

# Fernie Economic Development & Opportunity Identification Forum

June 2009

Report & Results from On-line Survey

Hosted by: City of Fernie



Facilitation, Survey & Report by: [www.MikeStolte.com](http://www.MikeStolte.com)

mike stolte + associates

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# Fernie Economic Development Forum & Opportunity Identification Session

## Notes from Session

Fernie Community Centre  
June 9, 2009

Hosted by: City of Fernie

Facilitated by: Mike Stolte

### ***Session Objectives***

- Initiate a broad community conversation on economic development and untapped opportunities
- Provide a safe forum for interaction
- Be inclusive of all segments and sectors of the community
- Identify untapped community and economic development opportunities
- Identify untapped business opportunities
- Identify key future drivers of economic activity
- Establish 2-4 economic development priority areas
- Using the priorities, identify several promising economic development initiatives and next steps
- Perform a 'reality check' on initiatives to identify timing, leadership, resource and other key issues
- Identify possible new leaders or initiative champions
- Identify potential public/private and private/private partnerships

## Agenda

### Afternoon Session - 1-4 pm

Time	Agenda Item	Lead
1:00-1:30	Introduction & Overview of Forum, Icebreaker,	Mike Stolte & Mayor Corrigan
1:30-2:15	Where we are – OCP, Projects (City-led & other interesting initiatives)	Mayor Corrigan, Jim Hendricks, Bruce Lennox
2:15-2:30	<b>BREAK</b>	
2:30-3:15	Where we are (con'd) - Demographic Overview, Communities Matrix, Interim Results of On-line Survey	Mike
3:15-3:50	Identifying Strengths & Opportunities, Untapped Opportunities	Mike
3:50-4:00	Conclusion, Agenda for Tonight	Mike Stolte & Mayor Corrigan

### Evening Session - 7-10 pm

Time	Agenda Item	Lead
7:00-7:20	Icebreaker, Introduction, Overview of Forum – Review of Morning Forum	Mike Stolte & Mayor Corrigan
7:20-8:00	Identifying Future Economic Drivers	Mike
8:00-8:15	Picking Priority Initiatives -Review of Drivers, Strengths and Opportunities	Mike
8:15-8:30	<b>BREAK (also vote on priorities using a dotmocracy exercise)</b>	
8:30-8:45	Picking top priorities	Mike
8:45-9:30	Determining a goal or initiative for top priorities and performing a 'reality check'	Mike
9:30-9:45	Small Group report back	Mike
9:45-10:00	Conclusion, wrap-up, next steps	Mike Stolte & Mayor Corrigan

## ***Results of Group Work***

### ***Identifying Untapped Community & Economic Development Opportunities***

#### **Group 1 (self-named 'Group Stupendous')**

- Carbon fibre/coal
- Bioenergy/pine beetle
- Grizzly Centre
- Telecom Infrastructure
- Call Centre/High tech centre
- Alternative energy/micro hydro
- International "Baccalaureate"
- Sports academies
- Sports medicine/ wellness specialization
- Expansion/enhancement of seasonal-only businesses

#### **TOP 3**

- Telecommunications/IT Infrastructure
- Educational/professional development (wellness, sports medicine, science, International conference centre)
- Alternative energy/bioenergy

## **Group 2 (self-named 'Group Awesome')**

- Wi-fi downtown
- Conference destination (conference centre, e.g. Banff Conference Centre for the arts)
- Gateway Project (welcome to Fernie)
- Sport academy (ski school, snowboard school, hockey school)
- Pedestrian-friendly downtown (public spaces, lighting, trees, balconies, vibrant downtown with more foot traffic, commerce, restaurants, hospitality)
- Manufacturing (custom/artisan production of outdoor equipment, more 'Made in Fernie' [in addition to honey, mustard, beer])
- Better transportation (for export, internal, collaboration with other communities)
- Greater municipal collaboration (transportation, accommodation)
- City-owned land inventory (housing, rezoning for light industry, diversification)
- Community communication (community radio/TV)
- Value-added to natural resources
- Movie industry attraction

### **TOP 3**

- Conference destination (conference centre, e.g. Banff Conference Centre for the arts)
- Gateway Project (welcome to Fernie)
- Pedestrian-friendly downtown (public spaces, lighting, trees, balconies, vibrant downtown with more foot traffic, commerce, restaurants, hospitality)
- City-owned land inventory (housing, rezoning for light industry, diversification)

