Kimberley
Phase 2 Focus & Action Report

June 2005
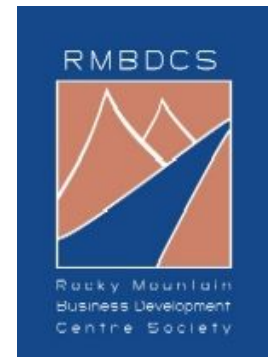
Building prosperous communities
www.BusinessVitalityIndex.com

The BVI is facilitated by:

ciel Centre for Innovative & Entrepreneurial Leadership

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What is the Business Vitality Initiative (BVI)?

The Business Vitality Index (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. communities to determine possible short and long term actions the community can undertake to improve its business friendliness.

The City of Kimberley, Community Futures of South East British Columbia, and the Kimberley & District Chamber of Commerce, 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 June 8, 2005, 35 Kimberley residents participated in the BVI Phase 1 Assessment session.

This first phase of the BVI included the assessment of the community's apparent small business resources and potential through a survey and focus group session. The Phase 2 Focus & Action Session was open to the entire community with the purpose of setting priorities for improvement, and jump starting the community to action. Phase 2 was held on June 29, 2005 from 6:30 to 9:30pm at the Centennial Centre and 39 Kimberley residents participated.

Kimberley Assessment Results

Participants were asked to describe their region. The majority of responses were positive. According to respondents, Kimberley[1] has *friendly / committed residents, is scenic, transitioning, has a laid back lifestyle, is a close knit community, and has a number of outdoor recreation opportunities*. When participants were asked to identify key strengths, the top responses were *outdoor recreation opportunities, scenic location and sense of community*. In addition, *residents, quality of life, volunteers, safety and low taxes* were mentioned as strengths. When participants were asked why they lived in Kimberley, *quality of life, recreation opportunities and affordability* were the reasons mentioned most. When participants were asked to provide directions for improvement for their community, *small business attraction & support* was most often mentioned. *Improved collaboration, employment opportunities, youth oriented programs / facilities and sustainable growth* were also mentioned by a number of participants.

From highest to lowest, section scores were as follows: Quality of Life (68), Infrastructure & Business Services (65), Opportunities & Attitudes (55), Communication

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[1] Residents were asked to define what geographical area constituted their community and the response was the City of Kimberley.   .

& Connectivity (53), Leadership, Teamwork & Networking (50), Markets & Marketing (46), Education & Training (42), Government & Organization (41), Innovation (33), and Capital & Funding (29). The total score for all sections was 48.

According to absolute score, Kimberley scored well in a number of sections indicating a number of potential community assets that should be considered when considering directions for community action(s). In addition, a number of lower scoring sections highlight areas of potential concern. More specifically, Quality of Life, Infrastructure & Business Services, Opportunities & Attitudes, Communication & Connectivity, and Leadership, Teamwork & Networking represent areas of potential strength. Due to lower scores, Markets & Marketing, Education & Training, Government & Organization, Innovation, and Capital & Funding represent areas of potential concern. 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 Kimberley 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, *Markets & Marketing, Leadership, Teamwork & Networking,* and *Opportunities & Attitudes* are clearly areas of strength in Kimberley, in comparison to the nine other communities in the BVI database. Further, *Communications & Connectivity, Education & Training* and *Infrastructure & Business Services* are areas where future improvement efforts could be targeted, due to the lower scores in comparison to other communities.

