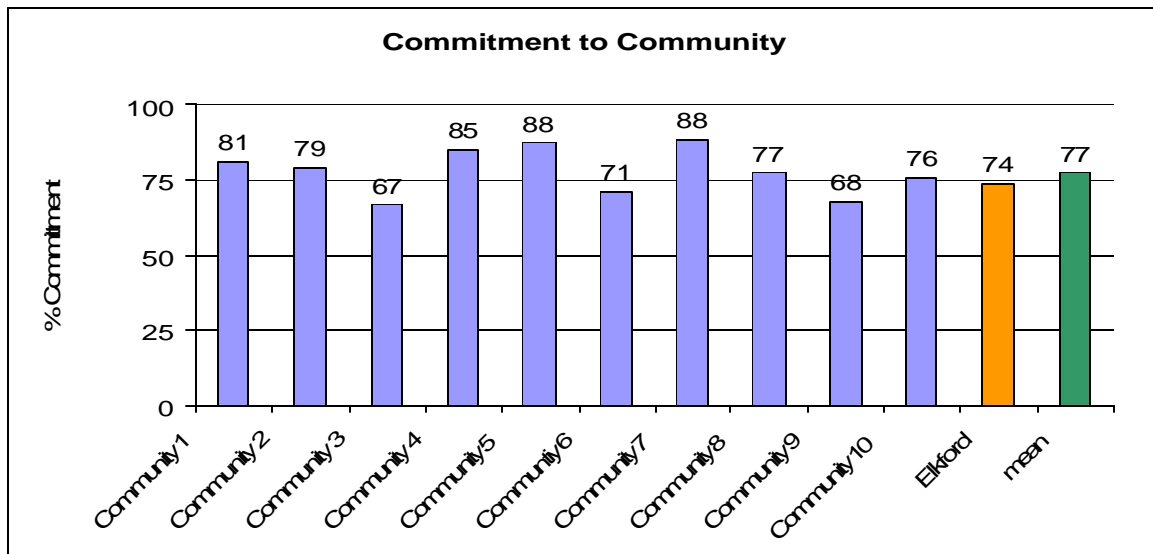
57% of respondents considered themselves to be business person, with an additional 17% considering themselves 'somewhat' of a business person, and 22% 'not at all'. In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford's assessment session included a below average number of business people.



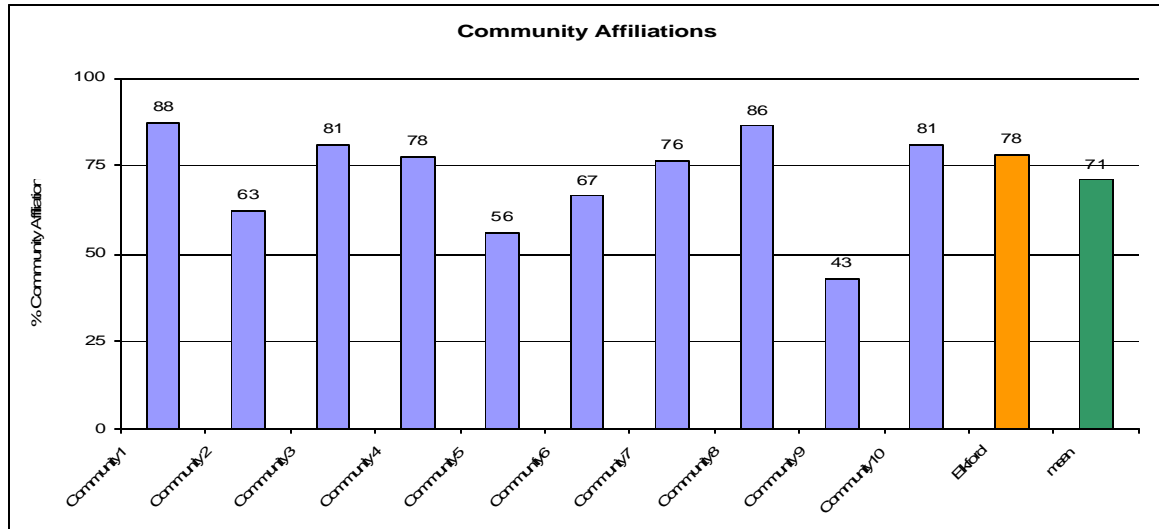
9% of respondents considered themselves to be very influential in the community. 30% were usually influential, 48% somewhat, 13% not usually, and 0% not at all. In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford’s assessment session including an above average number of influential community members (87% of Elkford residents perceived themselves as very, usually or somewhat influential versus the all-community average of 86%).



74% are committed to the community and would do much to remain there (compared to the all-community average of 77%).



81% of respondents had at least one community affiliation (i.e. Chamber of Commerce, Arts Council, City Council) (compared to the all-community average of 71%).



52% of respondents were male and 48% of respondents were female (the same as the all-community average). In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford’s assessment session included a greater number of 45-54, 55-64, and over 65 year old respondents.

Age

	Under 24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 & over
Elkford	0%	4%	13%	39%	35%	9%
Average	5%	10%	28%	30%	24%	4%

In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford’s assessment session included a greater number of individuals in the 60-80k, 80-100k, and over 100k income brackets, and fewer respondents in the under 20k, 20-40k, and 40-60k income brackets.

Income

	Under 20k	20-40k	40-60k	60-80k	80-100k	Over 100k
Elkford	4%	9%	22%	39%	9%	17%
Average	8%	24%	22%	20%	9%	10%



Real estate (30%), Financial Services (32%), and Hospitality (22%) were the occupations most often mentioned by Elkford respondents. Respondents from other BVI communities reported Retail (21%), Financial Services (18%), Hospitality (16%), and Health (14%) most often as occupations.

In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford’s assessment session included a greater number of respondents having resided in the community between 6-10 and 11-20 years, and fewer residents having lived in Elkford under 2, between 2-5, and over 20 years.

Time in Community

	Under 2 years	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	Over 20 years
Elkford	9%	13%	30%	13%	35%
Average	10%	13%	21%	21%	34%

In comparison to other BVI communities, Elkford’s assessment session included a greater number of respondents with a university degree and a high school diploma, and fewer respondents with some high school, some college or university, trades /technical / college diploma certificate, and a professional degree.

Education

	Some High School	High School Diploma	Some College or University	Trades / Technical / College Certificate / Diploma	University Degree	Professional Degree
Elkford	4%	4%	13%	65%	9%	4%
Average	6%	13%	21%	27%	27%	7%

Community Profile

Community Description

As revealed below, when participants were asked to provide 3 words, phrases, or adjectives describing their community, the majority of responses were positive. (Number of responses indicated in brackets behind response) According to respondents, the community of Elkford is *beautiful, quiet / peaceful, scenic, friendly, and breath taking*. A small number of negative words were used to describe Elkford with a ratio of 6:1 positive to negative which is slightly below the all-community average ratio of 10:1 (positive to negative).

- beautiful (8)
- quiet / peaceful (6)
- scenic (6)
- friendly (5)
- breath taking (3)
- middle of nowhere / remote (2)
- small (2)
- outdoor activities (2)
- nature / wilderness (2)
- outdoors
- top of the Rockies
- home
- vibrant
- clean
- unspoiled / best kept secret
- industry
- moderate climate
- good recreation facilities
- exciting
- protective
- safe
- beautiful downtown
- young
- growing
- positive people
- recreation minded
- stable workforce
- wilderness
- mining town
- close knit
- good income level
- business stressed
- in decline
- narrow
- under utilized
- fragmented health system
- mismanaged
- accept status quo / no progress
- stagnant
- few visible businesses
- close minded
- backward

Community Strengths / Assets

When participants were asked to identify the strengths of their community, the top response was *outdoor activities*. In addition, *people (caring / diverse)*, *the mines, beauty, location, wilderness, scenery, employment* and *cost of living* were mentioned as strengths.

- outdoor activities (9)
- people (caring / diversity) (6)
- mines (6)
- beautiful (5)
- location (5)
- wilderness (4)
- scenery (4)
- job stability / security (3)
- low cost of living (3)
- low crime rate (2)
- high paid mining jobs / disposable income (2)
- good infrastructure (2)
- family-friendly
- wilderness days
- support for sports activities
- local schools create strong team spirit
- recreation facilities
- community organizations
- good sense of community
- safe
- schools
- peaceful
- decent children's programs
- great youth programs
- people will rally to a cause
- great amenities for size

Reasons for Residence

When participants were asked why they lived in Elkford, *employment, beauty, lifestyle, safety, and family-friendly* were the reasons mentioned most.

- employment (13)
- beautiful (4)
- lifestyle (2)
- safe (2)
- family-friendly (2)
- peaceful
- family
- affordable in the mountains
- ski hill
- reasonable housing
- hunting areas
- relationship
- small town living / low stress
- business opportunity
- peaceful
- wilderness
- people
- location
- outdoor activities
- motorized outdoor recreation
- retired

Directions for Improvement

When participants were asked to provide directions for improvement for their community, *more downtown business* was most often mentioned. *The shift from a 4/4 to a 5/2 work week, through road to Calgary, downtown revitalization, improved health care, youth activities, lower taxes, more proactive Chamber of Commerce, increased business support, support for schooling, and more industry* were also mentioned by a number of participants.

- more business / downtown business (5)
- 5 + 2 work week to encourage in town shopping (5)
- a through road to Calgary (#43 highway) (4)
- downtown revitalization (4)
- health care (3)
- youth activities / entertainment (2)
- lower taxes (2)
- Chamber more proactive / provide for opportunities for business linkages (2)
- more support / services for business (2)
- schooling (2)
- more industry (2)
- evening activities
- trades education
- global recognition
- better motivated teachers
- development of business community
- outward looking attitude
- diversification of business and community from mining dependence & leadership
- tourism
- attracting youth to community
- stable employment for non-mine workers
- cooperation / joint events
- improve shopping hours
- form downtown business district
- old mining theme for downtown
- buy local
- better communication
- utilize vacant properties
- ski hill development
- golf course development
- incentives for business development backed up by strong promotional program
- more open minded approaches by community leaders to new ideas
- outdoor theme for community (brand)
- people
- improve & upkeep of commercial and residential buildings
- communication
- move forward (i.e. broadband)
- land access to motorized recreation
- less reliance on mining
- joint marketing across communities (ie. Fernie / Sparwood)
- culture
- retail
- activities
- out of area marketing
- increase population base
- more advertising

Unique in Relation to Other Communities

When participants were asked what makes Elkford unique in relation to other communities, *remote location, the people, heavy mining influence, outdoor activities, low crime, small size, beauty, proximity to Calgary, and inexpensive property* were most often mentioned.

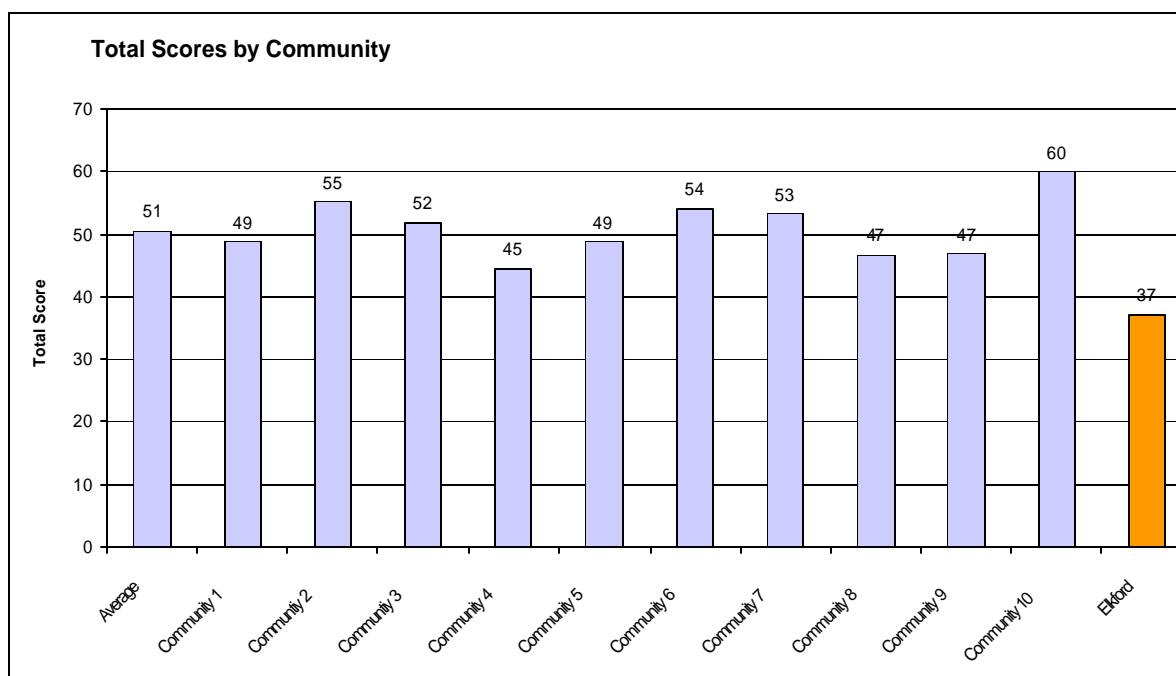
- out of the way / remote (11)
- the people (friendly) (5)
- heavy mining influence / one industry (5)
- outdoor life / activities (4)
- safe / low crime (3)
- small (2)
- beautiful (valley) (2)
- proximity to Calgary (2)
- inexpensive property (2)
- stable work
- night skiing
- mining commuters
- caring for each other
- clean
- recreation-use condos / houses
- poor Chamber motivation
- natural beauty
- inexpensive golfing
- good fishing
- underdeveloped but well engineered
- development potential
- quiet
- scenery
- 4 / 4 work schedule
- beginning of highway
- good income levels
- youth programming
- opportunity to expand
- amenities

Elkford Section Scores

The community of Elkford’s highest scoring sections were: *Quality of Life* (53), *Infrastructure & Business Services* (52), and *Opportunities & Attitudes* (45). Remaining sections scored below mid-range, including: *Leadership, Teamwork & Networking* (36), *Markets & Marketing* (36), *Communications & Connectivity* (34), *Innovation* (33), *Education & Training* (29), *Government & Organizations* (29), and *Capital & Funding* (25). The total average score for all sections was 37.

Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities

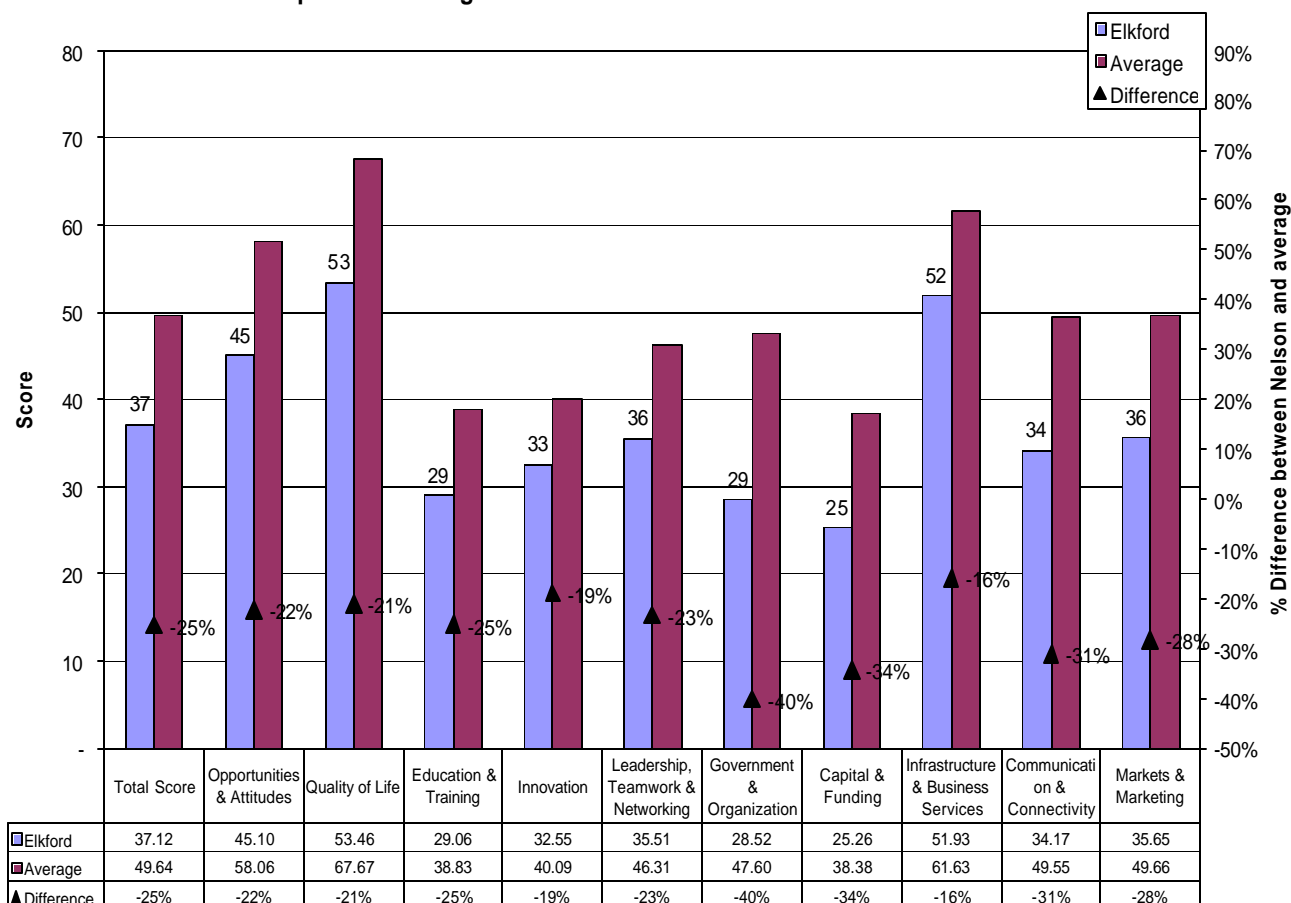
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⁸ See Appendix L for a list of BVI communities.

⁹ See Appendix C for Elkford scores compared to other BVI communities by section.