### **Group 3 (self-named 'Team Vision')**

- Education/interpretive /activity centre – e.g. Grizzly Centre
- Conference/Facility Centre (capacity 400-500 people)
- Hi-Tech Park – Downtown Hub (to encourage business concentration – e.g. Revelstoke – high speed Broadband – incentive to new & well-paid employees – create satellite offices, topping in 2 M population base)
- Linked community – Valley Trail System – promote aging in place and walkability
- Restaurant – Gazebo Centre to create attraction to tourists – e.g. close off main street and move parking to tracks (Revelstoke, Nelson, Vail)
- Development of the Highway (e.g. airport – WestJet – Courtenay/Comox) – economic access – gateway (outside our control, vital to community)
- Utilize and enhance the 'Crown of the Continent' to cross market; strength in #s

### **Top 3**

- Conference/Facility Centre (capacity 400-500 people)
- Hi-Tech Park – Downtown Hub (to encourage business concentration – e.g. Revelstoke – high speed Broadband – incentive to new & well-paid employees – create satellite offices, topping in 2 M population base)
- Restaurant – Gazebo Centre to create attraction to tourists – e.g. close off main street and move parking to tracks (Revelstoke, Nelson, Vail)

## ***Identifying the Key Economic Drivers in the Next 5 Years***

### **Group 1 - Team Forward**

- Tourism (accommodation, hospitality, recreation)
- Resource Coal industry (support by providing affordable housing)
- Amenity migration
- Construction/development
- Aging population (facilities, training for care, recreation, keep people here, health, festivals)
- Regional cooperation
- IT Industry
- Commercial property
- Environment (stewarding, reducing carbon footprint, alternative energy, green industry)
- Arts/culture (festivals/concerts)
- Health/wellbeing
- Recreation (golf, trails)
- Retail (green consumer)
- Local/food security (beer, markets)

### **Top 2 Economic Drivers**

- Tourism (accommodation, hospitality, recreation)
- Resource Coal industry



## **Group 2**

- Resource extraction (coal, timber)
- Geography (tourism – e.g. Banff Centre)
- FAR
- Golf courses
- Housing industry
- Tourism
- Demographic change
- The aging industry
- Amenities
- Cultural tourism
- Educational system
- Small & home-based business
- Amenity Migrants
- Specialty/niche business
- Self-employment (current climate propelling people towards self-employment)

### **Top 2 Economic Drivers**

- Resort/recreation industry
- Resource Extraction

## **Group 3**

- Resource extraction
- Tourism
- Lifestyle migration
- Cranbrook airport
- Film/entertainment industry
- Knowledge/education industry

### **Top 2 Economic Drivers**

- Resource extraction
- Tourism

## ***Identifying Possible Economic Development Priorities***

### **Group 1**

- Light Industry opportunities
- Incentives
- Someone who is accountable
- Infrastructure to support light industry
- Better paying jobs
- Land is an issue
- Economic incentives
- Economic development office
- Networks
- Comprehensive plan
- Grants
- Sparwood opportunities

#### **Top 3 Priorities**

- Economic development office
- Light industrial/commercial land opportunities
- Incentives

### **Group 2**

- Variety of housing
- Grizzly Centre/Gateway project
- 2 more golf courses
- Cutting edge IT /technology industry
- Advanced medical care
- Increased transportation services
- Business incubation centre
- Conference centre
- Do business locally
- Good service industry
- Diversity of businesses
- Improve Ski hill

#### **Top 3 Priorities**

- Variety of housing
- Grizzly Centre/Gateway project
- 2 more golf courses
- Cutting edge IT /technology industry

### **Group 3**

- Gateway Project/Grizzly Centre
  - Tourism, environment (uniqueness)
  - Welcome our tourists
  - Provides visitor info
  - Partnership opportunities
- Affordable Housing (Rental, student, employee, green)
- Downtown revitalization - Really!
  - Tourism
  - Aging pop'n
  - Amenity
  - Café's food retailer
  - How to keep access business & services
- IT/Infrastructure
  - Economic driver vs. enhancement/service

○

Access great but unsure

### **Top 3 Priorities**

- Gateway Project/Grizzly Centre
- Affordable Housing (Rental, student, employee, green)
- Downtown revitalization - Really!
- IT/Infrastructure

## ***Voting on Top Priorities***

Priorities from each group were combined and synthesized into a refined list. Each participant in the evening session was given 2 votes. Votes were to be cast based on 2 criteria: what would be good for Fernie & what initiative participants would consider putting their personal time and energy into supporting.

