



Centre for Innovative &  
Entrepreneurial Leadership

# **Business Vitality Initiative (BVI)**

## **Phase One Assessment Report**

### **Castor, Alberta**

December 2008

**Hosted by: Paintearth Economic Partnership Society**



**Funded by:**

The logo for the province of Alberta, featuring the word 'Alberta' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.



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## 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 BVI 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 communities to determine possible short and long-term actions the community can undertake to improve its business friendliness.

Larry Davidson selected and invited the community participants on behalf of the community sponsor, the Paintearth Economic Partnership Society (PEPS). 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 November 13, 2008, twenty-six people attended Phase 1 session of the BVI in Castor.

Castor is one of four Alberta communities selected to participate in a pilot of the BVI funded by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD). ARD has partnered with CIEL to deliver the BVI to assist with economic development in rural Alberta.

The geographic boundaries for the purposes of answering BVI questions (as chosen by consensus by BVI participants) are a 30 km radius around Castor.

This report summarizes the Phase 1 or *assessment* phase of the BVI. The phase 1 session used a survey and a focus group to assess the community's small business resources and potential. The phase 2 or *focus and action* session will be open to the entire community with the purpose of setting priorities for improvement, and jump starting the community to action. The date of that session is Thursday, February 5, 2009.

### Community Profile

In the Assessment Session, participants were asked to give three words to describe their community. The majority of responses were positive. According to respondents, Castor is a *friendly, safe, pretty community*. When participants were asked to identify key strengths, the top responses were *community involvement/spirit, health services, and the caring and cooperative nature of its citizens*. When participants were asked why they live in Castor, *country lifestyle, work, and family* were mentioned most. When participants were asked to provide

directions for improvement for their community, increased community participation and beautification of the town were mentioned most often.

### Castor Section Scores

Castor BVI participants were asked to respond to a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions, directly related to the concept of business vitality. The questions are divided into ten separate sections which focus on different aspects of business vitality. Section names, descriptions, as well as Castor section scores are as follows:

- A. Opportunities and Attitudes: 54 out of 100** - The ability of the community to recognize, take action, and follow through on available opportunities.
- B. Quality of Life: 70 out of 100** - The ability of the community to attract & retain businesses & residents, especially those who are young, skilled workers.
- C. Education and Training: 40 out of 100** – The ability to develop entrepreneurship skills & attitudes in the non-business population, and to upgrade skills in the business community to remain competitive in larger markets.
- D. Innovation: 43 out of 100** – The ability of a community and its residents to innovate-- to 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.
- E. Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking: 49 out of 100** - The capacity of a community to take action on an idea or opportunity as a whole group, with good leadership, effective teamwork, and clear communication.
- F. Role of Government and Organizations: 52 out of 100** – The 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.
- G. Capital and Funding: 61 out of 100** – The ability of the community to financially support entrepreneurs through ensuring access to capital, and educating businesses about financial management and supports.
- H. Infrastructure and Business Services: 55 out of 100** – The ability to provide necessary and high quality support services and infrastructure to business at reasonable costs, allowing businesses to be as competitive as possible.
- I. Communication and Connectivity: 55 out of 100** - The ability of businesses to connect with each other and with outside markets.
- J. Markets and Marketing: 49 out of 100** – The ability of business to capture and expand markets, both locally, regionally, and outside the region, thus keeping and building local wealth.

The average score for all sections was **54 out of 100**.

## Recurring Themes

The following recurring themes were identified throughout the BVI, highlighting areas for the community to potentially focus action on. The positive and negative themes can be used as a strength or solid base from which to work on the things that need improvement.

Positive	Negative
Friendly, caring community	Need more businesses
Low cost of living	More jobs to attract young people and young families
Good schools	Need business assn or chamber
Community spirit	Better marketing
Attractive setting	No community plan, brand
Health care	Beautify main street
Agriculture	

## 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 to the focus groups and questionnaire.

**Table 1: Recommendations – Possible Short Term Actions (0-12 Months)**

<b>Possible Short Term Actions (actions completed in less than 12 months)</b> (The possible actions are based upon participant responses to the survey and focus groups – each action notes the corresponding BVI section(s) where the action was listed by participant(s) – e.g. Question F8)	
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategically publicize available business niches &amp; possibilities (Bakery, plumber, web design, etc.) – (Focus Groups, B14, Top Untapped Opportunities)</li> <li>▪ Opportunity identification forum for young people to identify business, education, social and recreation opportunities (Top 10, Section A)</li> <li>▪ Youth entrepreneurship initiatives (e.g. entrepreneurship in schools, Junior Achievement, etc.) - (Top 10, Section A &amp; F)</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Main street beautification (also clean up commercial &amp; residential clutter) - (Themes, Focus Groups, Sections A &amp; F)</li> <li>▪ E-commerce, business start-up, financing and other basic courses offered (Sections I &amp; C, G5)</li> <li>▪ Better, more strategic use of newspaper to communicate Castor events to community and beyond (Focus, Groups, Section I)</li> <li>▪ Apprenticeship options/info sessions (Improvements, Section C)</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business association or chamber (Themes, Focus Groups, Section</li> </ul>

	<p>E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More social and community events (possibly building on farmers' markets with fair or rodeo, etc.) – (Top 10, Section B &amp; E)</li> <li>▪ Resurrect interagency meetings (Section E)</li> <li>▪ Networking sessions amongst businesses, council and others (Section F)</li> </ul>
Admin., Research, Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research adult education demands and online learning possibilities (Section C)</li> <li>▪ Business succession initiative (e.g. matchmaking, mentoring – possibly to introduce youth/young families to opportunities) – (Top 10, Focus Groups, Section B, F8)</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Recommendations – Possible Long Term Actions (12+ Months)**

<b>Possible Long Term Actions (actions taking more than 12 months to complete)</b>	
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community leadership program (Top 10, E6)</li> <li>▪ Develop post-secondary presence in town to increase education, innovation (e.g. forums introducing ideas ) – (Section D)</li> <li>▪ Ongoing physician recruitment/retention program (Section B)</li> <li>▪ Business recruitment &amp; retention strategy/program (Focus Groups, Improvements)</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and market Castor brand capitalizing on advantages &amp; unique qualities identified in BVI (e.g. cost, safety, schools, health facilities, rec. fees, outdoor recreation, etc.) - (Themes, Focus Groups, Various sections, J5)</li> <li>▪ Commercial real estate strategy that looks to increasing available land (including recovering contaminated land) and land inventory (Section H)</li> <li>▪ Better, more strategic use of newspaper to communicate Castor events to community and beyond (Focus, Groups, Section I)</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regional networking &amp; cooperation strategy with Coronation and beyond (e.g. working with Coronation Chamber) - (Section E)</li> <li>▪ Strategy top market goods &amp; services from region co-operatively (Section J, J9, J10)</li> <li>▪ Buy local strategy (Section J)</li> </ul>
Research, Admin. and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop community vision and plan with much local consultation (Themes, A1, Sections E &amp; H)</li> <li>▪ Twinning Highway 36 (Focus Groups, Section I)</li> <li>▪ Investigate feasibility of year-round sports facility (Section B)</li> </ul>

## 1.0 Introduction

The assessment session of the BVI was conducted in Castor, Alberta, on November 13, 2008. The project's community sponsor is the Paintearth Economic Partnership Society, whose Economic Development Officer, Larry Davidson, coordinated the project.

Castor is the 17th community in Canada that has taken part in the BVI, in addition to five communities in Australia. Castor is one of four Alberta communities selected to participate in a pilot of the BVI funded by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD). ARD has partnered with CIEL to deliver the BVI to assist with economic development in rural Alberta.

The geographic boundaries for the purposes of answering BVI questions (as chosen by consensus by BVI participants) are a 30 km radius around Castor.

The second session of the BVI, the Phase 2 or *focus and action* session, will take place on February 5, 2009. At that meeting, the findings contained in this report will be presented to the community, which will then set priorities for action. Following that process, the community sponsor will be available to offer assistance to the community in locating resources to carry out the identified actions.

### 1.1 Business Vitality Initiative Methodology

The BVI process surveys a variety of community members while also maximizing the information from local business people. For this reason, community sponsors, which typically include city councils and economic development offices, are encouraged to sample communities at certain ratios: 50% business people, 25% local leaders, and 25% citizens (representing a wide range of interests, ages, and perspectives in the community). Upon selection, these participants are asked to attend a BVI focus group session which typically takes place over two and a half hours on a weekday evening.

A typical BVI session begins with an introduction to the BVI process and an introduction of session participants and facilitators. In order to provide some structure for the BVI process and results, participants are then asked to discuss and define the geographical boundaries of their community. This boundary may be just a town's boundaries or it also may encompass nearby surrounding communities that may rely on or are integrated into the central community.

The completion of the BVI survey is the next step in the facilitation process. The first section of the BVI collects information relating to both the participant and the community. For example, questions relating to age, income, education, and

occupation are collected. Additionally, the BVI asks participants to provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of the community.

The second section of the BVI is comprised up of various multi-choice and short answer questions in ten separate sections (table 3). Each section contains a variable number of questions and subsections which total 170 questions in this section of the survey.

**Table 3: BVI Evaluation Sections**

A. Opportunities and Attitudes
B. Quality of Life
C. Education and Training
D. Innovation
E. Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking
F. Role of Government and Organizations
G. Capital and Funding
H. Infrastructure and Business Services
I. Communication and Connectivity
J. Markets and Marketing

A range of answers are available to the participant for each question (completely agree, somewhat agree, neither agree or disagree, somewhat disagree, and completely disagree), and each answer receives a different score. If all participants completely agreed with a question, the question would receive a score of 100. Alternately, if all participants completely disagreed with the question, the overall question score would be zero. In the case of neither agree or disagree, if all participants answered a question with this option, the question score would be 50.

CIEL weights each question, subsection, and section according to its relative importance.

In addition to the survey portion of the BVI, focus groups in Castor answered two separate questions that are administered on the same day as the BVI paper survey. Typically, the BVI respondent group in attendance is split into two or more separate groups, with each group answering one of the two questions (table 4). If a focus group is ambitious or has extra time, it can choose to answer both questions. The results of the focus group are then added to the data provided by the BVI survey in order to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of a community.

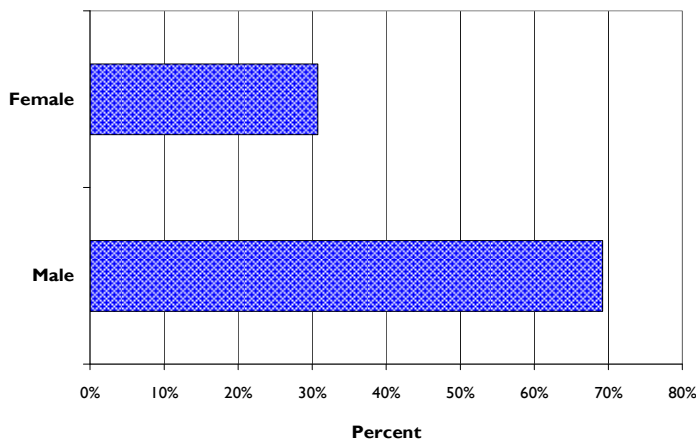
**Table 4: BVI Focus group questions**

1. What makes this community a great place to live?
2. What changes can be made to improve your community?

## 2.0 Community Profile and Focus Group Results

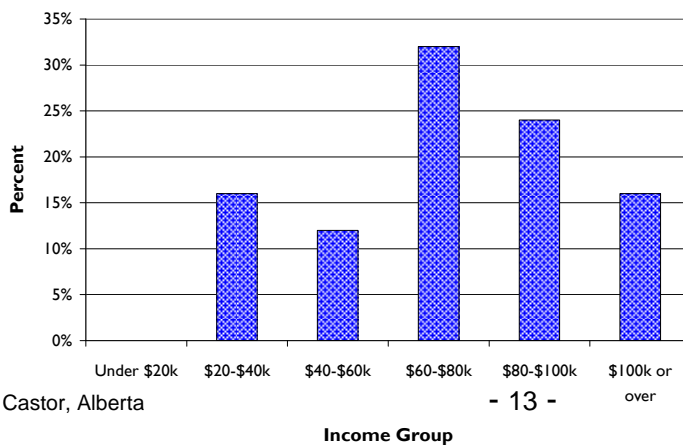
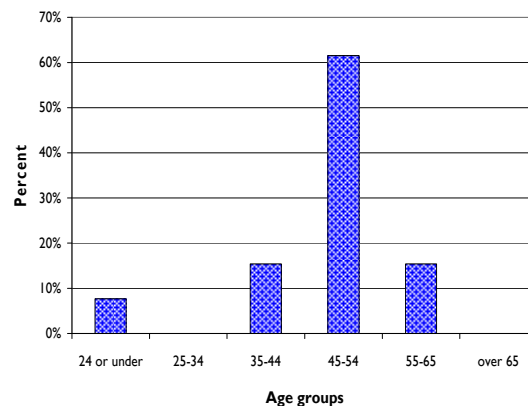
### 2.1 BVI Focus Group Respondent Profile

The first part of the BVI survey consists of various questions used to profile focus group participants. In total there were 26 people from the community of Castor who participated in the BVI survey and focus group session on November 13, 2008.



- 31% of Castor BVI participants were female, and 69% were male.

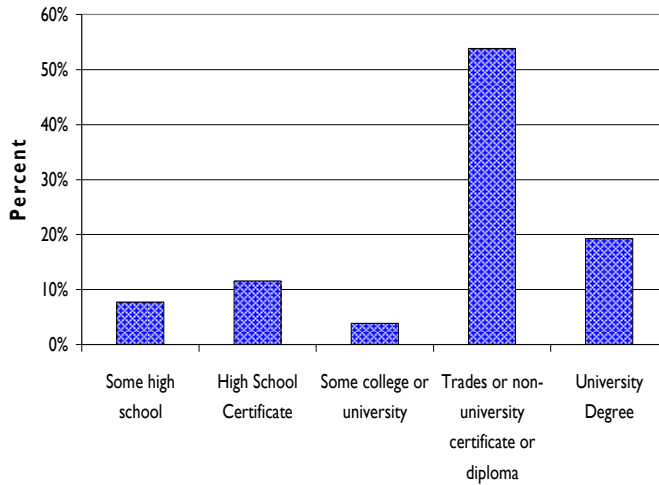
- In the BVI focus group session, 61% of the participants were in the 35-54 age range.
- There were no participants over the age of 65, or between 25 and 34.



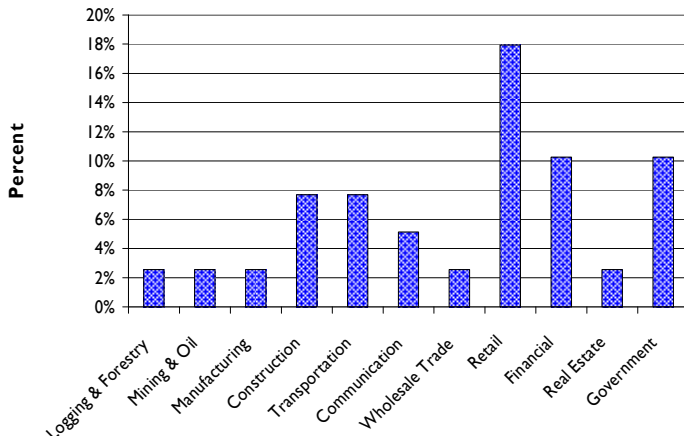
- 60% of the BVI survey group had incomes between \$60 and \$100 K.
- There were no participants with an income under \$20

Castor, Alberta

- The most common educational grouping was “Trade or non-university diploma or certificate” at 53% of participants.



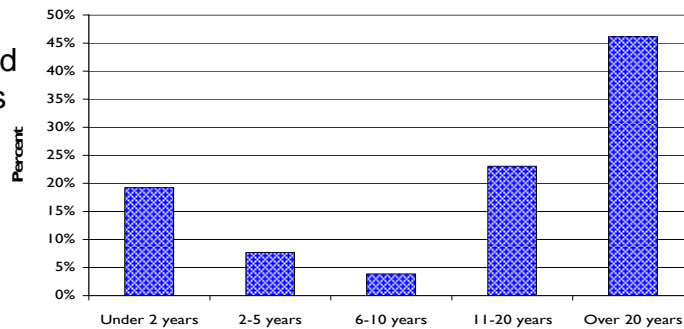
Highest level of Education



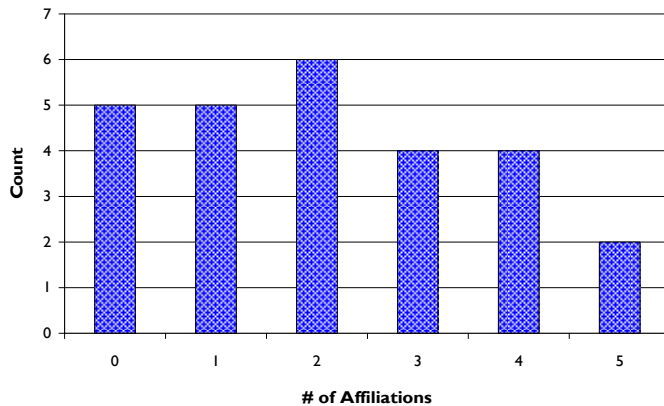
Occupation

- The most common occupation of BVI participants was the retail sector, followed by the financial and government sectors.

- The most commonly cited time in the community as stated by 46% of participants was ‘over 20 years’.