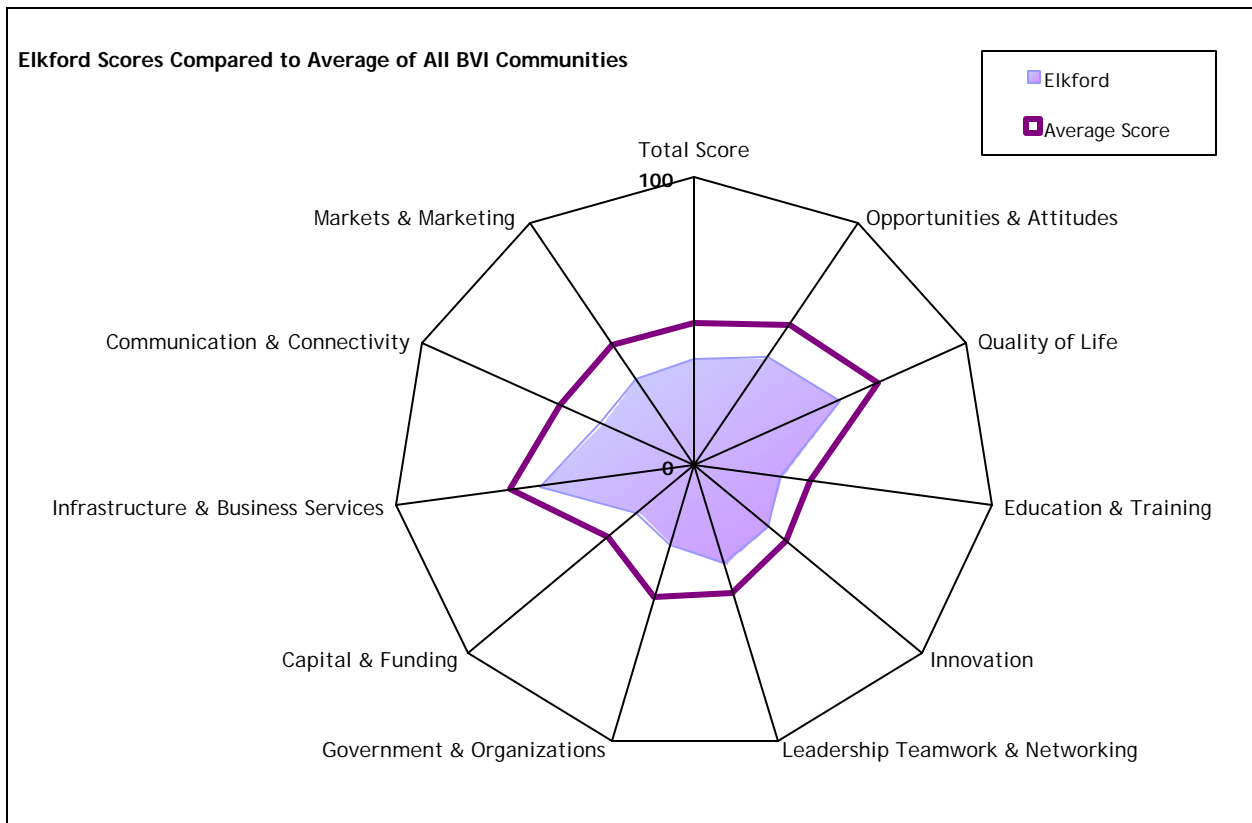
Elkford Scores Compared to Average of All BVI Communities



Other Comments

Participants decided prior to beginning the survey that for the purposes of the questionnaire the community should be defined as Elkford (following established boundaries).

According to absolute score, Elkford scored well in the areas of *Quality of Life*, *Infrastructure & Business Services* and *Opportunities & Attitudes*, indicating specific community assets that should be considered when considering directions for community action(s). Both high and low scoring sections are important to consider when choosing priority courses of action.



This radial graph is another visual tool to contrast Elkford section scores with the all-community average. The closer the shaded section is to the outside ring, the higher the score, and the greater the business friendliness. Again, according to quantitative data, *Quality of Life, Infrastructure & Business Services, Opportunities & Attitudes* are areas of potential strength in Elkford. Further, *Markets & Marketing, Communications & Connectivity, Capital & Funding, and Government & Organizations* are areas where future improvement efforts could be targeted, due to the lower scores especially in comparison to other communities.

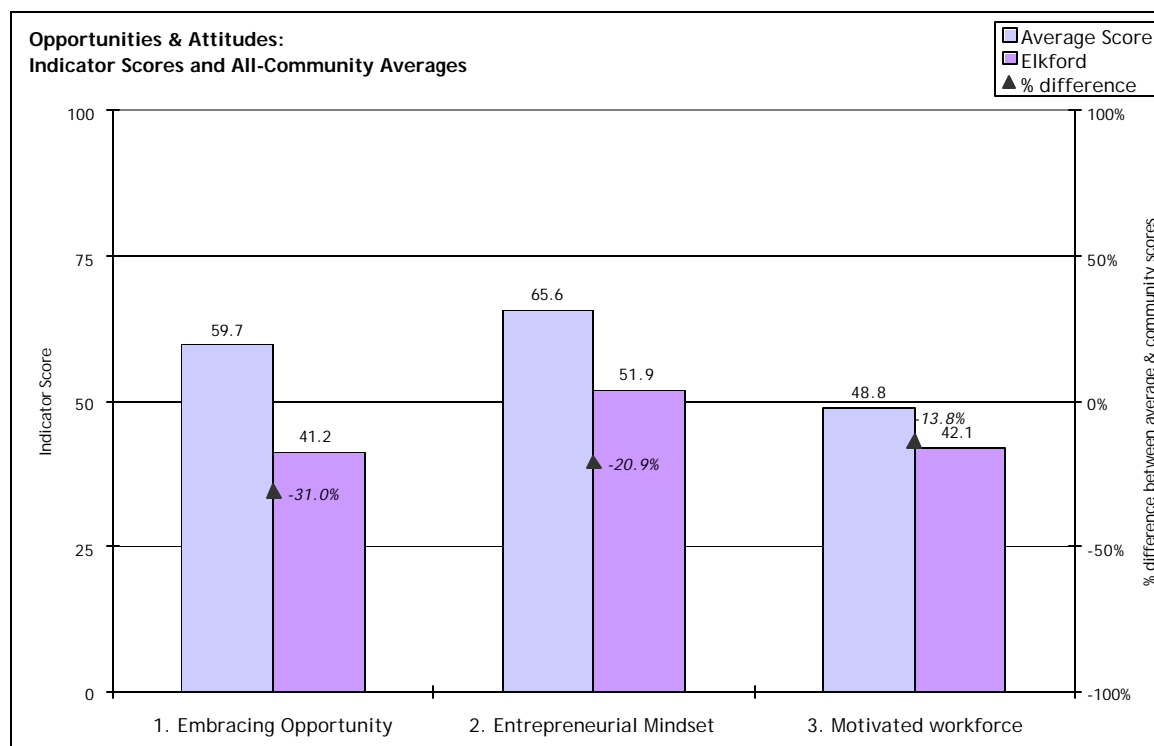
Section 1: Opportunities & Attitudes

The ability of the community to recognize, take action, and follow through on available opportunities.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Opportunities & Attitudes presents an *area of potential strength* with an absolute score of 45. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section¹⁰, Elkford scored *lowest* on the *Opportunities & Attitudes* section. Also according to comparative data, Elkford scored *-22% below the average* of all BVI communities, *indicating a potential area of concern in relation to other communities*¹¹.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Opportunities & Attitudes*, into three indicators including, *Enhancing Opportunity*, *Entrepreneurial Mindset*, and *Motivated Workforce*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on the indicators: *Embracing Opportunity* (-31%), *Entrepreneurial Mindset* (-21%) and *Motivated Workforce* (-14%), highlighting *potential areas of concern in relation to other communities*.

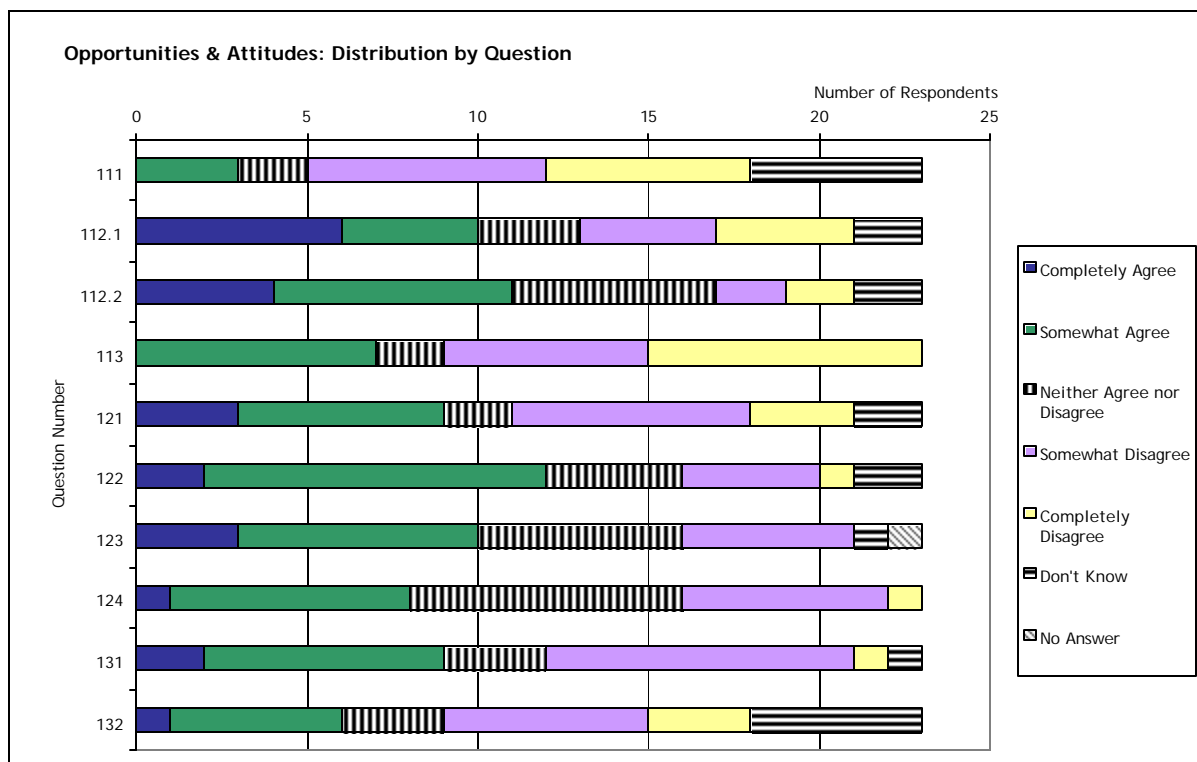


¹⁰ See Appendix C.

¹¹ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
1.1 Embracing Opportunity	<i>The basic capacity of a community to act on opportunities when they arrive, including abilities to recognize common needs and wants.</i>	111 There is an up-to-date community vision or plan which reflects the community's values and attitudes and represents all groups within the community.	<i>Presence of a common vision that includes all members of the community</i>	23	40	-42%
		112 The community is facing an economic crisis or a significant economic opportunity.	<i>Awareness of changing markets and emerging opportunities, and presents push/pull factors to entrepreneurship.</i>	54	80	-33%
		113 Entrepreneurial ventures and business creation are encouraged and supported by citizens and local governments.	<i>Promotion and general support of entrepreneurial ideals and culture.</i>	34	58	-42%
1.2 Entrepreneurial Mindset	<i>The ability and desire of the community to recognize and take action on opportunities when they arrive.</i>	121 Individuals desire independence, responsibility, & control over their future, and are willing to work to achieve these regardless of a risk of failure.	<i>Desire for independence, and willingness to take risks</i>	46	63	-28%
		122 Individuals are skilled in a trade, talent, or profession, and have the desire to form a business with these	<i>Presence of skilled workers who have an interest in entrepreneurship & self-employment</i>	56	66	-16%
		123 Individuals are capable of thinking creatively and developing unconventional solutions using a proactive/can-do attitude.	<i>Creativity and proactive problem solving</i>	56	69	-19%
		124 Individuals are capable of identifying new, unconventional or changing business opportunities.	<i>Creativity & vision, and the ability to identify opportunities</i>	51	64	-21%
1.3 Motivated workforce	<i>Businesses have the human resources to build & expand their operations</i>	131 A pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs.	<i>Skilled & motivated people are available to work for others</i>	48	51	-5%
		132 Managers & supervisors are motivated in their work and about their staff	<i>Skilled management is crucial to growth and sustainability</i>	36	47	-24%

Indicating an *area of potential strength*, question 131 scored *-5% below the average* of all BVI communities, stating, *a pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs*. Questions 111 and 113 scored *-42% below the average* of all BVI communities, indicating a *potential area of concern*, stating, *there is an up-to-date community vision or plan which reflects the community's values and attitudes and represents all groups within the community*, and *Entrepreneurial ventures and business creation are encouraged and supported by citizens and local governments*.



The distribution of levels of agreement / disagreement for each question further informs analysis. As demonstrated in the chart above, numbers of individuals in agreement are evidenced by the length of bar according to colour / pattern. For example, combining strongly agree and somewhat agree in question 122 reveals that close to 12 individuals either completely or somewhat agreed with that statement. Further, by isolating the length of bars representing somewhat disagree and completely disagree, 5 individuals was in disagreement.

According to the distribution of response, question 122 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 122 stated, *individuals are skilled in a trade, talent, or profession, and have the desire to form a business with these*. Question 113 was most disagreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 113 stated, *entrepreneurial ventures and business creation are encouraged and supported by citizens and local governments*.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Opportunities & Attitudes* section, top strengths identified by participants included *business potential, ski hill development, and affordable housing*. Directions for improvement included *lower taxes, downtown revitalization, market Elkford, and encourage new business*.

Strengths

- | | |
|--|--|
| ○ business potential (4) | ○ very pretty |
| ○ potential for ski hill development (3) | ○ safe |
| ○ affordable housing (3) | ○ lifestyle |
| ○ working for the mines / good jobs (2) | ○ proximity to cities |
| ○ family-friendly (2) | ○ proximity to ski hill |
| ○ beauty of area (2) | ○ existing infrastructure |
| ○ the people (friendly) (2) | ○ youthful attitude |
| ○ wilderness access / recognition (2) | ○ willingness of community to develop |
| ○ tourism potential | ○ some successful businesses (usually 'in town' services ie. hairdresser / restaurant) |
| ○ recreation clubs | ○ location |
| ○ mining provides employment opportunities | ○ open minded attitude |
| ○ open to change | ○ strong volunteers |
| ○ affordable programs | ○ assistance from major employer to community projects |
| ○ committed parents with good kid's programs | ○ encouraging attitude |
-

Improvements

- lower taxes / address taxes (personal & business) (5)
 - downtown revitalization / clean up the mall (4)
 - market Elkford / 'open for business' (3)
 - encourage new business / provide incentives (3)
 - identify opportunities (2)
 - education & opportunities for youth (2)
 - extend Highway #43 (2)
 - decrease leakage / buy local (2)
 - 4 / 4 shifts hinders sense of community (2)
 - hire marketing advisor
 - more advertising within community on what is available
 - new residents
 - encourage tourism year round with winter campgrounds
 - develop a vision with action plan
 - encourage involvement of new residents
 - use infrastructure to promote / draw entrepreneurs
 - attitude shift from 'end of the road' to 'wilderness capital of BC'
 - golf course development
 - ski hill development
 - improve bank capital for business development
 - improve motivation
 - improve attitudes
 - support local business\
 - business education at all levels
 - business – council partnerships
-

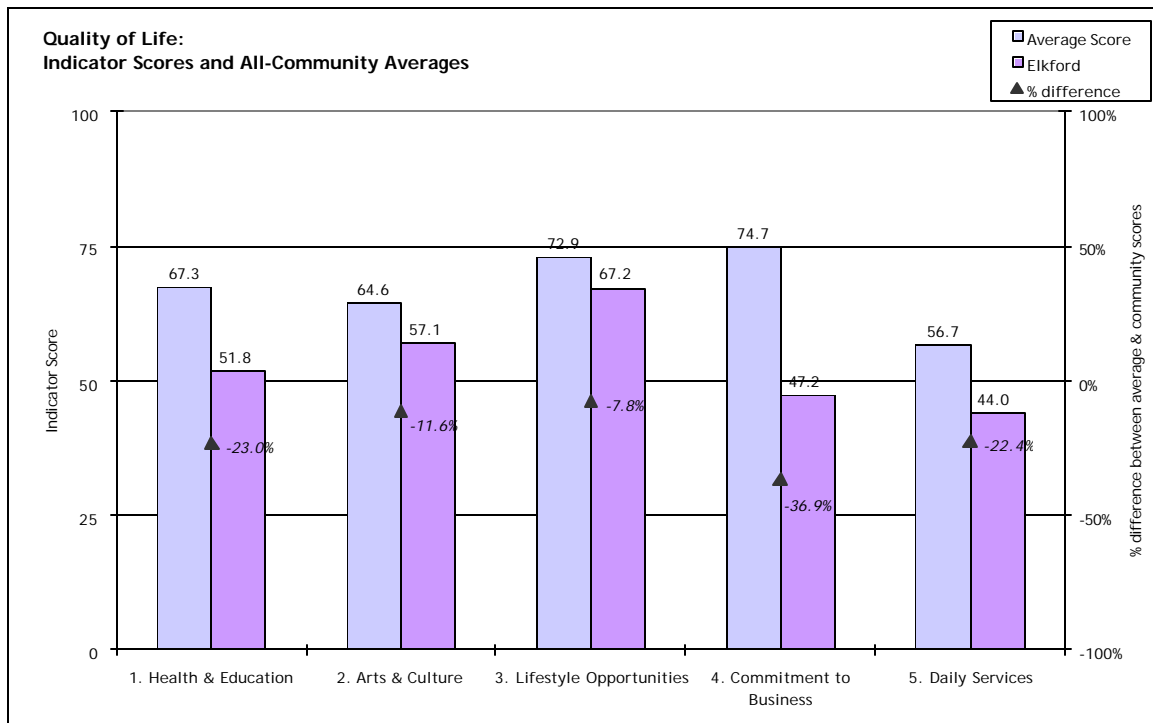
Section 2: Quality of Life

The ability of the community to attract & retain businesses & citizens, especially those who are young, skilled workers.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Quality of Life presents a *potential area of strength* with an absolute score of 53. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section¹², Elkford scored *lowest* on the *Quality of Life* section. Also according to comparative data, Elkford scored *-22% below the average* score of all BVI communities, indicating a *potential area of concern in relation to other communities*¹³.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Quality of Life*, into five indicators including, *Health & Education*, *Arts & Culture*, *Lifestyle Opportunities*, *Commitment to Business*, and *Daily Services*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all indicators, *Commitment to Business* (-37%), *Health & Education* (-23%), *Daily Services* (-22%), *Arts & Culture* (-12%), *Lifestyle Opportunities* (-9%), highlighting *potential areas of concern*.