<b>Project/Initiative</b>	<b>Votes</b>
1. Gateway Project/Grizzly Centre	19
2. Affordable housing/diversity of housing (especially from economic development perspective)	13
3. Economic development office(r)	12
4. IT enhancement/service	11
5. Light industrial opportunities (e.g. making more land available)	9
6. Incentives (research, use to attract)	4
7. 2 more golf courses	3
8. Downtown revitalization – Really!	1

## ***Reality Check – Top 3 Initiatives***

### **Action Group Summary**

Following the priority setting exercise, participants formed action groups in order to assess the viability of the three courses of action that were chosen.

The 'Reality Check' exercise revealed that the three initiatives had sufficient energy and resources to proceed. Highlights from the discussion/action groups are outlined below.

## 1. Gateway Project/Grizzly Centre

Describe what the <b>successful action</b> might look like (in 3 points):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interpretation, education, research (Derrick History Bear)</li> <li>2. Tourist Info</li> <li>3. Conference Centre &amp; Theatre</li> </ol>
<b>Purpose</b> – What is the main goal of this action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase Tourism – year round, non-weather dependent destination tourism</li> <li>▪ Increase high-end employment</li> <li>▪ Increase spin-off opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment</b> – Can we get commitment and energy from the community to undertake this? If not, what do we have to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes, if we can get info out there as to benefits</li> <li>▪ Volunteers, funds</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b> – Who has the skills to lead (organization(s), individuals)? Who else do we need to involve to ensure success who isn't in the room right now?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current promoters of project</li> <li>▪ Provincial and federal governments</li> <li>▪ Big business (Ski hill, Teck, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Time Frame</b> – How long will it take to accomplish? Are there any political, economic or funding factors which might hurt/help the timing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gateway – year if funds in place</li> <li>▪ Grizzly Centre – 5 years if funds in place</li> <li>▪ Economic situation, politics</li> </ul>
<b>Finances/Resources</b> – What, if any, financial resources do we need to tap into? Are there any organizations that can assist this action? Any other resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CBT, Corporations, Grants, Individuals, Federal &amp; Provincial funds</li> <li>▪ Fundraising events</li> <li>▪ City can assist</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take action</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thursday June 11<sup>th</sup>, 3 pm Chamber “advocate package”</li> </ul>

### People in Group:

- Bernie Palmer
- Gordon Sombrowski
- Sharron Thomas
- Chris Thomas
- Sean Staplin
- Lynn Flokstra
- Marja Albers
- Linda Johnson

## 2. Affordable Housing/Diversity of Housing

Describe what the <b>successful action</b> might look like (in 3 points):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dedicated paid position (non-political)</li> <li>2. Staff housing policy</li> <li>3. Do a partnership project to establish need &amp; target</li> <li>4. Encourage &amp; support p2/p3 of development</li> <li>5. Streamlining gov't processes, incentives (including strategy for incentives)</li> </ol>
<b>Purpose</b> – What is the main goal of this action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make housing more affordable (to families to assist increasing our permanent population to help reduce barriers to economic success)</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment</b> – Can we get commitment and energy from the community to undertake this? If not, what do we have to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yes. Commitment already from council, community, FFHS, development community to keep cooperation</li> <li>▪ Dialogue, actual defined target (e.g. home ownership numbers)</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b> – Who has the skills to lead (organization(s), individuals)? Who else do we need to involve to ensure success who isn't in the room right now?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council, developers, planners, CBT, CMHC, BC Housing, FFHS, lenders, Credit Union, RCR, COTR, Teck, Steering Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Time Frame</b> – How long will it take to accomplish? Are there any political, economic or funding factors which might hurt/help the timing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ongoing as long as population requires</li> <li>▪ Streamlining processes – happening now</li> </ul>
<b>Finances/Resources</b> – What, if any, financial resources do we need to tap into? Are there any organizations that can assist this action? Any other resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BC Housing, City of Fernie, FABDA, FFHS, CMHC, Real Estate Foundation, Bank, CBT, Fraser Basin Council, Federal government</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take action</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support letter from Metis Assoc. (Jean), Meeting?</li> </ul>

