

# Business Vitality Initiative (BVI)

## Phase One Assessment Report

### Hinton, Alberta

January 2009



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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.

The Hinton BVI was sponsored by the Town of Hinton, Community Futures West Yellowhead, and the Hinton and District Chamber of Commerce. It was organized by Renée Laboucane, the Economic Development Manager for the Town of Hinton. She selected and invited the participants, who 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 19, 2008, forty-three people attended the Phase 1 session of the BVI in Hinton.

Hinton 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.

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 February 11, 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, Hinton is an *active, energetic, progressive* community in a *beautiful, scenic* setting. When participants were asked to identify key strengths, the top responses were *geographic location, the diversity of resource industries, and the wilderness*. When participants were asked why they live in Hinton, *employment, family, and quality of life* were mentioned most. When participants were asked to provide directions for improvement for their community, the need for post-secondary education and retail diversity, along with the need for less dependence on resource-based industries, were mentioned most often.

## Hinton Section Scores

Hinton 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 Hinton section scores are as follows:

- A. Opportunities and Attitudes: 57 out of 100** - The ability of the community to recognize, take action, and follow through on available opportunities.
- B. Quality of Life: 71 out of 100** - The ability of the community to attract & retain businesses & residents, especially those who are young, skilled workers.
- C. Education and Training: 56 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: 58 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: 59 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: 59 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: 56 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: 66 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: 69 out of 100** - The ability of businesses to connect with each other and with outside markets.
- J. Markets and Marketing: 45 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 **60 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
Diversity of resource industries with high wages	Lack of post-secondary education opportunity
Progressive attitude	Over-dependence on resource industries
Outdoor recreation	Appearance of town
Location on transportation corridors	Marketing for tourism potential
Strong municipal government	More industrial land needed?
Lots of business opportunity	Not sufficient business mentoring and networking

## 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>▪ Opportunity Identification Session for youth to identify untapped business, recreation and education opportunities (Opportunities)</li> <li>▪ Lenders forum introducing businesses &amp; potential businesses to finance and needs of lenders (Focus Groups)</li> <li>▪ Events to build cooperation and improve community (e.g. highway clean up, summer or winter festival, ‘Celebrate Hinton’ event, etc.) – (Three things, Opportunities, Section B)</li> <li>▪ Youth entrepreneurship program/initiative (Opportunities)</li> <li>▪ CF West Yellowhead to take a higher profile (Section H)</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review and expand tourism development initiatives, especially marketing of Hinton (Top 10, Opportunities, Themes, Focus Groups)</li> <li>▪ Highway appearance and signage review (Top 10, Focus Groups)</li> <li>▪ Publish and promote BVI results, especially untapped opportunities – e.g. - Bike store, restaurant, etc.) – (Opportunities)</li> <li>▪ Local products and services showcase or event that would also encourage joint marketing (Section A, J)</li> </ul>

Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business mentoring program (Focus Groups)</li> <li>▪ Shop local initiative (Section J, J8)</li> <li>▪ Initiative to encourage more business and community collaboration, possibly using speaker series, events, educational forums - e.g. finance, start-up, doing business online, etc. (Sections A, I)</li> </ul>
Admin., Research, Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review commercial and industrial land bylaws and available land with a committee involving local business people (Focus Groups, Top 10, H8)</li> <li>▪ Housing affordability review (B13, Top 10 improvements, Focus Groups)</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>▪ Strategy for creating a venue or venues for performance, art, etc. (Improvements, Section B)</li> <li>▪ Air service strategy (Section I)</li> <li>▪ Sport facility review (Section B)</li> <li>▪ Strategy to support volunteers and start-up of community groups (e.g. a meeting venue, assistance with recruitment of volunteers, training, accessing finance, etc) (Section B)</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Branding review to correct image of Hinton as a desirable community - especially for young adults - using opportunities &amp; unique characteristics referenced in BVI (e.g. abundant outdoor recreation opportunities, etc.) (Focus Groups, Sections B &amp; H, J6, B6)</li> <li>▪ Community beautification strategy - e.g. downtown cleanup, outdoor stewardship, addressing sprawl, etc. (Sections B &amp; H, B6)</li> </ul>
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outreach, communication and participation strategy to reach out to broader community (Themes, throughout report)</li> <li>▪ Develop new business welcome program &amp;/or new resident welcome program (Section A)</li> <li>▪ Strategy to increase production and joint marketing of local goods and services (J8, J9, J10, Section J)</li> </ul>
Research, Admin. and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corridor plan completed (Focus Groups)</li> <li>▪ Post-secondary strategy (involving research) so that Hinton becomes innovative adult education community (the strategy should also address trades training) - (Top 10, Section B, Themes)</li> <li>▪ Housing affordability strategy involving business community (to look at this as an economic development issue) (B13, Improvements)</li> <li>▪ Commercial land and building strategy – e.g. increase land base (Section H)</li> <li>▪ Coherent land-base plan that addresses competing issues of needing to increase the land base for business with the desire to centralize and reduce sprawl (Themes, throughout report)</li> </ul>

## 1.0 Introduction

The assessment session of the BVI was conducted in Hinton, Alberta, on November 19, 2008. The project's community sponsors are the Town of Hinton, Community Futures West Yellowhead, and the Hinton and District Chamber of Commerce.

Hinton 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.

Hinton is the 17th community in Canada that has taken part in the BVI, in addition to five communities in Australia.

The second session of the BVI, the Phase 2 or *focus and action* session, will take place on February 11, 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 sponsors 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 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.

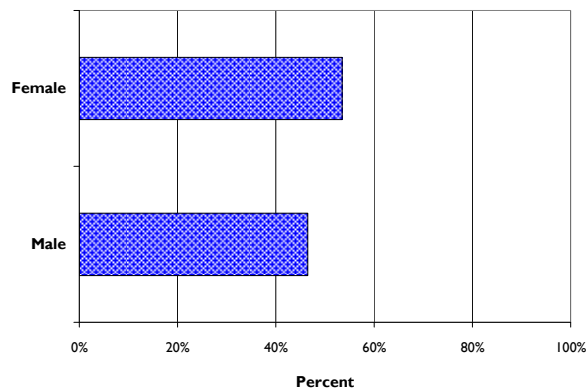
CIEL weights each question, subsection, and section according to its relative importance in terms of business vitality.

In addition to the survey portion of the BVI, focus groups in Hinton discussed the factors that make the community a good place to do business and improvements that could be made in order to improve business vitality. The results of the focus groups 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.

## 2.0 Community Profile and Focus Group Results

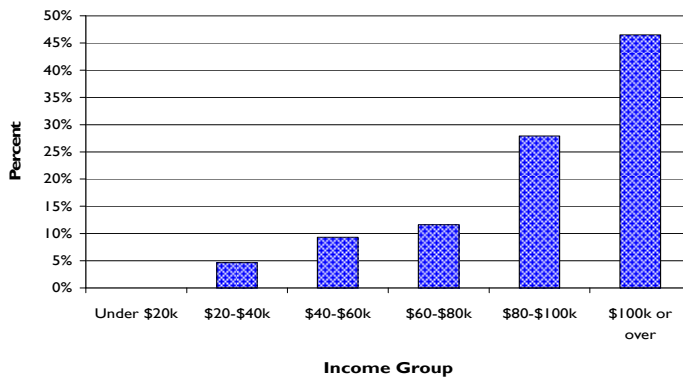
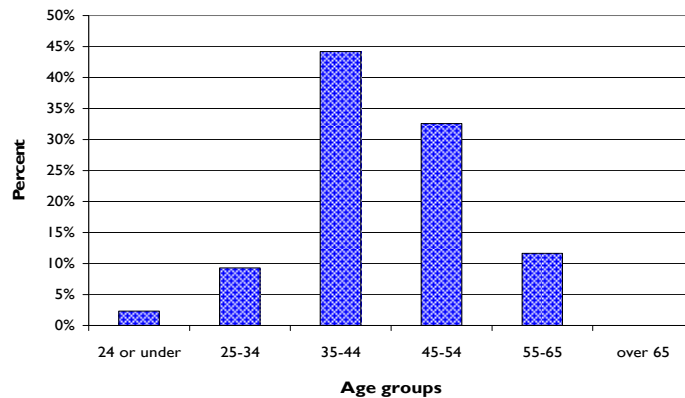
### 2.1 BVI Focus Group Respondent Profile

The first part of the BVI survey consists of various questions used to profile focus group participants. Forty-three people from the community of Hinton participated in the BVI survey and focus group sessions on November 19, 2008.



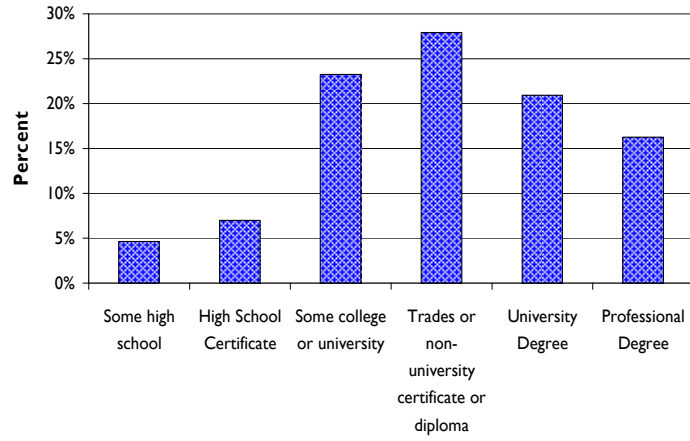
53.5% of Hinton BVI participants were female, and 46.5% were male. This deviates from most or all other BVIs in which men have outnumbered women.