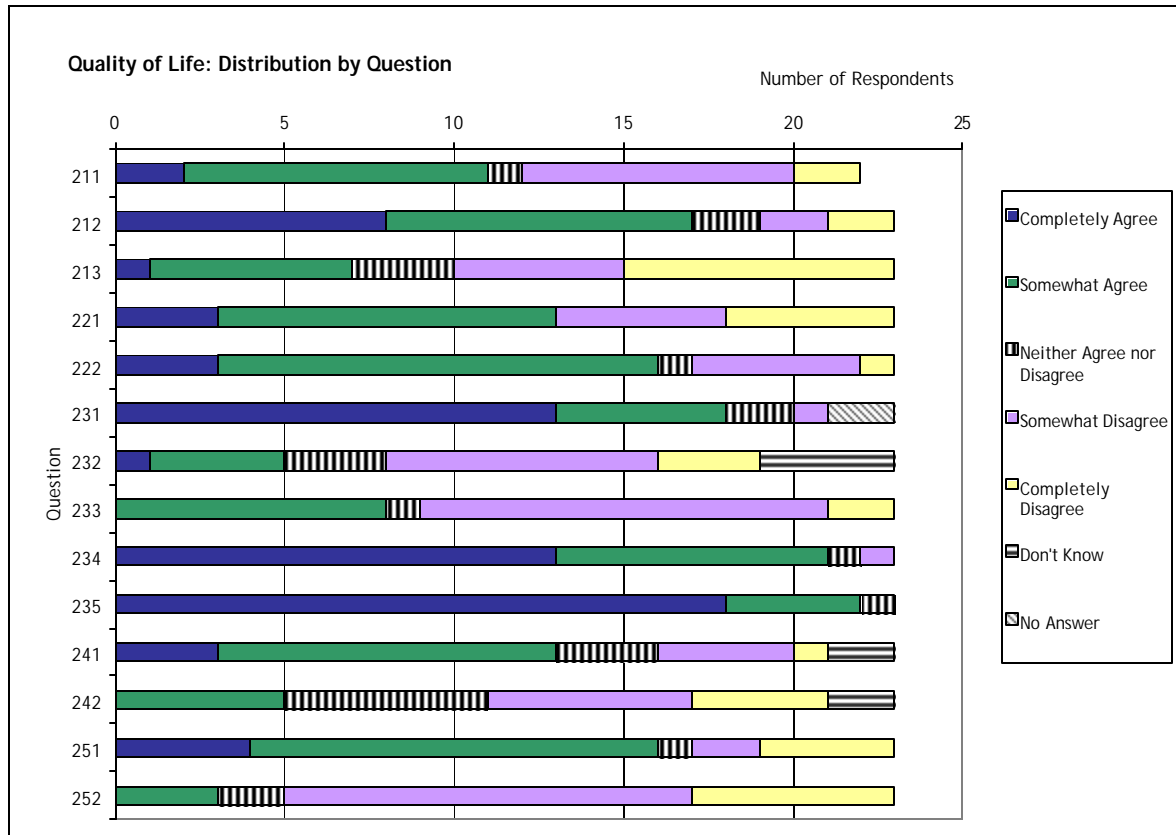


¹² See Appendix C.

¹³ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p. 24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
2.1 Health & Education	<i>The ability to meet basic family needs, needed to attract and retain citizens</i>	211 A quality health care facility is accessible, well serviced and within a reasonable distance.	<i>Available health care is important to attract new residents & build family security in the community</i>	49	65	-25%
		212 There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	<i>Encourages life-long learning and risk taking, also places value on youth, children & families needed for retention</i>	71	78	-10%
		213 There is an educational organization in the area that offers post-secondary programs and continuing education opportunities.	<i>Availability of life long learning opportunities, and opportunities to develop skills, and increases youth retention.</i>	36	58	-38%
2.2 Arts & Culture	<i>Appreciation of & have pride in the talents and skills of the community, and presence of non-business activities</i>	221 High quality events (i.e. festivals, concerts, movies) catering to a range of ages take place regularly in or close to the community.	<i>Displays community values, business successes, and the pride of place. Also provides extracurricular activities</i>	51	61	-16%
		222 There is a strong community identity, and there are plentiful and varying opportunities for involvement (i.e. arts, athletics, politics, church groups).	<i>Sense of community and cohesion with supportive networks, and opportunities for leadership development</i>	63	68	-8%
2.3 Lifestyle Opportunities	<i>Appreciation of community's location & non-business activities</i>	231 The community is physically beautiful, and environmentally safe (i.e. Pollution, water quality).	<i>Quality of living space, and indication of responsible and sustainable practices</i>	80	90	-11%
		232 Young adults (25-34) consider the community a desirable place to live.	<i>Ability to retain and attract youth, fostering future capacity, long term community vitality and "leaders of tomorrow"</i>	34	50	-31%
		233 There are locations/facilities (i.e. Nightclubs, pubs, bingo, camps) that attract a variety of people, and provide social interaction for citizens of all ages.	<i>Informal networking opportunities and typical social participation in "community"</i>	41	49	-15%
		234 There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. Ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	<i>Availability of extracurricular opportunities</i>	86	84	2%
		235 The community is a safe place to live.	<i>Family values. A lack of fear within the community, could lead to more risk taking</i>	93	92	1%
2.4 Commitment to Business	<i>Desire to remain in the community, working, living and taking part in all aspects</i>	241 Successful businesses want to remain in the community	<i>People choose to live in the community & are committed to it</i>	58	79	-27%
		242 Individuals are capable of persevering and being committed to their business, and remaining in the community even during hard economic times.	<i>Business people are committed to the community, even under stress (economic, social, etc)</i>	37	71	-48%
2.5 Daily Services	<i>Ability to meet everyday needs, while maintaining a reasonable cost of living</i>	251 Quality residential real estate opportunities (both purchase and rental) are available and affordable.	<i>Affordable costs of moving/relocating, and presents increased number of business opportunities</i>	61	62	-2%
		252 There is a diversity of quality and affordable services (i.e. dry-cleaning, photo developing, gas station).	<i>Ability to buy products and services locally, thus supporting local business</i>	27	51	-47%

Indicating an area of potential strength, question 234 scored 2% *above the average* of all BVI communities, stating, *there are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. Ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks)*. Question 242 scored -48% *below the average* of all BVI communities, indicating a potential area of concern, stating, *individuals are capable of persevering and being committed to their business, remaining in the community even during hard economic times*.



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that questions 234 and 235 were the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 234 stated, *there are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. Ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks)*. Question 235 stated, *the community is a safe place to live*. Also according to distribution of response, the question in which respondents disagreed most was question 252. More specifically, question 252 stated, *there is a diversity of quality and affordable services (i.e. dry-cleaning, photo developing, gas station)*. Question 221 presented the greatest variance of opinion, which stated, *high quality events (i.e. festivals, concerts, movies) catering to a range of ages take place regularly in or close to the community*.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Quality of Life* section, top strengths identified by participants included *outdoor recreation, safe, quiet / peaceful, clean air, wilderness environment, affordable housing and recreational facilities*. Directions for improvement included *more business, downtown revitalization, improved health care, and youth recreation / entertainment opportunities*.

Strengths

- outdoor recreation (7)
- safe (7)
- quiet / peaceful (5)
- clean air (5)
- wilderness environment (4)
- affordable (housing) (3)
- recreation facilities (3)
- the people (caring)
- family friendly
- mines provide good living
- proximity to Alberta for post-secondary education
- proximity to recreation in US / BC
- healthy lifestyle
- Sparwood's wellness centre
- schools for young children
- clean environment
- health care in surrounding areas
- community health clinic
- location
- family-friendly
- proximity to Calgary amenities
- location
- low pressure
- wildlife

Improvements

- more businesses / services – diversify from mining (5)
- downtown revitalization / clean up (3)
- health care (24/7) (3)
- youth recreation / opportunities (3)
- picnic tables at river
- increase library hours
- encourage biking through bike short trips
- progressive / balanced view of future
- taxation reduction
- senior's housing / home care
- offer business incentives
- more cooperation
- communicate with resource groups on what we have / what we need / how do we achieve goals
- improve dusty roads
- economic growth
- expand commercial and industrial sectors
- improve local educational opportunities
- remove the apathy
- lower taxes
- keep more people in town
- more entertainment for all ages

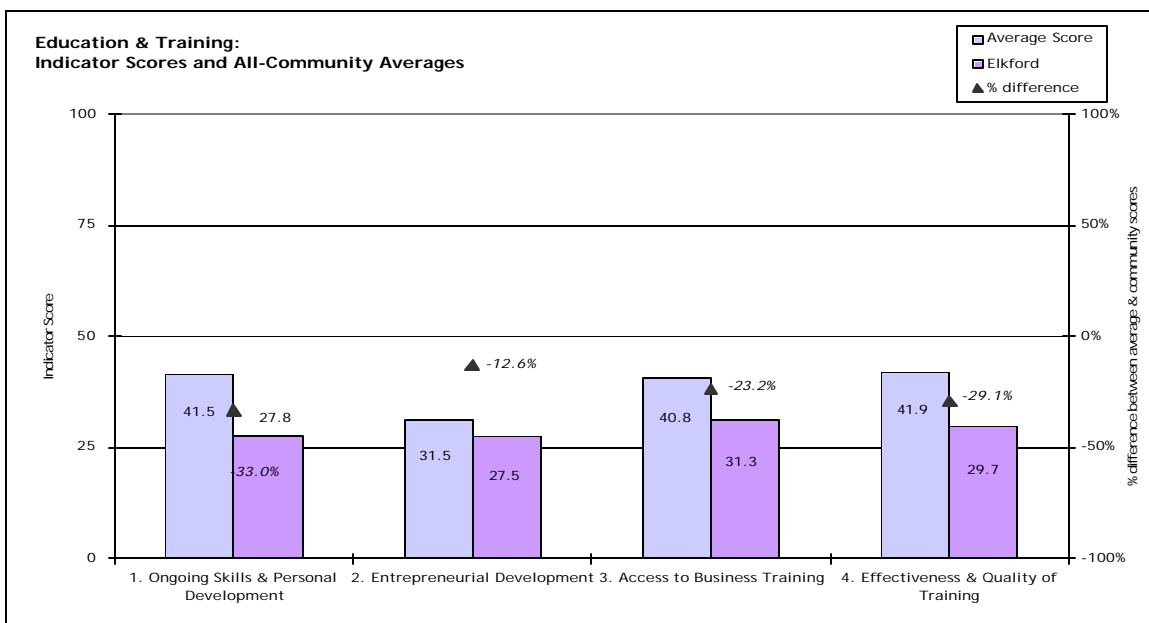
Section 3: Education & Training

Ability to develop entrepreneurship skills & attitudes in non-business population, and upgrading skills in the business community to remain competitive in larger markets.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Education & Training presents an *area of potential concern* with an absolute score of 29. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section¹⁴, Elkford scored *low range* on the *Education & Training* section. Also according to comparative data, Elkford scored -25% below the all-community average, indicating an *area of concern in relation to other communities*¹⁵.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Education & Training*, into four indicators including, *Ongoing Skills & Personal Development*, *Entrepreneurial Development*, *Access to Business Training*, and *Effectiveness & Quality of Training*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all indicators in this section. More specifically, *Ongoing Skills & Personal Development* (-33%), *Effectiveness & Quality of Training* (-29%), *Access to Business Training* (-23%), and *Entrepreneurial Development* (-13%) scored *below average*, indicating *varying areas of concern in relation to other communities*.

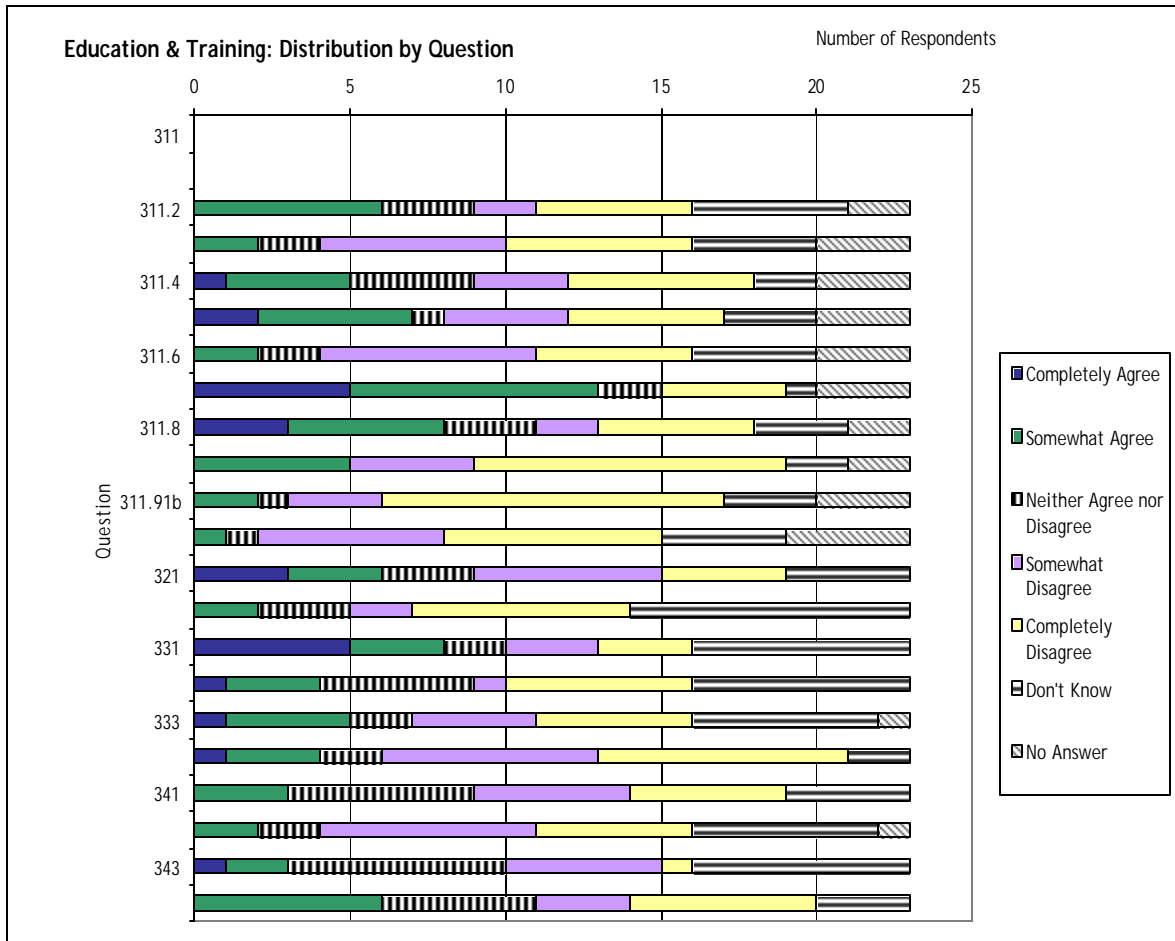


¹⁴ See Appendix C.

¹⁵ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p. 24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
3.1 Ongoing Skills & Personal Development	<i>Opportunities to learn new skills & to upgrade existing skills, specifically those for business.</i>	311 There are a wide range of realistic training and educational programs available in or close to the community, including the following:	<i>Presence and diversity of opportunities to learn new skills and to upgrade existing skills, specifically those for business.</i>			
		Business Training				
		1 Business plan development		31	54	-43%
		2 Basic business skills development (i.e. sales, pricing, displays)		19	32	-42%
		3 Advanced business skills development (i.e. financial planning, marketing, accounting communications)		31	31	0%
		4 Computer training for business (i.e. excel, web design, graphics, business applications)		34	56	-40%
		5 Personal Development		20	37	-45%
		6 Online/Distance Training		55	57	-4%
		7 Continuing Education		40	54	-25%
		8A College		22	26	-16%
8B University		13	13	0%		
9 Professional Development		13	28	-54%		
3.2 Entrepreneurial Development	<i>Ability to foster entrepreneurship in non-entrepreneurs</i>	321 Business mentors and/or role models are available in the community.	<i>Informal mechanisms to foster entrepreneurship</i>	38	41	-9%
		322 There is an entrepreneurial development program for elementary and secondary school students (K-12).	<i>Formal entrepreneurial development programs & strategies</i>	17	20	-18%
3.3. Access to Business Training	<i>Awareness of available training programs, and cooperation between the business and education communities to provide affordable and timely programs</i>	331 There is an organization through which training and educational programs/opportunities can be offered.	<i>Awareness of educational organizations in area, if exist, a place to develop educational networks</i>	42	57	-26%
		332 Training programs are affordable for anyone (i.e. business owners, youth, professionals)	<i>Affordable programs to help all types of business people</i>	28	37	-24%
		333 Flexible timing for skills training is available to meet local business needs.	<i>Educators' understanding and accommodation of business needs in terms of class schedules</i>	28	31	-10%
		334 The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	<i>Communication between groups exists, which improves business services</i>	27	37	-28%
3.4 Effectiveness & Quality of Training	<i>The availability of educational programs that meet business community needs</i>	341 A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	<i>Use of educational services to create a skilled labour force</i>	30	37	-20%
		342 Teaching organizations develop courses that serve community needs (i.e. Specialized training)	<i>Ability of training organizations to adapt and change to needs & demands</i>	20	38	-47%
		343 Teaching staff is knowledgeable and skilled in the area/subject they teach	<i>Good quality educators, use of professional development to keep up to date</i>	34	46	-25%
		344 Citizens are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	<i>Interest in life-long learning</i>	35	47	-26%

Indicating areas of potential strength, question 311.4 and 311.9b scored the same as *the average* of all BVI communities. Question 311.91 scored -54% *below the average* of all BVI communities, indicating a potential *area of concern*.



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that question 311.7 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, Question 311.2 stated, *online / distance education is available within or close to the community*. Also according to distribution of response, the question in which respondents disagreed most was question 334. More specifically, question 334 stated, *the education and business communities work together to provide convenient training*.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Education & Training* section, the top strength identified by participants was *K-12 schools, limited strengths, internet access, high school, and quality teachers*. Directions for improvement included *a broad band internet, more on-location education & training, K-12 entrepreneurial development, and re-open elementary school*.