### People in Group:

- Mike Sosnowski
- Jean Sulzer
- Aaron Goos
- Beth Dennahower
- Jessica Mossman
- Grant Sigaty
- Amanda Ridgway
- Darren Milne

### 3. Economic Development Office(r)

Describe what the <b>successful action</b> might look like (in 3 points):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full-time regional economic development officer in place (Areas A/B &amp; 3 Valley communities)</li> <li>2. An assessment of our assets will be done &amp; in place</li> </ol>
<b>Purpose</b> – What is the main goal of this action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manage economic opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Commitment</b> – Can we get commitment and energy from the community to undertake this? If not, what do we have to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Probably</li> <li>▪ Political will likely there – Need to be ongoing to sustain over many years</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b> – Who has the skills to lead (organization(s), individuals)? Who else do we need to involve to ensure success who isn't in the room right now?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Councils/ business people/ Chambers</li> </ul>
<b>Time Frame</b> – How long will it take to accomplish? Are there any political, economic or funding factors which might hurt/help the timing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1-2 years up &amp; running</li> </ul>
<b>Finances/Resources</b> – What, if any, financial resources do we need to tap into? Are there any organizations that can assist this action? Any other resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to study various models of what is working in other areas with financing EDO</li> <li>▪ CBT should take a leadership role in financing Ec. Dev. – perhaps fund a study to determine Valley needs</li> <li>▪ Needs to be Valley-wide</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take action &amp; Get more information before starting</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meet June 17/09</li> </ul>

#### People in Group:

- Evelyn Cutts
- Kevin McIsaac
- Alison Harwood
- Mary Giuliano
- Oz Parsons
- Judith Johansson
- Randal Macnair

## ***Attendance for Sessions***

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM SIGN IN SHEET AFTERNOON SESSION, June 9, 2009**

<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>COMPANY/BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION</u></b>
Jessica Mossman	FABDA
Kevin McIsaac	CofF
Phil Iddon	CofF
Nick Vale	LeBlond Partnership
Chris Thomas	Greenfir Tech.
Bernie Palmer	Grizzly Centre
Sharron Thomas	Greenfir Tech.
Sean Staplin	FABDA
Gayle Vallance	FFHS/Farmer
Lynn Mace	FWC/CBFRS
Carrie Meyer	Teck Coal
Clark Weber	Bluerock Engineering
Jeff Zukiwsky	Zumundo Consultants
Steve Kuijt	Island Lake Lodge
Andy Cohen	FAR
Mike Delich	Fernie Vacation Properties
Judith Johannsson	Ghostrider Trading Co/ Birch Meadows Lodge
Linda Hide	Ghostrider Trading Co
Beth Dennahower	Parastone Developments - 901 Fernie
Jim Banks	District of Sparwood
Ev Cutts	CBT/COC/Koocanusa campsite/Sheep Mtn
Sean Campbell	BDC
Scott Smith	Shaw Communications
Mary Giuliano	CofF
Lynn Flokstra	CofCommerce
Lane Wells	BP Canada Energy Co
Aaron Goos	CofF
Oz Parsons	F&D Arts Council
Grant Sigaty	The Drive B104 radio
Leah Bradish	COTR
Laurie Cordell	Fraser Basin Council
Bruce Lennox	CofF Planning Dept
Jim Hendricks	CofFernie Finance Dept
Cindy Corrigan	Mayor, CofF



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM SIGN IN SHEET, EVENING  
SESSION, June 9, 2009**

<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>COMPANY/BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION</u></b>
Bruce Lennox	CofF
Amanda Ridgway	OCPIC
Jean Sulzer	CBT - Economic Advisory
Alison Harwood	Tourism Fernie
Lynn Flokstra	CofCommerce
Ev Cutts	COC/CBT
Jim Banks	District of Sparwood
Aaron Goos	CofF
Leah Bradish	COTR
Gordon Sombrowski	IGS/RMGC
Sean Staplin	FABDA
Bernie Palmer	CofF
Sharron Thomas	Greenfir Tech
Chris Thomas	Greenfir Tech
Linda Johnson	Mountain High Travel
Marja Albers	Mountain High Travel
Kevin Mclsaac	CofF
Oz Parsons	F&D Arts Council
Mike Sosnowski	RDEK
Darren Milne	Parastone Developments/Fernie Hotels
Barbara Kosiec	Cemetery Heritage Society/EVSCHCC
Jessica Mossman	FABDA
Beth Dennahower	Parastone Developments
Randal Macnair	CoF
Cindy Corrigan	Mayor, CoF

## ***Results of On-line Survey (22 Total Responses)***

An on-line survey was posted for two weeks to solicit feedback for the session (and this report). The web address was publicized through various sources with a prize being offered to a randomly selected participant. Twenty-two responses were received.