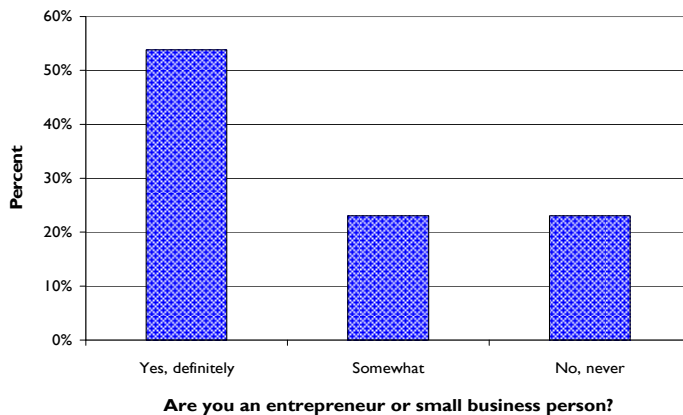
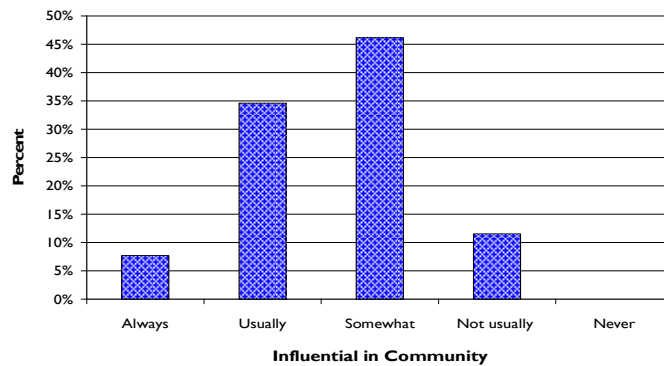


Time in Community



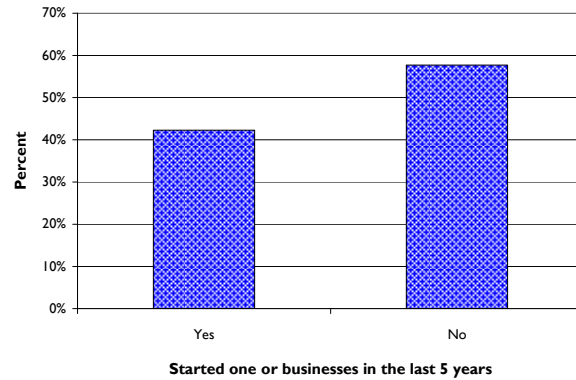
The most common number of affiliations for focus group participants was '2' at 25% of the BVI group.

- 80% of participants say they feel influential in the community in some way.
- No participants felt they were 'never' influential in the community.



- 76% of participants stated that they felt they are a business person or entrepreneur in some way.

- 42% of participants stated that they have started at least one business in the last 5 years.



## 2.2 Focus Group Results

The focus groups on November 13 were asked two questions.

**Question 1:** What are the things that make this community a good place in which to do business ?

**Question 2:** What are the things that can be improved to help businesses in your community?

Table 5 shows the top responses to Question 1 including an alphabetical listing of some of the responses that were given only once. For a full listing of answers consult Appendix F.

**Table 5: Focus Group Question 1-- Top Ten Results**

	Count	Category
Friendly	2	Community
Affordable real estate	2	Real Estate
Accessible parking	1	Infrastructure
Aesthetically pleasing - tidy beautiful, clean	1	Community
Businesses know their clientele	1	Business
Community spirit	1	Community
Deliveries - daily, depots	1	Services
Economic development officer	1	Government
Established community - loyal	1	Community
Fair prices	1	Business

Grouping all 26 responses in Appendix F into categories (table 6), the category “Community” comes out on top. That category includes various social aspects of life in Castor.

**Table 6: Focus Group Question 1 Common Themes**

	Count
Community	9
Business	8
Infrastructure	3
Government	2
Services	2
Real Estate	2

Table 7 shows the top responses to Question 2 including an alphabetical listing of the responses that were given only once. For a full listing of answers consult Appendix F.

**Table 7: Focus Group Question 2 Top Ten Results**

	Count	Category
Accessibility of land	3	Real Estate
Chamber of commerce	2	Business
Business needs - sporting goods, clothing, breakfast, espresso shop, web design, graphic design, bakery, copy centre	1	Business
Business succession planning	1	Business
Generate tourist trade experiences	1	Marketing
More information readily available	1	Marketing
More newspaper ads	1	Marketing
Promote Castor lifestyle	1	Marketing
Promote heritage sites	1	Marketing
Promote how inexpensive it is to live here (rec fees half the price of anywhere)	1	Marketing

Grouping all 26 responses in Appendix F into categories (table 8), the category “Marketing” comes out on top.

**Table 8: Focus Group Question 2 Common Themes**

	Count
Marketing	8
Business	6
Community	3
Infrastructure	3
Real Estate	3

## 2.3 Community Profile Results

The community profile is broken up into seven different questions as described below. For each section, a table of the top ten answers is presented with a count of the number of answers in brackets if it is over one. For a full list of responses for each question, tables are located in Appendix G.

### 2.3.1 Describing Castor in Three Words

There were 64 individual responses to the community profile question which asks for three words or phrases that best describe Castor. Of those, 45 were considered to be positive, 14 were neutral, and 5 were considered negative, resulting in a 10:1 positive to negative ratio, indicating an overall strength for the community.

**Table 9: Describing Castor in Three Words (Top Ten)**

Positive		Negative	
Friendly	18	Complacent	1
Safe	5	Needing direction	1
Pretty	4	Tired	1
Active	3	Doesn't see potential	1
Peaceful	2	Siloed	1
Supportive, caring	2		
Beautiful	2		
Picturesque	2		
Clean	2		
Caring for elderly	1		

### 2.3.2 Strengths and Assets of Castor

In the strengths and assets section of the Castor community profile, there were 71 individual responses. Of these responses, the top ten self-assessed strengths of Castor appear in table 10 below. For a complete list of responses see Appendix G.

**Table 10: Top Ten Strengths and Assets of Castor**

	<b>Count</b>
Community involvement and spirit	10
Hospital/extended care facility/senior's lodge	6
Caring, cooperative	5
People	4
Friendly, welcoming	4
Safe & Secure	3
Oil/Gas	3
Good schools	3
Great place to raise a family	2
Two schools	2

### 2.3.3 Improving Castor

The most important step in improving Castor, according to survey participants, is the need to retain youth and families through employment and other means. This is probably closely related to the second most common response, which is the need for more businesses.

**Table 11: Top Ten ways to Improve Castor**

	<b>Count</b>
Youth and family retention through employment	12
Business development, more business	11
More activities for younger people	4
More diversity of businesses to help keep shopping local	3
The attractiveness of the main street	3
Improve infrastructure	3
Indoor sports plex/ rec centre	2
More involvement of youth in community	2
Land development at affordable pricing	2
More social and community events	2

### 2.3.4 Reason for living in Castor

The top reason for living in Castor as stated by BVI participants was the quiet country lifestyle, followed by work, family, and friends. Table 12 is a partial listing; for a complete list consult Appendix G.

**Table 12: Top Ten Reasons for Living in Castor**

	<b>Count</b>
Nice quiet country lifestyle	5
Work	3
Family	3
Friends here	2
Friendly	2
Community involvement	2
Safety	1
People	1
Location	1
Good place to raise children	1

### 2.3.5 What makes Castor unique

According to BVI participants, the two most common reasons that make Castor unique is its attractive physical setting and waterways. Some of these reasons are given in Table 13; for a complete list see Appendix G.

**Table 13: Top Ten Reasons Castor is Unique**

	<b>Count</b>
Attractive community	9
Our waterways in town, Castor Creek	5
Friendly people	5
Stable, not transient	2
Recreational facilities	2
Senior citizen's facilities	2
Topography, landscape	2
Involved community	2
Variety of things to do	1
Location	1

### 2.3.6 Untapped Opportunities

The most commonly cited untapped opportunity was the need for a bakery. See table 13A and Appendix G.

**Table 13A: Top Untapped Opportunities**

	Count
Bakery	4
Restaurant	3
Plumber	2
Hotel/Motel	2

### 2.3.7 What are you most proud of?

**Table 13B: Top Sources of Pride**

	Count
People care about each other	5
Friendly people	4
Beauty of the town	2
Community spirit	2
Extra services for seniors including housing	2
Arts & culture	1
Safety	1
Ability to have a full running daycare	1
Golf Club	1
Castor little theatre	1
Health facilities	1

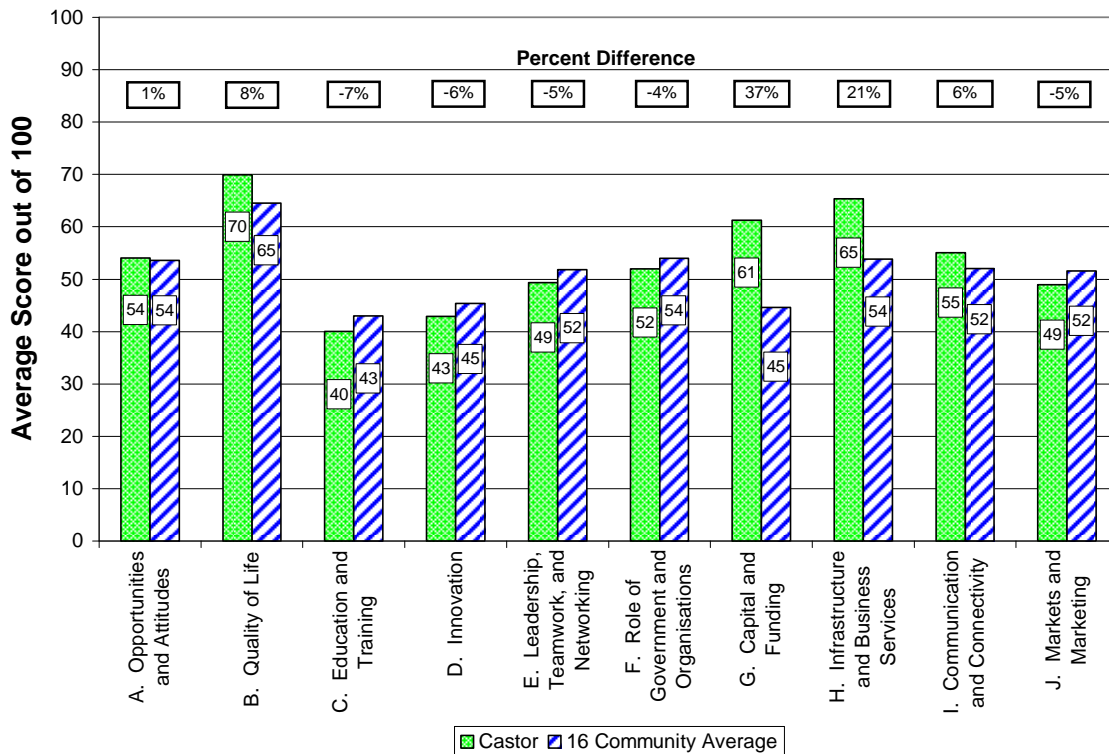
## 3.0 Section Scores

Overall, Castor had a full survey score of 54 out of 100, which is 5% above the 16-community average of 51.

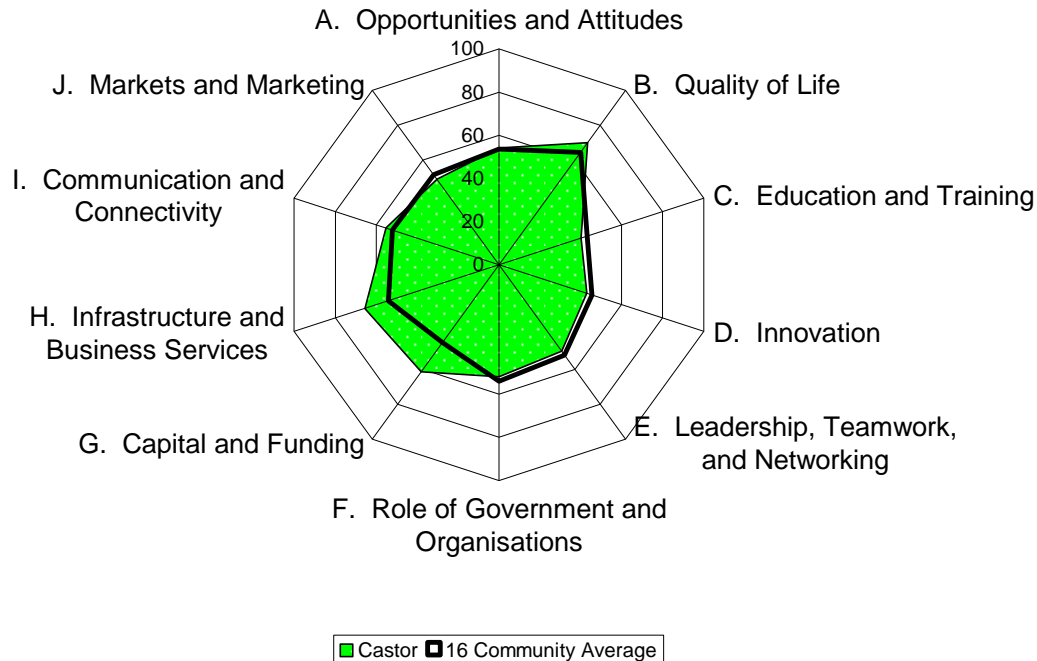
The BVI section results as shown in figures 1 and 2 illustrate that Castor scored equal to or above the 16-community average in five of 10 sections. A particular strength for Castor was its score for the 'Quality of Life' section of 70 (8% above the community average), which was the highest scoring section of the survey.

Also notable is that Castor’s score for the ‘Capital and Funding’ and ‘Infrastructure and Business Services’ sections were much higher than the community average—37% and 21% respectively.

The lowest scoring section of the survey was section C, ‘Education and Training’ which had a score of 40 (7% below the community average).



**Figure 1: Castor and 16- Community Average Section Scores**



**Figure 2: Castor and 16-Community Average Section Scores**

### 31. Individual Section Scores

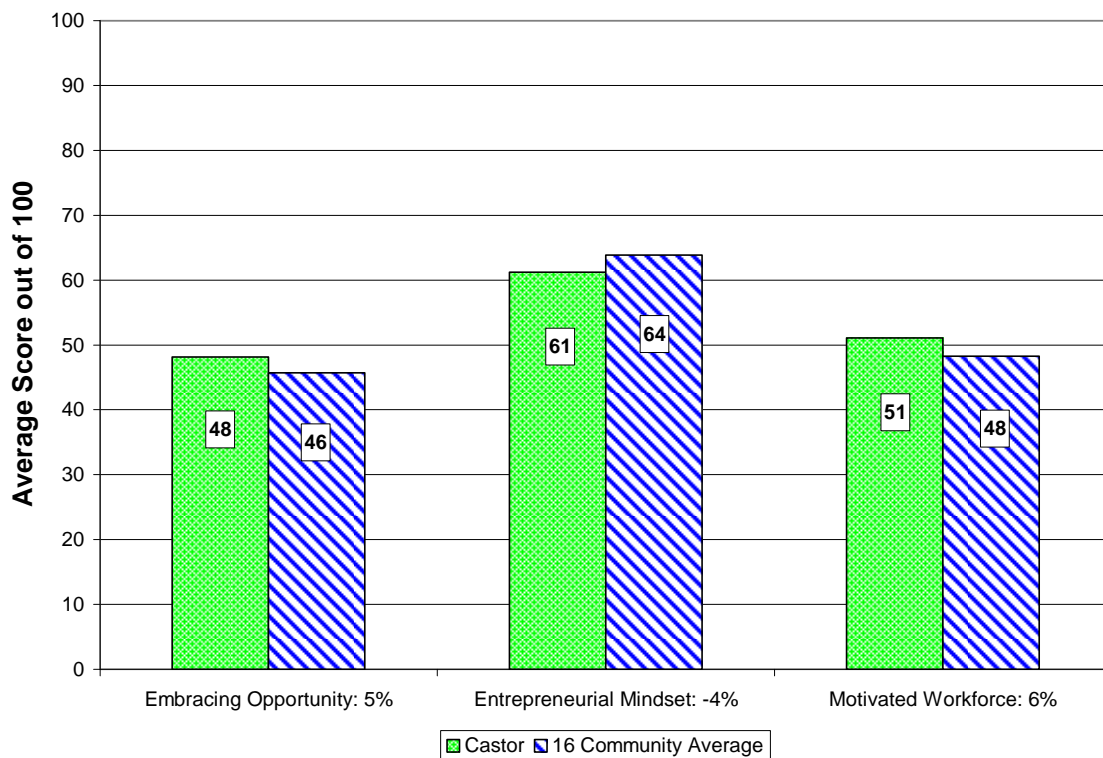
The remainder of this chapter presents a look at each of the ten sections of the Castor BVI individually, including:

- a graph showing the subsection results for each section, and the deviation of those results from the 16-community average.
- a list of all questions in each section showing the score for Castor compared with the average score for the 16 communities. That table has the highest scoring question in relation to the 16-community average highlighted in green, and the lowest in red.
- a graph indicating the distribution of answers within each question.
- a summary of the strengths and improvements as stated by the survey participants.

### 3.2 Section A: Opportunities and Attitudes (54 out of 100)

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

The Opportunities and Attitudes section was the 5th highest ranking section of the survey in terms of absolute score, and also ranked 5th when compared to the community average. Of particular concern in this section is question A1 (the existence of a community plan) which scored in the bottom 20 questions in terms of absolute score and in comparison with the 16-community average (see Appendices B and D).



**Figure 3: Opportunities and Attitudes Subsection Scores**

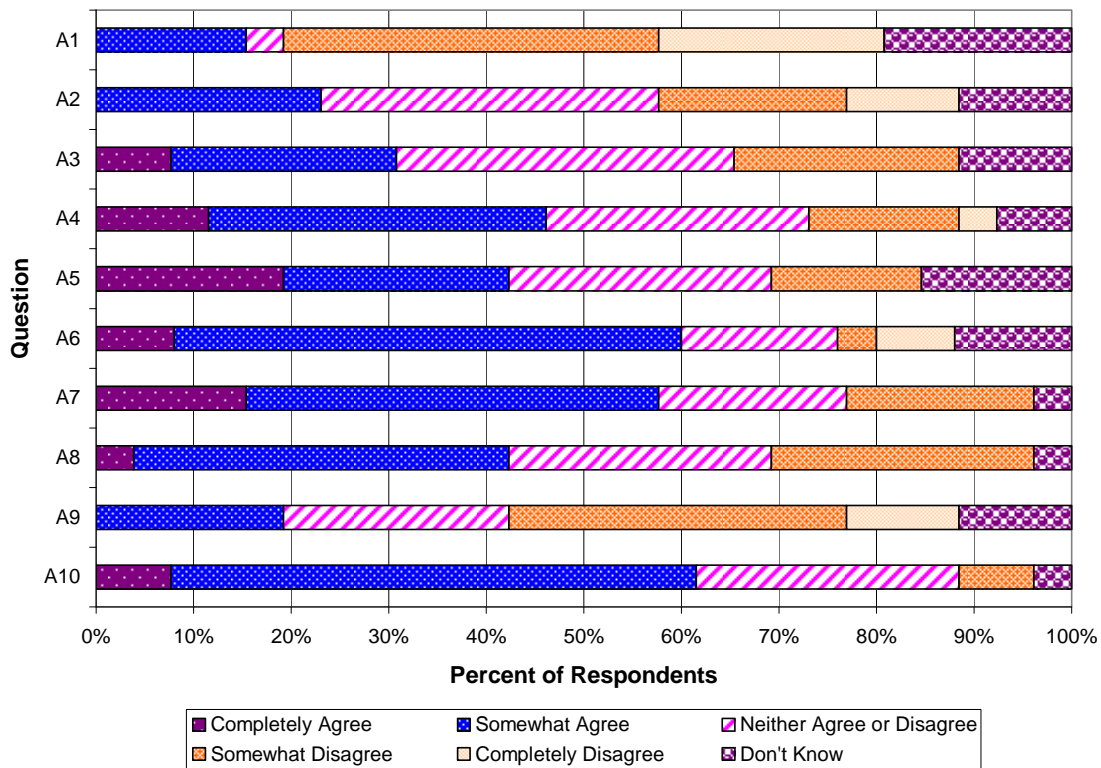
- The 'Entrepreneurial Mindset' subsection scored highest (61 out of 100), 3% below the 16-community average.
- With a score of 48, the "Embracing Opportunity' subsection scored lowest in the section, 2% below the 16-community average.