- In the BVI focus group session, 76% of the participants were in the 35-54 age range.

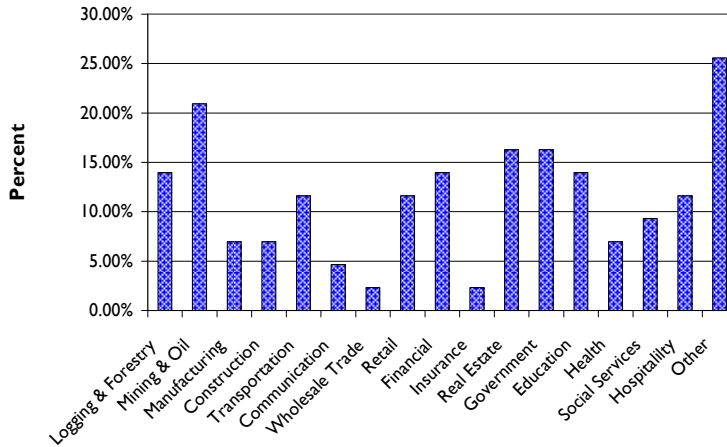


- 73% of the BVI survey group had incomes over \$80K.
- There were no participants with an income under \$20K.

- The most common educational grouping was “Trade or non-university diploma or certificate” at 27% of participants.



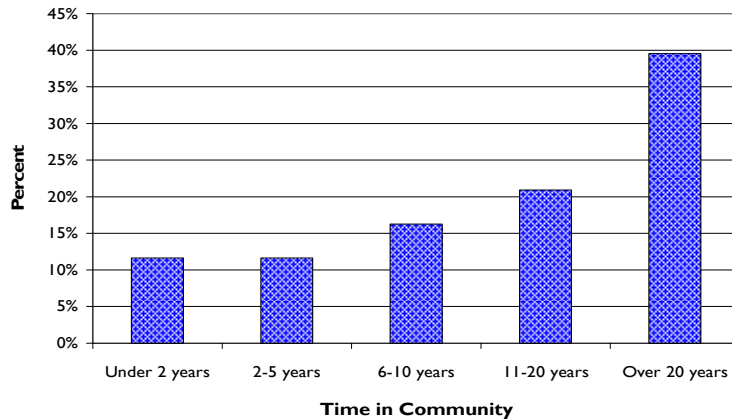
Highest level of Education

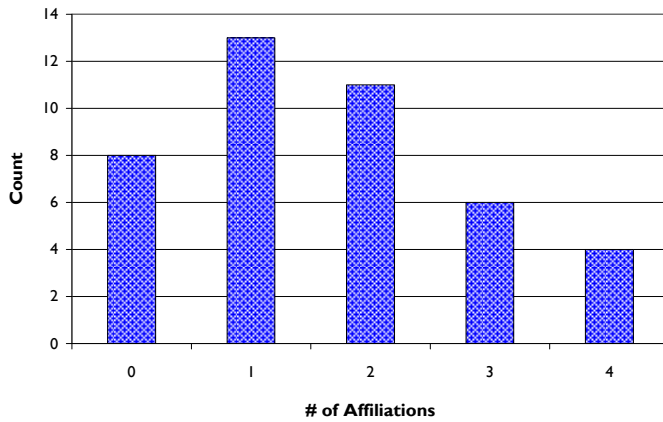


Occupation

- The most common occupation of BVI participants is a miscellaneous category of a variety of occupations, followed by mining and oil.

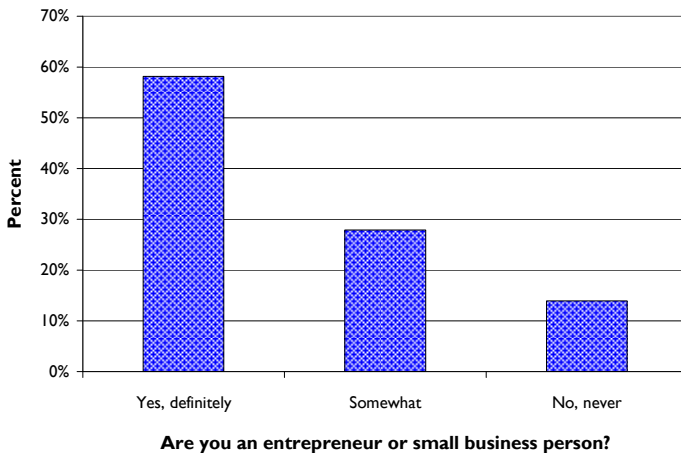
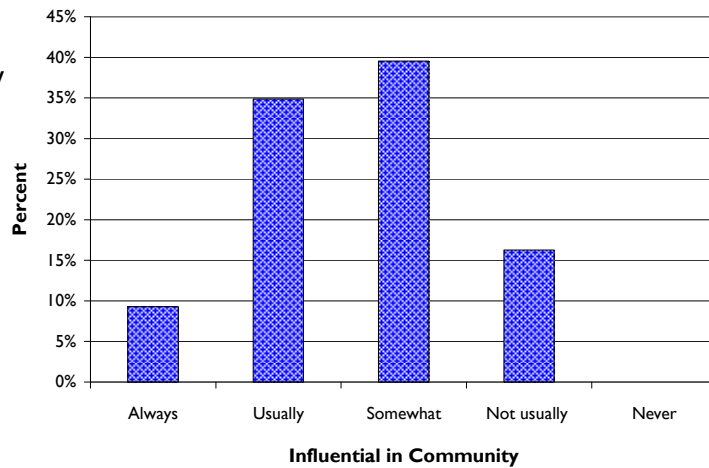
- The most commonly-cited time in the community as stated by 39% of participants was ‘over 20 years’.





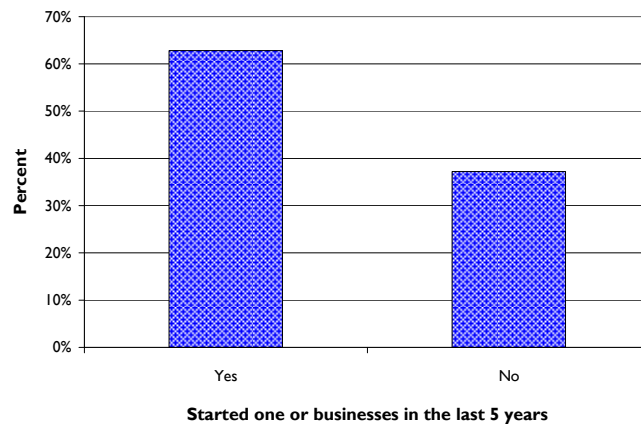
- The most common number of affiliations for focus group participants was '1' at 13% of the BVI group.

- 84% of participants say they feel influential in the community in some way.
- No participants felt they were 'never' influential in the community.



- 86% of participants stated that they felt they are a business person or entrepreneur in some way.

- 61% 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 19 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 (within the community’s control) that can be improved to help businesses in your community?

Table 4 shows the top responses to Question 1. For a full listing of answers consult Appendix F.

**Table 4: Focus Group Question 1-- Top Ten Results**

	Count	Theme
Transportation corridor (for business and tourism)	5	Location
Opportunities for new business	5	Business
Regional service provider	3	Location
High wages, prosperity	3	Economy
Oil and gas/ other resources	3	Economy
Health care services	2	Services
Education	2	Services
Parks, recreation	2	Services
Hinton Training Centre, YRAF creative campus, post secondary.	2	Services
Innovista Eco Industrial Park	2	Environment
High speed internet	2	Infrastructure
Public transit	2	Infrastructure
Arts and culture (events, festivals)	2	Arts and Culture

Table 5 shows the top responses to Question 2. For a full listing of answers consult Appendix F.

**Table 5: Focus Group Question 2 Top Results**

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Business mentoring and networking	5	Business Development
Marketing Hinton to the world	4	Marketing
More commercial and industrial land, fewer restrictions	2	Real Estate
Improve signage	2	Infrastructure
Branding review	2	Marketing
Major event/ festival	2	Community
Get the corridor plan completed, in place now	2	Infrastructure
Increased awareness in the community of lending opportunities	2	Business Development
See Appendix F for more		

Grouping all 42 responses in Appendix F into themes (Table 6), the theme “Business Development ’comes out on top.

**Table 6: Focus Group Question 2 Common Themes**

	<b>Count</b>
Business Development	17
Infrastructure	8
Marketing	6
Community	6
Real Estate	3

### 2.3 Community Profile Results

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

### 2.3.1 Describing Hinton in Three Words

There were 113 individual responses to the community profile question which asks for three words or phrases that best describe Hinton. Of those, 97 were considered to be positive, 10 were neutral, and 6 were considered negative, resulting in a 20:1 positive to negative ratio, indicating an overall strength for the community.

**Table 7: Describing Hinton in Three Words (Top Ten)**

	Positive		Negative
Beautiful, scenic	9	Closed	1
Outdoor recreation	9	Close minded on tourism	1
Active, energetic	7	Cliquey	1
Progressive	6	Struggling	1
Location (gateway, hub)	5	Discombobulated	1
Vital, vibrant	4	Smells	1
Resource/industry based	4		
Diverse	3		
Growing	3		
See Appendix G for more			

### 2.3.2 Strengths and Assets of Hinton

In the strengths and assets section of the Hinton community profile, there were 73 individual responses, all listed in Appendix G. The top self-assessed strengths of Hinton appear in Table 8 below.