Strengths

- K-12 schools (4)
- no great strengths (3)
- internet access (2)
- high school (shops / tech) (2)
- quality / dedicated teachers (2)
- skilled trades
- College of the Rockies outreach program
- modern facilities
- junior level schooling
- high school principal
- Adult Learning Centre
- high school music program
- need a driver's license
- align views between community and education providers
- high school work experience training

Improvements

- | | |
|--|---|
| ○ broad band internet for education / educate on possibilities (4) | ○ knowledgeable trustees |
| ○ more on- location education & training (3) | ○ coordination between community entities |
| ○ encourage K-12 entrepreneurial development (2) | ○ regenerate population to ensure schools remain open |
| ○ re-open elementary school / open another school (2) | ○ offer all courses all the time (ie. chemistry 12, physics 12) |
| ○ fully accredited education programs | ○ lengthen school day to accommodate more education |
| ○ K-12 improvements | ○ job specific training |
| ○ provision of training areas | ○ entrepreneurial training |
| ○ address needs & plan activities | ○ free adult education / training |
| ○ more business and technical training | ○ improve relationship between administration and educators |
| ○ public school funding | ○ increase funding to rural education |

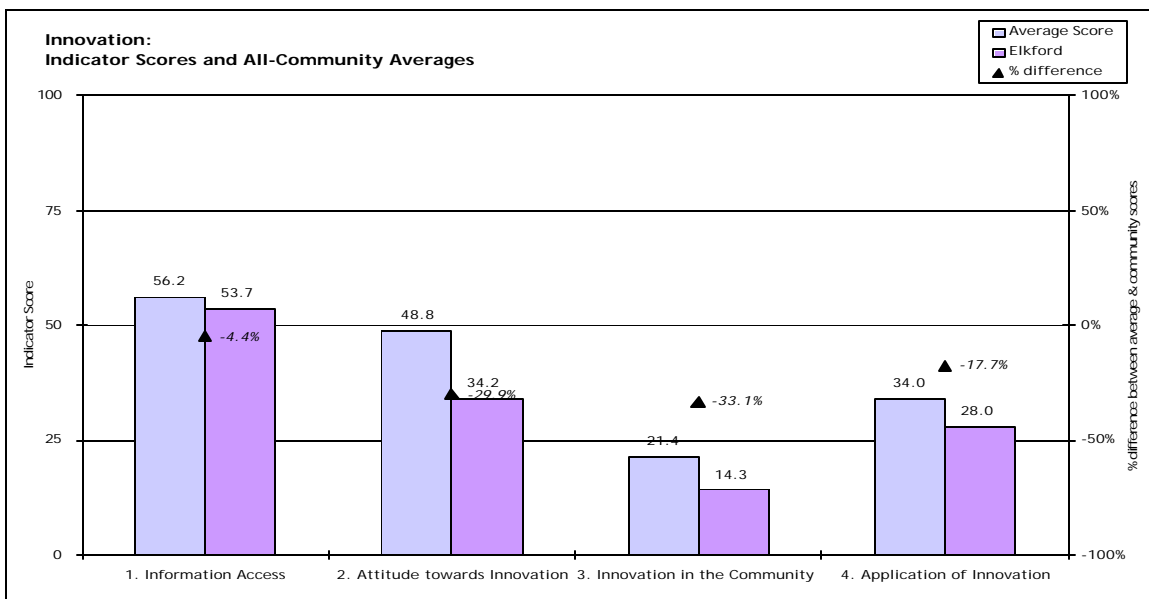
Section 4: Innovation

Ability of a community & its citizens to innovate, that is, think of and develop new ideas, increases the ability of that community to adapt to changes, recognize unusual and new opportunities and technologies, and share their ideas with like-minded people.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Innovation presents an *area of potential concern* with an absolute score of 33. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section¹⁶, Elkford scored *low range* on the *Innovation* section. According to comparative data, Elkford scored -19% *below* the all-community average, indicating a *potential area of concern in relation to other communities*.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Innovation*, into four indicators including, *Information Access*, *Attitude Towards Innovation*, *Innovation in the Community*, and *Application of Innovation*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific¹⁷ areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all of the indicators in this section, including *Innovation in the Community* (-33%), *Attitude Toward Innovation* (-30%), *Application of Innovation* (-18%), *Information Access* (-4%), and highlighting *varying areas of potential concern in relation to other communities*.

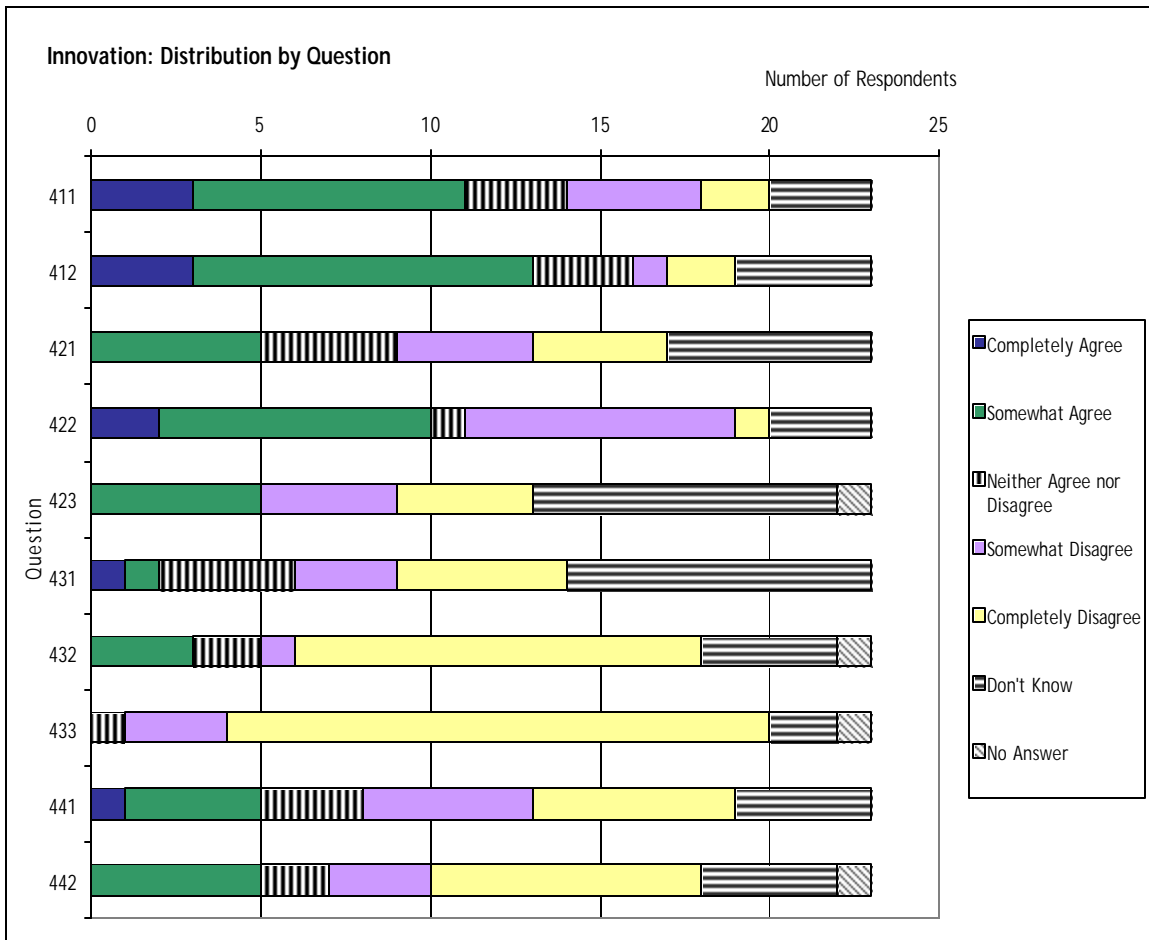


¹⁶ See Appendix C.

¹⁷ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
4.1 Information Access	<i>People know how to access information about R&D and know where to go to get information</i>	411 Individuals have access to business research (Local, regional, national, international) relating to new technologies, business development and/or expansion.	<i>Ability of individuals to access information: do they know how? Do they know where?</i>	52	56	-8%
		412 There are libraries or resource facilities that carry information on business development, market trends, new technologies, policies, and networks.	<i>Presence of a central place of knowledge, which cultivates innovative thinking</i>	56	56	-1%
4.2 Attitude towards Innovation	<i>Aware of and supportive of the presence and the relevance of innovative activities in the community</i>	421 Business people & entrepreneurs are aware of and knowledgeable about new and innovative technologies, & are eager to further their knowledge.	<i>Interest in innovative activities great enough for individuals to want to learn more</i>	31	49	-36%
		422 Innovation is valued and recognized by business people.	<i>Importance of Innovation is appreciated and understood</i>	47	55	-14%
		423 Support and assistance for innovative research and development are available.	<i>Advanced support networks for R&D in business: networking, patents, etc.</i>	23	42	-44%
4.3 Innovation in the Community	<i>Presence of and pride in innovation in the community in terms of facilities, individuals, and networks.</i>	431 Businesses that do research or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	<i>Concentration of facilities often leads to better interaction and competition</i>	22	20	7%
		432 Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (not necessarily about the region).	<i>Community respects and values a culture of innovation: this attracts more innovators and researchers</i>	16	22	-27%
		433 There are formal and informal forums (Conferences, workshops, association breakfast meetings) on technology and technology applications	<i>People have a way to come together, interact, network, and learn from each other on a formal basis</i>	6	21	-74%
4.4 Application of Innovation	<i>Interaction between innovative people and organizations and the business community</i>	441 Businesses use innovative technology, practices, and research.	<i>Ability of business to apply the results of innovation to better their own business</i>	31	35	-12%
		442 Research that is being done in the community or region is relevant to the business community's needs and interests.	<i>Local R&D helps local businesses' needs and efforts</i>	25	33	-23%

Questions 431 scored *above the average* of all BVI communities, indicating a potential area of strength. More specifically, question 431 stated, *businesses that do research or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other*. Question 433 fell *below average*, stating, *there are formal and informal forums (Conferences, Workshops) on technology and technology applications*.



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that questions 412 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 412 stated, *there are libraries or resource facilities that carry information on business development, market trends, new technologies, policies, and network*. Also according to distribution of response, the question in which respondents disagreed most was question 433. More specifically, question 433 stated, *there are formal and informal forums (Conferences, Workshops) on technology and technology applications*. Of interest, question 422 presented the greatest variance of opinion.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. Strengths in the area of *Innovation* included *limited innovation*, *the internet*, and *the coal mining sector*. Directions for improvement included *advertise availability for R & D*, and *tax incentives*.

Strengths

- doesn't happen here / stopped 20 years ago (5)
 - the internet (3)
 - coal industry / mining sector (3)
 - open to study
 - Chamber of Commerce employee
 - library
 - the mayor
-

Improvements

- invite R & D / advertise availability (2)
- tax incentives (2)
- recruit graduate student who grew up here
- amalgamate area mines to form large supplier to world markets
- coordination between key stakeholders
- identify research area
- mines to initiate working with government
- identify funded programs
- educate location at a local level
- more businesses
- more active Chamber

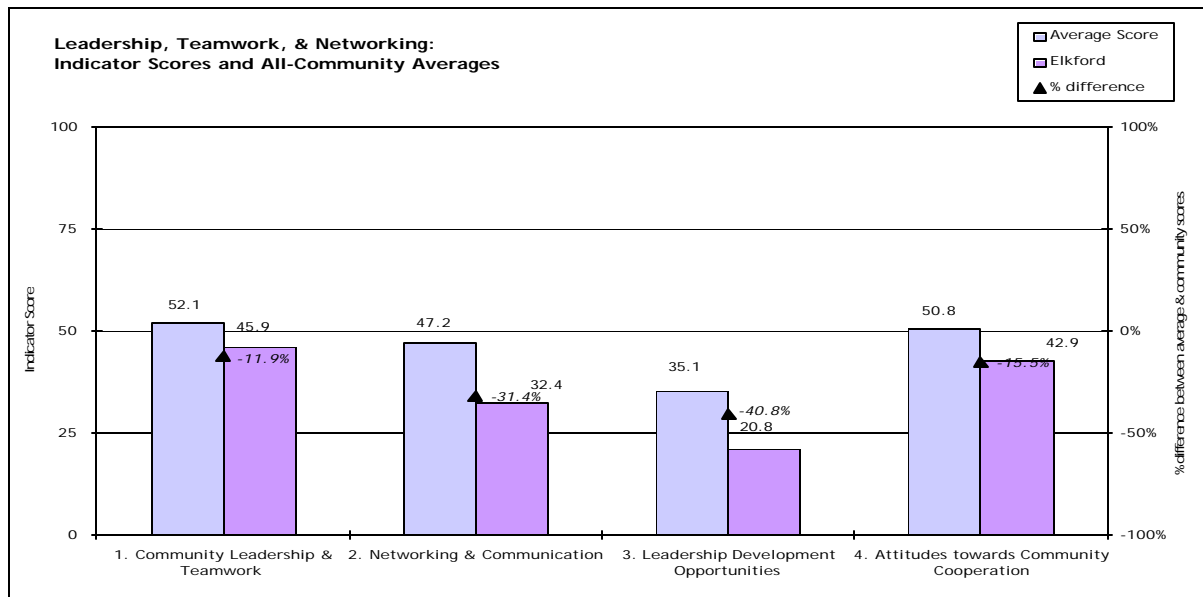
Section 5: Leadership, Teamwork & Networking

The capacity of a business community to take action on an idea or opportunity as a whole group, with good leadership, effective teamwork, and clear communication.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Leadership, Teamwork, & Networking presents an area of concern with an absolute score of 36. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section¹⁸, Elkford scored low range on the Leadership, Teamwork & Networking section. Also according to comparative data, Elkford scored -23% below the all-community average indicating a potential area of concern in relation to other communities¹⁹.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, Leadership, Teamwork, & Networking, into four indicators including, Community Leadership & Teamwork, Networking & Communication, Leadership Development Opportunities, and Attitudes Toward Community Cooperation. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* all indicators *Leadership Development Opportunities* (-40%), *Networking & Communications* (-31%), *Attitude Toward Community Cooperation* (-16%), and *Community Leadership & Teamwork* (-12%), and indicating *varying areas of concern in relation to other communities*.

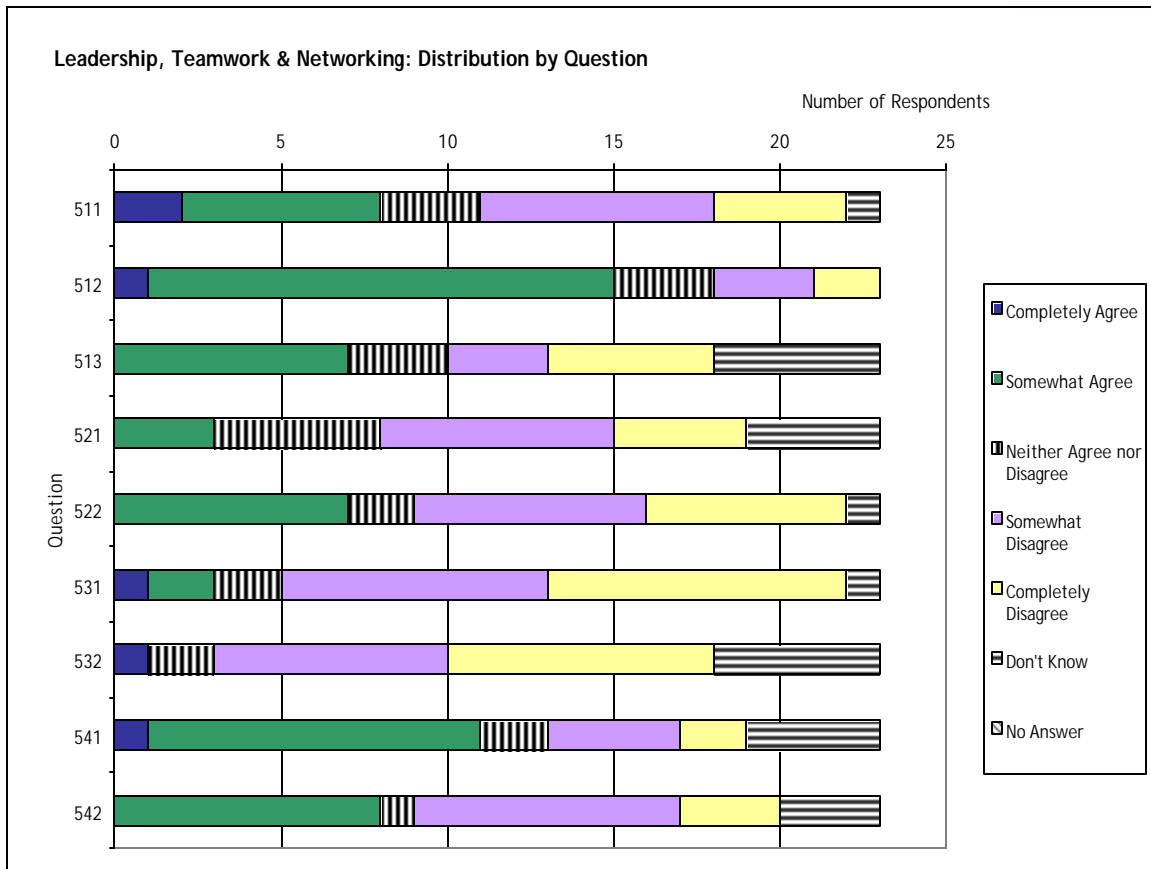


¹⁸ See Appendix C.

¹⁹ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
5.1 Community Leadership & Teamwork	<i>Ability of a community to come together to make effective and appropriate decisions for businesses</i>	511 Members representing interests of the public, private, and government sectors jointly participate in community decision-making & implementation.	<i>Ability to work together to make representative decisions to benefit the whole</i>	43	54	-21%
		512 There is a pool of talented leaders with diverse skills, cultural experiences and backgrounds who are available for leading community initiatives.	<i>Availability of good leaders representing diversity of experiences</i>	60	66	-10%
		513 Qualified supervisors and managers (and management services) are available to small business	<i>Availability of good leaders in business</i>	34	36	-4%
5.2 Networking & Communication	<i>Ability of business people to connect and share knowledge</i>	521 There are adequate opportunities (informal and formal) where business people and entrepreneurs can network with each other.	<i>Ways of sharing information and building relationships</i>	30	50	-41%
		522 Business people are able to give and receive support from other experienced business people (i.e. Business associations, mentoring).	<i>Ways of sharing business knowledge and build business relationships</i>	35	44	-21%
5.3 Leadership Development Opportunities	<i>Ability to develop leadership skills in a diversity of groups.</i>	531 There are opportunities for leadership training and development for individuals of all ages and interests (i.e. professionals, youth).	<i>Opportunities/programs to foster and train leaders of tomorrow, to develop individuals' self confidence in taking risks</i>	24	37	-35%
		532 There are opportunities for small business to learn and develop management and leadership skills	<i>Opportunities to develop leadership and management skills, making business practices more effective</i>	17	33	-48%
5.4 Attitudes towards Community Cooperation	<i>Ability and willingness to work together to achieve goals</i>	541 Groups with similar interests can form alliances and cooperate to achieve goals	<i>Ability to work together to achieve results</i>	48	58	-18%
		542 Cooperative and joint community initiatives are encouraged and respected	<i>Willingness to work together</i>	38	44	-12%

Question 532 scored 48% *below the average* of all BVI communities, indicating a potential area of concern, stating, *there are opportunities for small business to learn and develop management and leadership skills.*



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that question 512 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, 512 stated, *There is a pool of talented leaders with diverse skills, cultural experiences and backgrounds who are available for leading community initiatives.* Also according to distribution of response, the questions in which respondents disagreed most was question 531. More specifically, question 531 stated, *There are opportunities for leadership training and development for individuals of all ages and interests.* Of interest, question 511 presented the greatest variance of response.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Leadership, Teamwork, & Networking* section, the top strength identified by participants was *good community organizations*. Directions for improvement included *more communication / cooperation, incentives / support to new leaders* and *networking with other communities*.