Scores Compared to Average of All BVI Communities
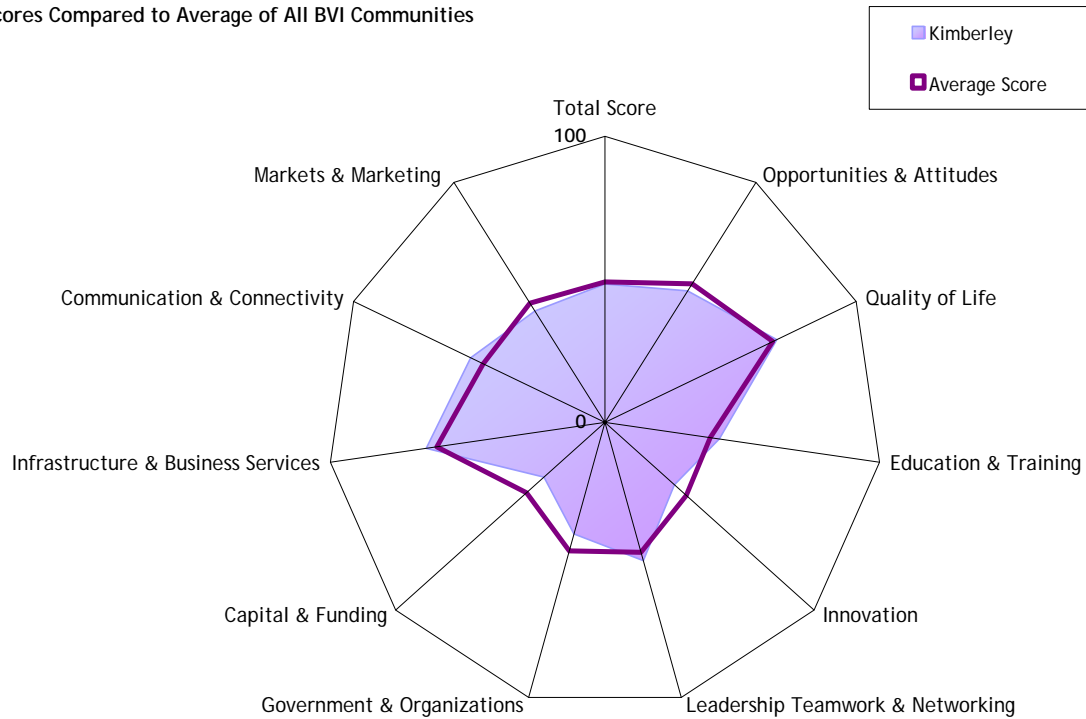
Prioritized Possible Courses of Action

During the Focus Session, the Assessment results were presented to the community by Mike Stolte of CIEL. The community was then presented with a series of possible courses of action, derived from focus groups and questionnaire responses, to improve the community's environment for business. Attendees were asked further suggestions for community action. These actions were displayed throughout the room, and attendees were asked to identify their top five priorities. The attendees discussed the actions with the most support, and immediate action steps were identified. Results from the Focus session are presented below with the number of votes for each displayed by each potential action.

Votes	Networking Action Statement
16	**Introduce a 'business beat'** in the local weekly newspaper to keep community informed on business needs, development efforts, including 'new business' features & success stories
	Develop Kimberley internal communications (i.e. web page or email alert system to feature events, meetings, status of initiatives, success stories, feature new businesses, volunteer opportunities, etc.)
0	Utilize Chamber of Commerce network and other local associations / groups to **assess required business supports and training needs**
0	Explore **joint-marketing opportunities** – possibly through Chamber or formation of a Business Association Host monthly business forums / training sessions (to provide networking opportunity and identified training and support, including business financing)
0	Host a **lenders forum** (how to obtain financing, what financing options exist, local financing expectations, etc.)
0	Host monthly business forums / training sessions (to provide networking opportunity and identified training and support, including business financing)

Votes	Capacity Building Action Statement
29	Implement a **buy local program**
	Consumer survey re: what residents buy locally and don't and why
4	**Strategy to get NGOs to work with business sector** (i.e. identifying business opportunities)

4	**Increase awareness of size of marketplace** / broader business orientation for new and existing businesses
4	Develop and implement an **entrepreneurial & / or leadership mentorship program for youth**
3	**Facilitate collaboration by pursuing a short-term project** between the resort, City, and business community (i.e. joint-marketing, collective re-branding or brand update initiative)
2	Host a **business opportunity identification** session
1	Develop & implement a strategy to use **local money for investing in local opportunities**
0	Host an **opportunity identification session** for youth

Votes	Marketing Action Statement
24	Investigate Kimberley as a '**green' brand**
	Investigate whether Kimberley could be a leader in 'green home' products and market it