**Table 8: Top Ten Strengths and Assets of Hinton**

	Count
Geographic location	14
Diversity of resource industries	11
Wilderness, mountains, parks	10
Volunteers	10
Outdoor recreation	7
People	5
Involved and engaged people	5
Quality of life	4
Strong council and mayor	3
See Appendix G for more	

### 2.3.3 Improving Hinton

The most important steps in improving Hinton, according to survey participants, are the need to have less dependence on resource industries, and the need for more post-secondary opportunities. For a list of all 112 responses, see Appendix G.

**Table 9: Top Ways to Improve Hinton**

	<b>Count</b>
Post secondary education	8
Less dependence on resource based industry	7
Retail diversity	7
More community involvement	6
Improve appearance along highway	5
Availability of commercial/industrial land	5
Better and bigger indoor rec facilities	4
Foster improved relations between businesses	3
Affordable housing	3
Consultation and consensus re municipal planning	3
More positive attitude	3
See Appendix G for more	

### 2.3.4 Reason for living in Hinton

The top reason for living in Hinton as stated by BVI participants was employment, followed by family, lifestyle, and recreation. Table 10 is a partial listing; for a complete list consult Appendix G.

**Table 10: Top Reasons for Living in Hinton**

	<b>Count</b>
Employment	18
Family	9
Lifestyle, quality of life	8
Proximity to mountains - recreation	6
People	3
Location	3
Business opportunity	2

### 2.3.5 What makes Hinton unique

According to BVI participants, the two most common reasons that make Hinton unique is its proximity to the mountains and wilderness recreation. Some of these reasons are given in Table 11; for a complete list see Appendix G.

**Table 11: Top Reasons Hinton is Unique**

	<b>Count</b>
Mountains and outdoor recreation	22
Variety of natural resources	19
Location	7
Rural lifestyle but with most benefits of larger centre	5
On Trans-Canada highway	2
Economic diversity	2
Spread out	2
See Appendix G for more	

### 2.3.6 Untapped Opportunities

The most commonly cited untapped opportunity was the need for tourism development. See Appendix G for a list of all 70 responses.

**Table 12: Top Untapped Opportunities**

	<b>Count</b>
Tourism development	11
Restaurant other than fast food	4
Performance venue for arts and entertainment	4
Activities for young people other than bars	3
Post secondary education	3
Arts and culture development	2
Bike store	2
Youth entrepreneurship development	2
Sports shops	2
See Appendix G for more	

### 2.3.7 What is the one thing you are most proud of?

Table 13 contains the top reasons. For a full listing see Appendix G.

**Table 13: Top Sources of Pride**

	<b>Count</b>
Hinton's determined commitment to the future	5
Recreation, camping, skiing, hiking	4
Community involvement and pride	4
Mountains, outdoors, wilderness	4
Volunteers	4
Beaver boardwalk	3
The community has a vision	2
See Appendix G for more	

## 3.0 Section Scores

Overall, Hinton had a full survey score of 60 out of 100, which is 17% above the 17-community average of 52.

The BVI section results as shown in figures 1 and 2 illustrate that Hinton scored equal to or above the 17-community average in 9 out of 10 sections. A particular strength for Hinton are its score for the 'Quality of Life' section of 71 out of 100 (9% above the community average), which was the highest scoring section of the survey, and its score of 69 (31% above average) for Communications and Connectivity.

The lowest scoring section of the survey, and the only one which fell below the community average, was 'Markets and Marketing' which had a score of 45 (12% below the 17-community average).

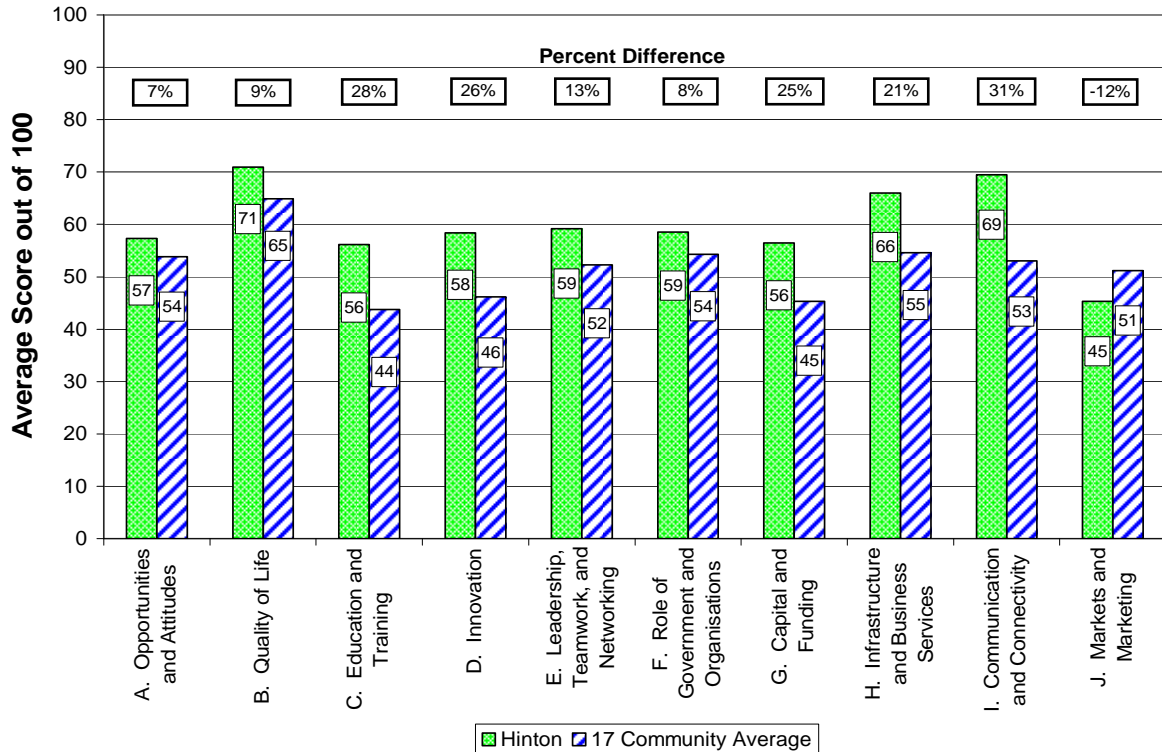


Figure 1: Hinton and 17- Community Average Section Scores

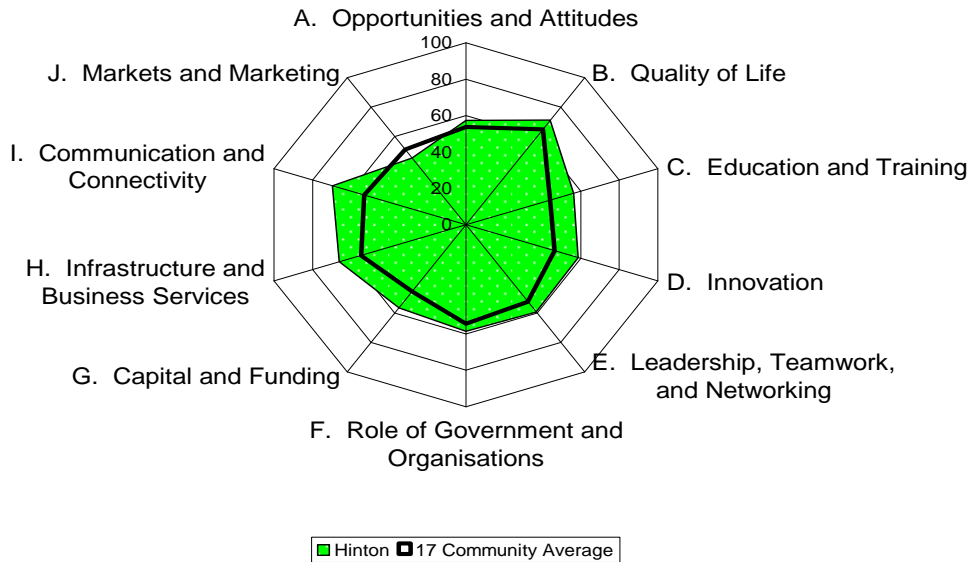


Figure 2: Hinton and 17- Community Average Section Scores

### **31. Individual Section Scores**

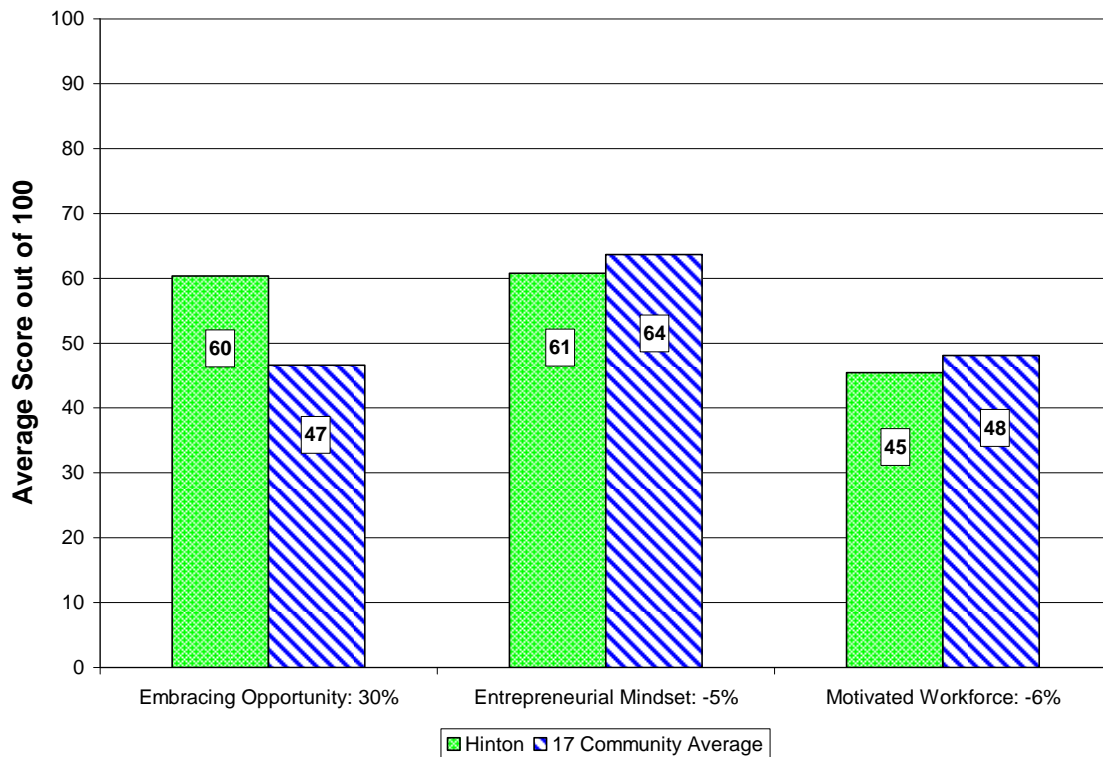
The remainder of this chapter presents a look at each of the ten sections of the Hinton BVI individually, including:

- a graph showing the subsection results for each section, and the deviation of those results from the 17-community average.
- a list of all questions in each section showing the score for Hinton compared with the average score for the 17 communities. That table has the highest scoring question in relation to the 17-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 (57 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 7th highest ranking section of the BVI survey in Hinton.



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

- The 'Entrepreneurial Mindset' subsection scored highest (61 out of 100), 5% below the 17-community average.
- With a score of 45, the "Motivated Workforce" subsection scored lowest in the section, 6% below the 17-community average.

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

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Hinton	17-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.	58	46	27%
	A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	43	61	-28%
	A3. The community is facing a significant economic opportunity.	<b>72</b>	63	14%
	A4. Entrepreneurial ventures and business creation are encouraged and supported by citizens and local governments.	52	58	-10%
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.	58	63	-7%
	A6. Individuals are skilled in a trade, talent, or profession, and have the desire to form a business with these	62	65	-5%
	A7. Individuals are capable of thinking creatively and developing unconventional solutions using a proactive/can-do attitude.	63	66	-4%
	A8. Individuals are capable of identifying new, unconventional or changing business opportunities.	59	61	-3%
Motivated workforce	A9. A pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs.	<b>40</b>	48	-16%
	A10. Managers and supervisors are motivated in their work and about their staff	52	59	-12%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7%</b>

- The highest and lowest scores in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **large bold type**.

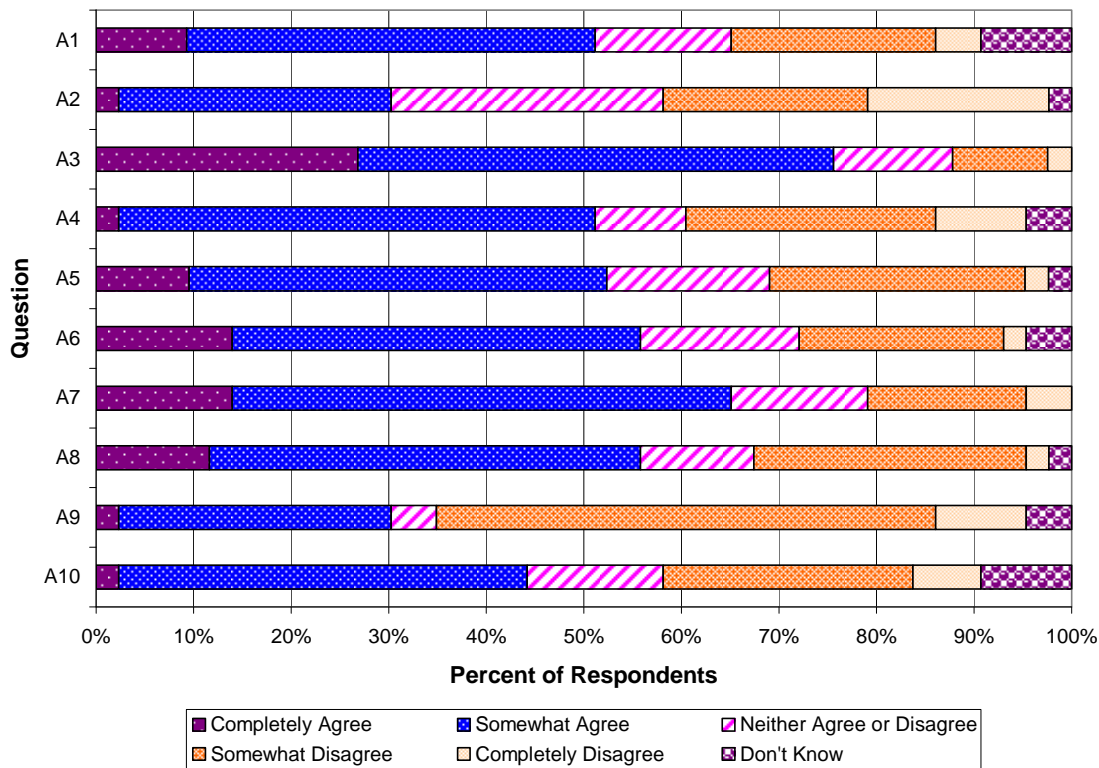


Figure 4: Opportunities and Attitudes Question Response Distribution

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** A3 (significant economic opportunity) at 76%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** A9 (motivated employees) at 30%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** A10 (managers motivated in their work) 9%.

Table 15: Opportunities and Attitudes Strengths and Improvements

Strengths		Improvements	
Natural resources and related industry	9	Education, communication, forums, networking, and outreach to actively invite broader and more inclusive community participation	13
Positive attitudes and high motivation of the people	7	Improve mentoring, financing, incentives for new businesses	4
Leadership is forward thinking and progressive	6	Reduce reliance on oil, gas, mining, forestry	3
Wilderness for tourism and recreation	5	Don't let a handful of people dictate what comes to town (old boys club)	2

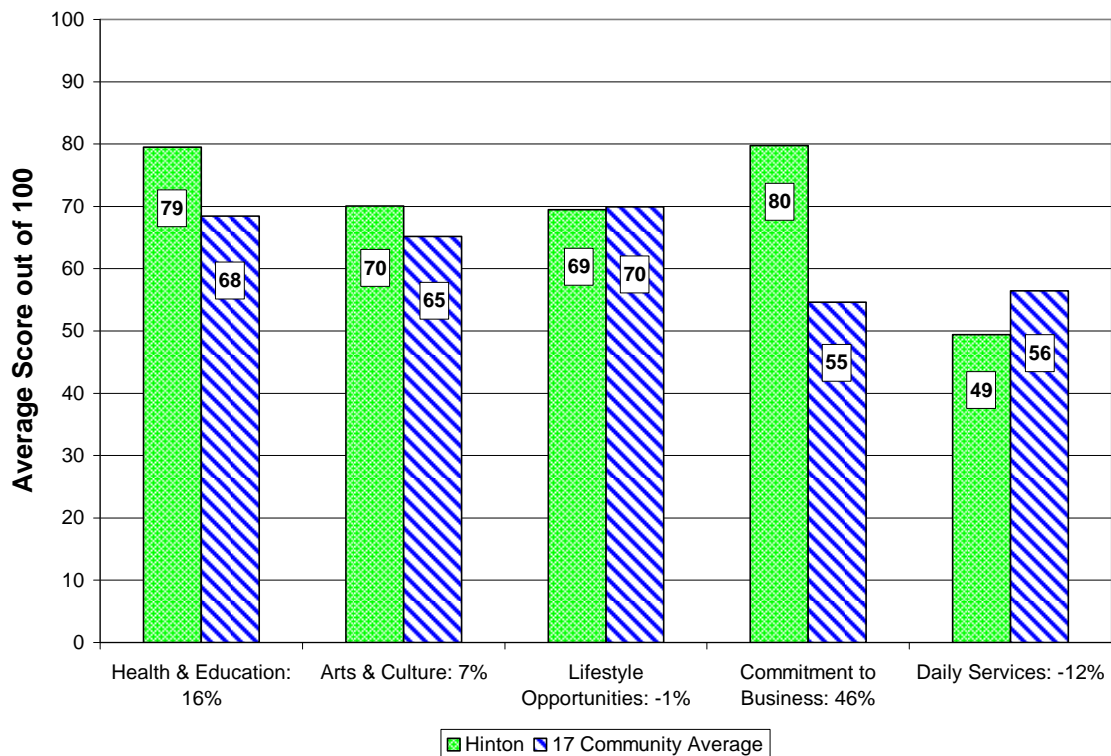
Location - Yellowhead corridor	4	More industrial land availability	2
We believe in partnering and collaborating	3	Reduce cost of residential and commercial real estate	2
We recognize the need for change and act on it	3	Union mindset does not encourage entrepreneurship	2
Young people with energy	2	I hope this process will make a difference	1
Lots of business opportunity	2	Importance of tourism in overall business plan	1
Hinton has many amenities of main centres	1	Partnerships	1
Arts and culture	1	Give more funding to volunteer groups that are creating positive economic impacts	1
The people.	1	Activities, festivals to attract new people	1
Information and support	1		
We are quick to implement proven strategies	1	Formally greet new business and thank them	1
New direction from the town council with programs like this one.	1	Create the opportunities	1
Educational hub/centre for West Yellowhead.	1	Showcase what is available locally and appreciate	1
Mountain pine beetle impact could allow us to diversify	1	Foster greater pride	1
Willingness to diversify	1	Expand land base	1
The new 12 in 12 initiative	1	More group events for recreation activities	1
Challenging	1	More trades and technical skills training	1
If you provide honest excellent service you will be busy and booked.	1	Break up the commercial real estate monopoly.	1
High wages	1		
Despite layoffs, closures, and slowdowns, workers stay and find local jobs	1		

### 3.3 Section B: Quality of Life (71 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 was the highest ranking section for Hinton. The list of the 20 highest scoring questions in Appendix A contains four questions from this section. The highest scoring question in the entire survey is B9 (high quality recreational opportunities), which got a score of 94 out of 100.