**Table 14: Opportunities and Attitudes Individual Question Scores**

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Embracing Opportunity	A1. There is an up-to-date community vision or plan that reflects the community's values and attitudes and represents all groups within the community.	29	45	-36%
	A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	45	62	-28%
	A3. The community is facing a significant economic opportunity.	54	62	-13%
	A4. Entrepreneurial ventures and business creation are encouraged and supported by citizens and local governments.	59	58	2%
Entrepreneurial Mindset	A5. Individuals desire independence, responsibility & control over their future, and are willing to work to achieve these regardless of a risk of failure.	64	63	1%
	A6. Individuals are skilled in a trade, talent, or profession, and have the desire to form a business with these	64	65	-3%
	A7. Individuals are capable of thinking creatively and developing unconventional solutions using a proactive/can-do attitude.	64	66	-3%
	A8. Individuals are capable of identifying new, unconventional or changing business opportunities.	55	61	-10%
Motivated workforce	A9. A pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs.	39	48	-19%
	A10. Managers and supervisors are motivated in their work and about their staff	66	59	11%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1%</b>

- Question A10 (manager motivation) scored highest in comparison with the 16-community average and in terms of absolute score, with a score of 66 (11% above average).
- Question A1 (community plan) scored lowest of all questions with a score of 29 out of 100, (36% below the 16-community average).



**Figure 4: Opportunities and Attitudes Question Response Distribution**

- Question A10 (managers are motivated) had the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 62%.
- Question A1 (community plan) had the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 62%.
- Question A1 also had the highest level of “Don’t know” responses in the section at 19%.

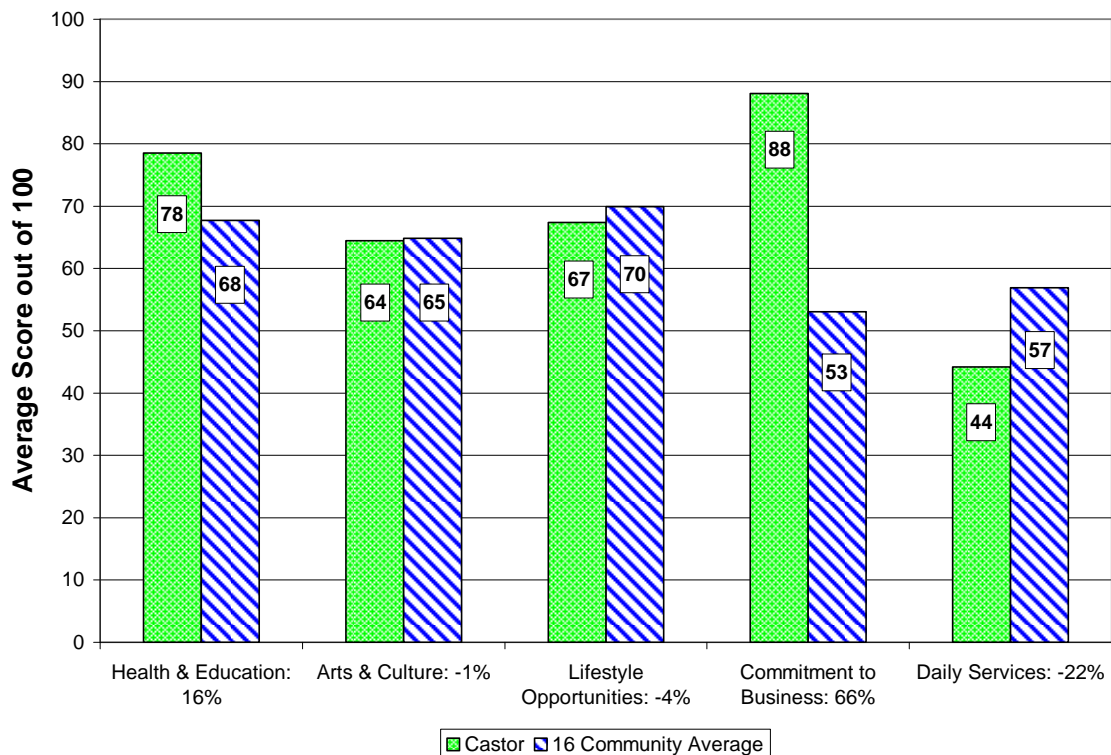
**Table 15: Opportunities and Attitudes Strengths and Improvements**

Strengths		Improvements	
Natural resources	3	More young trades people	2
Agriculture	3	Attract and retain young people	1
Opportunities, potential	2	Expand eastward	1
Safety	2	Community plan	1
Willingness to work together	2	Assist farmers with direct marketing	1
Cost of living	2	Attract professionals	1
Open to new ideas and change.	2	Workforce for growth	1
Supportive, caring	2	This initiative is probably the most important first step.	1
Sense of identity and loyalty	2	More pride in businesses	1
Friendly	1	Encourage young people to dream	1
Public or private education	1	Business related to seniors' needs	1
Beauty	1	Better coordination between rural and town leaders and businesses	1
Expanding businesses	1	Same volunteers wear many hats-- it's hard to stay motivated	1
Intersection of Hwy 36 and 12	1	Incentives to business owners to grow and expand-stay in the community.	1
Cheap land	1	Support the businesses, churches, clubs	1
Hospital	1	Attract industry and jobs	1
Peace and quiet	1	More activities for youth	1
Recreation	1	More doctors	1
Expanding businesses	1		

### 3.3 Section B: Quality of Life (70 out of 100)

- ◆ **The ability of the community to attract & retain businesses & residents, especially those who are young, skilled workers.**

The Quality of Life section ranked 1st when compared to the other sections of the survey, and ranked 3rd as compared to the 16-community average. Six questions from this section appear in the list of Castor's 20 highest-scoring questions in Appendix A. Two of those, B10 (safety) and B2 (quality of schools) were the two top-ranking questions in the entire Castor survey.



**Figure 5: Quality of Life Subsection Scores**

- The 'Commitment to Business' subsection scored highest as compared with the 16-community average and in terms of absolute score, with a score of 88, 66% above average.
- The lowest scoring subsection, 'Daily Services' had a score of 44, 22% below the 16-community average.

**Table 16: Quality of Life Individual Question Scores**

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Health & Education	B1. A quality health care facility is accessible, well serviced and within a reasonable distance.	86	67	27%
	B2. There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	95	79	21%
	B3. There is an educational organization in the area that offers post-secondary programs and continuing education opportunities.	47	54	-14%
Arts & Culture	B4. High quality events (i.e. festivals, concerts) catering to a range of ages take place regularly in, or close to, the community.	53	60	-12%
	B5. There is a strong community identity, and there are plentiful and varying opportunities for involvement (i.e. arts, athletics, politics, church groups).	76	69	10%
Lifestyle Opportunities	B6. The community is physically beautiful and environmentally safe (i.e. pollution, water quality).	91	89	3%
	B7. Young adults (25-34) consider the community to be a desirable place to live.	50	49	2%
	B8. There are locations/facilities (i.e. Nightclubs, pubs, bingo, camps) that attract a variety of people, and provide social opportunities for local residents of all ages.	33	45	-27%
	B9. There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. sports fields, golf courses, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	68	81	-16%
Commitment to Business	B10. The community is a safe place to live.	96	91	6%
	B11. Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	88	82	8%
Daily Services	B12. Individuals are capable of persevering and being committed to their business, remaining in the community even during hard economic times.	88	70	26%
	B13. Quality residential and business real estate opportunities (both purchase and rental) are available and affordable.	44	63	-30%
	B14. There is a diversity of quality and affordable services (i.e. dry-cleaning, photo developing, petrol station).	44	51	-13%

Section Score 70 65 8%

- Question B1 (quality accessible health facility) scored highest of all questions in the section in absolute terms and in comparison with the 16-community average, with a score of 86, 27% above average
- Question B13 (residential real estate available and affordable) was the lowest scoring question of the section with a score of 44, 30% below average.

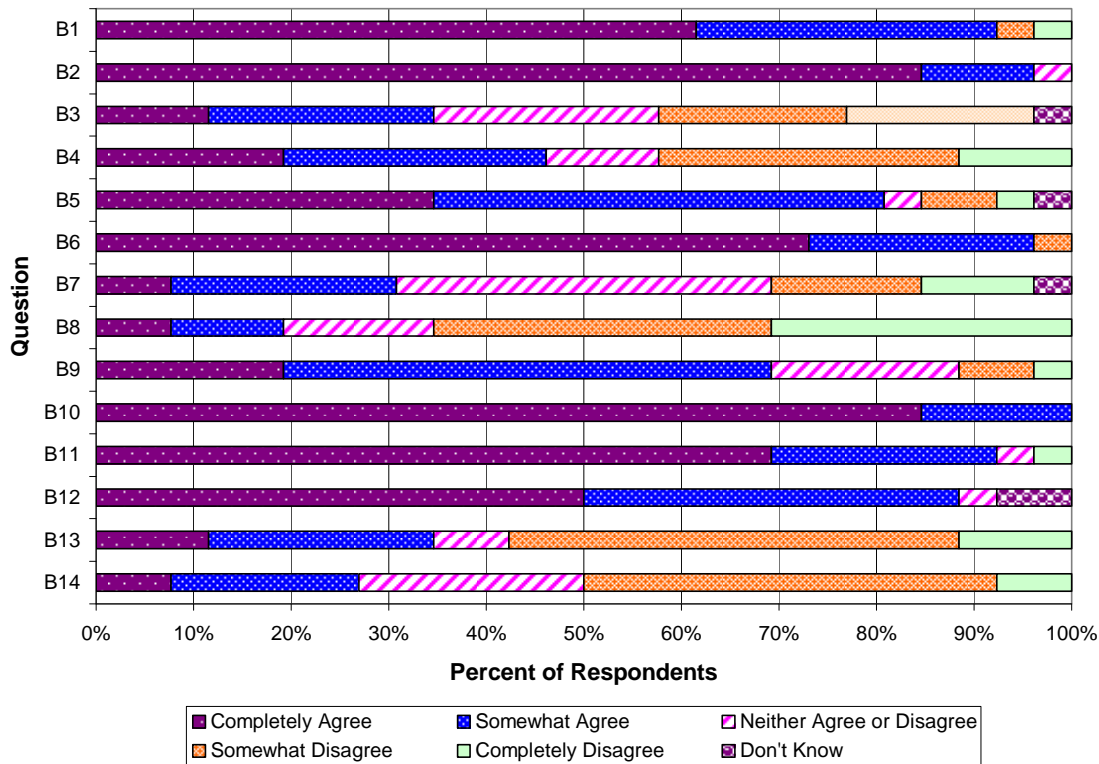


Figure 6: Quality of Life Question Response Distribution

- Question B1 (quality accessible health facility) had the **highest level of agreement with the question** 92%.
- Question B8 (entertainment and social facilities) had the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 66%.
- Question B12 (commitment to businesses) had the highest level of “Don’t Know’ responses at 7%.

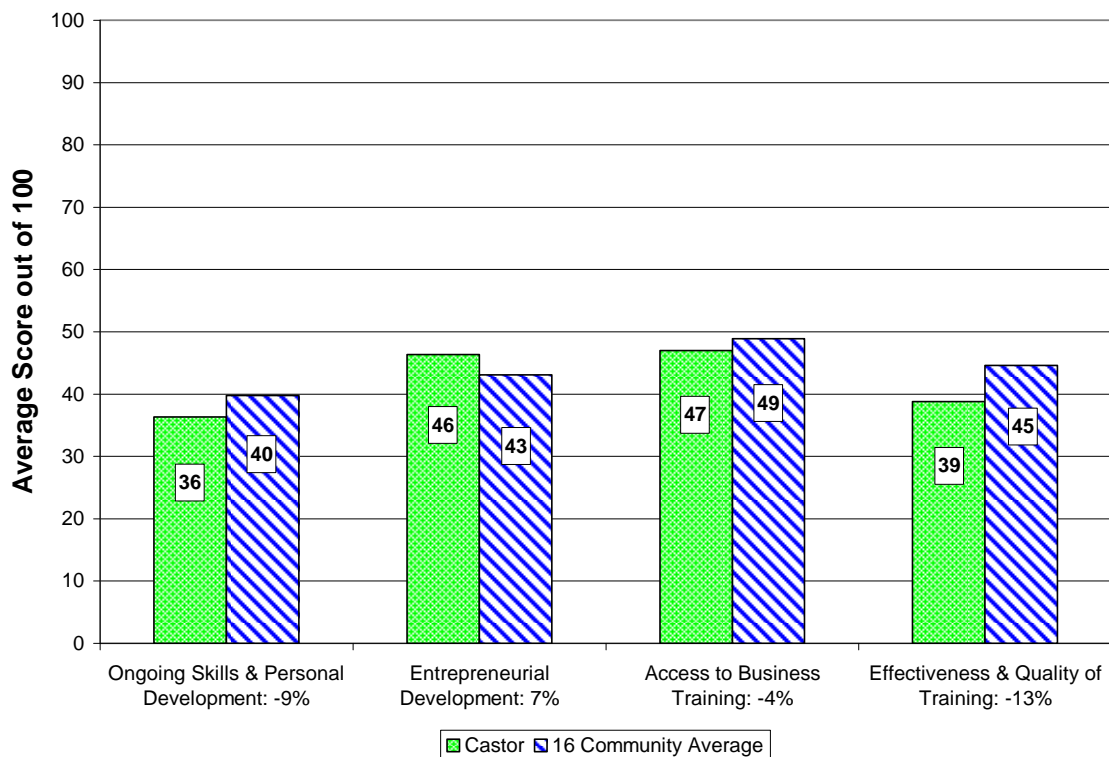
**Table 17: Quality of Life Strengths and Improvements**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Low cost of living	4	Keep doctors and health facilities	4
Safety	4	More quality activities for young families	4
The hospital/ health care	3	More quality exciting community events (fair and rodeo)	1
All generations connect and support each other	2	Parks, green spaces	1
Great place to raise your family	1	Indoor swimming pool/rec centre	1
Quiet	1	Employment opportunities to keep young people	1
Quality of life	1	Recreational opportunities other than hockey or curling	1
Community identity	1	Nightlife beyond special events	1
Lots of park and open area	1	Diversity within business	1
People take pride in their property	1	Public year round sports facility	1
Seniors can remain in their community.	1		
Festivals, theatre and fairs that get people together	1		
Athletic fees are much lower	1		
Wide range of activities	1		
New public school	1		
Separate catholic school	1		
Schools	1		
Beautiful surroundings	1		

### 3.4 Section C: Education and Training (40 out of 100)

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

The Education and Training section was the lowest scoring section of the survey, both in terms of absolute score, and in comparison with the other communities. Five questions from this section can be found in the list of Castor’s lowest-scoring questions in Appendix B.



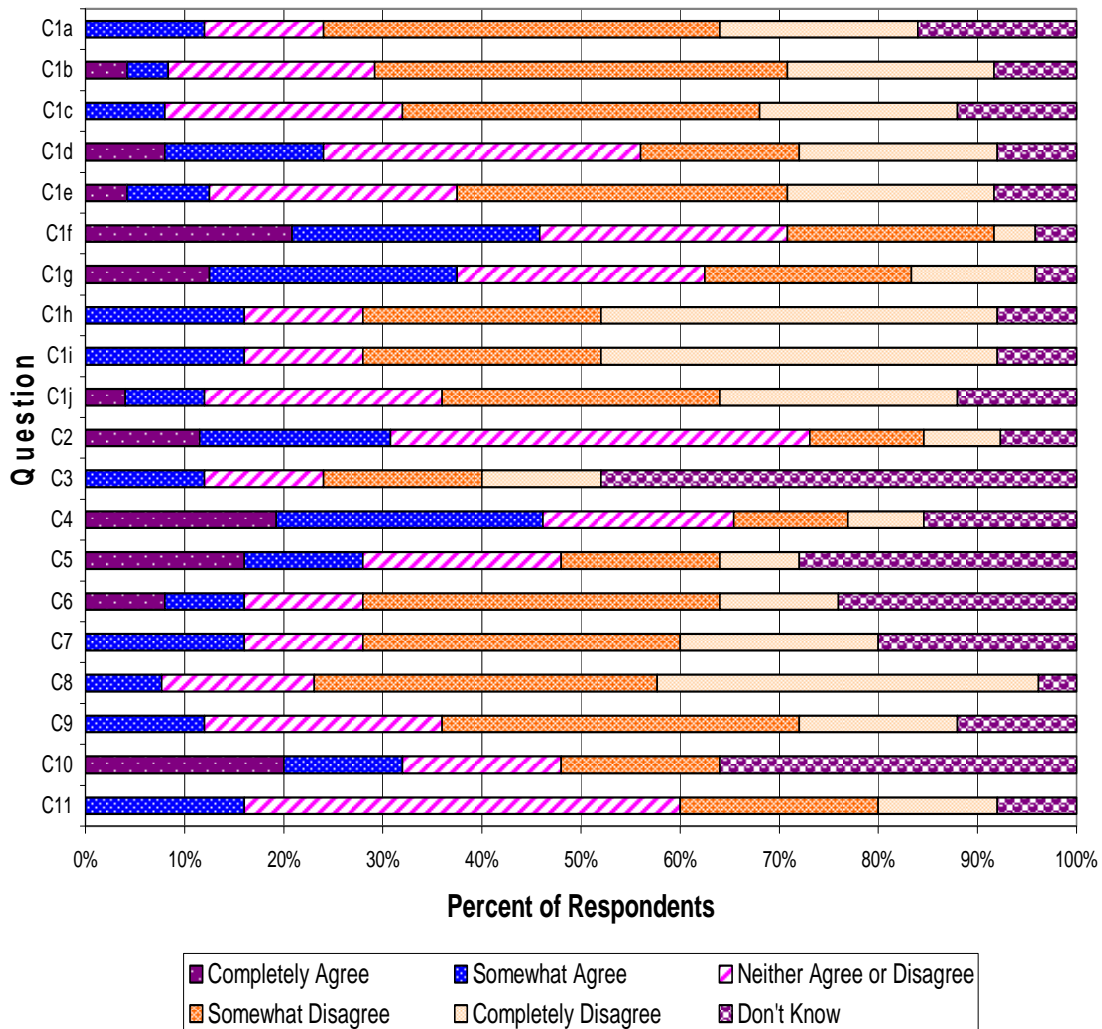
**Figure 7: Education and Training Subsection Scores**

- The ‘Access to Business Training’ subsection was the highest scoring subsection.
- The ‘Ongoing Skills and Personal Development’ subsection was the lowest scoring subsection with a score of 36, which was 9% below the 16-community average.