### ***Name 3 words to describe Fernie***

64 responses (8:1 positive: negative)

#### **Most Frequently Used Positive Words**

- Beautiful, spectacular, scenic (14)
- Friendly (6)
- Natural community/community oriented/warm (5)
- Character, cool, diverse, eclectic (4)
- Outdoorsy (3)
- Energetic, active (2)
- Wonderful (2)
- Youthful (2)
- Home (2)
- Blessed
- Fortress
- Passionate
- Progressive
- Nature
- Trails
- Strong
- Refreshing
- Environment
- Good skiing
- Flat & easy to bike
- Unique
- Exciting
- Rustic
- Laid back
- Abundant
- Green
- Diverse
- Functioning working"real" town

### **Negative or Neutral Words**

- Expensive (3)
- Not living to its potential (2)
- Locals lack of optimism
- Guarded
- Untidy
- Seasonal

### ***What are you most proud of in Fernie?***

- People, cooperation, sense of community, character (10)
- Natural surroundings, geography (3)
- Trails, Hiking, Biking & Parks [River, Annex] (3)
- Opportunities available for activity, business and self improvement
- Ski facilities
- Creativity
- Respect for our past
- Attitude to life
- Proud to raise my family
- Environmental work – GHG reduction plan, garden, ALL, Wildsight, etc.

## ***What is an untapped community or economic development opportunity for Fernie?***

(list up to 3)

- Tourism (11) – corporate retreats, marketing ‘natural’ness, spa, children’s attractions (e.g. petting zoo), summer, Grizzly Centre, 2nd GC, Gateway
- Technology (6) - educated telecommuters as permanent residents, tech community, incentives, etc.
- Convention centre/retreat (4)
- Retain permanent population (4) – non-market housing, land title covenants, attract permanent telecommuters & entrepreneurs
- Municipal upgrades (4) – street, waste, water, a functioning town
- Energy innovations (3) – waste to energy, composting, Coalbed methane/clean energy inventions
- Affordable housing (3)
- Partnerships & cooperation (3) – community / non-profit/ business
- Downtown vibrancy (2) – street vendors, farmers market, funky retail)
- Vision (2)
- Underutilized walking and world class mtn bike trails (2)
- EDO (2)
- Medical wellness centre (surgical/physio)
- Athletic academy
- A 2nd Golf Course up and running
- 2 million people within 4 hour drive
- 3 international airports within 3 hours
- Long Term planning and environmental community status
- accessible training programs to improve business and extend business opportunities to people not already engaged through micro-finance or mentoring programs
- Making technological advancement accessible through gov’t/business incentives or resource sharing
- Men’s clothing store

## ***What is an untapped business development opportunity?***

(list up to 3)

- Conference Centre (4)
- Family shoe/clothing – business that serves young families (3)
- Creating intelligence economy (2) - education, on-line, Education centre based on the specific surroundings
- Arts incubation centre/ arts & culture as tourism opportunity (2)
- Restaurant choice (2) – steakhouse, vegetarian, Greek or Italian restaurant
- Coffee shop/day care
- Coffee shop with free wi-fi
- Shopping locally: industrial & retail suppliers sourced locally (or regionally)
- Rent-a-secretary
- Spa
- Wilderness resort
- Personal services
- Snowboard/mtn bike manufacturing
- Short-term camping facility
- Notary
- Picture framing
- Affordable housing
- Transportation service
- Rooftop balcony/café
- Coal bed methane testing in mountain terrain
- Coal research with close testing facilities
- Green energy production: hydro-electric – waste/wood/wind
- World class mountain trails
- Efficiencies with resources (sharing capital) & using green technology: city & business maintenance using "green technology" (e.g. city mowers: outsource to company with a tractor rather than pay 3 city crew to weed-eat)
- Embrace responsible resource development
- Increased services
- Courier service
- Tourism, Lengthening Stay, Off season Visits
- Land Development
- Fernie as a "Town"
- Non-specific location industry