18	Refine or revisit **community brand** – develop a branding strategy accordingly
13	**Targeting entrepreneurs for recruitment** to City
6	Develop and implement a **joint-marketing strategy**
5	Strategy to target new businesses / residents (i.e. some core strengths, proximity to airport, hi speed internet)
3	Develop & implement a **revitalization** initiative – including businesses outside of Platzl

Votes	Research, Administration & Planning Action Statement
8	Investigate opportunity in **training locally** – timber framing, tourism, recreation
7	**Inventory businesses and business resources**
6	**Visitor survey** to look at attitudes towards brand, community and amenities

3	Research into **diversification opportunities**
3	**Professional assessment of Platzl** (realtor / leasing specialist) re: right business mix / business practices
3	Ensure communication of and business inclusion in **community decision-making**

Small Group Summary

Following the priority setting exercise, participants from the session formed four discussion groups in order to access the viability of the top four courses of action. The 'Reality Check' exercise revealed that four of the four prioritized initiatives had sufficient energy and resources to proceed. Highlights from the discussion groups are outlined below according to initiative.

Initiative: **Introduce a 'business beat'** in the local weekly newspaper to keep community informed on business needs, development efforts, including 'new business' features & success stories

Initiative: **Develop Kimberley internal communications** (i.e. web page or email alert system to feature events, meetings, status of initiatives, success stories, feature new businesses, volunteer opportunities, etc.)

Working Group:

Heather Hornoi (leader)	Heather McKenzie
David Bellm	Mike Dodd
Mac Campbell	Ruldi Schuler

Reality Check: **Communications Strategy**

Question	Answer
Purpose – Does this action promote business growth and startup in the community? How does it/doesn't it? What is the main goal of this action? Does this goal help business?	• knowledge sharing within community and region of initiatives and available products and services • newspaper, radio, tv, Internet

Commitment – is this action realistic for our community to undertake? Is the whole community supportive of the action? Is there enough energy in the community to make it happen? Who has the energy to lead it (individuals and/or organizations)?	• yes
Leadership – Are there adequate human resources (people and time) to commit to this action? Who are key individuals and organizations? Who has the skills (i.e. leadership, organizational, fundraising) needed to make it happen?	• the City and Chamber will move forward on establishing a more detailed action plan for communications
Time Frame – can we accomplish this action within a reasonable amount of time? How does the timing affect its feasibility? What are the political, economic, funding, opportunistic factors affecting the timing of this action? How can these factors be managed?	• early Fall / first week of September
Financial Feasibility – Can we access enough financial resources (existing or potential) to commit to this action? Are these financial resources sustainable? (Both in building and operating/sustaining the action) Is this action viable?	• enough to start the process

<u>Assessment</u>

Take Action

Initiative: Investigate Kimberley as a '**green' brand**

Initiative: Investigate whether Kimberley could be a leader in 'green home' products and market it

Working Group:

Tina Cobb (leader)	Nancy Henderson
Larry Haber	Andy Cohen
Libby Olson	Ilona Hale
Sioban Staplin	Cathy Murphy
Kelly Comishin	Mike Flowers

Reality Check: **Green Brand**

Question	Answer
Purpose – Does this action promote business growth and startup in the community? How does it/doesn't it? What is the main goal of this action? Does this goal help business?	• approaches a business niche, opportunity for light industry • interest and support and values to support this approach • simple, visible, marketable
Commitment – is this action realistic for our community to undertake? Is the whole community supportive of the action? Is there enough energy in the community to make it happen? Who has the energy to lead it (individuals and/or organizations)?	• definitely the support there • Wildsight, Linday Park, City, Treetop, Good Times, TLC, College of the Rockies, RCR

Leadership – Are there adequate human resources (people and time) to commit to this action? Who are key individuals and organizations? Who has the skills (i.e. leadership, organizational, fundraising) needed to make it happen?	• "federal', provincial, corporate, CBT
Time Frame – can we accomplish this action within a reasonable amount of time? How does the timing affect its feasibility? What are the political, economic, funding, opportunistic factors affecting the timing of this action? How can these factors be managed?	• will be time consuming but feasible • need to start with small initiatives (blue box)
Financial Feasibility – Can we access enough financial resources (existing or potential) to commit to this action? Are these financial resources sustainable? (Both in building and operating/sustaining the action) Is this action viable?	• this has massive financial and environmental possibilities "the market has spoken"