**Table 18: Education and Training Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Ongoing Skills & Personal Development	C1. A range of training and educational programs are utilised, including:			
	Business training			
	C1a. Business plan development	30	53	-44%
	C1b. Basic business skill development (i.e. sales, pricing, display)	31	40	-24%
	C1c. Advanced business skill development (i.e. financial planning, marketing, accounting, communication)	31	39	-22%
	C1d. Computer training for business (i.e. excel, web design, graphics, business applications)	43	56	-22%
	C1e. Personal Development (i.e. Stress management)	34	40	-15%
	C1f. Online / distance education	60	65	-7%
	C1g. Continuing education	51	57	-10%
	C1h. TAFE/College	26	26	2%
	C1i. University	26	35	-25%
C1J. Professional Development (i.e. certification sessions)	33	35	-5%	
Entrepreneurial Development	C2. Business mentors and/or role models are available in the community	54	50	9%
	C3. There is an entrepreneurial development program in primary and secondary schools.	37	35	4%
Access to Business Training	C4. There is an organization through which training and educational programs/opportunities can be offered.	61	62	-2%
	C5. Training programs are affordable for anyone (i.e. business owners, youth, professionals)	54	47	16%
	C6. Flexible timing for skills training is available to meet local business needs.	38	40	-5%
	C7. The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	33	41	-20%
Effectiveness & Quality of Training	C8. A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	23	35	-35%
	C9. Teaching organizations develop courses that serve community needs (i.e. specialised training)	34	40	-16%
	C10. Teaching staff are skilled in and knowledgeable about the subject(s) they teach	64	56	15%
	C11. Individuals are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	42	51	-17%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>-7%</b>

- Question C10 (quality of teachers) is the highest scoring question of the section with a score of 64, 15% above average.
- Question C8 (pool of skilled and trained labour) is the lowest scoring question of the section with a score of 23, 35% below average.



**Figure 8: Education and Training Question Response Distribution**

- Question C4 (organization offers business training) has the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 46%.
- Question C8 (pool of skilled labour available) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 73%.
- Question C3 (entrepreneurial development in schools) has the highest incidence of 'Don't Know' responses at 48%.

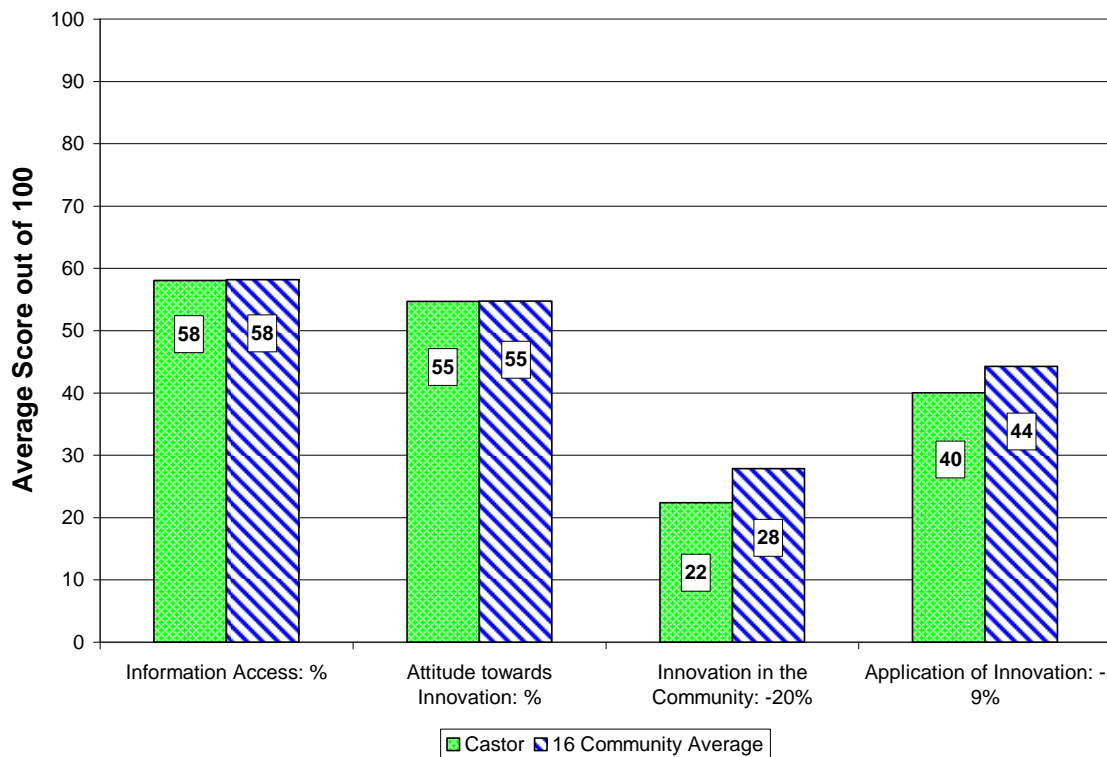
**Table 19: Education and Training Strengths and Improvements**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Schools K-12	7	More quality education programs for adults	6
Adult education courses	3	Outreach programs	2
RAP program offered to youth	2	More online education	2
Business development programs	1	Training for direct local employment	1
The unidentified project (business incubator models)	1	Partnering to support community education	1
Work experience for school students.	1	One school	1
		More apprenticeships in high school	1
		Local education consortium	1
		Lack of marketing for training specialized courses (computer skills, graphic art)	1
		Better trades education	1
		Ask business what they need and then provide it locally	1
		Train kids in school how money works and real business	1

### 3.5 Section D: Innovation (43 out of 100)

- ◆ **Ability of a community and its residents 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.**

The Innovation section scored low in the survey, ranking 9th in terms of absolute score and in comparison with the 16-community average. Question D7 (presence of scientists and researchers) and D8 (technology forums) can be found in the list of Castor’s lowest scoring questions in Appendix B.



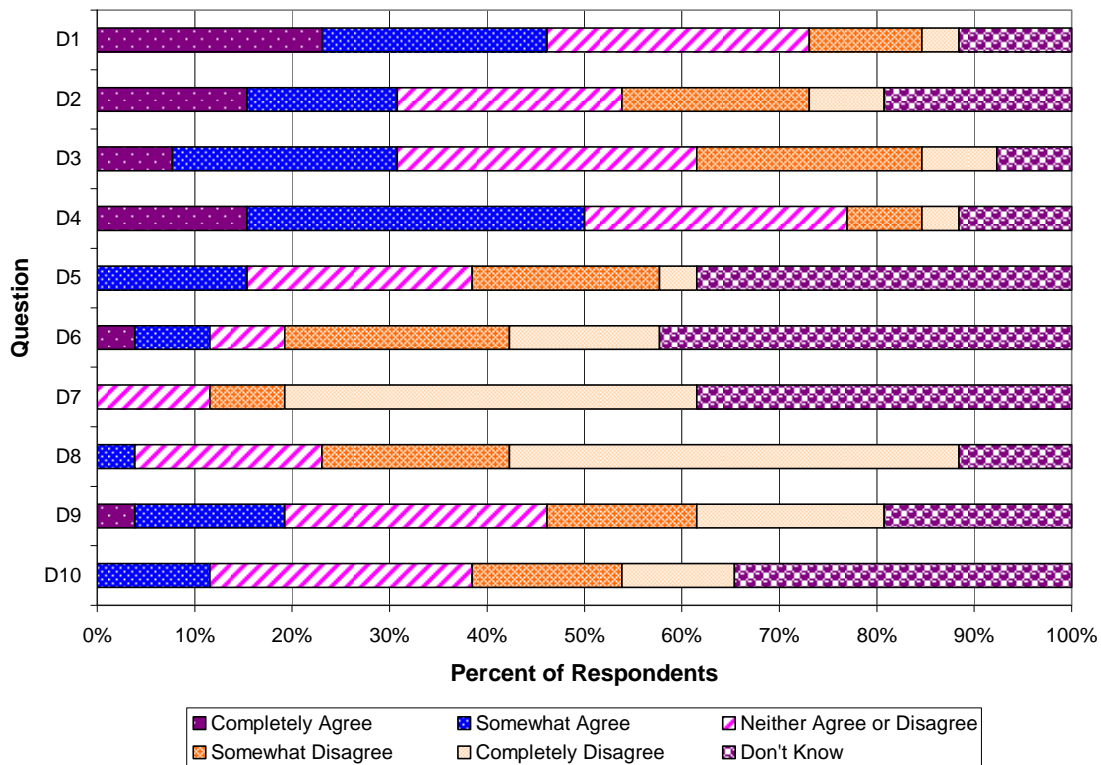
**Figure 9: Innovation Subsection Scores**

- ‘Information Access’ is the highest scoring question of the section, having a score of 58, equal to the average.
- The lowest scoring subsection ‘Innovation in the Community’ has a score of 22, 20% below the 16-community average.

**Table 20: Innovation Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		% Diff.
		Castor	Victoria Community Average	
Information Access	D1. Individuals have access to research (local, regional, national, international) relating to new technologies, business development and/or expansion.	64	58	11%
	D2. There are library or resource facilities that carry information on business development, market trends, new technologies, policies, and networks.	54	59	-9%
Attitude towards Innovation	D3. Business people & entrepreneurs are aware and knowledgeable about new and innovative technologies, & are eager to further their knowledge.	50	54	-7%
	D4. Innovation is valued and recognized by business people.	64	60	6%
	D5. Support and assistance for innovative business research and development is available.	45	47	-4%
Innovation in the Community	D6. Businesses that do research, or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	33	32	5%
	D7. Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (not necessarily about the region).	13	26	-52%
	D8. There are formal and informal forums (conferences, workshops, association lunch meetings) on technology and technology applications.	20	26	-25%
Application of Innovation	D9. Businesses use innovative technology, practices and research.	40	44	-9%
	D10. Research that is being done in the community or region is relevant to the business community's needs and interests.	40	44	-10%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>-6%</b>

- Question D1 (access to research) scored highest in comparison to the community average with a score of 64 (11% above average).
- Question D7 (scientists and researchers) scored lowest of all questions in the section with a score of 13 (52% below average).



**Figure 10: Innovation Question Response Distribution**

- Question D4 (innovation valued by business people) has the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 50%.
- Question D7 (skilled researchers in the community) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 50%.
- Question D6 (research facilities) has the highest incidence of ‘Don’t Know’ answers at 42%.

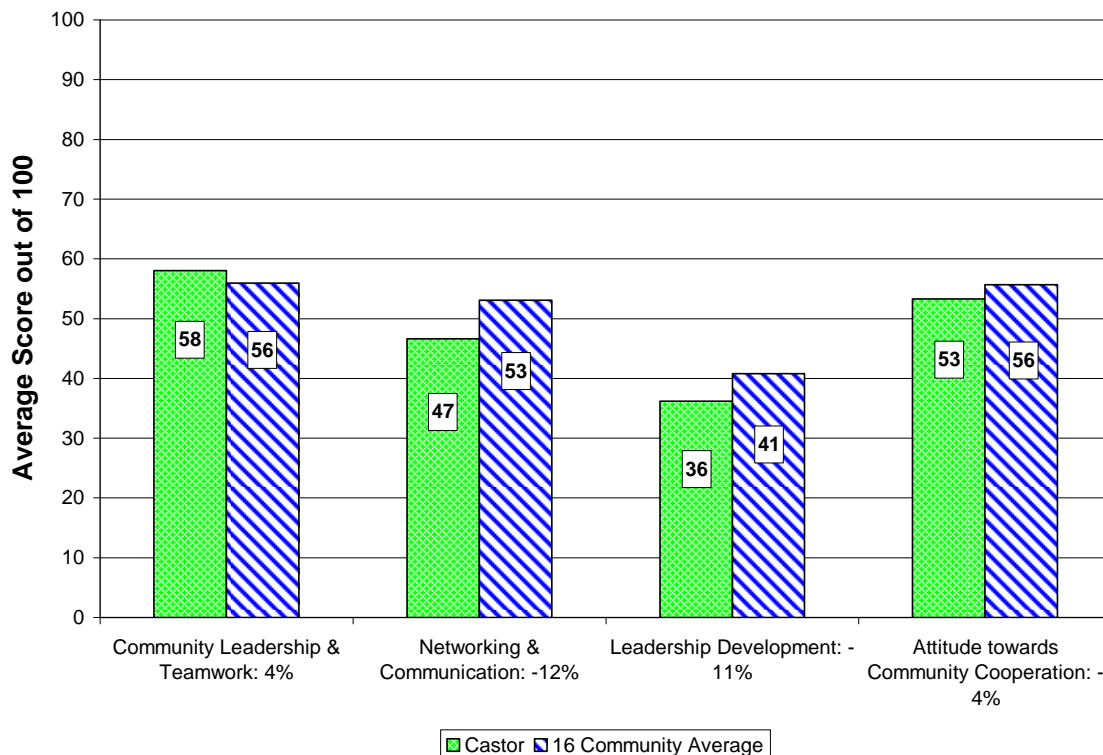
**Table 21: Innovation Strengths and Improvements**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Some research in agriculture.	1	Have a post secondary presence in town.	2
Internet	1	Make people aware of what if any research in being done, and share info	2
There is none being done.	1	Meetings like this	2
Hiring of an economic development person.	1	We don't really have any.	1
Economic development groups are working to respond to community needs.	1	Ask businesses what they need and then provide training.	1
The library and personal home study.	1	Better access to high speed internet	1
I'm not aware that it exists	1	Institute an economic development board.	1
Don't know	1	Develop partnerships with industry and government to explore projects	1
What we are doing to day.	1	Public forums available in the community.	1
		Get some	1

### 3.6 Section E: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking (49 out of 100)

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

The Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking section ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in score and 6<sup>th</sup> as compared to the community average.



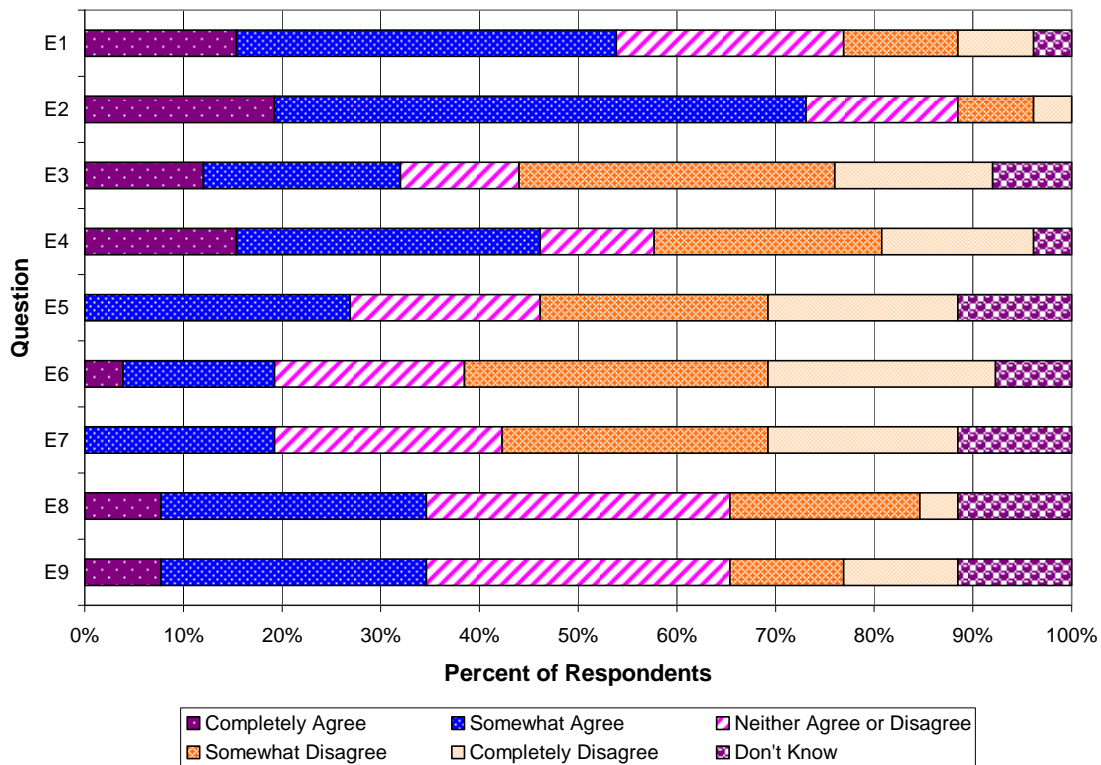
**Figure 11: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking Subsection Scores**

- 'Community Leadership and Teamwork' is the highest scoring subsection with a score of 58 (4% above average).
- The lowest scoring subsection, 'Leadership Development' has a score of 36 (11% below average).

**Table 22: Leadership, Teamwork, and Network Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Castor	Victoria Community Average	% Diff.
Community Leadership & Teamwork	E1. Members representing interests of the public, private, and government sectors jointly participate in community decision-making and implementation.	61	58	6%
	E2. There is a pool of talented leaders with diverse skills, cultural experiences and backgrounds who are available for leading community initiatives.	69	67	3%
	E3. Qualified supervisors and managers (and management services) are available to small business.	45	43	3%
Networking & Communication	E4. There are adequate opportunities (informal and formal) where business people and entrepreneurs can network with each other.	52	56	-6%
	E5. Business people are able to give and receive support from other experienced business people (i.e. business associations, mentoring).	40	50	-20%
Leadership Development Opportunities	E6. There are opportunities for leadership training and development for individuals of all ages and interests (i.e. professionals, youth).	35	41	-13%
	E7. There are opportunities for small business to learn and develop management and leadership skills.	37	41	-9%
Attitudes towards Community Cooperation	E8. Groups with similar interests can form alliances and cooperate to achieve goals.	54	62	-12%
	E9. Cooperatives and joint community initiatives are encouraged and respected.	52	57	-8%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>-5%</b>

- Question E1 (representation of sectors) scored highest in comparison with the average, having a score of 61 (6% above average).
- Question E6 (opportunities for leadership training) is the lowest scoring question of the section with a score of 35 (13%% below average).