***What is an untapped collaborative opportunity within the region (e.g. partnering with neighbouring municipalities)?***

(list up to 2)

- Regional tourism/brand/ marketing (including Gateway to the Kootenays, links to Montana [Glacier} & Alberta [Waterton] Nat'l Parks) (10)
- Environmental Sustainability Goals/ Waste to energy / compost / recycling / Innovative solid waste management project (3)
- Highway 3 improvements (2)
- Employee housing/affordable housing (2)
- Expansion of Fernie city boundaries into West Fernie and beyond (2)
- Strategic medical facility & services coordination (2)
- Cranbrook airport improvements
- wilderness recreation promotion and stewardship
- Transport Service to Calgary or Whitefish
- Local food production & shipping
- Creating an intelligence economy (training centers, online learning, conference centre, attracting new tech & research companies to the valley)
- Inter-"tribal" cooperation within competing groups
- Partnership with RCR
- Economic development corridor
- Interpretative centers for geology, rock formations and geo history
- Coal research with testing facilities, gas, bacteria, pulverization
- Development of huge recreation/training centre

***What do you believe will be the 2 most important drivers of economic development for Fernie over the next 5 years?***

- Tourism – including price of oil & associated tourism impacts (9)
- Mining/resource-based industries (9)
- Calgary & Fernie quality of life/weekenders, attraction of permanent residents/affordability (7)
- Diversity of small businesses & services (5)
- Housing (2)
- Long range & environmental planning for City Council
- High tech centres for commuters & research
- Retirement migration
- Walking trails
- Thinking beyond tourism
- Committed City Council
- Ingenuity/skillset/training programs
- Cooperation among factions

***What do you believe will be the 2 most important drivers of economic development for Fernie over the next 25 years?***

- Very similar responses to 5 year horizon

Some differences:

- Not sprawling & losing small-town feel/ Balance of industrial development without damaging small town feel & environment (2)
- Price of oil - tourism impacts
- Facilities for weekenders/ place to retreat to
- Supply of trails/ recreation opportunities to promote migration/ telecommuters
- Ability of families to live here
- Supply of labour
- Walking trails
- Broad-based strategic direction NOW



***If free broadband were available downtown, what opportunities would be created?***

(list up to 3)

**Mostly positive responses (13 respondents were positive, 5 not sure/no response, 3 negative)**

**Positive Responses**

- Increase length of stay for tourists / tourists finding services to spend money in here
- More businesses
- More people downtown/ more spending in those businesses
- Better coffee shops
- Business clients
- Geotourism
- Home schooling opportunities
- Improved health care from out-of-area specialists
- Incentive to improve core businesses
- Satellite engineering offices
- Design centres for resort, coal or housing industries
- Opportunities to encourage business people to come and stay and have a working-resting vacation
- Visitors and residents staying longer and spending money in the core

**Negative Responses**

- Less money for local business (2)
- Competes with local business

**Neutral Response**

- Would more free use computers be available?

## ***About the Facilitator & Report Writer***

Mike Stolte specializes in innovative performance evaluation, creative analysis and strategic planning with communities and organizations.

Mike is also the Executive Director and founder of the Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL - [www.theCIEL.com](http://www.theCIEL.com)). He is the originator and co-creator of the Business Vitality Initiative (BVI), the Community Vitality Initiative (CVI), the Communities Matrix, the Community Check-up, and the Green Light Check-Up, all internationally recognized tools and processes to assess and strengthen communities.

Mike has spent many years working in the field of community and business development. He has facilitated several national conferences and think-tanks, and has written many articles and publications in the field.

Over the past few years Mike has made presentations in Australia, the United States, New Zealand and in many parts of Canada. His subject matter most often centres around the need and the method for creating entrepreneurial and vital communities. His work has been featured in *Canadian Living* magazine, on CBC radio's *Sounds Like Canada*, in the *Globe & Mail* and on the Australian Broadcasting Company (ABC).

Mike is the current president of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF). He serves on the steering committee of the National Rural Research Network of Canada and is a past member of the Co-operative Development Initiative of Canada. He holds degrees from Carleton University (MA in Public Administration) and the University of Western Ontario (Economics).

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