Strengths

- good community organizations (2)
 - comes together when support is needed
 - volunteer people and hours
 - willingness to improve
 - businesses willing to come together
 - sports
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - CFDC
 - cooperation
 - ability exists
-

Improvements

- more communication / cooperation (6)
 - provide incentives and support to new leaders (3)
 - network with other communities (2)
 - identify common goal
 - a way for people to stay informed and feel involved
 - Chamber of Commerce needs help
 - an attitude of progress / curiosity / openness at Chamber level
 - support volunteers
 - more businesses will bring more leaders
 - unlock strangle hold certain people have on the Chamber as it hinders involvement
 - develop common vision and goals, informal / free networking opportunities
 - get excited about moving ahead
-

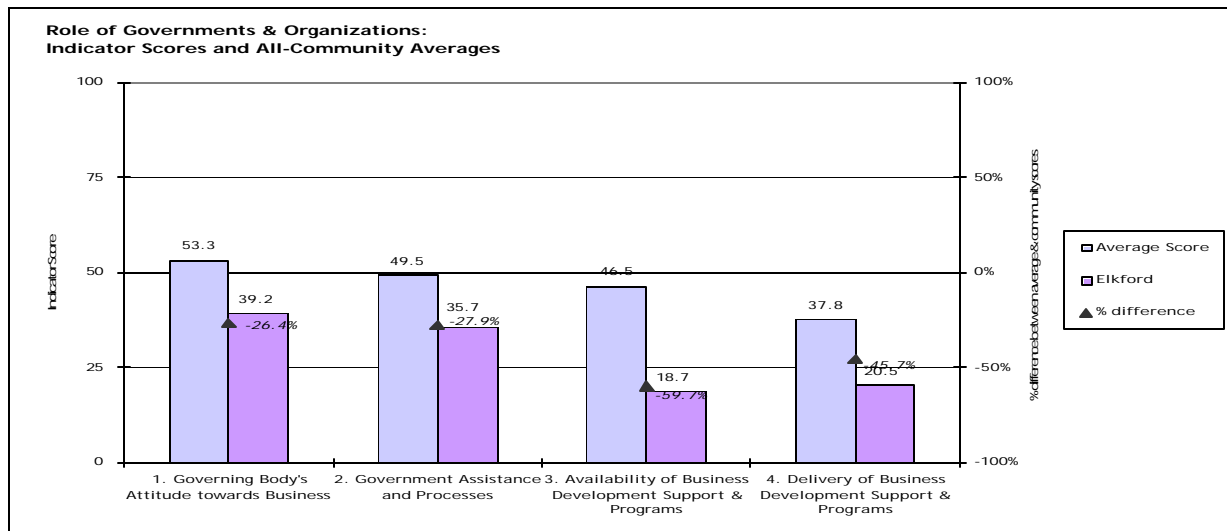
Section 6: Role of Government & Organizations

Ability of local governments and other organizations to work with business to design processes and programs that make it as easy as possible to start or expand a business.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Role of Government & Organizations presents an *area of potential concern* with an absolute score of 29. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section²⁰, Elkford scored *lowest* on the *Role of Government & Organizations* section. According to comparative data, Elkford scored *-40% below the average*, indicating a *potential area of concern in relation to other communities*²¹.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Role of Government & Organizations*, into four indicators including, *Governing Body’s Attitude Towards Business*, *Government Assistance and Processes*, *Availability of Business Development Support and Programs*, and *Delivery of Business Development Support and Programs*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all indicators *Availability of Business Development Support and Programs* (-60%), *Delivery of Business Development Support and Programs* (-46%), *Government Assistance and Processes* (-28%), and *Governing Body’s Attitude Towards Business* (-26%) and indicating *varying levels of concern*.

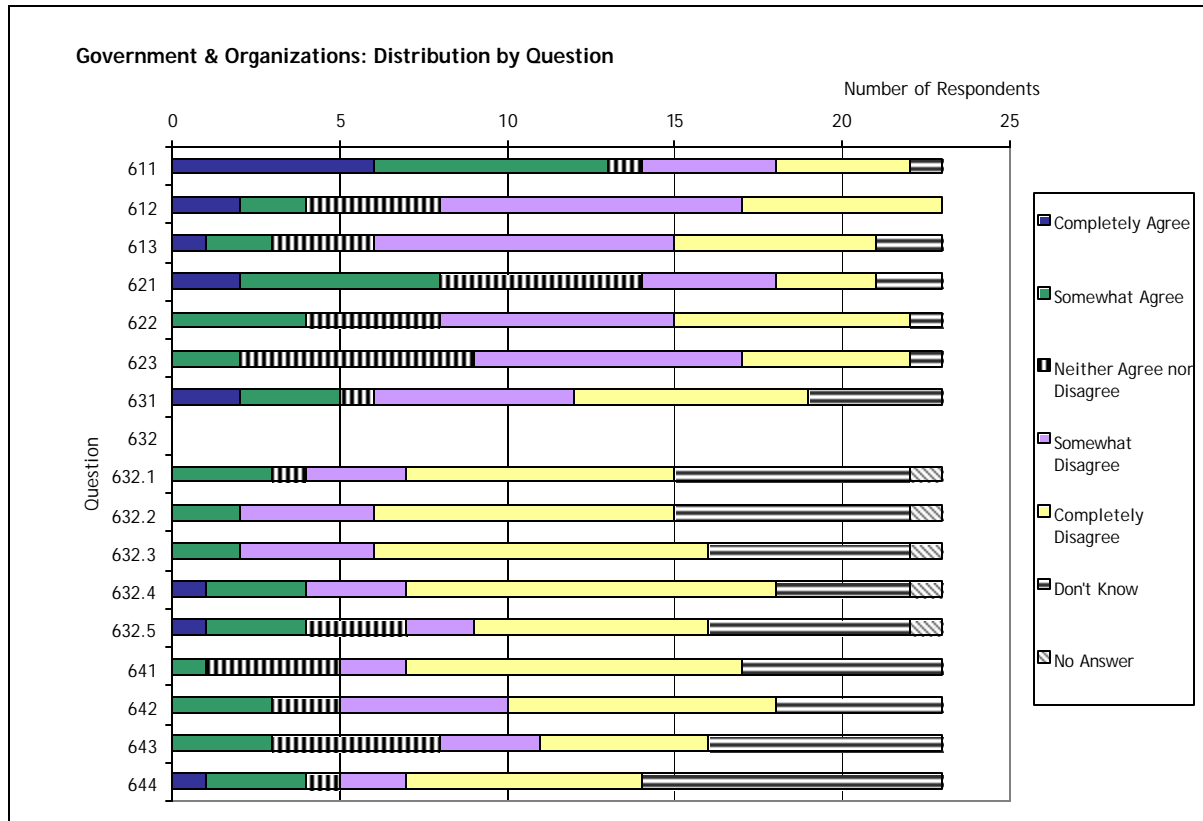


²⁰ See Appendix C.

²¹ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
6.1 Governing Body's Attitude towards Business	<i>The local government's efforts and commitment to assisting business development</i>	611 The governing body (city council, village council, or area director) recognizes that businesses are important and valuable for community development.	Attitude of local government towards business, and recognition of its important role in the economy	56	72	-22%
		612 The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	Efforts of local governments to expand the business community on behalf of business from outside the region	34	46	-26%
		613 The governing body is committed to helping existing businesses or creating new businesses through policy and action.	Actions and decisions of local government helping business development and expansion	28	42	-34%
6.2 Government Assistance and Processes	<i>Ability of governments to work with business to provide materials and assistance that helps business</i>	621 Community leaders and officials are willing to cooperate with business and business associations.	Ability and willingness for government and businesses to work together	47	63	-26%
		622 Local officials make it easy/reasonable for businesses to start or expand.	Human resources needed for assisting business are helpful & effective, rather than a barrier	30	45	-34%
		623 Local regulations, policies, rules, bylaws and zoning are easily understood by business people making it easy/reasonable for businesses to expand or start up.	Written resources and documents needed for assisting business are helpful and effective, rather than a barrier	31	41	-24%
6.3 Availability of Business Development Support & Programs	<i>Organizations that help businesses start up and expand through direct facilitation or through classes</i>	631 There is a recognized organization or individual available to assist people identify, assess, expand and/or create business opportunities.	Existence of an organization which facilitates business development	28	44	-36%
		632 The following programs and services assisting business people are utilized:	Programs exist that assist in business development			
		1 Counseling		17	46	-64%
		2 Training		12	47	-75%
		3 Mentoring		12	37	-68%
		4 Self-Employment Assistance		18	51	-64%
5 Loans		25	52	-52%		
6.4 Delivery of Business Development Support & Programs	<i>Ability of organizations to deliver programs that assist business in the most effective and efficient manner</i>	641 Business development programs are effective and efficient, and do not duplicate each other.	Efficiency of business development programs	15	29	-48%
		642 Business programs are offered in a well-known and accessible location.	Ability to hear about programs, and the attendance potential	21	43	-52%
		643 Staff members delivering programs are knowledgeable, competent and approachable.	Training and development staff is well-trained and knowledgeable	26	44	-41%
		644 Successful programs are repeated, reproduced, and further developed.	Evaluation process only keeps most effective programs	20	35	-41%

Question 632.2 scored *-75% below the average* of all BVI communities, indicating a potential area of concern, stating *the following programs and services assisting business people are utilized: training.*



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that question 611 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 611 stated, *the governing body (city council, village council, or area director) recognizes that businesses are important and valuable for the development of the community.* Also according to distribution of response, questions in which respondents disagreed most were questions 612 and 613. More specifically, question 612 stated, *the governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.* Question 613 stated, *the governing body is committed to help existing businesses or creating new businesses through policy and action.* Of interest, question 611 presented the greatest variance of opinion.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Role of Government & Organizations* section, the top strength identified by participants was *the local council (accessible, knowledgeable, business friendly, diverse, listens, committed)*. Directions for improvement included *more proactive bylaws* and *government more empathetic to the needs of business and citizens*.

Strengths

- local council (accessible, knowledgeable, business friendly, diverse, listens, committed) (7)
- Chamber of Commerce is very active
- lots of non-business organizations
- willingness to improve
- good service on day to day operations
- large base of service & recreational clubs responsive to crisis

Improvements

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ enforce / more proactive bylaws for business development (ie. sign by-law states 'no flashing signs' in residential areas signs only 2 sq.ft.) (3) ○ government more empathetic to needs of citizens and businesses (2) ○ engage youth in town hall meeting process ○ community to move ahead ○ community interactivity with council with people-friendly way of explaining things ○ council to be aware of all community needs (ie. pool is underused and new garbage rates are questionable) ○ citizens to support government ○ forget the past and build on today's issues ○ improve government's knowledge of business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ recall ○ a more open-minded approach ○ set and follow through on goals & objectives collectively – stay focused ○ a place to learn ○ advertise we are 'open for business' ○ land for new office buildings ○ coordinated community profile & theme ○ council and Chamber to work together ○ less provincial government business involvement (ie. liquor stores) ○ organizations to encourage new leadership ○ accessible and encouraging business start-up information ○ government to communicate with those organizations that respond to crisis |
|--|--|

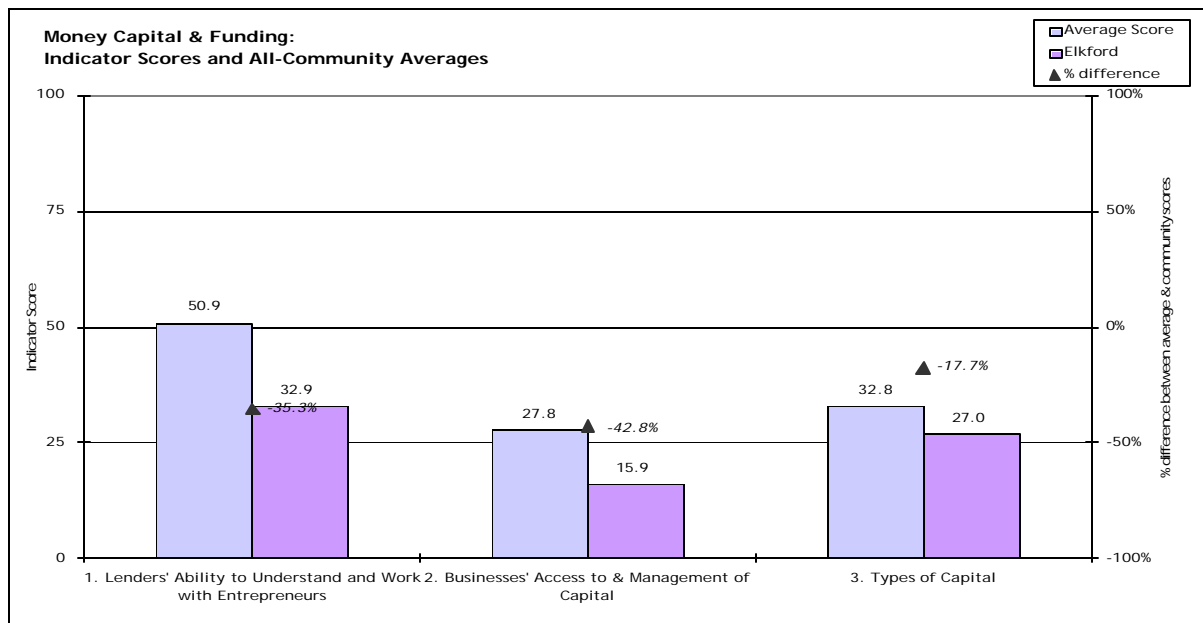
Section 7: Money, Capital & Funding

Ability of the community to financially support entrepreneurs through ensuring access to capital, and educating businesses about financial management and supports.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Money, Capital & Funding presents an *area of concern* with an absolute score of 25. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section²², Elkford scored *lowest* on the *Money, Capital & Funding* section. According to comparative data, Elkford scored *-34% below* the all-community average highlighting *areas of potential concern in relation to other communities*²³.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, Money, Capital & Funding, into three indicators including, Lenders' Ability to Understand and Work with Entrepreneurs, Businesses Access to & Management of Capital, and Types of Capital. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all indicators, *Businesses Access to & Management of Capital* (-43%), *Lenders' Ability to Understand and Work with Entrepreneurs* (-35%), and *Types of Capital* (-18%) highlighting *areas of potential concern*.

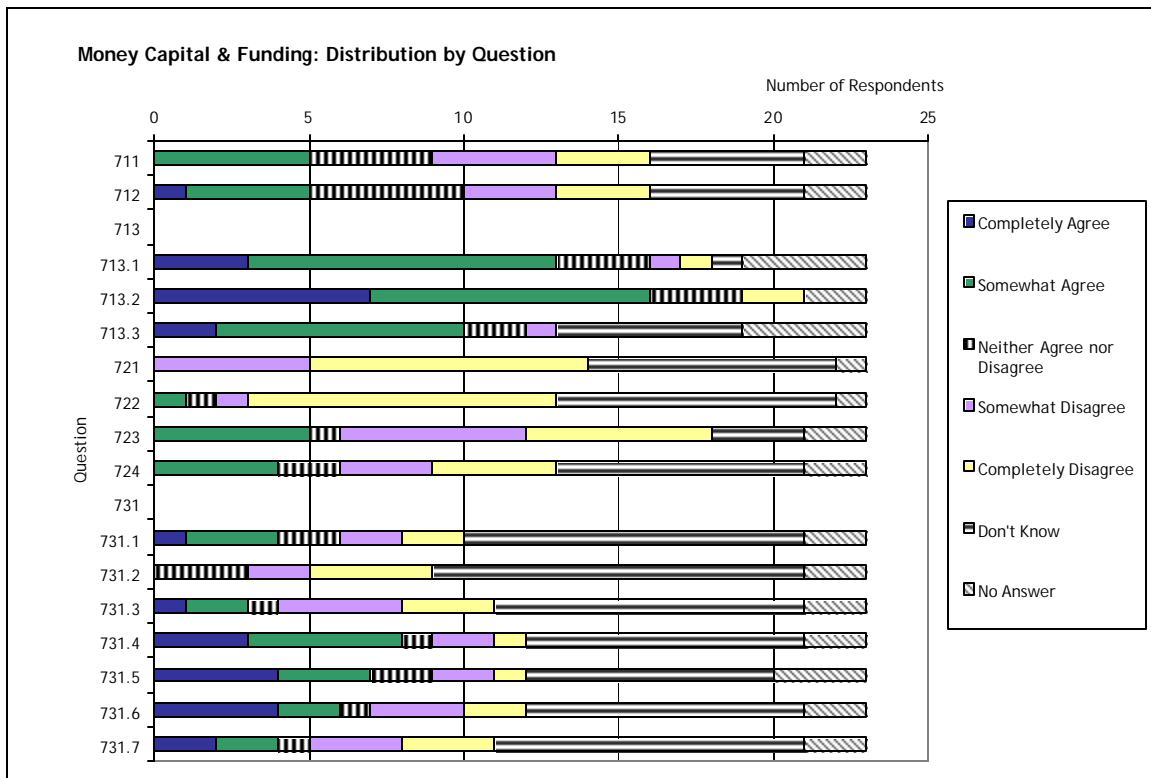


²² See Appendix C.

²³ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
7.1 Lenders' Ability to Understand and Work with Entrepreneurs	<i>Ability to support worthy business ideas and provide assistance to improve chances of success</i>	711 Lenders are willing to take chances based on individual character and good business ideas	<i>Lenders' ability to recognize and support a good idea</i>	32	35	-9%
		712 Lenders and investors understand entrepreneurs' needs and have programs to address those needs.	<i>Willingness to educate and assist business people in financial management</i>	34	36	-4%
		713 The following types of lending organizations are utilized for business needs:	<i>Variety of lending organizations with different lending goals</i>			
		1 Bank		56	78	-28%
		2 Credit Union		68	72	-6%
		3 Development Organization		45	64	-30%
7.2 Businesses' Access to & Management of Capital	<i>Ability of a business to acquire and manage funds</i>	721 Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors.	<i>Access Equity</i>	6	15	-59%
		722 People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	<i>Ability to raise funds (getting investors, loans, etc) for a business venture</i>	7	23	-68%
		723 Businesses have a firm understanding of financial management (cash flow, reading financial statements).	<i>Understanding of financial management, which increases chances of success.</i>	26	38	-31%
		724 Costs (i.e. Interest, application fees) of accessing capital are manageable for entrepreneurs.	<i>Fair and affordable access to capital</i>	23	35	-34%
7.3 Types of Capital	<i>Availability of capital through a variety of programs (formal and informal), ensuring that all potential and existing businesses have access to capital</i>	731 The following sizes of loan funds are accessible to expand or start a business:	<i>Variety and appropriateness of sources of capital</i>			
		1 Equity (investments)		24	33	-28%
		2 Angel		10	26	-60%
		3 Grants		20	35	-42%
		4 Revolving loan funds		38	33	16%
		5 Micro Loans (up to \$5,000)		38	42	-9%
		6 Loans \$5,000 to \$200,000		33	36	-7%
		7 Loans \$200,000 and above		24	23	1%

Indicating areas of potential strength, question 731.4 scored *above the average* of all BVI communities. More specifically, question 731.4 scored *16% above average*, stating, *revolving loan funds are available*. Question 722 scored *-68% above average*, stating, *people who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds*.