**Figure 12: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking Question Response Distribution**

- Question E2 (leaders for community initiatives) has the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 73%.
- Questions E6 (opportunities for leadership training) and E7 (opportunity for developing management skills) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 74%
- Question E5 (support from other businesses) has the highest incidence of 'Don't know' answers at 13%.

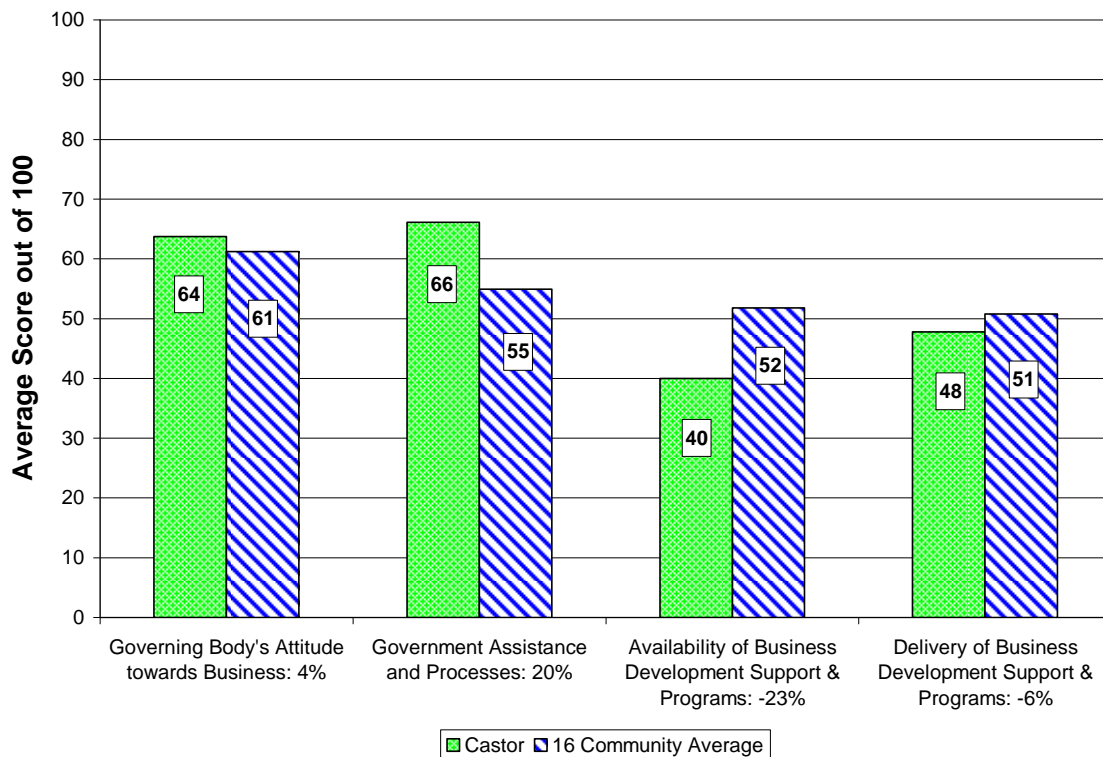
**Table 23: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking Strengths and Weaknesses**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Many talented leaders	5	Establish business association	3
Service clubs and groups	2	Community vision (5,10,25 year plan)	2
Active economic development officer	1	Regular networking sessions	2
Community spirit and sense of belonging	1	Leadership training	2
Most want to work together to accomplish a goal	1	Encourage more business into the community.	1
Local coffee shop-- much is accomplished on a rainy day	1	Getting them into the same mode	1
Attempts to motivate and create interest in new schemes and ideas	1	More positive attitudes.	1
Many opportunities to network through recreational activities	1	Resurrect inter-agency meetings	1
		More participation	1
		More than 1 person spearhead a project	1
		Gather business lenders and meet regularly and discuss opportunities	1
		Focus on a single project	1
		Showing people you can make a difference	1
		Finding a way to promote new people and new ideas to projects	1
		Join Coronation Chamber of Commerce	1
		Minimize volunteer burnout	1

### 3.7 Section F: Role of Government and Organizations (52 out of 100)

◆ **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.**

The Role of Government and Organizations ranked 6<sup>th</sup>, both in absolute score and as compared to other communities. Questions F8a and F8b (business training and business counselling) were among the 20 lowest scoring questions in the Castor BVI as outlined in Appendix B. Question F6 (local regulations, policies, and by-laws) ranked among the 20 questions with the most positive deviation from the 16-community average (Appendix C).



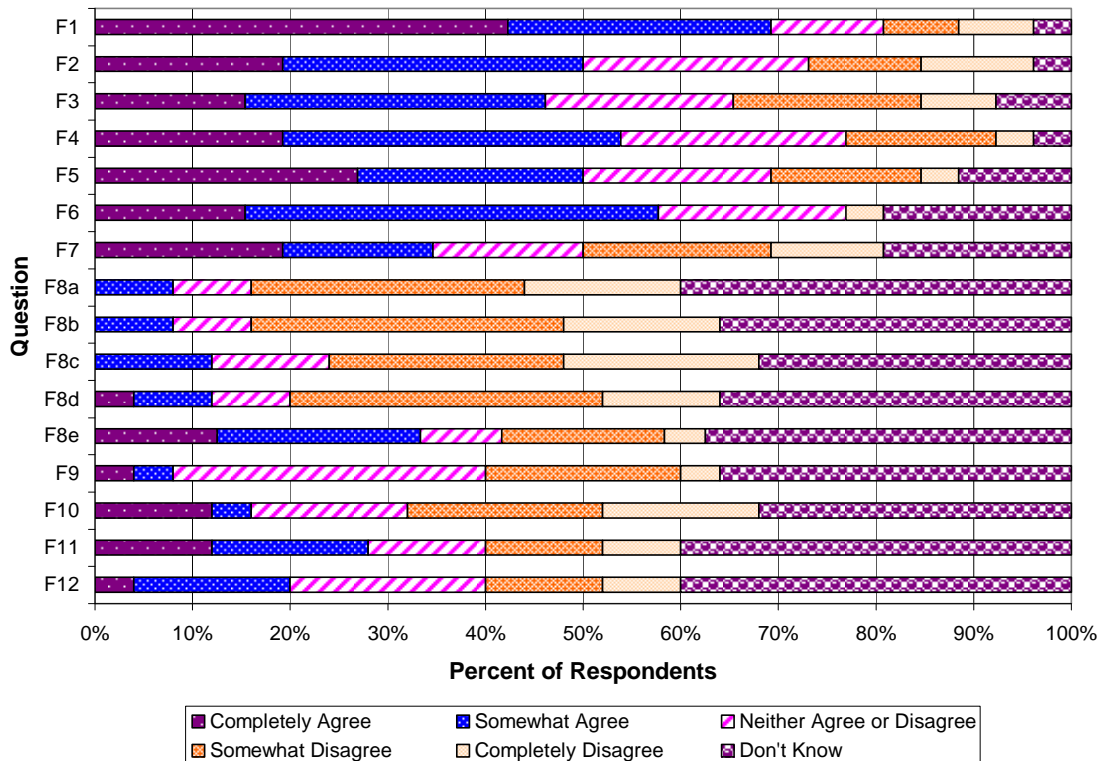
**Figure 13: Role of Government and Organizations Subsection Scores**

- The 'Government Assistance and Processes' subsection is the highest scoring subsection with a score of 66 (20% above average).
- The 'Availability of Business Development Support & Programs' scored lowest with a score of 40 (23% below average).

**Table 24: Role of Government and Organizations Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Governing Body's Attitude towards Business	F1. The municipal government recognizes that businesses are important and valuable for the development of the community.	73	75	-3%
	F2. The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	59	58	2%
	F3. The governing body is committed to assisting existing or startup business opportunities through policy and action.	57	49	16%
Government Assistance and Processes	F4. Community leaders and officials are willing to cooperate with business and business associations.	63	66	-5%
	F5. Local officials make it easy/reasonable for businesses to start or expand.	65	51	27%
	F6. Local regulations, policies, rules, bylaws, zoning are easily understood by business people, making it easy/reasonable for businesses to expand or start up.	70	48	47%
Availability of Business Development Support & Programs	F7. There is a recognized organization or individual available to assist people identify, assess, expand and/or create business opportunities.	54	52	4%
	F8. The following programs and services assisting business people are utilised.			
	F8a. Counselling	28	48	-42%
	F8b. Training	28	50	-43%
	F8c. Mentoring	31	44	-29%
	F8d. Assistance for those seeking self-employment	34	55	-38%
Delivery of Business Development Support & Programs	F8e. Loans	58	61	-4%
	F9. Business development initiatives are effective and efficient, and do not duplicate each other.	44	43	3%
	F10. Business programs are offered in a well-known and accessible location.	41	49	-15%
	F11. Staff members delivering programs are knowledgeable, competent and approachable.	55	59	-7%
	F12. Successful programs are repeated, reproduced, and further developed.	48	49	-1%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>52</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>-4%</b>

- Question F1 (municipal government recognition) is the highest scoring question of the section, with a score of 72 (3% below average).
- Questions F8a and F8b (counselling and training) are the lowest scoring questions of the section with scores of 28 (43% below average).



**Figure 14: Role of Government and Organizations Question Response Distribution**

- Question F1 (government values business) has the **highest level of agreement with the question**, at 69%.
- Question F8a (availability of business counselling) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 44%.
- Question F8a (counselling), F11 (staff members are knowledgeable and competent) and F12 (successful programs are reproduced) have the highest incidence of 'Don't know' at 40%.

**Table 25: Role of Government and Organizations Strengths and Improvements**

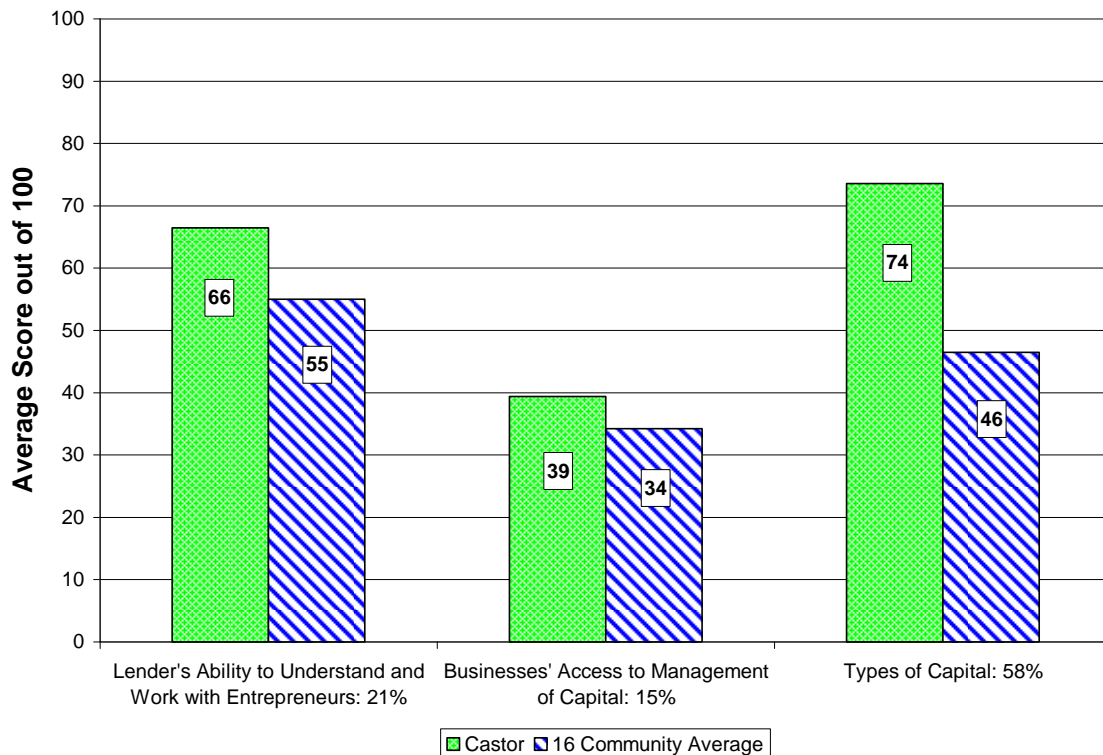
Strengths		Improvements	
Mayor and town council	4	Be willing to change attitudes and ways of thinking	2
Local people care about the community	2	Interactive meetings between town and business	2
Quick access to all forms of government	2	Make them more visible	1
Ability to talk to the CEO on my hours and time not his	1	Encourage younger people to town and listen to them at council meetings.	1
The strength of individual leaders	1	Hard to be risk takers and answer to tax payers.	1
Dedicated individuals in key positions.	1	Clearer boundaries between community orgs and government	1
Our communities have worked hard to develop a regional cooperative approach	1	More participation and less complaining	1
Business development and expansion is seen as a positive goal	1	Have people willing to take the extra step	1
Volunteers	1	Focus the direction of the business community and the leadership	1
Same council/mayor for quite a while	1	Have networking sessions quarterly to share projects and ideas	1
Younger people on the boards	1	Better plan for the future	1
	1	More funding for town council	1
Local people elected to governing agencies	1	Funding ability to think outside the box.	1
Most members are also successful businessman in this community	1	Change some of the land use policies	1
The local government has been responsible and kept costs and taxes reasonable	1		
Created their own mini REDA while still working with two other REDA's	1		
One of the first to provide a publicly funded wireless internet system for the region	1		

### 3.8 Section G: Capital and Funding (61 out of 100)

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

The Capital and Funding section scored 3rd in terms of absolute score and highest in comparison with the 16-community average.

This section contains four questions that were among the 20 highest scoring questions for Castor (see Appendix A), and eight questions in the list of Castor's highest in comparison to other communities (see Appendix C). It also contains two of Castor's lowest scoring questions: G4 (availability of business capital) and G5 (fund-raising skill) (see Appendix B).



**Figure 15: Capital and Funding Subsection Scores**

- The 'Types of Capital' subsection scored highest in the section with a score of 74, 58% above the average.
- The 'Businesses' Access to Management of Capital' subsection is the lowest scoring subsection of the section with a score of 39, 15% above average.

**Table 26: Capital and Funding Individual Question Scores**

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Lenders' Ability to Understand and Work with Entrepreneurs	G1. Lenders are willing to take chances based on individual character and good business ideas.	64	46	38%
	G2. Lenders and investors understand entrepreneurs' needs and have programs to address those needs.	57	47	21%
	G3. The following types of lending organizations are utilised for business needs.			
	G3a. Banks	88	79	11%
	G3b. Credit Unions	86	77	12%
	G3c. Business Development Organizations	67	75	-11%
Businesses' Access to & Management of Capital	G4. Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors.	30	21	46%
	G5. People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds.	26	27	-4%
	G6. Businesses have a firm understanding of financial management (cash flow, reading financial statements).	49	45	8%
	G7. Costs of Capital (i.e. interest, application fees) of accessing capital are manageable for entrepreneurs.	54	48	14%
Types of Capital	G8. The following sizes of loan funds are accessible to expand or start a business.			
	G8a. Equity (formal investors)	70	54	31%
	G8b. Angel (informal local investors)	56	41	36%
	G8c. Grants	59	54	10%
	G8d. Revolving Loan Funds (i.e. lines of credit)	85	66	30%
	G8e. Micro Loans (up to \$5,000)	80	75	7%
	G8f. Loans \$5,000 to \$200,000	85	70	21%
G8g. Loans \$200,000 and above	79	55	44%	

Section Score 61 45 37%

- Question G3a (utilization of banks) is the highest scoring question with a score of 88 (38% above average).
- Question G5 (skill at fundraising) is the lowest scoring question of the section with a score of 26 (4% below average).

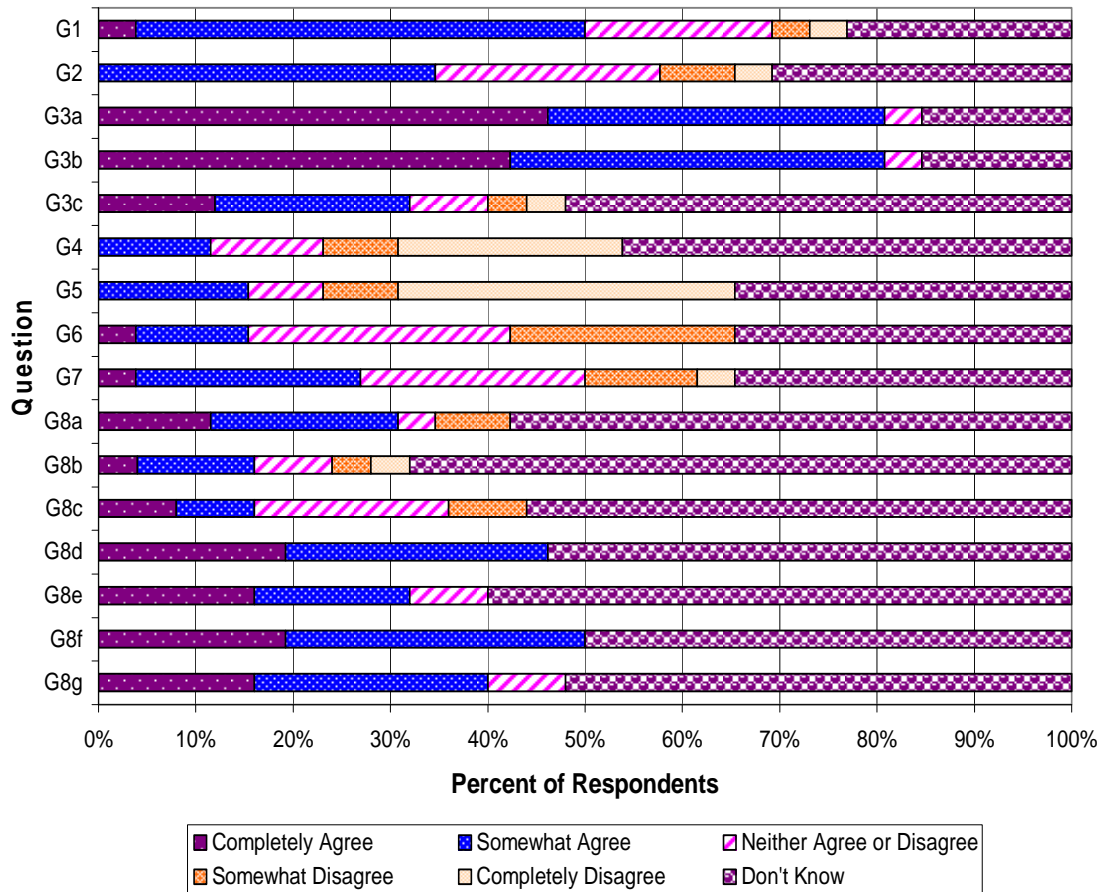


Figure 16: Capital and Funding Question Response Distribution

- Questions G3a and G3B (banks and credit unions utilized) have the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 81%.
- Question G4 (business capital available to everyone) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 30%
- Question G8b (local investor funds accessible) had the highest incidence of 'Don't know' at 48%, in a section notable for a high degree of 'Don't know' across the board.

