



# Kimberley Assessment Summary

## The 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 regional communities to determine possible short, medium, or long-term actions the community can undertake to improve its business friendliness.

The **City of Kimberley, Community Futures of SE Region of BC** and the **Kimberley 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 report summarizes the *assessment* phase of the BVI. The Phase 1 session included an assessment of the community's apparent small business resources and potential through a survey and a focus group session. The Phase 2 Community Focus session will be open to the entire community with the purpose of setting priorities for improvement, and jumpstarting the community to action. The **Phase 2 session is scheduled for June 29, 2005 from 6:30 to 9:30pm at the Centennial Centre.**

Kimberley is the 18th BC community to participate in the Business Vitality Index.

**Note:** For a complete 82 page report, please visit [www.businessvitalityindex.com](http://www.businessvitalityindex.com).

## Key Findings

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

A comparison of Kimberley scores to other BVI communities revealed Kimberley is above average on five of ten BVI sections: Communications & Connectivity (10%), Education & Training (9%), Leadership, Teamwork & Networking (7%), Infrastructure & Business Services (6%), and Quality of Life (2%), indicating areas of potential strength. Remaining sections present potential areas of concern: Opportunities and Attitudes (-5%), Markets & Marketing (-6%), Government & Organization (-13%), Innovation (-15%), and Capital & Funding (-22%). In addition, Kimberley also scored below average on total score in relation to other BVI communities by 2%.

Participants were asked to describe their region. The majority of responses were positive. According to respondents, Kimberley 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.

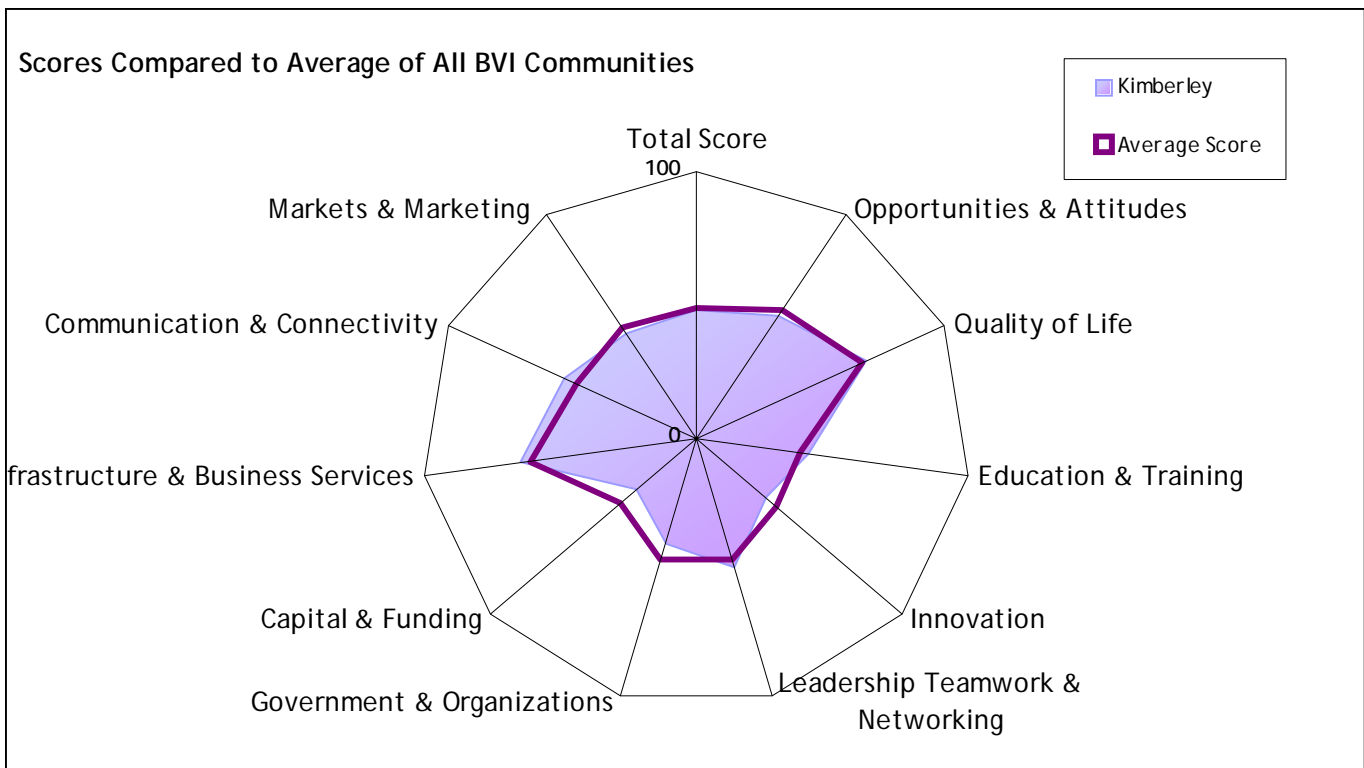
Sponsored by and funded by:

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## The Assessment

The quantitative section of the two-part questionnaire asked the participants to rate their community by agreeing or disagreeing with a series of statements related 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*.