Assessment

Take action

Initiative: Refine or revisit **community brand** – develop a branding strategy accordingly / Branding for City & Platzl

Working Group:

Wendy Moore (leader)	Mike Cave
Jack Ratcliffe	Laurie Sorensen
Phil Lyall	Marc Trudeau
Mel Taylor	Kieran Hickey
Barrie Peterson	Olyve Schuler
Chris V. Sorensen	Fred Mehl
John Teghtmeyer	Andrea Ericsson
Dan Hay (leader 2)	

Reality Check: **Community Brand**

Question	Answer
Purpose – Does this action promote business growth and startup in the community? How does it/doesn't it? What is the main goal of this action? Does this goal help business?	• Bavarian toward Alpine with historical • deal with parking and signage
Commitment – is this action realistic for our community to undertake? Is the whole community supportive of the action? Is there enough energy in the community to make it happen? Who has the energy to lead it (individuals and/or organizations)?	• City – reactivate BIA, Chamber, OCP

Leadership – Are there adequate human resources (people and time) to commit to this action? Who are key individuals and organizations? Who has the skills (i.e. leadership, organizational, fundraising) needed to make it happen?	• KV and Chamber – Dan Hay • Visitor survey
Time Frame – can we accomplish this action within a reasonable amount of time? How does the timing affect its feasibility? What are the political, economic, funding, opportunistic factors affecting the timing of this action? How can these factors be managed?	• $7000 branding • yes
Financial Feasibility – Can we access enough financial resources (existing or potential) to commit to this action? Are these financial resources sustainable? (Both in building and operating/sustaining the action) Is this action viable?	• City to grant on improvements • financial feasibility questionable

<u>Assessment</u>

Take action

<u>Next Steps</u>

meeting late summer

Initiative: Implement a **buy local program**

Initiative: **Consumer survey** re: what residents buy locally and don't and why

Working Group:

Paula Readman (leader)

Graham McRae

Ken McRae

Ian Ferrie

Reality Check: **Buy Local Program**

Question	Answer
Purpose – Does this action promote business growth and startup in the community? How does it/doesn't it? What is the main goal of this action? Does this goal help business?	• yes information will assist existing and potentially recognize untapped opportunity for business in the community. Main goal – to increase business prosperity • yes this goal helps with business
Commitment – is this action realistic for our community to undertake? Is the whole community supportive of the action? Is there enough energy in the community to make it happen? Who has the energy to lead it (individuals and/or organizations)?	• yes it's a realistic action, we feel the community will support the process and potentially the initiative if implemented properly • there is enough energy – it will need to be focused correctly • Chamber, city (EDO), individual businesses

Leadership – Are there adequate human resources (people and time) to commit to this action? Who are key individuals and organizations? Who has the skills (i.e. leadership, organizational, fundraising) needed to make it happen?	• yes, Chamber / City (EDO), interested businesses, and citizens • see above
Time Frame – can we accomplish this action within a reasonable amount of time? How does the timing affect its feasibility? What are the political, economic, funding, opportunistic factors affecting the timing of this action? How can these factors be managed?	• yes – if split into a survey phase and implementation phase each being approximately 6 months in length • downside could be summer time – upside could be a tie into holiday shopping for implementation of phase 2 • city committed funds towards BVI outcomes
Financial Feasibility – Can we access enough financial resources (existing or potential) to commit to this action? Are these financial resources sustainable? (Both in building and operating/sustaining the action) Is this action viable?	• local media coverage • may not be a huge financial strain, with a great outcome for implementing action • this action is viable

Assessment

Take action

Next Steps

Chamber is already looking at this initiative, perhaps action could be taken through that organization and interested individuals

Next Steps

The BVI Team strongly emphasizes the need for communities to become more self-reliant in today's economy.