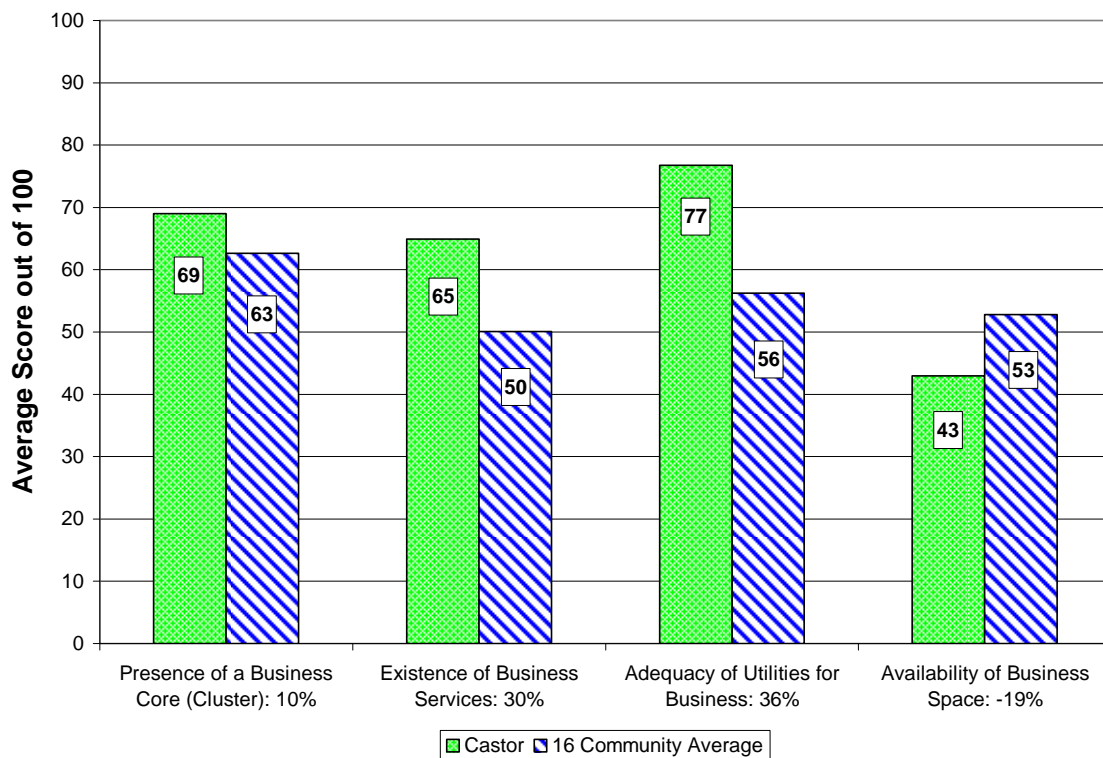
**Table 27: Capital and Funding Strengths and Improvements**

Strengths		Improvements	
Two banking facilities	8	We need a representative on the board of the Credit Union	1
We spend it	1	Banks have ability to lend based on assets, but little monies are available for remainder to financing	1
Several people have successfully written government grants	1	Being informed	1
We have banking competition	1	Need a way to have capital funding available to small business which has no bank connections	1
Reasonably balanced budgeting	1	Education	1
Interested in promoting a solid plan - understand the rural community	1	Improve infrastructure to support business	1
		Getting people to reinvest in their community-- we could develop a pool of funds for business startups	1
		Larger tax base	1
		How is it you can borrow \$500,000 for a house but not for a business	1
		Bring people together to discuss possible projects - growth will only come from within the community.	1
		Access more Federal money	1
		Better understanding of grant procedures	1
		Banks change some incentive to promote business	1

### 3.9 Section H: Infrastructure and Business Services (65 out of 100)

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

This section was the second highest scoring section of the survey. Of particular note are questions H4a (banking accessible) and H4b (insurance services available) which were the third and fourth highest scoring questions of the entire survey (See Appendix A).



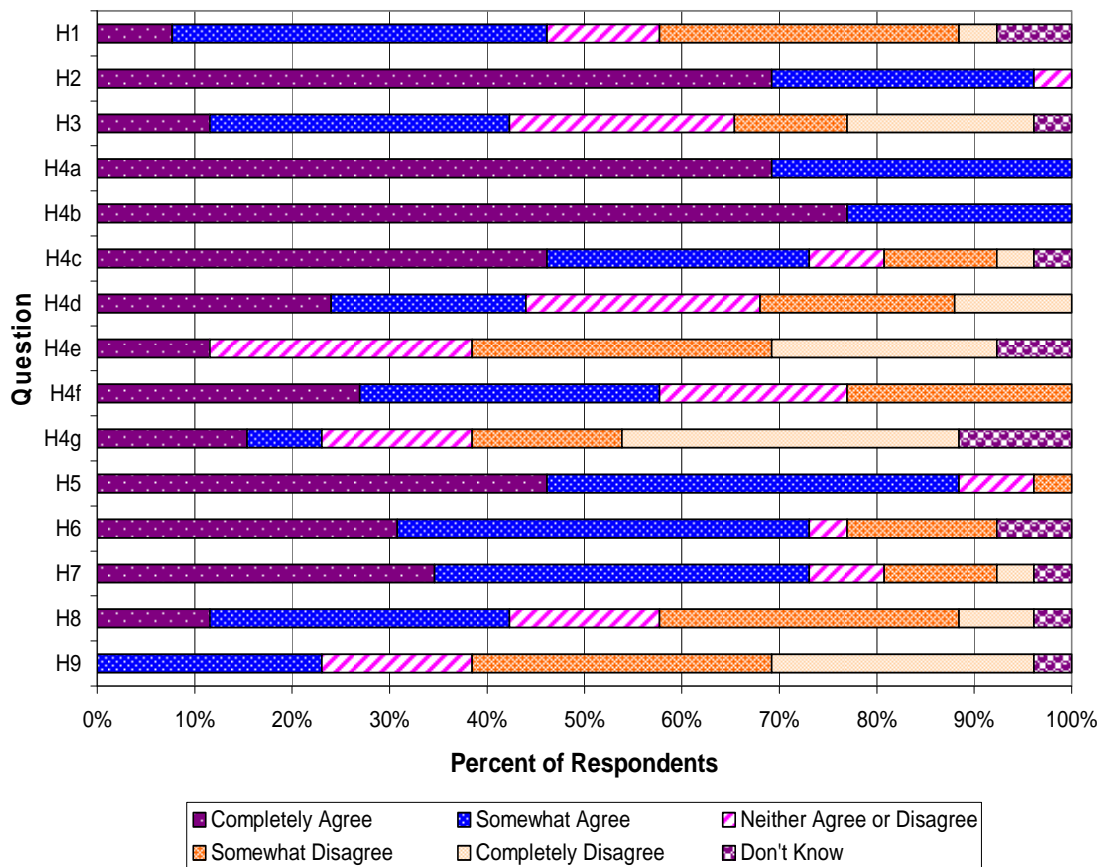
**Figure 17: Infrastructure and Business Services Subsection Scores**

- The 'Adequacy of Utilities' subsection was the highest scoring subsection of the section with a score of 77 (36% above average).
- The 'Availability of Business Space' subsection was the lowest scoring subsection with a score of 43 (19% below average).

**Table 28: Infrastructure and Business Services Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Presence of a Business Core (Cluster)	H1. There is a vibrant, active town centre or community core.	54	50	7%
	H2. Parking near core business areas is accessible and adequate.	91	81	13%
Existence of Business Services	H3. Business services (i.e. printers, web designers) are affordable and modern.	51	58	-12%
	H4. Professional services (i.e. legal, accounting) are easily accessible and affordable.			
	H4a. Banking	92	83	11%
	H4b. Insurance	94	82	15%
	H4c. Freightling	76	68	11%
	H4d. Legal	54	64	-15%
	H4e. Marketing	35	39	-8%
Adequacy of Utilities for Business	H4f. Accounting	65	72	-9%
	H4g. Graphic Design	37	50	-26%
	H5. Existing infrastructure (i.e. power, water) is of good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	83	71	17%
Availability of Business Space	H6. The planning of new physical infrastructure (i.e. roads, power, sewage) considers business needs.	74	60	24%
	H7. Telecommunication infrastructure is reliable, well maintained and modern.	73	57	28%
Availability of Business Space	H8. A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation (i.e. home-based, town centre, industrial park).	52	58	-10%
	H9. Quality rental space is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	34	48	-29%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>21%</b>

- Question H4b (insurance accessible) is the highest scoring question of the section and survey with a score of 94 (15% above average).
- Question H4e (rental space available) is the lowest scoring question of the section with a score of 34, (29% below average).



**Figure 18: Infrastructure and Business Services Question Response Distribution**

- Question H4a and H4b (banking and insurance accessible) have the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 100%
- Question H4e (marketing service available) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 54%
- Question H4g (graphic design services available) has the highest incidence of 'Don't know' answers at 12%

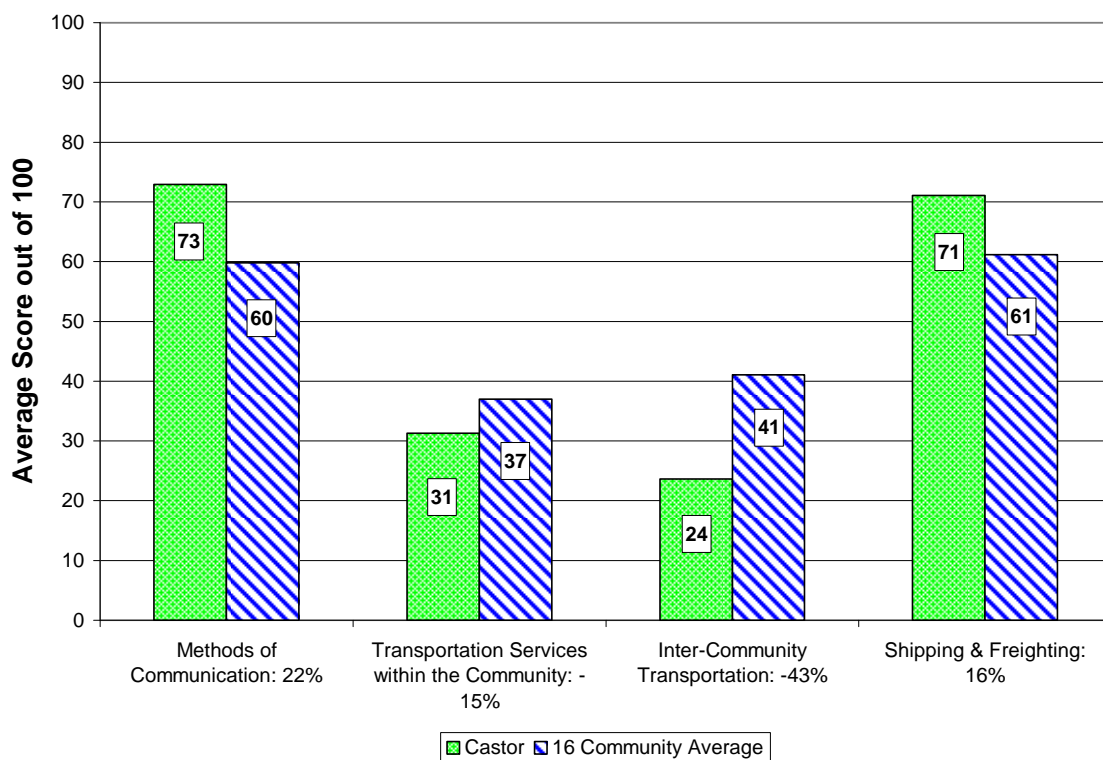
**Table 29: Infrastructure and Business Services Strengths and Improvements**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Basic infrastructure is suitable.	3	More business and investment	5
They forever donate to fundraisers.	1	Main street beautification	4
Old however being replaced and upgraded will be very good soon	1	More commercial land readily available	3
Wildrose internet	1	Expansion of local dialing area to the entire county of Paintearth	1
Our new development	1	Attract or start small service businesses	1
The number of businesses and items available to buy in town.	1	Housing for workers	1
Have most businesses here so you don't have to go out of town for much.	1	Expansion of industrial park	1
Accessibility, parking, convenience.	1	Make use of commercial contaminated sites.	1
We benefit by each other and informally exchanging ideas.	1	More community involvement in planning	1
Business appear to support one another.	1	Lower costs to compete with city prices.	1
Long term businesses	1	We need a store that can sell quality clothing and be competitive	1
Recognizing problems with current system and infrastructure	1		

### 3.10 Section I: Communication and Connectivity (55 out of 100)

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

The Communication and Connectivity section is the fourth highest scoring section of the survey. Questions I1e and I1G (mobile phone services and high-speed internet services) were among the top 20 questions as compared with the 16-community average. Questions I4a and I4d (train and commercial air services) were the lowest scoring questions for Castor in the entire survey.



**Figure 19: Communication and Connectivity Subsection Scores**

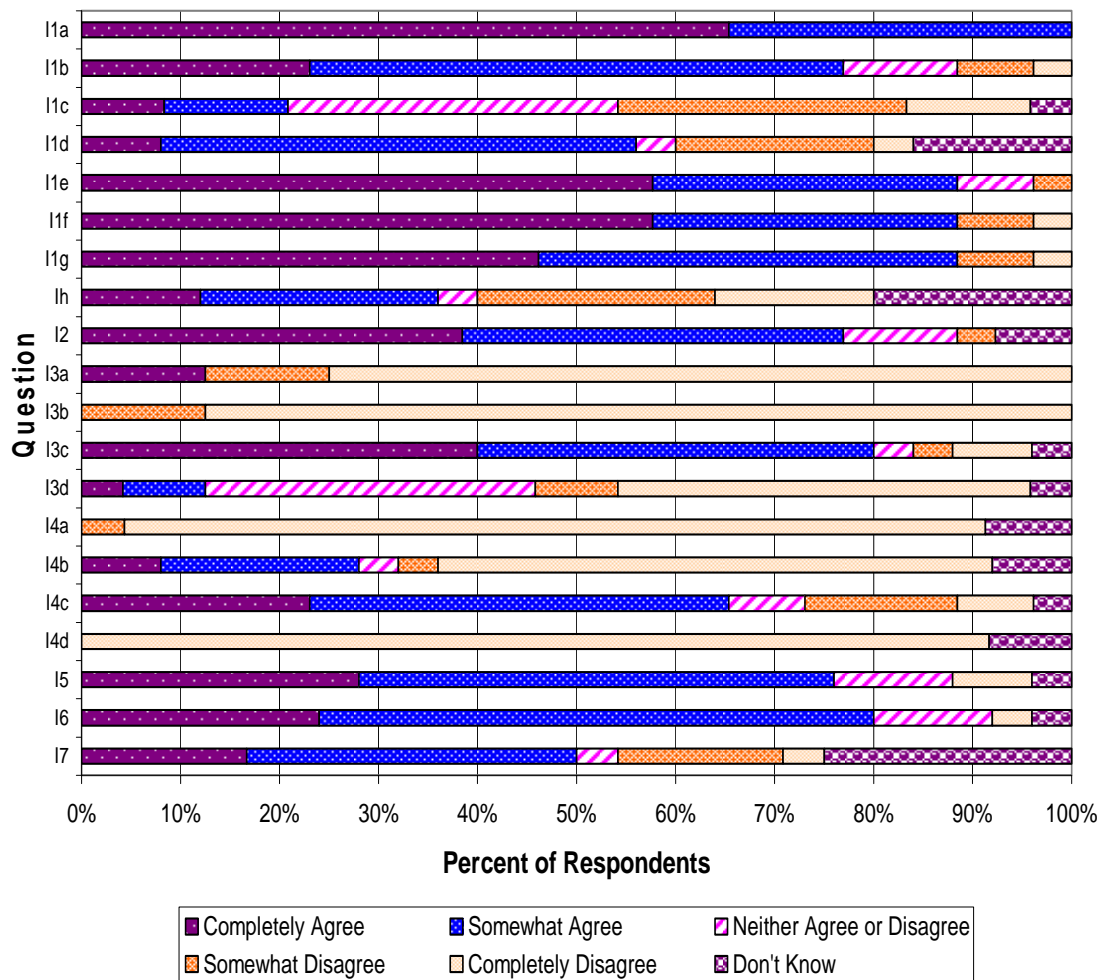
- The 'Methods of Communication' subsection is the highest scoring of the section with a score of 73 (22% above average).
- 'Inter-Community Transportation' was the lowest scoring subsection, 43% below average with a score of 24.

**Table 30: Communication and Connectivity Individual Question Scores**

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Methods of Communication	I1. The following communications services are accessible and utilized.			
	I1a. Word of Mouth	91	90	1%
	I1b. Local Newspaper	71	74	-4%
	I1c. Local Radio	43	57	-23%
	I1d. Overnight express mail service (nationally)	61	55	10%
	I1e. Mobile phone	86	63	35%
	I1f. Basic Internet Services	83	83	0%
	I1g. Fast or High-Speed Internet services	80	55	45%
	I1h. Video Conferencing Capabilities	48	43	12%
	I2. Quality communication services (phone, fax, high speed internet) are affordable to business.	80	72	12%
Transportation Services within the Community	I3. The following transportation services are accessible and utilized within the community.			
	I3a. Public Transportation	16	31	-49%
	I3b. Taxi Service	3	40	-92%
	I3c. Special transportation services (i.e. Seniors, people with disabilities)	76	52	47%
Inter-Community Transportation	I4. The following transportation services are available between communities.			
	I4a. Air (commercial)	1	29	-96%
	I4b. Air (private)	28	48	-41%
	I4c. Bus	65	67	-3%
	I4d. Train	0	20	-100%
Freighting	I5. Main transportation and freight routes between communities are safe, well maintained and well serviced.	73	67	9%
	I6. Regular and frequent freight to major centres is accessible and utilized.	75	70	8%
	I7. Freight services into and out of the community are affordable to businesses.	64	43	48%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>6%</b>

- Question I1 (communication by word of mouth) has the highest score in the section with a score of 91 (1% above average).
- Question I4d (train service available) scored lowest of all questions, with a score of 0.