However, the list of questions with the largest negative deviation from the 17-community average (see Appendix D) also contains three questions from this section: B13 (affordable residential real estate) at 41% below average, B6 (physically beautiful and environmentally safe) at 21% below average, and B10 (a safe place to live) at 16% below average.



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

- The 'Commitment to Business' subsection scored highest as compared with the 17-community average and in terms of absolute score, with a score of 80 (45% above average).

- The lowest scoring subsection, ‘Daily Services’ had a score of 49 (12% below the 17-community average).

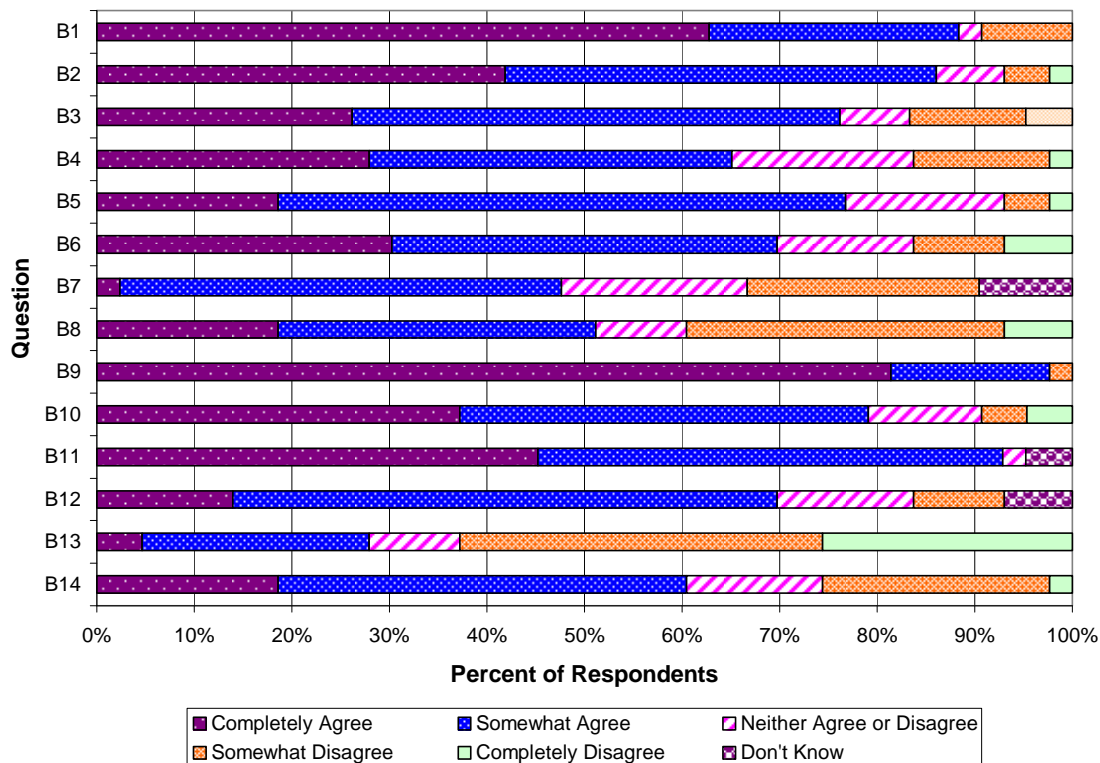
**Table 16: Quality of Life Individual Question Scores**

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Hinton	17-community Average	% Diff.
Health & Education	B1. A quality health care facility is accessible, well serviced and within a reasonable distance.	85	69	25%
	B2. There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	80	79	1%
	B3. There is an educational organization in the area that offers post-secondary programs and continuing education opportunities.	70	55	27%
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.	69	61	13%
	B5. There is a strong community identity, and there are plentiful and varying opportunities for involvement (i.e. arts, athletics, politics, church groups).	72	69	3%
Lifestyle Opportunities	B6. The community is physically beautiful and environmentally safe (i.e. pollution, water quality).	69	88	-21%
	B7. Young adults (25-34) consider the community to be a desirable place to live.	57	50	15%
	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.	<b>56</b>	45	23%
	B9. There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. sports fields, golf courses, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	<b>94</b>	82	15%
Commitment to Business	B10. The community is a safe place to live.	76	90	-16%
	B11. Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	86	83	4%
Daily Services	B12. Individuals are capable of persevering and being committed to their business, remaining in the community even during hard economic times.	70	70	1%
	B13. Quality residential and business real estate opportunities (both purchase and rental) are available and affordable.	36	61	-41%

B14. There is a diversity of quality and affordable services (i.e. dry-cleaning, photo developing, petrol station).	63	52	22%
<b>Section Score</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>9%</b>

- The highest and lowest scoring questions in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **large bold type**.



**Figure 6: Quality of Life Question Response Distribution**

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** B9 (recreational opportunities) at 97%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** B13 (affordable real estate) at 28%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** B7 (attractive to young adults) at 10%.

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

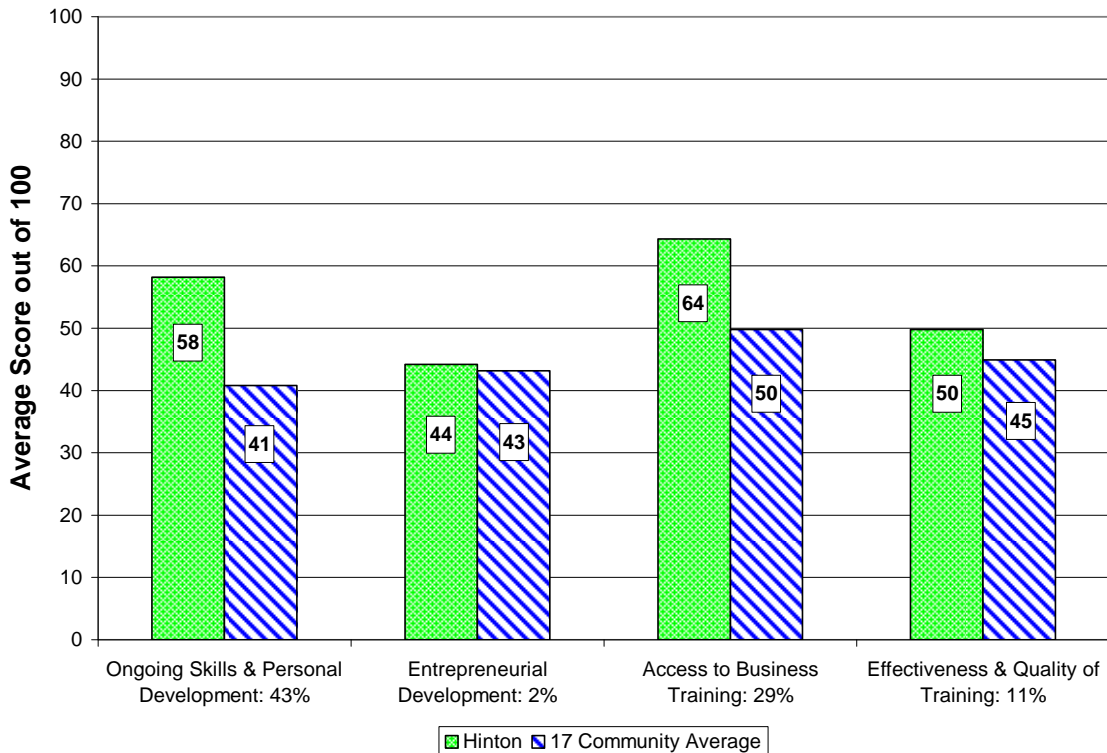
<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Outdoor recreation	22	More arts and culture events and venues	6
Good local hospital and health services	6	More adult learning and post secondary training	5
Natural beauty	6	Manage smell of pulp mill or move it	3
Variety of activities, clubs, organizations	3	More affordable housing	3
Elementary schools, education	3	Better sports facility, or upgrade	3
Location	3	Innovative education models in the schools: arts, crafts, outdoors, leadership	2
Good resource industry jobs	2	Encourage the community to take ownership	1
Close to Jasper	2	Celebrate Hinton a with a significant display in art, culture, industry	1
Small town but great opportunities	2	Activities to integrate new residents	1
Arts and culture	2	More restaurants	1
Public transit	2	Reduce crime	1
Recreation activities in town-- pool, bike park	2	More retail	1
Close to the capital city	1	Beautification of parts of the community	1
Safety	1	Stewardship of outdoors	1
Small town living and values	1	Clean up run down buildings.	1
Library	1	Facilitate volunteer groups that have a vision - meetings space, start-up funds	1
Peaceful environment	1	Expand new and better medical services (mri) to make us more regional medical stop	1
Mild weather	1	More social events, concerts, seminars, etc.	1
Internet connectivity	1	Create the opportunities	1
Business opportunities	1	Open up more land for commercial and residential development	1
Great festivals that are starting up	1	Have more fairs and festivals celebrating Hinton.	1
Creative community activities and events	1	Positive attitude	1
		Diversify our strengths	1
		Have venue for entertainment, more rock festivals	1
		Population increase	1
		More old age related facilities.	1
		Shop local	1

### 3.4 Section C: Education and Training (56 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 scored 8<sup>th</sup> out of the ten sections of the survey. Three questions from this section appear in Appendix B, which is the list of the lowest-scoring questions for Hinton: C1i (university programs), C8 (availability of labour) and the second-lowest score in the entire survey, C3 (entrepreneurial development program in the schools).