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that questions 713.2 was the most agreed upon in this section, stating, *The following types of lending organizations are available: credit unions and development organizations (ie. BCD, CFDC)*. Also according to distribution of response, the question in which respondents disagreed most was question 721 which stated, *business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors*. Also of note, a large number of respondents ‘didn’t know’ or ‘didn’t answer’ questions regarding types of capital.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Money, Capital & Funding* section, the top strength identified by participants was *the credit union*. Directions for improvement included *tax reduction, small business support, incentives for entrepreneurs, training / education for councilors, and more accessible funding*.

Strengths

- Credit Union (3)
 - funds are available
 - infrastructure almost paid for
 - CFDC
 - CU
 - debt free District
 - coal mine taxes
-

Improvements

- reduce taxes (3)
 - support existing business / small business program / information (3)
 - encourage entrepreneurial spirit / provide incentives for entrepreneurs (2)
 - train / educate councilors (2)
 - make funding available / lenders willing to take risks (2)
 - educate on available options
 - make neighbourhood worth investing in
 - ensure a good quality business plan
 - town development
 - major alternate employer
 - address leakage program
 - Chamber to be more active
 - regular meetings
 - brainstorming sessions
 - ambassadorship for business
 - confidence in town's growth
 - more government money
 - competition
 - access federal / provincial tax money
-

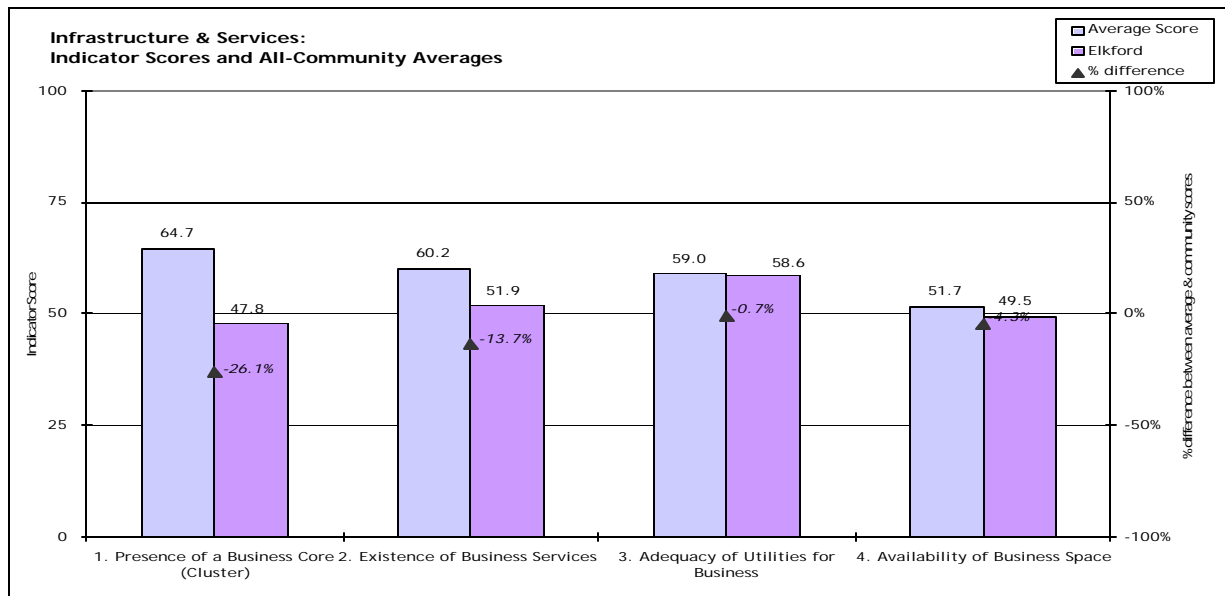
Section 8: Infrastructure & Business Services

Ability to provide necessary and high quality support services and infrastructure to business at reasonable costs, allowing businesses to be as competitive as possible.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Infrastructure & Business Services presents an *area of potential strength* with an absolute score of 52. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section²⁴, Elkford scored lowest on the *Infrastructure & Business Services* section. Also according to comparative data, Elkford scored -16% below the all-community average, highlighting a *potential area of concern in relation to other communities*²⁵.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Infrastructure & Business Services*, into four indicators including, *Presence of a Business Core*, *Existence of Business Services*, *Adequacy of Utilities for Business*, and *Availability of Business Space*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all indicators, *Presence of a Business Core* (-26%), *Existence of Business Services* (-14%), *Availability of Business Space* (-4%) and *Adequacy of Utilities for Business* (-1%) highlighting *areas of varying concern*.

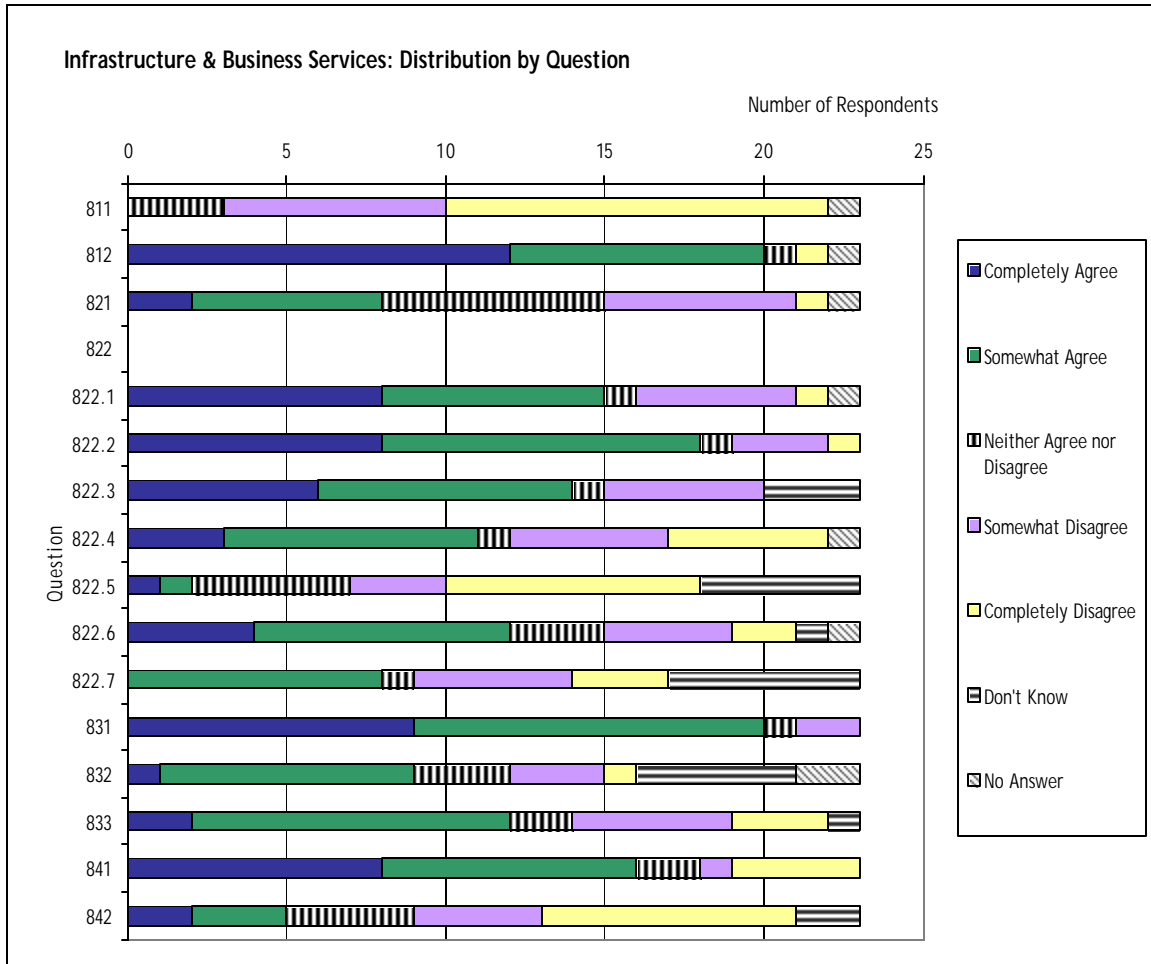


²⁴ See Appendix C.

²⁵ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
8.1 Presence of a Business Core (Cluster)	<i>A central commercial area that increases access to and competition between business</i>	811 There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	<i>Existence of a commercial cluster</i>	14	50	-72%
		812 Parking near core business areas is accessible and convenient.	<i>Access to the commercial cluster</i>	81	79	3%
8.2 Existence of Business Services	<i>Affordable services available to assist in business development</i>	821 Business services (i.e. Printers, web designers) are affordable and modern.	<i>Entrepreneurs can afford to use available, state-of-the-art business services</i>	51	60	-15%
		822 The following professional services are easily accessible and affordable:	<i>Variety and usefulness of business services</i>			
		1 Banking		66	70	-6%
		2 Insurance		73	69	6%
		3 Freighting		62	63	-2%
		4 Legal		47	61	-23%
		5 Marketing		23	35	-35%
		6 Accounting		56	66	-16%
7 Graphic Design		36	56	-36%		
8.3 Adequacy of Utilities for Business	<i>Affordability, reliability, and appropriateness of utilities allows for maximum competitiveness in business</i>	831 Existing physical infrastructure (i.e. power, water) is good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern	<i>Reliable and modern infrastructure that contributes to better competitiveness of business</i>	79	70	14%
		832 The planning of new physical infrastructure (i.e. Roads, power, sewage) considers business needs.	<i>Infrastructure is suitable to business needs</i>	44	51	-15%
		833 Telecommunication infrastructure is reliable, well-maintained and modern	<i>Presence of communications not enough. Have to be compatible with current technologies (and not be obsolete)</i>	52	56	-8%
8.4 Availability of Business Space	<i>Appropriate variety of spaces available to accommodate businesses at different stages of development</i>	842 A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation (i.e. home-based, downtown core, industrial park)	<i>Space is available for businesses at different stages of development</i>	66	56	19%
		843 Quality rental space is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	<i>Rental space is available for businesses at different stages of development</i>	32	48	-33%

Indicating an area of potential strength, question 841 scored 19% above the average of all BVI communities, stating, *a variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation*. Question 822.7 scored -36% below the average of all BVI communities, stating *professional services are easily accessible and affordable: graphic design*, indicating a potential area of concern, stating,



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that question 812 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, Question 812 stated, *parking near core business areas is accessible and affordable*. Also according to distribution of response, the question in which respondents disagreed most was question 811. More specifically, Question 811 stated, *there is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core*. Of interest, question 842 presented the greatest variance of response.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Infrastructure & Business Services* section, top strengths identified by participants included *good water, power and telephone*. Directions for improvement included *downtown revitalization, business centre / education, and the attraction of non-mining jobs*.

Strengths

- | | |
|--|---|
| ○ good water (2) | ○ potential for improvement |
| ○ power (2) | ○ raw land |
| ○ telephone (2) | ○ good sized mall |
| ○ skilled workforce | ○ mini-mall |
| ○ diversity | ○ independent building that houses businesses |
| ○ available service lots | ○ central business location |
| ○ excellent road clearing / snow removal | ○ good services |
| ○ close proximity to us as consumers | ○ up to date facilities |

Improvements

- downtown revitalization (6)
- business centre / education (3)
- attraction of non-mining jobs (3)
- open highway 43
- council to get landlord to clean up mall
- competition
- support local business
- renewed / revised role for Chamber
- business development
- build affordable space with reasonable property taxes
- develop ski hill
- develop golf course
- promote infrastructure for development
- rebuild hotel
- make voice mail available
- improve community pride
- access to commercial development sites
- draw in new residents

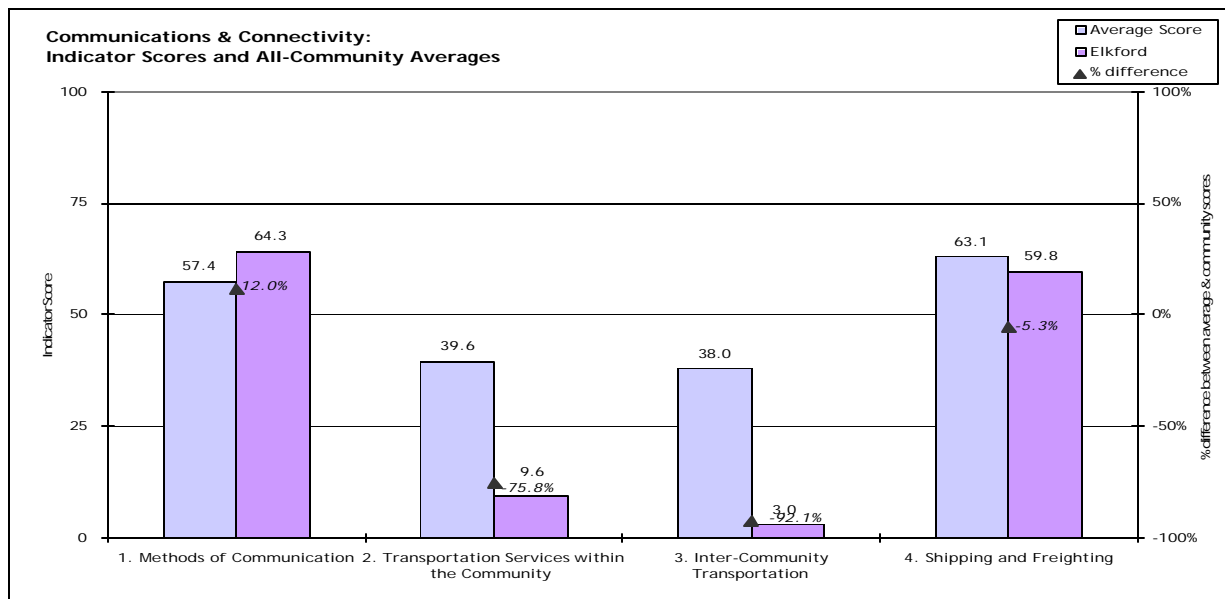
Section 9: Communication & Connectivity

The ability of businesses to connect with each other and with outside markets.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Communications & Connectivity presents an area of concern with an absolute score 34. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section²⁶, Elkford scored lowest on the Communications & Connectivity section. Also according to quantitative data, Elkford scored -31% below the all-community average, indicating a specific area of concern in relation to other communities²⁷.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Communications & Connectivity*, into four indicators including, *Methods of Communication, Transportation Services within the Community, Inter-Community Transportation, and Shipping & Freightling*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *above average* on one of the four indicators, *Methods of Communication* (34%), indicating an *area of strength*. The indicators, *Inter-Community Transportation* (-92%), *Transportation Services within the Community* (-76%), and *Shipping & Freightling* (-5%), scored *below average* indicating a *potential areas of concern*.

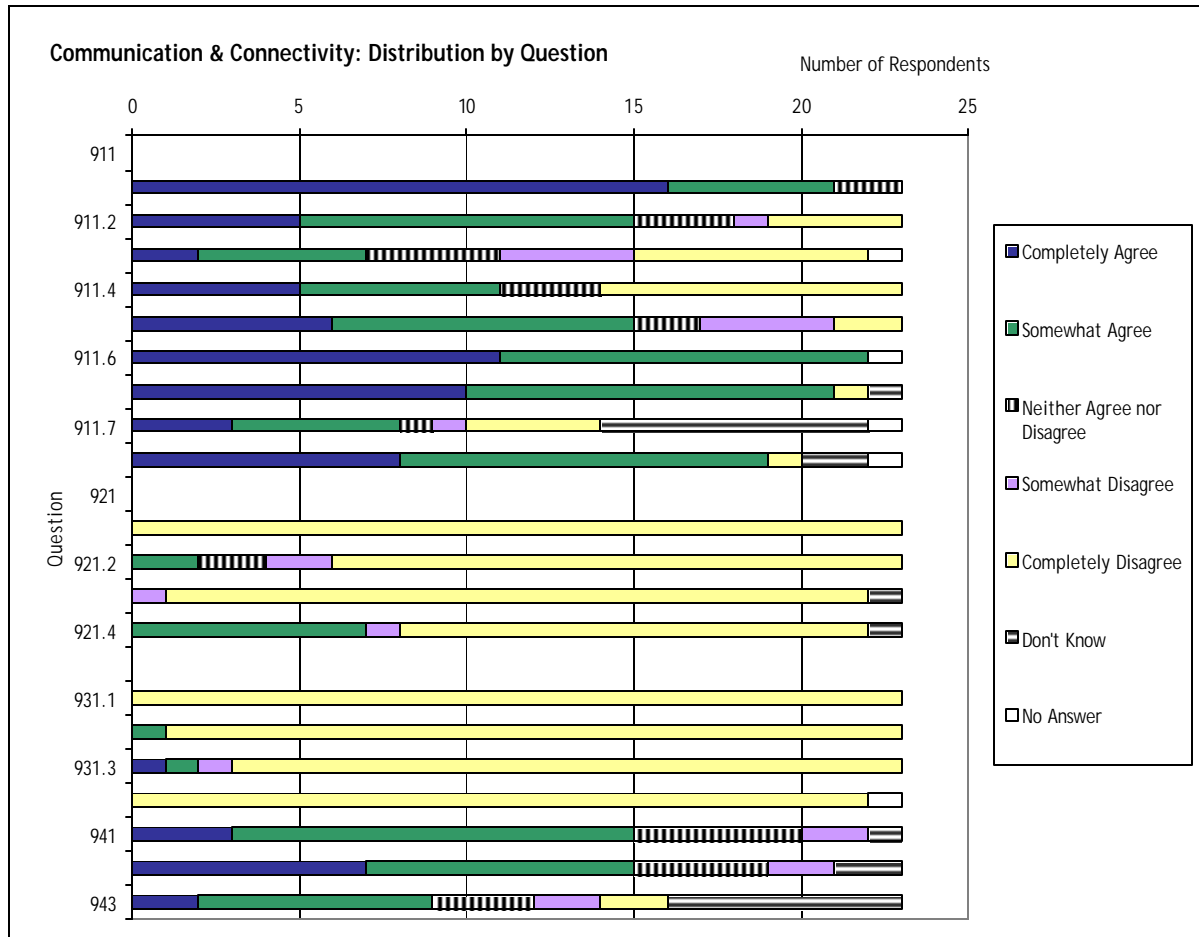


²⁶ See Appendix C.