**Figure 20: Communication and Connectivity Question Response Distribution**

- Question I1b (communication by word of mouth) has the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 100%.
- Question I4a (commercial air available between communities) and I4d (train service) have the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 92%.
- Question I3d (affordability of freight services) has the highest incidence of 'Don't know' in the section at 26%.

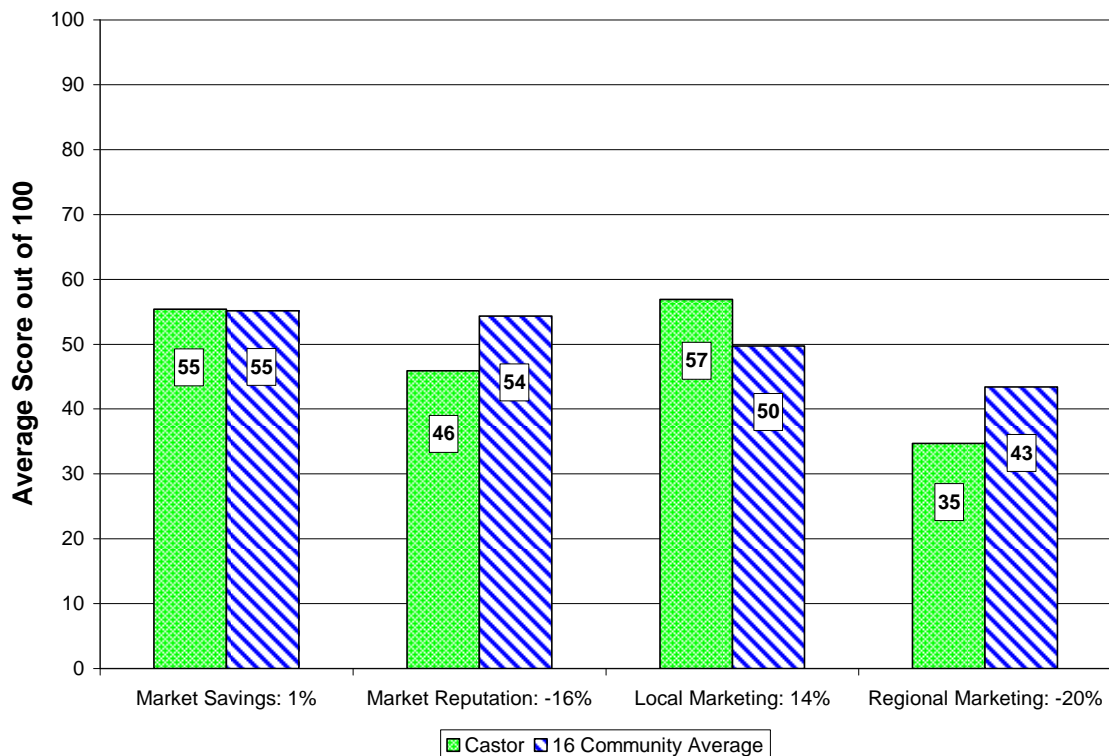
**Table 31: Communication and Connectivity Strengths and Improvements**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Good internet service	8	Training to help businesses use internet and ecommerce	2
Good communications	2	Have highway 36 twinned	1
Two main highways interact to town (12&36)	1	Canvass to buy and make long distance calls between Coronation and Castor local.	1
Good roads	1	Use newspaper more to spread the word	1
Local newspaper is good for communicating and connecting.	1	We are too far from the big centres-- not sure how to combat that	1
Farmers markets - social gatherings-fundraising events.	1	Support and better connecting - faster	1
Easy to spread urgent message by networking than through media.	1	Improved and faster high speed access	1
Cell phone service.	1	Develop a newsletter showcasing community/business activities	1
Has improved in the last 2-3 years	1	Need one umbrella - often left hand has no idea what right hand is doing-- less fundraising for everyone if we pooled our resources and ideas then divided the proceeds.	1
The community is average to others its size.	1		
If the coffee shop crowd doesn't have the answer then they are not worth having.	1		
Word of mouth	1		
Shipping is good	1		

### 3.11 Section J: Markets and Marketing (49 out of 100)

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

The Markets and Marketing section ranks eighth of all of the sections. Question J5 (distinct brand or marketing image) appears in the list of the lowest scores compared with other communities (see Appendix D), and that question along with J9 (joint marketing) appears in the list of the lowest scoring questions for Castor (see Appendix B).



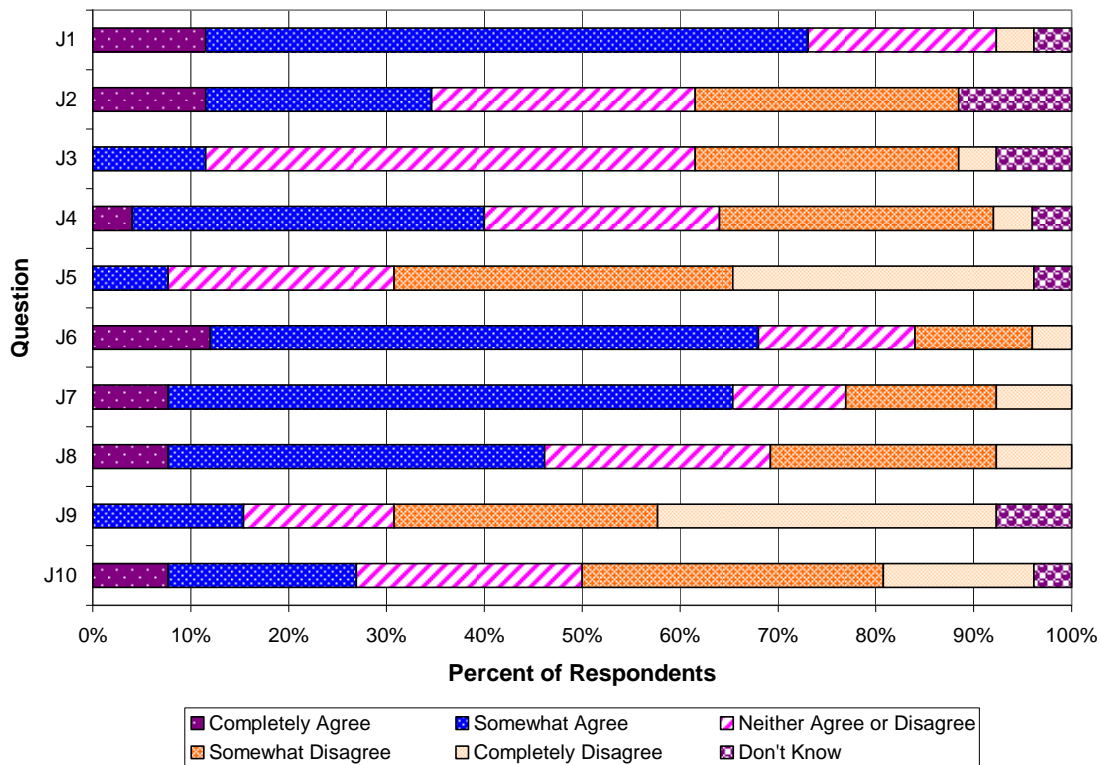
**Figure 21: Markets and Marketing Subsection Scores**

- The 'Local Marketing' subsection was the highest scoring subsection with a score of 57 (14% above average).
- The 'Regional Marketing' subsection was the lowest scoring subsection with a score of 35 (20% below average).

**Table 32: Markets and Marketing Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Castor	16-Community Average	% Diff.
Market Saviness	J1. Businesses have a good understanding of their customers and their purchasing behaviour.	70	61	14%
	J2. Business people have knowledge and an awareness of the global economy and market trends, and its relevance to local markets.	55	53	5%
	J3. Local businesses demonstrate creativity and innovation in seeking new customers, both locally and outside of the area.	44	53	-17%
Market Reputation	J4. The community has a reputation for high quality products and/or services	52	55	-6%
	J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image.	27	44	-39%
	J6. People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	65	69	-5%
Local Marketing	J7. Products and services are reasonably priced in comparison to regional and city competitors	61	58	5%
	J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	54	43	25%
Regional Marketing	J9. Businesses in the community / region market their products and services as a group.	28	32	-12%
	J10. Locally developed goods and services are marketed both in the community and in other regions.	43	58	-25%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>-5%</b>

- Question J1 (businesses understand customers) has the highest score of the section with a score of 70 (14% above average).
- Question J5 (distinct brand or marketing image) is the lowest scoring question of the section with a score of 27 (39% below average).



**Figure 22: Markets and Marketing Question Response Distribution**

- Question J1 (good understanding of customers) has the **highest level of agreement with the question** at 73%.
- Question J5 (distinct brand or marketing image) has the **highest level of disagreement with the question** at 65%
- Question J2 (knowledge of global economy) has the highest incidence of 'Don't know' at 12%.

**Table 33: Markets and Marketing Strengths and Improvements**

Strengths		Improvements	
The friendliness of the owners and staff of stores	3	Better marketing	4
People in business know the people and accommodate that market.	2	Local shopping	2
Word of mouth and local post office, papers, posters	1	Join Coronation Chamber of Commerce/ form a chamber	2
Very diverse spread of business for our size	1	Attract industry and businesses	2
Community support for local businesses	1	More signs on hwy 36	1
Many local businesses are good in the local market but not outside.	1	Improve joint marketing plan	1
Farmers market - Festivals - fairs-4a are drawing people in.	1	Larger amount of products to keep them shopping at home	1
		Upgrade main street	1
		Issues with service	1
		Better customer training skills in service	1
		Discussion among local businesses and coordination on a local level	1
		Could advertise the safeness security of our area	1
		Look outside present market and try and stay competitive to their similar industries	1
		Increase internet exposure	1

## Appendix A: Top 20 Highest Scoring Questions

Question	Score out of 100		
	Castor	16-Community Average	% Difference
B10. The community is a safe place to live.	96	91	6%
B2. There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	95	79	21%
H4b. Insurance services are easily accessible and affordable.	94	82	15%
H4a. Banking services are easily accessible and affordable.	92	83	11%
B6. The community is physically beautiful, and environmentally safe (i.e. pollution, water quality).	91	89	3%
H2. Parking near core business areas is accessible and affordable.	91	81	13%
I1a. Word of mouth is utilized.	91	90	1%
B11. Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	88	82	8%
B12. Individuals are capable of persevering and being committed to their business, remaining in the community even during hard economic times.	88	70	26%
G3a. Banks are utilized for business needs.	88	79	11%
G3b. Credit Unions are utilized for business needs.	86	77	12%
B1. A quality health care facility is accessible, well serviced and within a reasonable distance.	86	67	27%
I1e. Mobile phone services are accessible and utilized.	86	63	35%
G8d. Revolving Loan Funds (i.e. lines of credit) are accessible to expand or start a business.	85	66	30%
G8f. Loans \$5,000 to \$200,000 are accessible to expand or start a business.	85	70	21%
H5. Existing infrastructure (i.e.. Power, water) is good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	83	71	17%
I1f. Basic Internet Services are accessible and utilized.	83	83	0%
I2. Quality communication services (phone, fax, high speed internet) are affordable to business.	80	72	12%
G8e. Micro Loans (up to \$5,000) are accessible to expand or start a business.	80	75	7%
I1g. High speed Internet services are accessible and utilized.	80	55	45%

## Appendix B: Bottom 20 Lowest Scoring Questions

Question	Score out of 100		
	Castor	16-Community Average	% Difference
I4d. Train services are available between communities.	0	20	-100%
I4a. Air (commercial) services are available between communities.	1	29	-96%
I3b. Taxi services are accessible and utilized within the community.	3	40	-92%
D7. Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (Not necessarily about the region).	13	26	-52%
I3a. Public transportation services are accessible and utilized within the community.	16	31	-49%
D8. There are formal and informal forums (conferences, workshops) on technology and technology applications	20	26	-25%
C8. A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	23	35	-35%
C1i. University programs are utilized.	26	35	-25%
C1h. College programs are utilized.	26	26	2%
G5. People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	26	27	-4%
J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	27	44	-39%
J9. Businesses in the community /region jointly market their products and services	28	32	-12%
F8b. Training programs and services assisting business people are utilized.	28	50	-43%
I4b. Air (private) services are available between communities.	28	48	-41%
F8a. Counselling programs and services assisting business people are utilized.	28	48	-42%
A1. 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.	29	45	-36%
C1a. Business plan development programs are utilized.	30	53	-44%
G4. Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	30	21	46%
I3d. Carpooling system is accessible and utilized within the community.	30	25	20%
C1c. Advanced business skill development programs (i.e. financial planning, marketing, accounting, communication) are utilized.	31	39	-22%

## Appendix C: Top 20 Highest Positive Deviation from the 16-Community Average

Question	Score out of 100		
	Castor	16-Community Average	% Difference
I7. Shipping and freight services into and out of the community are affordable to business.	64	43	48%
I3c. Special Transportation Services (i.e.. seniors, people with disabilities) are accessible and utilized within the community.	76	52	47%
F6. Local regulations, policies, rules, bylaws and zoning are easily understood by business people making it easy/reasonable for businesses to expand or start up.	70	48	47%
G4. Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	30	21	46%
I1g. High speed Internet services are accessible and utilized.	80	55	45%
G8g. Loans \$200,000 and above are accessible to expand or start a business.	79	55	44%
G1. Lenders are willing to take chances based on individual character and good business ideas	64	46	38%
G8b. Angel funds (informal local investors) are accessible to expand or start a business.	56	41	36%
I1e. Mobile phone services are accessible and utilized.	86	63	35%
G8a. Equity funds (formal investors) are accessible to expand or start a business.	70	54	31%
G8d. Revolving Loan Funds (i.e. lines of credit) are accessible to expand or start a business.	85	66	30%
H7. Telecommunication infrastructure is reliable, well-maintained, and modern.	73	57	28%
F5. Local officials make it easy/reasonable for businesses to start or expand.	65	51	27%
B1. A quality health care facility is accessible, well serviced and within a reasonable distance.	86	67	27%
B12. Individuals are capable of persevering and being committed to their business, remaining in the community even during hard economic times.	88	70	26%
J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	54	43	25%
H6. The planning of new physical infrastructure (i.e. roads, power, sewage) considers business needs.	74	60	24%
G8f. Loans \$5,000 to \$200,000 are accessible to expand or start a business.	85	70	21%
G2. Lenders and investors understand entrepreneurs' needs and have programs to address those needs.	57	47	21%
B2. There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	95	79	21%

## Appendix D: Bottom 20 Largest Negative Deviation from the 16-Community Average

Question	Score out of 100		
	Castor	16-Community Average	% Difference
I4d. Train services are available between communities.	0	20	-100%
I4a. Air (commercial) services are available between communities.	1	29	-96%
I3b. Taxi Services are accessible and utilized within the community.	3	40	-92%
D7. Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (Not necessarily about the region).	13	26	-52%
I3a. Public Transportation services are accessible and utilized within the community.	16	31	-49%
C1a. Business plan development programs are utilized.	30	53	-44%
F8b. Training programs and services assisting business people are utilized.	28	50	-43%
F8a. Counselling programs and services assisting business people are utilized.	28	48	-42%
I4b. Air (private) services are available between communities.	28	48	-41%
J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	27	44	-39%
F8d. Assistance for those seeking self-employment programs and services assisting business people are utilized.	34	55	-38%
A1. 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.	29	45	-36%
C8. A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	23	35	-35%
B13. Quality residential real estate opportunities (both purchase and rental) are available and affordable.	44	63	-30%
H9. Quality commercial rental space is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	34	48	-29%
F8c. Mentoring programs and services assisting business people are utilized.	31	44	-29%
A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	45	62	-28%
A9. A pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs.	38	46	-18%
E3. Qualified and affordable supervisors and managers (and management services) are available to small business	37	44	-17%
E7. There are opportunities for small business to learn and develop management and leadership skills	37	44	-17%

## Appendix E: The “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 out of 100		% Diff.
	Castor	16-Community Average	
A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	45	62	-28%
B7. Young adults (25-34) consider the community a desirable place to live.	50	49	2%
B11. Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	88	82	8%
C7. The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	33	41	-20%
C11. Citizens are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	42	51	-17%
F2. The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	59	58	2%
F3. The governing body is committed to help existing businesses or creating new businesses through policy and action.	57	49	16%
G5. People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	26	27	-4%
H1. There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	54	50	7%
J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	27	44	-39%
J6. People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	65	69	-5%
J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	54	43	25%

-

## Appendix F: Focus Group Results

**Question One:** What makes this community a great place to live?

	Count	Category
Friendly	2	Community
Affordable real estate	2	Real Estate
People	1	Community
Fair prices	1	Business
Population has money, older population	1	Community
Good hours of operation	1	Business
Good freight connections	1	Infrastructure
No business license required if you live in the community or county	1	Business
Trusted business persons	1	Business
2 banks in town	1	Business
Large drawing area	1	Location
Variety of businesses	1	Business
Property taxes are reasonable	1	Government
Accessible parking	1	Infrastructure
Good education and health care systems	1	Services
Aesthetically pleasing - tidy beautiful, clean	1	Community
Variety of cultural activities, sports, religion	1	Community
Highway 12 and 36 corridors - heavily travelled	1	Infrastructure
Community spirit	1	Community
Deliveries - daily, depots	1	Services
Economic development officer	1	Government
Businesses know their clientele	1	Business
Have potential for new businesses	1	Business

**Question Two:** What changes should be made to improve your community?

	Count	Category
Accessibility of land	3	Real Estate
Chamber of commerce	2	Business
Road repair	1	Infrastructure
Twinning highway 36 and using 12	1	Infrastructure
Clean up commercial residential clutter.	1	Community
More information readily available	1	Marketing
Promote how inexpensive it is to live here (rec fees half the price of anywhere)	1	Marketing
Business succession planning	1	Business
Marketing for business	1	Business
Expand office service hours	1	Services

Sprucing up	1	Community
More newspaper ads	1	Marketing
Promote Castor lifestyle	1	Marketing
Mentoring	1	Business
Get over the CC war	1	Misc
Promote outdoor recreation	1	Marketing
More community investment by newspaper (Castor Advance)	1	Media
Generate tourist trade experiences	1	Marketing
Shirley McG - Water project	1	Misc
Provide bussing to events (alliance sports day, july1)	1	Infrastructure
Reclamation projects for contaminated properties	1	Environment
Business needs - sporting goods, clothing, breakfast, espresso shop, web design, graphic design, bakery, copy centre	1	Business
Promote heritage sites	1	Marketing

## Appendix G: Community Profile Results

Name 3 words, phrases or adjectives that best describe your community.