Interestingly, however, there are 6 questions in this section that considerably exceed the 17-community average—see Appendix C.



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

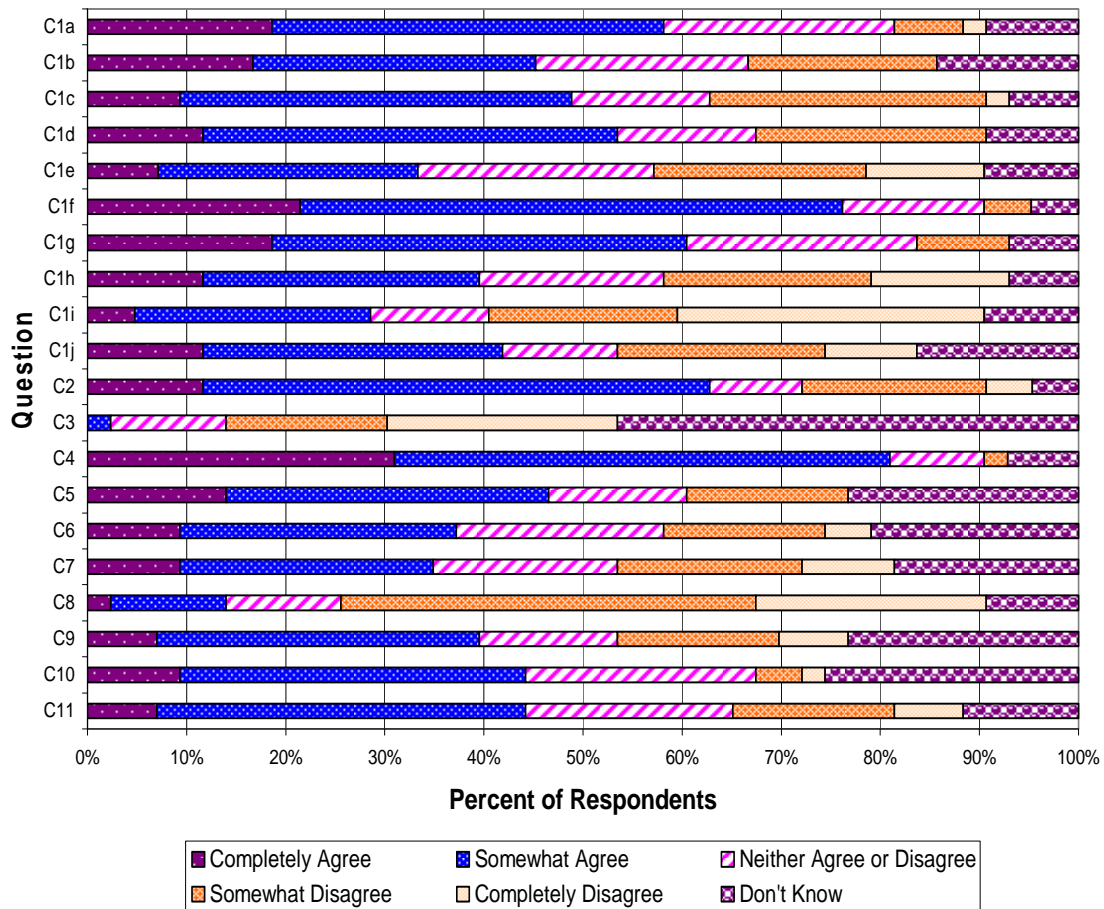
- The ‘Access to Business Training’ subsection was the highest scoring subsection, 29% above the average.
- The ‘Entrepreneurial Development’ subsection was the lowest scoring subsection with a score of 44.

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

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Hinton	17- community Average	% Diff.
Ongoing Skills & Personal Development	C1. A range of training and educational programs are utilised, including:			
	Business training			
	C1a. Business plan development	68	54	26%
	C1b. Basic business skill development (i.e. sales, pricing, display)	63	42	50%
	C1c. Advanced business skill development (i.e. financial planning, marketing, accounting, communication)	57	40	41%
	C1d. Computer training for business (i.e. excel, web design, graphics, business applications)	62	56	10%
	C1e. Personal Development (i.e. Stress management)	49	41	20%
	C1f. Online / distance education	74	65	14%
	C1g. Continuing education	69	57	20%
	C1h. TAFE/College	51	34	49%
	C1i. University	37	35	5%
	C1j. Professional Development (i.e. certification sessions)	54	36	52%
Entrepreneurial Development	C2. Business mentors and/or role models are available in the community	62	50	24%
	C3. There is an entrepreneurial development program in primary and secondary schools.	22	34	-37%
Access to Business Training	C4. There is an organization through which training and educational programs/opportunities can be offered.	79	63	25%
	C5. Training programs are affordable for anyone (i.e. business owners, youth, professionals)	64	48	35%
	C6. Flexible timing for skills training is available to meet local business needs.	57	41	37%
	C7. The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	52	41	26%
Effectiveness & Quality of Training	C8. A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	30	35	-14%
	C9. Teaching organizations develop courses that serve community needs (i.e. specialised training)	55	41	34%
	C10. Teaching staff are skilled in and knowledgeable about the subject(s) they teach	65	56	15%
	C11. Individuals are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	56	51	9%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>28%</b>

- The highest and lowest scoring questions in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **large bold type**.



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

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** C4 (available training organization) at 81%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** C3 (entrepreneurial development programs in schools) at 3%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** C3 (entrepreneurial development programs in schools) at 47%.

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

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Yellowhead Region Educational Consortium	20	Community college or university	17
Hinton Training Centre	3	Trades training all under one roof	5
Elementary school education	2	More advertising of programs	3
Apprenticeship programs	2	Better utilization of programs offered	3
Distance learning	1	Needs assessment	1
Entrepreneurial people that provide training in related fields, mainly oil and gas.	1	Get high school back on track (bottom 10 in province)	1
Proximity to Edmonton	1	Better facilities	1
Foothills Research Institute	1	Develop a college town marketing plan	1
Community Futures	2	It is hard for people to run households, go to work and still be able to get further education	1
Great programs for people wanting to start their own business	1	School of arts	1
Framework to establish a comprehensive training schedule for courses, skills training, college and university	1	A new, expanded YREC facility	1
Hinton supports post secondary education and non credit part time learning through the community	1	Partnerships of 3 learning facilities with accessible space and affordable space, trained facilitators	1
New venture program	1		1
Efforts are underway to improve offerings (post secondary study, creative campus)	1	Combine all education resources 1 one stop shop	1
Leadership West Yellowhead	1	Develop trades training in partnership with stakeholders	1
Forestry training	1	Expand on educational opportunities for the region-- educational hub	1
College	1	Elementary, junior and senior high schools need to offer more innovative programming-- mediocrity is acceptable	1
Adequate schools (public and catholic)	1	Encourage off campus learning centres	1
Business centre	1	Marketing or re-branding of the YREC	1
Accessibility	1	Coop working with business	1
Accessible college entry courses, hands on training	1	More education and training seminars for small businesses-- publicize them better	1
People have the motivation and desire for education and training	1	Keep our kids in school.	1

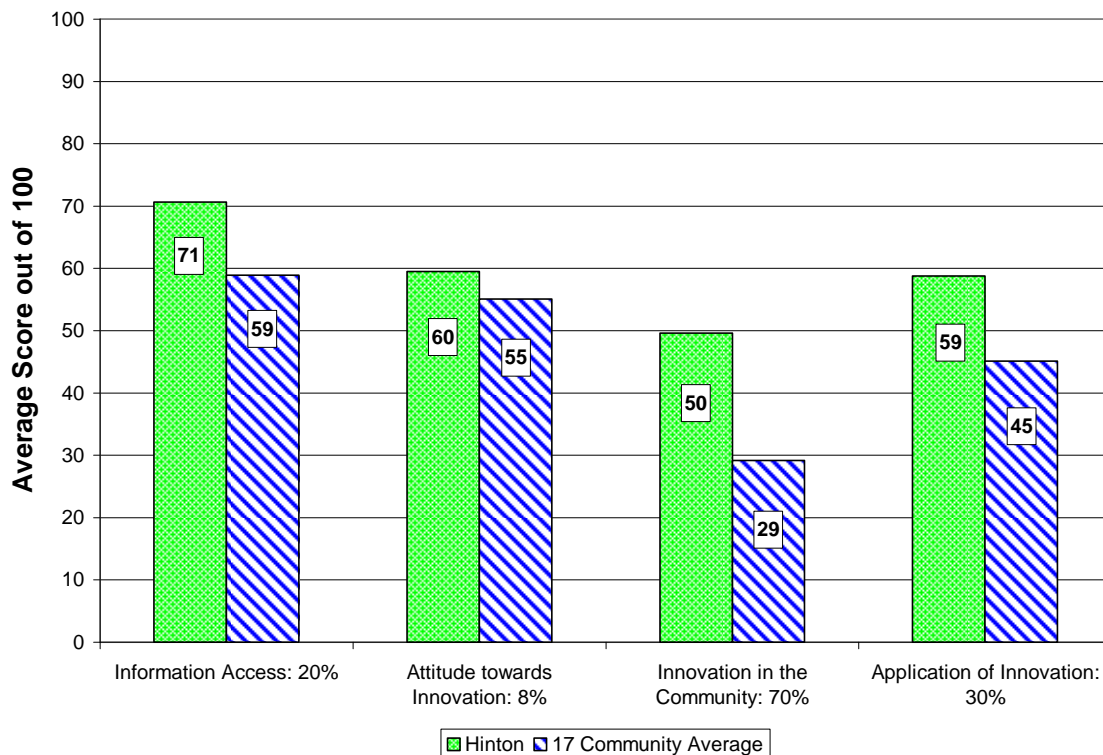
Large pool of knowledgeable people with the means and ability to pass along their knowledge	1	YREC and the training centre need to coordinate with local businesses on a regular basis	1
There is a lot for oilfield courses	1	Offer more training	1
Has facilities potential (the forestry school)	1	Affordable/available accommodations for people wanting to relocate here.	1
Adaptability-- small business spring up to offer education needed	1	Training Centre is under-utilized	1

### 3.5 Section D: Innovation (58 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 6th for Hinton in terms of absolute score, but it was nevertheless 26% higher than the average.