²⁷ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
9.1 Methods of Communications	<i>Access to a variety of effective communication methods (from word-of-mouth to state of the art) at a reasonable cost</i>	911 The following communications methods are accessible and utilized:	<i>Communications are comparable to other communities. A lack of communications leads to an inability for businesses to compete effectively with outside markets</i>			
		1	Word of mouth	90	73	23%
		2	Local Newspaper	62	64	-3%
		3	Local radio	38	45	-14%
		4	Overnight express mail service (nationally)	48	51	-7%
		5	Mobile phone	64	54	20%
		6	Basic Internet Services	85	79	7%
		7	Fast or High-Speed Internet Services	80	47	69%
		8	Video conferencing capabilities	36	30	20%
		912 Quality communication services (phone, fax, high speed Internet) are affordable to business	<i>Financial barriers to being technologically competent, even if desire is there?</i>	73	71	2%
9.2 Transportation Services within community	<i>Customers and products move throughout the community</i>	921 The following transportation services are accessible and utilized within the community:	<i>Customers and products move throughout the community</i>			
		1	Public transportation	0	42	-100%
		2	Taxi service	13	45	-71%
		3	Special transportation services (i.e. seniors, people with disabilities)	1	45	-98%
		4	Car-pooling system (i.e. park and ride, car co-op)	24	25	-4%
9.3 Inter -community Transportation	<i>Customers and products move between markets in different communities</i>	931 The following transportation services are accessible and utilized between communities:	<i>Customers and products move between markets in different communities</i>			
		1	Air (commercial)	0	22	-100%
		2	Air (private)	3	43	-92%
		3	Bus	9	68	-87%
		4	Train	0	19	-100%
9.4 Shipping & Freighting	<i>Businesses access outside markets, moving goods and services into or out of community, at a reasonable cost</i>	941 Main transportation and shipping routes between communities are safe, well maintained and well serviced.	<i>Reliability of shipping routes in all seasons</i>	66	64	3%
		942 Regular & frequent shipping to major centres is accessible and utilized.	<i>Frequency of shipping, leading to better competitiveness</i>	69	67	3%
		943 Shipping and freight services into and out of the community are affordable to businesses.	<i>Affordability of shipping</i>	44	58	-25%

Indicating an area of strength, question 911.7 scored 69% above the average of all BVI communities, stating, *The following communication services are accessible and utilized: high speed internet.* Question 921.1, 931.1 and 931.4 scored -100% below the average of all BVI communities, indicating *potential areas of concern.*



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that question 911.1 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 911.1 stated, *The following communication services are accessible and utilized: high speed internet.* Also according to distribution of response, the questions in which respondents disagreed most was question 921.1, 931.1 and 931.4.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Communications & Connectivity* section, top strengths identified by participants included *internet, phone, and word of mouth*. Directions for improvement included *improving communication within the community*.

Strengths

- internet (5)
 - phone (4)
 - word of mouth (2)
 - good freight service
 - modern services
 - Alberta radio
 - Fernie newspaper
 - young town
 - fax
 - public access to new technologies
-

Improvements

- | | |
|--|--|
| ○ establish local communication / publications (3) | ○ better radio |
| ○ broadband internet | ○ openness between council and school trustees |
| ○ advertisements | ○ connectivity between Chambers |
| ○ incentives | ○ open highway 43 |
| ○ more transportation services | ○ reduce cost of phone / internet |
| ○ transportation for seniors | ○ advertising of resources |
-

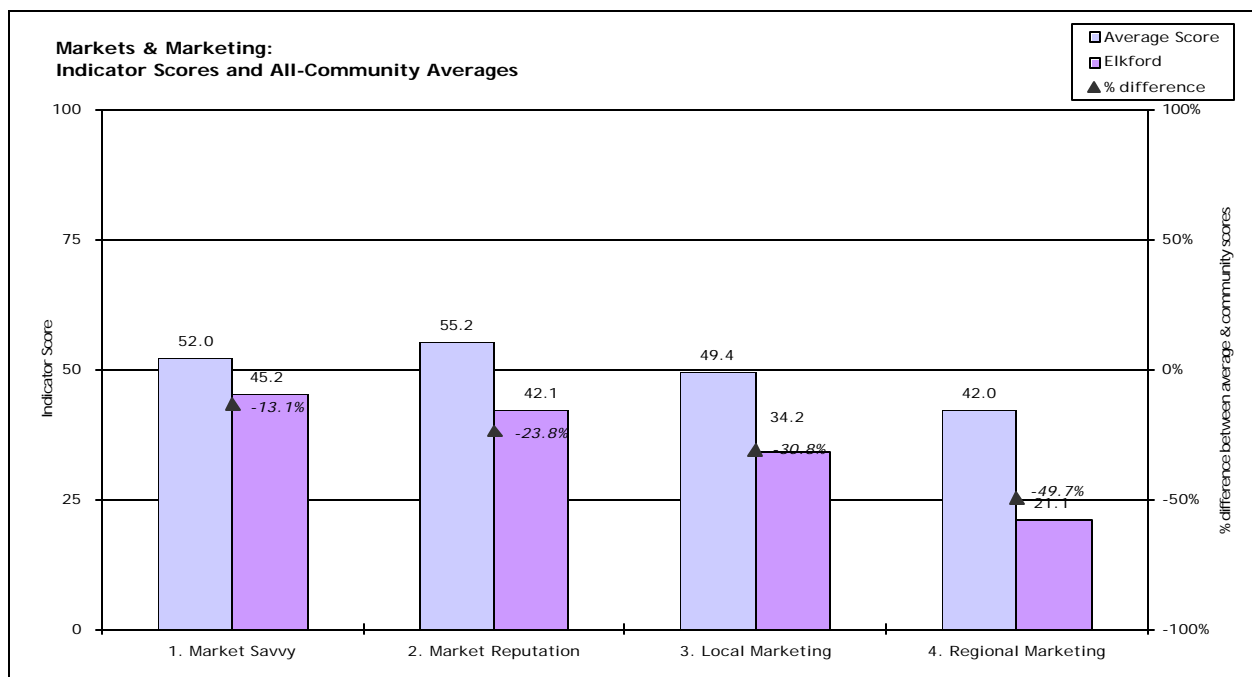
Section 10: Markets & Marketing

Ability of business to capture and expand markets, both locally, regionally, and outside the region, thus keeping and building local wealth.

Community Comparisons, Indicators and Questions

Markets & Marketing presents an *area of concern* with an absolute score of 36. In comparison to the distribution of scores of other BVI communities in this section²⁸, Elkford scored lowest on the *Markets & Marketing* section. Also according to quantitative data, Elkford scored -28% below the all-community average, indicating an *area of concern in relation to other communities*²⁹.

The BVI further breaks down the section entitled, *Markets & Marketing* into four indicators including, *Market Savvy*, *Market Reputation*, *Local Marketing*, and *Regional Marketing*. An examination of indicator scores and all-community averages reveals specific areas of strength and weakness. Elkford scored *below average* on all indicators in this section highlighting areas of varying strength including, *Regional Marketing* (-50%), *Local Marketing* (-31%), *Market Reputation* (-24%), and *Market Savvy* (-13%).

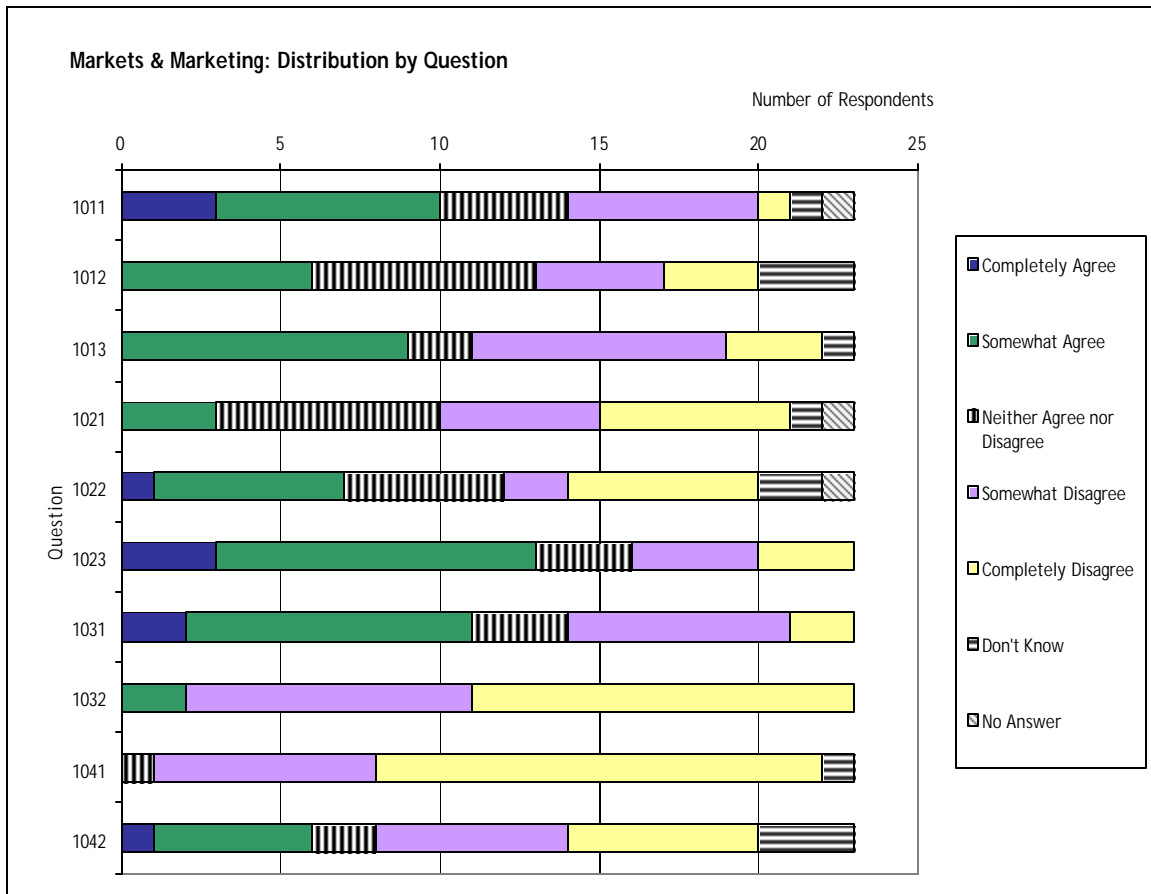


²⁸ See Appendix C.

²⁹ See chart entitled, Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities (p.24).

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Question	Question Definition	Score	Average	Difference (%)
10.1 Market Savvy	<i>Ability of business to anticipate and adapt to changes in market trends and demands</i>	1011 Businesses have a good understanding of their customers and their purchasing behavior.	<i>Awareness of market demands and trends, enabling business to adapt to demands</i>	52	57	-8%
		1012 Business people have knowledge and an awareness of the global economy and market trends, and its relevance to local markets	<i>Anticipation of trends and changes, & adaptation of local business activities to accommodate them</i>	40	48	-16%
		1013 Local businesses demonstrate creativity and innovation in seeking new customers, both locally and outside of the area.	<i>Ability to adapt marketing strategies to maintain and expand customer/client pool</i>	43	51	-16%
10.3 Market Reputation	<i>The potential to attract business and clients to local area</i>	1021 The community has a reputation for quality products and/or services.	<i>Potential to build on markets, and attract new markets & business relationships</i>	31	52	-40%
		1022 The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image.	<i>A clear image that potential markets can easily recognize</i>	38	42	-9%
		1023 People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live and visit.	<i>Potential for bringing in visitors and new businesses</i>	57	72	-21%
10.5 Local Marketing	<i>Ability to capture and keep local customers/ markets, thus keeping local \$ in the community</i>	1031 Products and services are reasonably priced in comparison to regional, and big city competitors.	<i>Competitive pricing which encourages local purchasing behavior</i>	52	58	-9%
		1032 People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	<i>Community support of local businesses</i>	16	41	-60%
10.6 Regional Marketing	<i>Ability to access and capture outside markets, bringing wealth into the community</i>	1041 Businesses in the community /region market their products and services as a group.	<i>Competitors recognize value of working together to achieve greater results than what is possible through individual efforts</i>	10	28	-64%
		1042 Locally developed goods and services are marketed and sold both in the community and in other regions.	<i>Presence of businesses that are linked to outside markets, thus bringing \$ into the community</i>	33	56	-42%

Question 1041 scored -64% below the average of all BVI communities, indicating a potential area of concern, stating, *businesses in the community /region jointly market their products and services.*



An examination of questions according to distribution of response reveals that question 1023 was the most agreed upon in this section. More specifically, question 1023 stated *people from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live*. Also, according to distribution of response, the questions in which respondents disagreed most was question 1032 and 1041. More specifically, Question 1032 stated, *people prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area*, and question 1041 stated, *people in the community / region jointly market their products and services*. Of interest, question 1041 presented the greatest variance of response.

Qualitative Comments

Qualitative comments further inform areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. In the *Markets & Marketing* section, the top strength identified by participants was *the annual dog sled races*. Directions for improvement included *a buy local program, mine shift change back to 5 / 2, and professional assistance to market Elkford*.

Strengths

- Annual Dog Sled Races (2)
- Wildcat Day
- ski hill
- unique community
- tourism potential
- marketing of coal
- success at serving mining industry
- small scale
- affordable services

Improvements

- a buy local program (6)
- change mine shifts back to 5/2 (2)
- professional assistance to market Elkford (2)
- local business to recognize marketing is necessary
- cooperation
- vibrancy
- innovation
- coordinated spirit from Chamber
- education
- excitement
- educate on marketing
- diversify economy
- assist retail business
- revitalize businesses
- address PST
- increase retail selection
- reasonable pricing
- advertise

Conclusion

Participants were positive in assessing the community, describing it as *beautiful, quiet / peaceful, scenic, and friendly*. Participants identified the *outdoor activities* of the community as its key strength. In addition, *people (caring / diverse), the mines, beauty, location, wilderness and scenery* were mentioned as strengths. When participants were asked why they lived in Elkford, *employment and beauty* were the reasons mentioned most. Other reasons included *lifestyle, safety, and family-friendly*. When asked what makes Elkford unique in relation to other communities participants indicated *remote location, friendly people, mining influence and outdoor activities*.

Absolute scores reveal areas of strength and weakness. More specifically, the community of Elkford's highest scoring sections were: *Quality of Life, Infrastructure & Business Services, and Opportunities & Attitudes*. Remaining sections scored below mid-range, including: *Leadership, Teamwork & Networking, Markets & Marketing, Communications & Connectivity, Innovation, Education & Training, Government & Organizations, and Capital & Funding*. The total average score for all sections was 37.

A comparison of Elkford scores to other BVI communities revealed the community of Elkford is *below average* on all of ten BVI sections.³⁰ More specifically, sections falling below the all-community average by less than 25% indicate *areas of potential strength*, including: *Infrastructure & Business Services (-16%), Innovation (-19%), Quality of Life (-21%), Opportunities & Attitudes (-22%), Leadership, Teamwork & Networking (-23%), and Education & Training (-25%)*. Sections falling below the all-community average by more than 25% indicate *areas of potential concern*, including: *Markets & Marketing (-28%), Communications & Connectivity (-31%), Capital & Funding (-34%), and Government & Organizations (-40%)*. Elkford also scored *below average* on total score by -25% and scored the lowest compared to other communities on 7 of 10 sections³¹, highlighting a number of potential areas where improvement efforts could be directed. Both strengths and weaknesses should be considered in setting priority actions on March 30th³².

³⁰ See Appendix L for a list of BVI communities.

³¹ See Appendix C for Elkford scores compared to other BVI communities by section.

³² See pages 8-9 for a list of possible short and long term courses of action.

Appendix A. The BVI Story

Frustrated by the lack of tools available to assist small communities (where the loudest person usually gets his / her way or where long planning processes tend to wear the community out). Mike Stolte, CF of Central Kootenay CED Manager and former economist, realized that people have an innate need to see where they stand relative to others before taking action. Communities have this same desire. In trying to build a tool based on available statistics to compare communities, Mike was disappointed with what was available, especially in rural areas. Mike & Anne Stacey researched the keys to entrepreneurial success from academic research and CED practice from all over the world and combined it with their own experiences in the rural context to build a tool made up of 100 perceptual indications, qualitative questions and focus groups, all conducted over one night.

For the first BVI, businesspersons, community leaders and others representative of the community had to be bribed with savory snack in order to get them out. Through the findings and the follow-up community ‘action session’ that community has since innovatively braded itself – and all products and services from the area – with its storytelling and forest-based heritage, formed a business association which helped the community successfully lobby to overturn slated ferry cuts, and is presently enhancing its town core by erecting an artisans’ market that will highlight local artisans, serve as a tourist draw and community catalyst and provide valuable ‘wired’ incubation spaces for fledgling area businesses. Following this, the BVI, formerly ‘just another good idea’, was born.

BVI Principles

- Communities know best
- Communities must harness their untapped human resources & energy
- Communities must become more self-reliant
- Small steps/actions to build capacity are recommended
- Process is better when it’s inclusive
- BVI is not a substitute for community planning

Why is entrepreneurship important?

The 21st Century has been dubbed “The Entrepreneurial Century”. There is a powerful link between entrepreneurship & economic performance. Some studies suggest that entrepreneurs and small business are creating 90-95% of new jobs. Studies also show that 80-90% of jobs are generated from retaining and expanding business within a community. Increasingly, research shows entrepreneurs fare better in supportive communities with dynamic business support organizations.

What have results been from other communities that have undertaken the BVI?

All community sponsors make a commitment to follow through on the results. Typically, a community sponsor agrees to undertake 4 short-term priorities (it is recommended communities undertake short-term actions although the BVI also identifies possible medium & long-term actions). For example in the West Kootenay town of Nakusp, the community agreed to:

- Hold an opportunity identification session (primarily for youth)
- Develop and implement a Buy Local program
- Create a community foundation
- Bring together political & business leadership along with community participation on a community project (The community has focused its energies on keeping its senior care home - slated for closure - open).

To date all outcomes are being vigorously pursued and achieved. Results are dependent on the energy & commitment of the community & the community sponsor. A reality check on selected priorities is performed near the end of the Phase 2 (community) session by participants during which the community energy, leadership, and other resources are assessed. In this way, the community makes the determination to proceed and identifies key resources needed in order to succeed.

Appendix B: Detailed Data Methodology

- Quantitative data from the questionnaire was entered manually into a customized Excel spreadsheet using the designations as below.

- *Strongly Agree entered as A valued at 4*
- *Agree entered as B valued at 3*
- *Neither agree nor Disagree entered as C valued at 2*
- *Disagree entered as D valued at 1*
- *Strongly Disagree entered as E valued at 0*
- *Don't know entered as F with no value³³*
- *No answer entered as H with no value*

The pre-written spreadsheet automatically calculated question scores, indicator area scores, section scores, percentages, and generated graphs.

- The number of non-scoring responses (F, H) was automatically totaled using the equation below.

$$(\# F, H) = (\#ofF + \#ofH)$$

- The “raw score” for each question was automatically totaled using the equation below.

$$RAW SCORE = [(\#ofA \times 4) + (\#ofB \times 3) + (\#ofC \times 2) + (\#ofD \times 1) + (\#ofE \times 0) + (\#ofF \times 0) + (\#ofH \times 0)]$$

- The raw “total possible” score for each questions was automatically calculated for each section using the equation below. This included all answers, including non-scoring answers.

$$TOTAL POSSIBLE (raw) = (Total possible score per question (i.e. A=4)) \times (\# of respondents)$$

- The adjusted “total possible” scores were automatically calculated for each section using the equation below. This only included scoring answers.

$$TOTAL POSSIBLE (adjusted) = (Total Possible (Raw)) - (\#F,H)$$

³³ “Don’t know” and “No answer” are null responses. Therefore, they are excluded from the total scores for each question and section.