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.

The qualitative section of the questionnaire collected 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?"), as well additional comments in each of 10 sections.

# Recurring Themes

## Strengths

outdoor recreational opportunities – proximity, diversity  
scenic location / natural beauty  
lifestyle – laid back, safe, family friendly  
residents – friendly, committed, “can-do” attitude  
community’s positive attitude toward transitioning  
affordability – commercial & recreation

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## Improvements

review, update or develop community brand  
improve communication / collaboration: between businesses &  
city, downtown & resort, community & City, across businesses  
support from city to businesses (i.e. visits, increase level of interest)  
identify training needs - more responsive to business/community needs  
sustainable development (as opposed to allowing developers to take over)  
employment, recreation & other opportunities for youth & young families  
economic diversification beyond tourism; fostering entrepreneurial/innovative  
attitude  
joint marketing needed

# Recommended Short-term Actions

The following are some possible courses of action that the community could undertake to improve business friendliness, derived from feedback and results.

Capacity Building
Host an <b>opportunity identification session for youth</b>
Host a <b>business opportunity identification session</b>
Develop and implement an <b>entrepreneurial &amp; / or leadership mentorship program for youth</b>
Implement a <b>buy local program</b>
<b>Facilitate collaboration by pursuing a short-term project</b> between the resort, City, and business community (i.e. joint-marketing, collective re-branding or brand update initiative)
Develop & implement a strategy to use <b>local money for investing in local opportunities</b> (micro-loan / business start-up fund)

Marketing
Develop and implement a <b>joint-marketing strategy</b>
Develop & implement a <b>revitalization</b> initiative – including businesses outside of Platzl
Refine or revisit <b>community brand</b> – develop a branding strategy accordingly

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

Research, Administration & Planning
<b>Inventory businesses and business resources</b>
Ensure communication of and business inclusion in <b>community decision-making</b>
Investigate opportunities in <b>training locally</b> – timber framing, tourism, recreation

**On June 29th from 6:30-9:30 pm at the Centennial Centre, residents will be asked to select priorities and form working groups around specific actions.**

# Highest Scoring Questions

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
235	The community is a safe place to live.	94	92	3%
234	There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. Ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	93	84	10%
231	The community is physically beautiful, and environmentally safe (i.e. pollution, water quality).	85	90	-6%
911.1	Word of Mouth	85	76	11%
812	Parking near core business areas is accessible and affordable.	84	79	6%
822.2	Insurance	84	71	18%
1023	People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	83	71	17%
822.1	Banking	82	72	14%
911.6	Basic Internet Services	80	78	3%
831	Existing infrastructure (ie. Power, water) is good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	79	70	13%
241	Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	78	79	-2%
911.5	Mobile phone	77	56	38%
213	There is an educational organization in the area that offers post-secondary programs and continuing education opportunities.	76	57	35%
931.3	Bus	76	66	16%
222	There is a strong community identity, and there are plentiful and varying opportunities for involvement (i.e. arts, athletics, politics, church groups).	75	69	10%
911.7	Fast or High speed Internet services	75	48	57%

# Lowest Scoring Questions

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
931.4	Train	2	15	-90%
721	Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	9	14	-39%
921.4	Carpooling system	12	23	-48%
921.1	Public Transportation	12	36	-65%
731.2	Angel (informal local investors)	18	25	-30%
322	There is an entrepreneurial development program in elementary and secondary schools (K-12).	18	20	-10%
431	Businesses that do research or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	22	21	6%
432	Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (Not necessarily about the region).	22	21	3%
731.1	Equity (formal investors)	23	31	-24%
433	There are formal and informal forums (Conferences, Workshops) on technology and technology applications	24	21	12%
722	People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	25	22	11%
632.3	Mentoring	25	35	-28%
731.7	Loans \$200,000 and above	26	24	12%
334	The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	27	35	-22%
442	Research that is being done in the community or region is relevant to the business community's needs and interests.	27	32	-13%

# 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.

#	Question	Score	Average	Difference
112	The community is facing a significant economic crisis	46	76	-39%
232	Young adults (25-34) consider the community a desirable place to live.	61	49	24%
241	Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	78	79	-2%
334	The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	27	35	-22%
344	Citizens are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	48	47	2%
612	The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	47	48	0%
613	The governing body is committed to help existing businesses or creating new businesses through policy and action.	37	42	-12%
722	People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds.	25	22	11%
811	There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	51	51	0%
1022	The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	57	44	30%
1023	People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	83	71	17%
1032	People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	45	41	8%