Question D6 (Research businesses are clustered) is on the list of the 20 lowest-scoring questions, although it is still 31% above average (see Appendix B). Two questions in this section are in the top 20 questions with the highest positive deviation above the 17-community average: D7 (research scientists, at 124%) and D8 (technology forums, at 75% above average)—see Appendix C.



**Figure 9: Innovation Subsection Scores**

- 'Information Access' is the highest scoring subsection, with a score of 71.

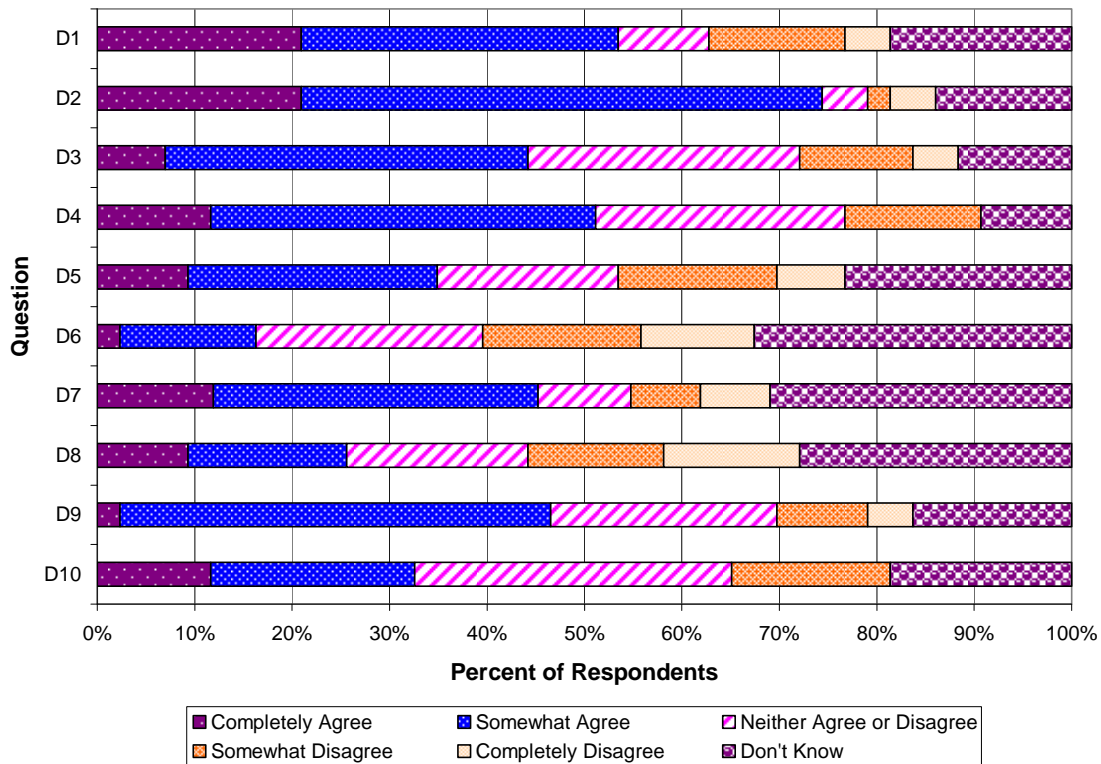
- The lowest scoring subsection ‘Innovation in the Community’ still scored 70% higher than the average.

**Table 20: Innovation Individual Question Scores**

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Hinton	Community Average	% Diff.
Information Access	D1. Individuals have access to research (local, regional, national, international) relating to new technologies, business development and/or expansion.	66	58	13%
	D2. There are library or resource facilities that carry information on business development, market trends, new technologies, policies, and networks.	<b>74</b>	60	25%
Attitude towards Innovation	D3. Business people & entrepreneurs are aware and knowledgeable about new and innovative technologies, & are eager to further their knowledge.	59	54	8%
	D4. Innovation is valued and recognized by business people.	63	61	5%
	D5. Support and assistance for innovative business research and development is available.	55	48	15%
Innovation in the Community	D6. Businesses that do research, or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	<b>42</b>	32	31%
	D7. Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (not necessarily about the region).	63	28	124%
	D8. There are formal and informal forums (conferences, workshops, association lunch meetings) on technology and technology applications.	48	27	75%
Application of Innovation	D9. Businesses use innovative technology, practices and research.	59	45	30%
	D10. Research that is being done in the community or region is relevant to the business community's needs and interests.	59	45	30%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>58</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>26%</b>

- The highest and lowest scoring questions in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.

- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **large bold type**.



**Figure 10: Innovation Question Response Distribution**

- **Highest level of agreement with the question: D2 (library or resource facilities) at 74%.**
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question: D6 (research facilities interact) at 17%.**
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses: D6 (research facilities interact) at 32%.**

**Table 21: Innovation Strengths and Improvements**

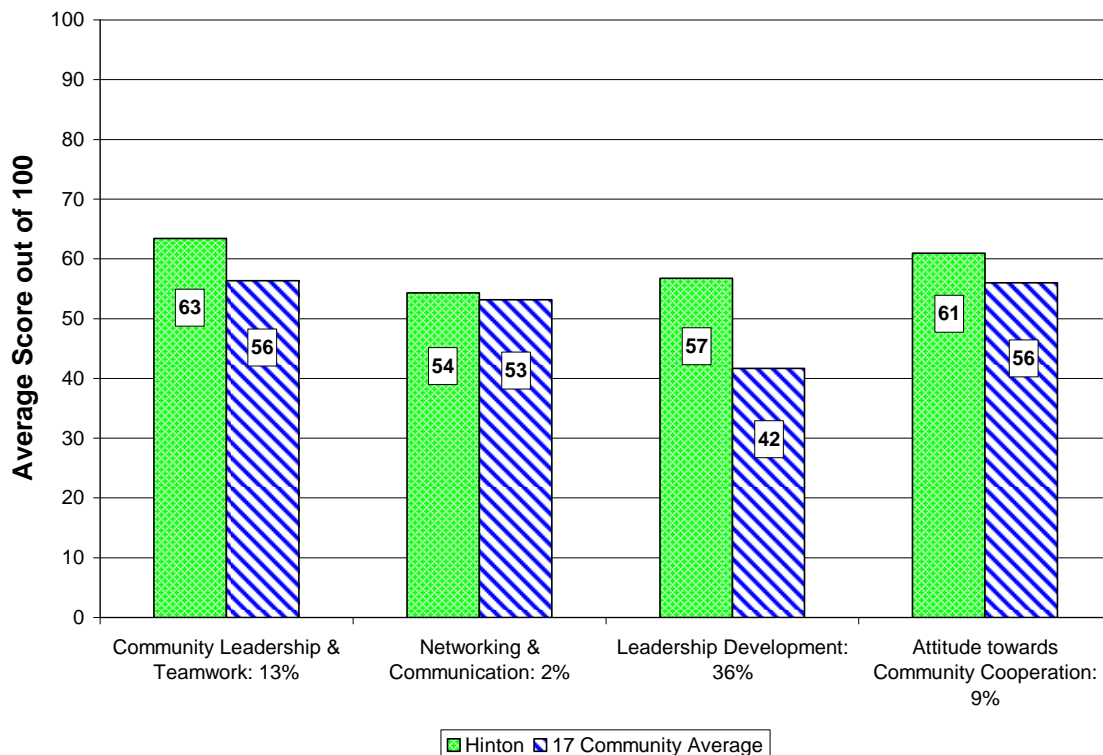
Strengths		Improvements	
Foothills Research Institute	8	Better communication and connection between research and the community including businesses and education facilities	9
Hinton Training Centre	6	Attract and retain other research institutes	2
Eco park	3	Expand post secondary education offerings that would do research	2
Active and ongoing projects on how to improve - like this one	2	Recognize and then act on it	1
Ability to promote	1	Don't let a few business people that have	1

		something to gain by not letting other businesses come to town have their way.	
Oil and gas companies	1	Create and motivate a council for R&D	1
Environment studies	1	Better facilities	1
Hinton does a lot of planning for future development	1	Foothills research institute should communicate their mandate and activities to community	1
Young professionals residing in the community	1	Bring in another forest research group	1
The pulp mill requirements	1	These types of sessions will become more successful as people become more aware of them	1
Partnerships	1	Work more closely with larger centres (Hinton being more of a satellite)	1
The vision of its population (beaver boardwalk, mountain bike park)	1	Celebrate the successes of these researchers and inform public of the results	1
Emerging interest in bio-fuels and alternative energy	1	Financing and space (office or lab)	1
Foothills model forest.	1	Get oil and gas to open training facilities similar to the forestry school - R&D	1
FP innovations	1	Build a business incubator service and attract venture capital	1
Community leaders who champion	1	Open up more commercial real estate for young businesses	1
Grande Alberta Economic Region	1	Skilled academics to teach it	1
Support large industries but not small business entrepreneurs	1	Provide it to small businesses rather than large industrial businesses	1
The town sees the need for it	1	Create more/larger opportunities so that businesses are motivated to invest further in Hinton	1
The desire to imagine to improve and expand without losing our smaller town charm or uniqueness	1	Government funding	1
Forestry and forest products	1		
Healthy outdoor environment	1		

### 3.6 Section E: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking (59 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 5<sup>th</sup> for Hinton at 13% above the 17-community average.