6. “Question score” was automatically calculated for each question using the equation below.

$$QUESTION\ SCORE = [(Raw\ Score) / (Total\ Possible\ (Adjusted))] \times 100$$

7. The questions were grouped into 41 Indicator Areas describing general qualities important to develop an entrepreneurial culture and increase the entrepreneurial capacity of a community.
8. “Raw Indicator Area Score” is the sum of the “Raw Scores” in each indicator area.
9. “Total Possible Indicator Area Score” is the sum of the “Total Possible (Adjusted)” scores in each indicator area.
10. “Normalized Indicator Area Score” was automatically calculated for each indicator area using the equation below. The scores ranged from 0.0 to 1.0.

$$INDICATOR\ AREA\ SCORE\ (normalized) = [Raw\ Score\ (Indicator\ Area)] / [Total\ Possible\ Score\ (Indicator\ Area)]$$

11. The “Indicator Area Score (normalized)” was multiplied by 100 to calculate the “Indicator Area Score” with a value between 0 and 100.
12. “Section score” was automatically calculated for each question using the equation below.

$$SECTION\ SCORE = [Sum\ of\ Raw\ Scores\ for\ Section\ \# X] / [Sum\ of\ Total\ Possible\ (Adjusted)\ for\ Section\ \# X] \times 100$$

13. Total Graphs (radial & bar) were automatically generated in the excel program. The radial graph indicates the fullness (or lack of) of the capacity of the community to support business startup and expansion in comparison to the average score amongst the communities. The bar graph indicates the relative strength and weakness of each section.
14. Section bar graphs portraying “Indicator Area Scores” were automatically generated. These were displayed as community score in comparison to the all community average score.
15. Stacked bar graphs portraying the number of respondents for each statement in each questions were automatically generated for each section. The “Don’t Know” responses may be attributed to one of three hypotheses.

- *HI = Question is not valid*

- *H2 = Question is not understood/not clearly written*
 - *H3 = Lack of knowledge on part of respondent*
16. Section, Indicator Area, and Question scores were imported into another excel file to compare community results with results of other communities. Total graphs (bar and radial), Section graphs (Indicator Areas) were generated for comparison.
 17. The profile of respondents was summarized automatically. The number of respondents in each category was totaled, and then converted into a percentage.
 18. The preliminary information data about the respondents and the community was grouped into appropriate themes.
 19. Qualitative data (Preliminary information, Section comments and responses, and Focus Group notes) was entered manually into a customized MSWord Document. Using the graphs for each section, the greatest strengths and weaknesses were highlighted and described for each section.
 20. Using the qualitative information for each section, the strengths and weaknesses for each section were grouped into appropriate themes. Theme types were dependent on the community's response and perceptions. This was repeated for the weaknesses
 21. The data from the focus groups was grouped into appropriate themes.
 22. "Major Themes and Recurring Ideas" were derived from qualitative and quantitative information, highlighting points and comments indicated in more than one data set (Questionnaire quantitative data, Questionnaire qualitative data, preliminary information, Focus Group notes).
 23. "Possible Courses of Action" were derived from the specific comments in the qualitative information, and possible "next steps" following the major themes.

Appendix C: Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities

Appendix C. Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities												
Section Score	Elkford Scores Compared to Other BVI Communities											
	Total Score	Opportunities & Attitudes	Quality of Life	Education & Training	Innovation	Leadership Teamwork & Networking	Government & Organizations	Capital & Funding	Infrastructure & Business Services	Communication & Connectivity	Markets & Marketing	
100												
75												
50												
25												
0												
	37	29	33	36	29	25	34	36	52	34	36	
Community 1	48.73	54.98	64.04	38.71	45.40	37.65	51.02	49.67	59.27	40.49	46.10	
Community 2	55.22	62.84	77.86	48.91	48.77	45.43	49.90	47.42	63.50	46.74	60.83	
Community 3	51.82	67.67	58.56	23.25	39.72	55.99	48.06	51.00	61.52	55.43	56.96	
Community 4	44.61	51.12	72.24	40.01	31.19	35.71	38.17	40.56	60.62	36.81	39.68	
Community 5	48.93	59.70	72.39	33.90	31.80	50.12	46.15	34.45	64.86	44.99	50.96	
Community 6	52.60	61.02	70.10	45.23	43.64	54.22	59.09	38.97	68.09	52.06	48.84	
Community 7	53.37	55.82	66.84	50.86	45.04	49.85	48.72	31.01	69.64	71.96	43.91	
Community 8	46.63	61.92	71.02	32.40	41.71	41.81	43.44	26.11	54.92	42.95	49.97	
Community 9	46.97	54.26	59.33	32.84	34.99	44.19	46.72	35.99	58.28	54.35	48.71	
Community 10	60.04	64.23	78.52	51.92	46.14	58.97	63.83	41.70	65.29	65.11	64.69	
Elkford	37.12	45.10	53.46	29.06	32.55	35.51	28.52	25.26	51.93	34.17	35.65	

Appendix D: Highest Scoring Questions

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
235	The community is a safe place to live.	93	92	1%
911.1	Word of Mouth	90	73	23%
234	There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. Ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	86	84	2%
911.6	Basic Internet Services	85	79	7%
812	Parking near core business areas is accessible and affordable.	81	79	3%
911.7	Fast or High speed Internet services	80	47	69%
231	The community is physically beautiful, and environmentally safe (i.e. pollution, water quality).	80	90	-11%
831	Existing infrastructure (ie. Power, water) is good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	79	70	14%
912	Quality communication services (phone, fax, high speed internet) are affordable to business.	73	71	2%
822.2	Insurance	73	69	6%
212	There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	71	78	-10%
942	Regular & frequent shipping to major centres is accessible and utilized.	69	67	3%
713.2	Credit Unions	68	72	-6%
841	A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	66	56	19%
822.1	Banking	66	70	-6%
941	Main transportation and shipping routes between communities are safe, well-maintained and well-serviced.	66	64	3%
911.5	Mobile phone	64	54	20%
222	There is a strong community identity, and there are plentiful and varying opportunities for involvement (i.e. arts, athletics, politics, church groups).	63	68	-8%
911.2	Local Newspaper	62	64	-3%
822.3	Freighting	62	63	-2%

Appendix E: Lowest Scoring Questions

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
921.1	Public Transportation	0	42	-100%
931.1	Air (commercial)	0	22	-100%
931.4	Train	0	19	-100%
921.3	Special Transportation Services (ie. Seniors, People with disabilities)	1	45	-98%
931.2	Air (private)	3	43	-92%
433	There are formal and informal forums (Conferences, Workshops) on technology and technology applications	6	21	-74%
721	Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	6	15	-59%
722	People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	7	23	-68%
931.3	Bus	9	68	-87%
1041	Businesses in the community /region jointly market their products and services	10	28	-64%
731.2	Angel (informal local investors)	10	26	-60%
632.3	Mentoring	12	37	-68%
632.2	Training	12	47	-75%
311.9b	university	13	13	0%
921.2	Taxi Service	13	45	-71%
311.91	Professional Development	13	28	-54%
811	There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	14	50	-72%
641	Business development programs are effective and efficient, and do not duplicate each other.	15	29	-48%
432	Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (Not necessarily about the region).	16	22	-27%
1032	People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	16	41	-60%

Appendix F: Highest Number of Don't Know Responses

#	Question	Respondents
731.2	Angel (informal local investors)	52%
731.1	Equity (formal investors)	48%
731.7	Loans \$200,000 and above	43%
731.3	Grants	43%
322	There is an entrepreneurial development program in elementary and secondary schools (K-12).	39%
731.4	Revolving Loan Funds (i.e. lines of credit)	39%
431	Businesses that do research or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	39%
731.6	Loans \$5,000 to \$200,000	39%
423	Support and assistance for innovative business research and development is available.	39%
644	Successful programs are repeated, reproduced, and further developed.	39%
722	People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	39%
911.7	Video Conferencing Capabilities	35%
724	Costs (i.e. Interest, application fees) of capital are manageable for entrepreneurs.	35%
721	Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	35%
731.5	Micro Loans (up to \$5,000)	35%
343	Teaching staff is skilled in and knowledgeable about the subject(s) they teach	30%
332	Training programs are affordable for anyone (i.e. business owners, youth, professionals)	30%
943	Shipping and freight services into and out of the community are affordable to business.	30%
643	Staff members delivering programs are knowledgeable, competent and approachable.	30%

Appendix G: Highest Positive Deviation from Average

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
911.7	Fast or High speed Internet services	80	47	69%
911.1	Word of Mouth	90	73	23%
911.7	Video Conferencing Capabilities	36	30	20%
911.5	Mobile phone	64	54	20%
841	A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	66	56	19%
731.4	Revolving Loan Funds (I.e. lines of credit)	38	33	16%
831	Existing infrastructure (ie. Power, water) is good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	79	70	14%
911.6	Basic Internet Services	85	79	7%
431	Businesses that do research or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	22	20	7%
822.2	Insurance	73	69	6%
812	Parking near core business areas is accessible and affordable.	81	79	3%
941	Main transportation and shipping routes between communities are safe, well-maintained and well-serviced.	66	64	3%
942	Regular & frequent shipping to major centres is accessible and utilized.	69	67	3%
234	There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. Ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	86	84	2%
912	Quality communication services (phone, fax, high speed internet) are affordable to business.	73	71	2%
235	The community is a safe place to live.	93	92	1%

Appendix H: Highest Negative Deviation from Average

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
921.1	Public Transportation	0	42	-100%
931.1	Air (commercial)	0	22	-100%
931.4	Train	0	19	-100%
921.3	Special Transportation Services (ie. Seniors, People with disabilities)	1	45	-98%
931.2	Air (private)	3	43	-92%
931.3	Bus	9	68	-87%
632.2	Training	12	47	-75%
433	There are formal and informal forums (Conferences, Workshops) on technology and technology applications	6	21	-74%
811	There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	14	50	-72%
921.2	Taxi Service	13	45	-71%
632.3	Mentoring	12	37	-68%
722	People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	7	23	-68%
632.4	Assistance for those seeking self-employment	18	51	-64%
1041	Businesses in the community /region jointly market their products and services	10	28	-64%
632.1	Counselling	17	46	-64%
1032	People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	16	41	-60%

Appendix I. Phase 1 Session Attendance

Name
Laura Bidinger
Shelli Diederich
Shelly Oliver
Bob Outhwaite
Keith Janzen
Chuck Shiners
Mike Pang
Faye Sigurdson
Dean McKerracher
Dave Brittain
Grace Williams
Sue Sundstrom
Debby Tomich
Marianne Stone
Allan Ackerman
Norma Everett
Jack Pitter
Doug Dean
Gordon Galloway
Ted Parker
Shirley Heward
Jack Meakin
Lorrie Pitter

Appendix J. Difference between Elkford and BVI Community Average

Note: Highlighted indicators represent positive and negative differences according to varying levels of shading (light to dark): 20-39% / 40-59% / 60+.

Section	Indicator Area	Elkford	Average	Difference
Opportunities & Attitudes	1. Embracing Opportunity	41	60	-31%
	2. Entrepreneurial Mindset	51	66	-21%
	3. Motivated workforce	42	49	-14%
Quality of Life	1. Health & Education	51	67	-23%
	2. Arts & Culture	57	65	-12%
	3. Lifestyle Opportunities	67	73	-8%
	4. Commitment to Business	47	75	-37%
	5. Daily Services	44	57	-22%
Education & Training	1. Ongoing Skills & Personal Development	27	42	-33%
	2. Entrepreneurial Development	27	31	-13%
	3. Access to Business Training	31	41	-23%
	4. Effectiveness & Quality of Training	29	42	-29%
Innovation	1. Information Access	53	56	-4%
	2. Attitude towards Innovation	34	49	-30%
	3. Innovation in the Community	14	21	-33%
	4. Application of Innovation	28	34	-18%
Leadership Teamwork & Networking	1. Community Leadership & Teamwork	45	52	-12%
	2. Networking & Communication	32	47	-31%
	3. Leadership Development Opportunities	20	35	-41%
	4. Attitudes towards Community Cooperation	42	51	-16%

Role of Government & Organizations	1. Governing Body's Attitude towards Business	39	53	-26%
	2. Government Assistance and Processes	35	49	-28%
	3. Availability of Business Development Support & Programs	18	46	-60%
	4. Delivery of Business Development Support & Programs	20	38	-46%
Capital & Funding	1. Lenders' Ability to Understand and Work with Entrepreneurs	32	51	-35%
	2. Businesses' Access to & Management of Capital	15	28	-43%
	3. Types of Capital	27	33	-18%
Infrastructure & Business Services	1. Presence of a Business Core (Cluster)	47	65	-26%
	2. Existence of Business Services	51	60	-14%
	3. Adequacy of Utilities for Business	58	59	-1%
	4. Availability of Business Space	49	52	-4%
Communication & Connectivity	1. Methods of Communication	64	57	12%
	2. Transportation Services within the Community	9	40	-76%
	3. Inter-Community Transportation	3	38	-92%
	4. Shipping and Freightng	59	63	-5%
Markets & Marketing	1. Market Savvy	45	52	-13%
	2. Market Reputation	42	55	-24%
	3. Local Marketing	34	49	-31%
	4. Regional Marketing	21	42	-50%

Appendix K. Gut Check 12

The following questions provide a snap shot of a community's business vitality. These key questions can be used to inform future efforts aimed at improving business friendliness.³⁴

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
112	The community is facing an economic crisis or a significant economic opportunity.	54	80	-33%
232	Young adults (25-34) consider the community a desirable place to live.	34	50	-31%
241	Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	58	79	-27%
334	The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	27	37	-28%
344	Citizens are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	35	47	-26%
612	The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	34	46	-26%
613	The governing body is committed to help existing businesses or creating new businesses through policy and action.	28	42	-34%
722	People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds.	7	23	-68%
811	There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	14	50	-72%
1022	The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	38	42	-9%
1023	People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	57	72	-21%
1032	People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	16	41	-60%
	Total	402	609	
	Average	33.5	50.8	

³⁴ Note: Highlighted indicators represent significant³⁴ positive and negative differences.

Appendix L. List of BVI Communities to Date

- Creston, BC
- Harrop Proctor, BC
- Pemberton, BC
- Nakusp, BC
- New Denver / Silverton, BC
- Grand Forks, BC
- Castlegar, BC
- McBride, BC
- Cache Creek, BC
- Nelson, BC
- Elkford, BC

Appendix M. Additional Qualitative Comments

Opportunities and Attitudes

Community must evolve from just being a mining town, the valley communities must work together at issues of tourism, health, schooling, and Chambers / business; our opportunities are low with access closures to motorized recreation; Elkford still has to contend with the PST issue as most of the people who live in Elkford on a 4x4 shift have habituated to shopping in Alberta; We have a good chance to start some exciting growth activity here; A change in perception that there is a lack of good will between business, residents and council; The general feeling I get as a relative newcomer is that the purchasing public will support you if you're down – but criticize success – not all citizens work for the mine and the mentality or mind-set compared to business owners (who don't have a spouse working at the mines) is miles apart; more cooperation between district, chamber, government, etc., The municipal government may have to help build, finance or give tax / rent incentives to get people to take the step to start a business; Need to maintain our schools and health care at present levels, There appear to be very few opportunities. Perception is more who you know not what you know. This could be a good strength if you know someone; This community is going to change dramatically in the next 10 years. The citizens can lead and participate or watch outsiders take over; One of the biggest blows to our community recently was the closure of on one our elementary schools and the almost absolute negative responsibility of the school board to move on with the building re-sell / encourage new business. Its an eye sore and was a factor in last years lower property assessment at this end of town

Quality of Life

Encourage a youth volunteer group where the kids would volunteer to help seniors and disable neighbours with shopping / snow removal / yard work, etc.; There is a large amount of our population that do not stop in Elkord at all; Build on an already growing Wilderness Days Dog Sled Race Weekend eg. add a trappers festival type event at the race site and indoors at the arena. Have games. events, encourage like minded vendors to rent booths; Small business owners have attempted to promote Elkford – this seemed to bring out the self-serving attitude of some – but I feel inspiration was not evident and talk is cheap; Health care is o.k. but we do not demand much of the system; community is beautiful but environmentally safe?

Education and Training

Don't think we are strong in education. Declining school populations and provincial funding short fall threatens our schools; Most education & training is not available in Elkford but out of town; For the most part people in town do not appear to be motivated to upgrade and the College of the Rockies does a poor job of promoting courses; Our high school is the only facility for education other than home schooling – I know little on the subject, but I do know that closing one school was the alternative to bussing to Sparwood; Finite number of teachers are excellent, many lack the verve to motivate students, we do have a fairly good post secondary ratio of grads, businesses are available to co-op students; We need to offer students training in the trades, not all students are interested in going off to university. With all the mines in area, we need to be able to offer the students 'trade' alternatives – partnership with the 5 mines in the area

Innovation

Our coal fire electrical / generating plant has been stalled for years by red tape and foot dragging, if it wasn't for the mining communities needs for high speed internet, it is my belief we still wouldn't have it; The business community appears to be splintered and 'stuck in the past' for the majority of businesses. Most would not be successful in a more competitive environment; I have had several inquiries and a few helped me, eg. forest renewal BC. IAS helped us with some research. Forintek researched a project which cost us money and come up with nothing helpful. They have too many big ideas and there is no funding available; I believe the mines – Elk Valley Coal – and some business are quite sophisticated, however there is minimal opportunity to share. The College have video conferencing that is not even talked about

Leadership, Teamwork and Networking

Hard union versus management attitudes are very difficult; We have went backwards instead of forward here!

Role of Government and Organizations

Our town can be quite apathetic on routine issues but will be galvanized into action on some things that affect us all re: 1) our school closure, 2) bussing of high school students to Sparwood; 4 x 4 shift has downsized the town and this means less volunteers, business, purchasers

Money, Capital and Funding

Capital, although frequently stated as the stumbling block for business development, is rarely unavailable to business that is well managed, has appropriate plans and can articulate their ideas

Community Infrastructure and Business Services

Since I moved to this community the highway 43 issue has not been addressed with any marketing, development, environmental studies. Most locals want no one here just themselves to enjoy the rivers, hunting, snowmobiling, etc. close minded; Our mall is a mess. Totally unkempt. Landlord doesn't care (doesn't live here). Doesn't care if spaces are rented or not! It is up to council to take action and get the landlord to clean up his act; This needs organization. There is land and a variety of buildings (included closed school) but difficult to identify and impossible for strangers; Castle (?) Mountain Alberta as developed in the middle of nowhere and is very successful with little or no services available,

Communication and Connectivity

Being at the end of the road in the wilderness capital of BC says it all!

Markets and Marketing

Do the coal mines want recreational development here? Do they want the nature lovers of the world coming here to enjoy trails, rivers, hunting?, Trans Canada Trail – recently lots of bikers coming through our community. Benefits from Trans Canada Trail not fully utilized because of opposition from coal mines. Elk River wasn't given Heritage Status re: opposition from mines; most of the people in the room tonight have never been to my shop