### Positive

	Count
Friendly	18
Safe	5
Pretty	4
Active	3
Peaceful	2
Supportive, caring	2
Beautiful	2

Picturesque	2
Clean	2
Caring for elderly	1
Community minded	1
Faithful	1
Welcoming	1
Enjoyable	1

### Neutral

	Count
Quiet	5
Elderly	2
Small	2
Conservative	1
Laid back	1
Agricultural based	1
Close Knit	1
Retirement Town	1
Old	1

### Negative

	Count
Complacent	1
Needing direction	1
Tired	1
Doesn't see potential	1
Siloed	1

### 1. What are the 3 greatest strengths / assets of your community?

	<b>Count</b>
Community involvement and spirit	10
Hospital/extended care facility/senior's lodge	6
Caring, cooperative	5
People	4
Friendly, welcoming	4
Safe & Secure	3
Oil/Gas	3
Good schools	3
Great place to raise a family	2
Two schools	2
Volunteers	2
Cost of living	2
Location away from but close to city	1
Good hockey program for all ages	1
Ability to come together for certain functions (fundraisers)	1
All the different landscapes within 20 minutes	1
Catholic School	1
Topography	1
Close knit groups	1
3 great historical sites for tourism	1
Reasonable real estate prices	1
Hard working people	1
The physical setting of the town - ponds, parks, pathways, trees	1
Long standing businesses as pillars in the community	1
Good base	1
Strength of People	1
Stores - Drug, Grocery, and hardware	1
Lodge - Paintearth housing	1
Very dedicated fire department	1
Good rec facilities	1
Town appearance - clean	1
Lots of opportunities to serve	1
Agriculture	1
Ability to cope	1
Stability	1
Appeal - trees/water (ponds)/cleanliness	1
Great support for the seniors in the community	1

## 2. What are 3 things that could improve your community?

	<b>Count</b>
Youth and family retention through employment	12
Business development, more business	11
More activities for younger people	4
More diversity of businesses to help keep shopping local	3
The attractiveness of the main street	3
Improve infrastructure	3
Indoor sports plex/ rec centre	2
More involvement of youth in community	2
Land development at affordable pricing	2
More social and community events	2
More recreation	1
Homes available to attract newcomers	1
Land development at affordable pricing	1
People taking more pride in the community	1
Bakery	1
More/Bigger coordinated community events	1
Better library	1
Lack of community vision	1
Instead of complaining, do something	1
Clothing outlet	1
Better professional services	1
Sporting goods store	1
Parks, green spaces	1
Safety supply store	1
Openness to new ideas	1
More tradespeople (Plumber, etc.)	1
Social events	1
Improved infrastructure to facilitate attraction of small businesses.	1
The restoration of some of our history	1
Fear of challenge	1
Encourage youth (20-25) to be involved with community leadership.	1
Unique shopping (heritage theme)	1
New community hall (We are working on it)	1

**3. What is the most important reason why you live in Castor?**

	<b>Count</b>
Nice quiet country lifestyle	5
Work	3
Family	3
Friends here	2
Friendly	2
Community involvement	2
Safety	1
People	1
Location	1
Good place to raise children	1
Accountable to each other	1
Very comfortable here	1
The caring people make it a pleasure to do anything in this community.	1
Good health care	1
Small enough to get to know everyone	1
Affordable real estate	1
Sense of belonging	1
Own business here	1
Opportunity	1
Grew up here	1
I married a farmer	1

**4. What makes your community unique in contrast to other communities? (list up to 3)**

	<b>Count</b>
Attractive community	9
Our waterways in town, Castor Creek	5
Friendly people	5
Stable, not transient	2
Recreational facilities	2
Senior citizens facilities	2
Topography, landscape	2
Involved community	2
Variety of things to do	1
Location	1
High percentage of older people	1
People	1
The beautiful trees on the barren prairie	1
Has a high school	1

Industry within the community	1
Two schools (public and catholic)	1
The citizens are extremely connected	1
Access to highway N&S (36) & E&W (12)	1
Theresetta Catholic School	1
The calm quietness of the community as a whole	1
Sports teams named "Raiders"	1
Good doctor and health care facility	1

**5. What are the untapped opportunities in your community? (List up to 3)**

	<b>Count</b>
Bakery	4
Restaurant	3
Plumber	2
Hotel/Motel	2
No interagency meeting	1
Sporting goods store/hunting, fishing, hockey, ball, etc.	1
Soup and sandwich business	1
Dam (Put in power)	1
Appliance business	1
Old buildings such as the old water treatment plant could make a great restaurant	1
Clothing store	1
Older population that needs to spend	1
We have 3 great historical sites that aren't advertised enough	1
Market gardening	1
Set up private health care centre	1
A Country Inn for executive retreats	1
Trades development	1
Young people - if they would look at more opportunities other than resource based.	1
Business related to seniors needs	1
A vastly under-promoted museum (elevator, rail and museum buildings)	1
We have an excellent golf course, club house, ball park - could be expanded upon and advertised better	1
More exposure for the Castor little theatre winter fest	1
Take advantage of heritage buildings	1
Mike Bain's pharmacy museum	1
No activities for young people	1
Marketing free range organic meat	1
AG Tourism (dude ranch)	1
Education (advanced learning)	1
Last standing elevator incorporate an art gallery, restaurant, tour	1

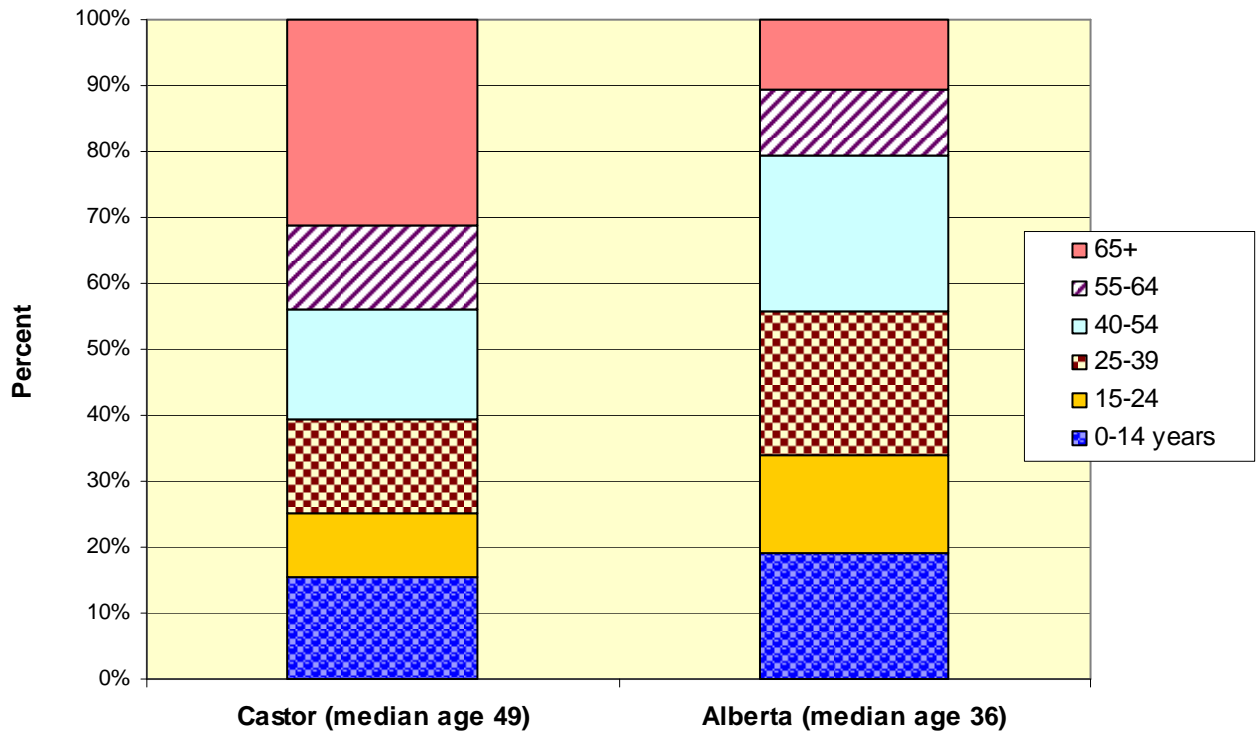
Eco-tourism and bird watching of Castor Creek & other natural areas such as Sullivan lake & Paintearth Coulee & Hatherley Valley, etc.	
Public skating on Sunday	
Seasonal swimming	
Manure strategy - use of manure for methane gas and fire board	

## Appendix H: Phase 1 Session Attendance

Michael Yakielashek  
 Larry Davidson  
 Garry DeVloo  
 Richard Froese  
 Melanie Robertson  
 Ken Jackson  
 Dwight Downey  
 Anthony Holland  
 Patrick Kelly  
 Rosemarie Franke  
 Don Sisson  
 Kevin Johnson  
 Mike Faught  
 Kerry Pickles

Herb Rock  
 Sylvia Wold  
 Rod Anderson  
 Chris Fournier  
 Shelly Pals  
 Phillip Pals  
 Catherine Wylie  
 Brian Dyki  
 Kimberley Dunkle  
 Randy Kary  
 Gordon Nichols  
 Shirley Hewitt  
 Shari Hagstrom  
 Mike Bain  
 Basil Nichols  
 Melody Vallee

### Appendix I: Castor Community Profile -- Age Distribution

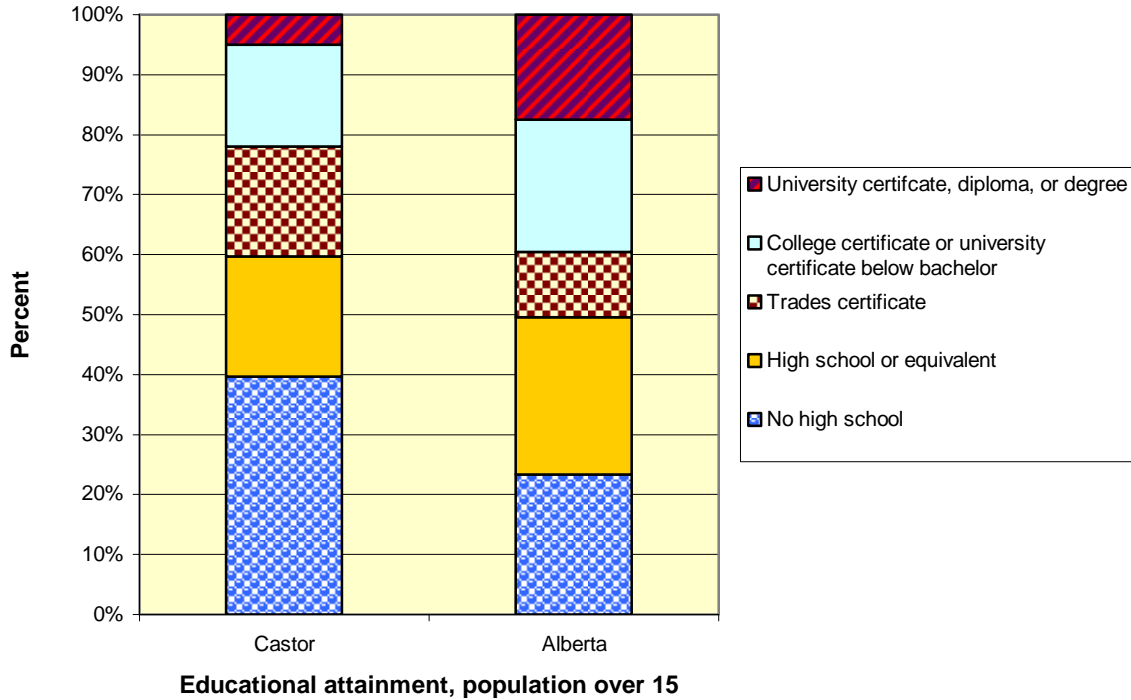


### Appendix J: Castor Community Profile—Labour Force Distribution

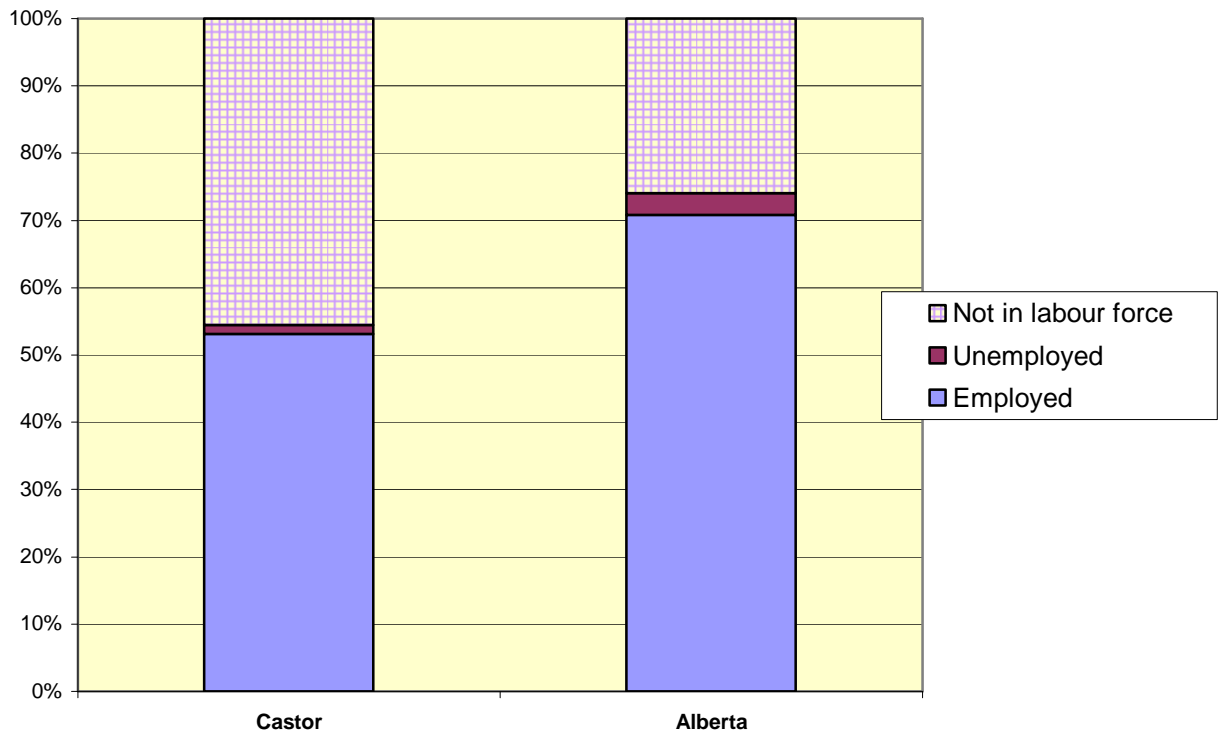
#### Top 5 Industries of Employment by Participation

Castor		Alberta	
Agriculture	20%	Business Services	18%
Construction	14%	Agriculture	12%
Retail	12%	Retail	11%
Health and social services	12%	Health and social services	9%
Business Services	7%	Construction	9%

## Appendix K: Castor Community Profile—Educational Attainment



## Appendix L: Castor Community Profile—Labour Force Distribution



## Appendix M: Castor Community Profile—Earnings and Income

	<b>Castor</b>	<b>Alberta</b>
Median Earnings (people over 15)	24,385	29,738
Percent of population in low income category	5.1	12.2
Government transfers as % of all income	16.5	7.2

## **Appendix N: The Business Vitality Initiative**

The BVI was developed by Mike Stolte, an economist and economic development manager in Nelson, B.C. He knew that people have an innate need to see where they stand relative to others before taking action, and that 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 and colleague 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 indicators, qualitative questions and focus groups.

### **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.

## Summary of the BVI Process

Using a combination of community meetings, focus groups, questionnaires, statistics, and written reports, the BVI guides the community through three stages:

1. **Assessment** --a 3 hour community meeting featuring a 95-question survey and focus groups will be accompanied by an on-line survey for those who wish to participate but cannot make the meeting.
2. **Focus**-- a 3 hour community meeting where survey results are reviewed, analysis is provided, possible community actions are considered, actions are selected by the community, and a reality check is performed.
3. **Action**-- the action stage features the community working on 3-4 top priorities or actions selected in the focus stage.

The BVI will allow communities to benchmark themselves and compare themselves to other communities using CIEL's unique graphs and scoring.

## Appendix O: List of BVI Communities to Date

### Canada

- Creston, BC, Canada
- 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
- East Shore Region, BC
- Port Hardy, BC
- Kimberley, BC
- Gladstone, MB
- Dauphin, MB
- Castor, AB
- Hinton, AB

### Australia

- Yarram, VIC
- Dimboola, VIC
- Myrtleford, VIC
- Robinvale, VIC
- Macarthur, VIC

## **Appendix P: About CIEL**

The Centre for Innovative and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL) strengthens communities by helping them become more business-friendly, more culturally vibrant, and more sustainable. We also assist them in improving leadership and enhancing community involvement.

CIEL is a non-profit organization located in Nelson, British Columbia, in a region featuring many communities that are quickly having to make transitions to survive in a fast-changing global economy.

Our early work assisted small communities in the neighbouring mountain valleys. We developed innovative assessments coupled with strategic processes that helped communities focus, leverage assets and energy and, most importantly, jumpstart action. Then our ideas attracted the attention of communities farther afield, and we began working with communities across the rest of B.C. More recently we have been invited into communities across Canada, the U.S, New Zealand and Australia.

Our Communities Matrix – a one page tool for assessing stages of community readiness – has now been used in many countries across the globe. The Government of Canada contracted CIEL to research, develop and build a collaborative leadership program as an effective means of building capacity for rural communities in Canada.

CIEL continues to develop practical, engaging and innovative tools and processes that strengthen communities. In 2008, CIEL won the award for the region's most innovative organization from the Kootenay Association for Science & Technology.

Our network of facilitators and trainers allows us to be responsive to the needs of communities across the world. CIEL's conference presentations have inspired at the local, regional, state/province and international level. Our work has been featured on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Canadian Living Magazine and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.