The most important element of successfully completing an action is the presence of strong community leadership and energy. The community must identify human resources to champion and lead each action. The BVI Team asked that those in attendance identify working group members. The Community Sponsors will also continue to work with the working groups in order to follow through on the identified courses of action. Working groups made a commitment at the meeting to schedule and attend a follow up meeting.

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Appendix A. Phase 2 Attendance

Kieran Hickey	Fred Mehl
Mel Taylor	Tina Cobb
Andy Cohen	Wendy Moore
Paula Readman	Chris Sorenson
Ilona Hale	John Teghtmeyer
Ruldi & Olyve Schuler	Kelly Comishin
Doreen Morgan	Sioban Staplin
Graham McRae	Dan Hay
Ian Ferrie	Mike Dodd
Ken McRae	Larry Haber
Jack Ratcliffe	David Bellm
Ron McRae	Mike Cave
Nancy Henderson	Barrie Peterson
Mac Campbell	Laurie Sorensen
Erin Brett	Andrea Ericsson
Mike Flowers	Libby Olson
Phil Lyall	Robin Dixon
Heather McKenzie	Rob Gay
Kathy Murphy	Tracey Whiting
Mark Trudeau	Heather Hornoi

Appendix B. Medium to Long Term Actions[2]

The following medium and long-term actions were derived from focus group and questionnaire responses from the Assessment session. Medium and long-term actions should be kept in mind for future projects / planning.

Capacity Building
Increase collaboration across learning providers utilizing College of the Rockies in a catalytic role
Develop and implement a long-term **leadership & development strategy for youth**
Establish an **youth entrepreneurship incubator**

Networking
Develop and implement a **leadership attraction & retention strategy** (recruit new leaders, mentorship, cross-group leadership opportunities)

Marketing
Develop **long-term regional marketing strategy** including investment attraction, out of area joint-marketing, and continued international tourist attraction
Determine **joint-marketing alliances** and develop strategy accordingly (i.e. resort, small businesses, city)

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[2] 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.

Research, Administration & Planning
Encourage self-employment according to community service / amenity needs
Develop and implement a **long-term health care strategy**
Develop and implement a **long-term transportation strategy** (explore feasibility of public transportation, working with resort on shuttle, explore Marysville and Cranbrook routes)
Expand vocational opportunities through College of the Rockies, based on local assets

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Appendix C. Reality Check Worksheet

TITLE OF ACTION: _____

Question	Answer
PURPOSE: Does the action promote business growth and startup in the community? How does it / doesn't it? What is the main goal of this action? Does this goal help business?	
COMMITMENT: Is this action realistic for our community to undertake? Is the whole community supportive of the action? Is there enough energy in the community to make it happen? Who has the energy to lead it (individuals and / or organizations)?	
LEADERSHIP: Are there adequate human resources (people and time) to commit to this action? Who are key individuals and organization? Who has the skills (i.e. leadership, organizational, fundraising) needed to make it happen?	
TIME FRAME: Can we accomplish this action within a reasonable amount of time? How does the timing affect its feasibility? What are the political, economic, funding, opportunistic factors affecting the timing of this action? How can these factors be managed?	
FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY: Can we access enough financial resources (existing or potential) to commit to this action? Are these financial resources sustainable (both in building and operating / sustaining the action)? Is this action viable?	

YOUR RECOMMENDATION:

Take action!
Get more information before starting
Wait for better circumstances

NEXT STEPS:

Appendix D. 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, Community Futures of Central Kootenay Manager pf Community Economic Development (CED) 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 statistics were 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 snacks in order to get them out. Through the findings and the follow-up community 'action session' that community has since innovatively branded itself – and all products and services from the area – with its story-telling 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. Because of the success of the BVI, the Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL) was formed in 2004. CIEL is a Canadian centre of excellence in community, entrepreneurial and economic leadership (focusing mainly on communities). Its tools, training, and innovative, yet practical, solutions build prosperity and a higher quality of life. CIEL strives to be among the nation's best resources for expert advice on community, entrepreneurial and economic solutions, as well as a leader in training, conceptual design & tool development.

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.