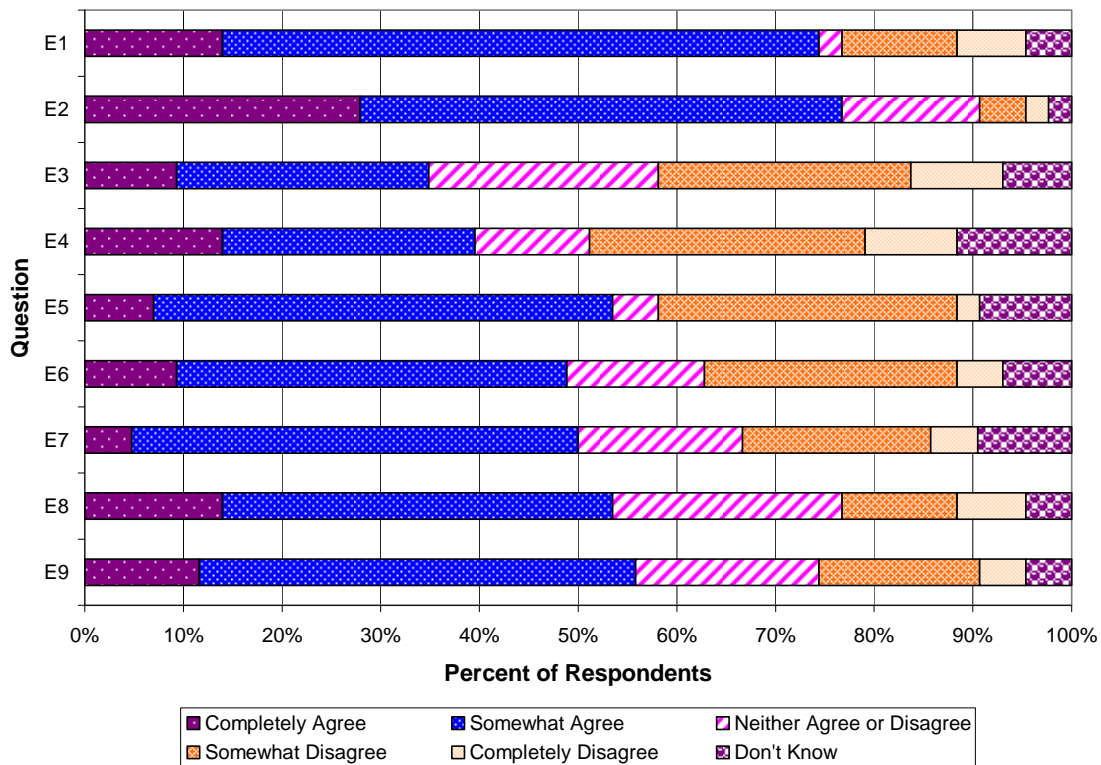
**Figure 11: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking Subsection Scores**

- ‘Community Leadership and Teamwork’ is the highest scoring subsection with a score of 63 (13% above average).
- The lowest scoring subsection, ‘Networking and Communication’ has a score of 54 (2% above average).

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

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Hinton	17-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.	66	58	14%
	E2. There is a pool of talented leaders with diverse skills, cultural experiences and backgrounds who are available for leading community initiatives.	<b>74</b>	67	10%
	E3. Qualified supervisors and managers (and management services) are available to small business.	<b>50</b>	44	14%
Networking & Communication	E4. There are adequate opportunities (informal and formal) where business people and entrepreneurs can network with each other.	52	55	-6%
	E5. Business people are able to give and receive support from other experienced business people (i.e. business associations, mentoring).	57	51	13%
Leadership Development Opportunities	E6. There are opportunities for leadership training and development for individuals of all ages and interests (i.e. professionals, youth).	56	42	35%
	E7. There are opportunities for small business to learn and develop management and leadership skills.	57	42	37%
Attitudes towards Community Cooperation	E8. Groups with similar interests can form alliances and cooperate to achieve goals.	61	62	-1%
	E9. Cooperatives and joint community initiatives are encouraged and respected.	61	57	7%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>13%</b>

- The highest and lowest scores in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in large **bold type**.



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

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** E2 (pool of talented leaders) at 77%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** E3 (qualified managers) at 34%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** E4 (opportunities to network) at 12%.

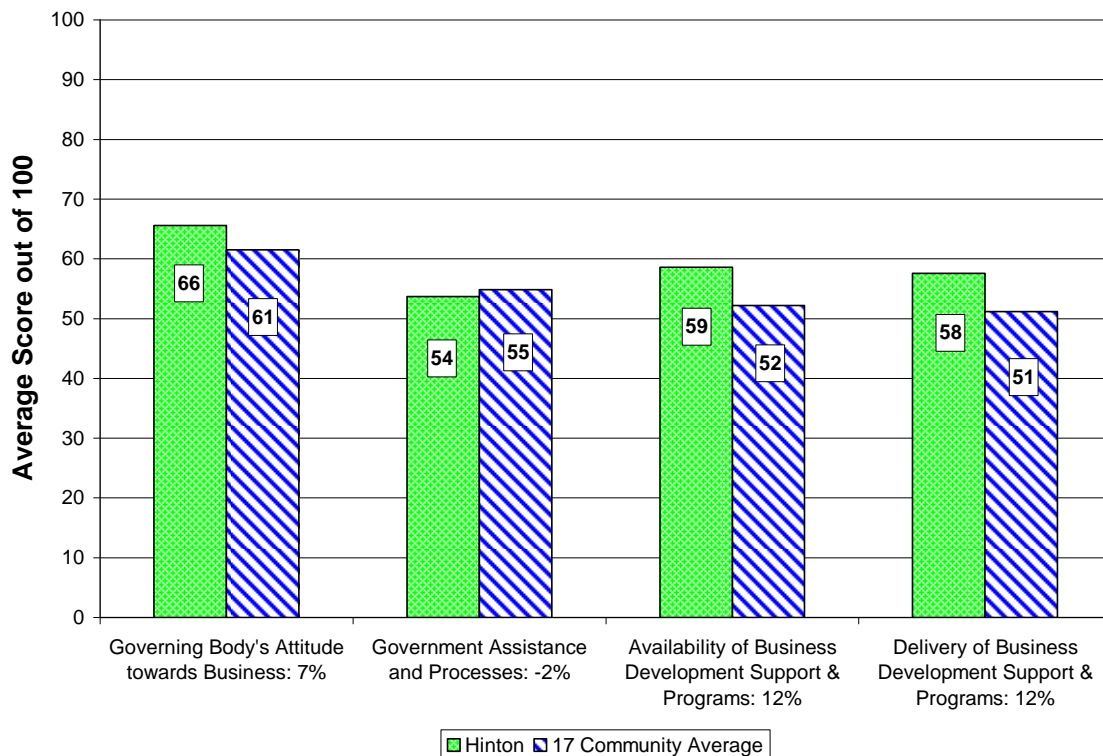
**Table 23: Leadership, Teamwork, and Networking Strengths and Weaknesses**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
There are numerous effective leaders in the community	8	Need networking and strategies to get more people involved in leadership	7
Leadership West Yellowhead	4	Better communication from government to businesses	4
Chamber of Commerce	4	Businesses should work together collaboratively	3
Mayor and council.	4	Business networking and mentoring sessions	3
Committed groups of volunteers e.g. School of dance, nordic skiers, arts society, rotary club.	3	More buy-in and input from the community	2
Town administration has energetic, supportive people	2	Establish a database and peer group	1
Good strong leaders are here but are burnt out-- we need to develop young leaders.	1	Town council must adopt a philosophy of we, not us and them	1
The steps the larger oil and gas companies have taken mostly on their own.	1	Buy-in from the private sector into Leadership West Yellowhead	1
Rene Laboucane - she is the town's go to person.	1	Better information between businesses and agencies	1
The next generation - time for a change	1	Recognize groups who work hard and award them with recognition and funding	1
Recreation projects available that need to be built or maintained and funded	1	Increase sessions (like this) to share experiences/desires	1
Rotary and many boards	1	Government should support community-driven and led initiatives.	1
Solid business owners who want Hinton to grow into something great	1	More active chamber of commerce	1
Key players like economic development, YREC, community futures coordinate efforts	1	Need to survive	1
Town initiatives	1	Communication	1
Communication	1	Engage 25-35 to get involved in nonprofits	1
Survival	1	Venture café.	1
ED offices	1	Towns administration need to go more with today's changes	1
		Make sure these leaders are meeting	1
		Encourage participation in existing business organizations	1
		Council members say they support oil and gas but continue to act against oil and gas related business	1
		Many groups are set up for retail and office business-- we need to connect with other outside groups like oilfield	1

### 3.7 Section F: Role of Government and Organizations (59 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 4th, but it was still 1% below the 17-community average. Two questions appear in Appendix B, the list of Hinton's 20 lowest-scoring questions: F6 (local regulations understood by business people) and F9 (business development programs are effective and efficient).



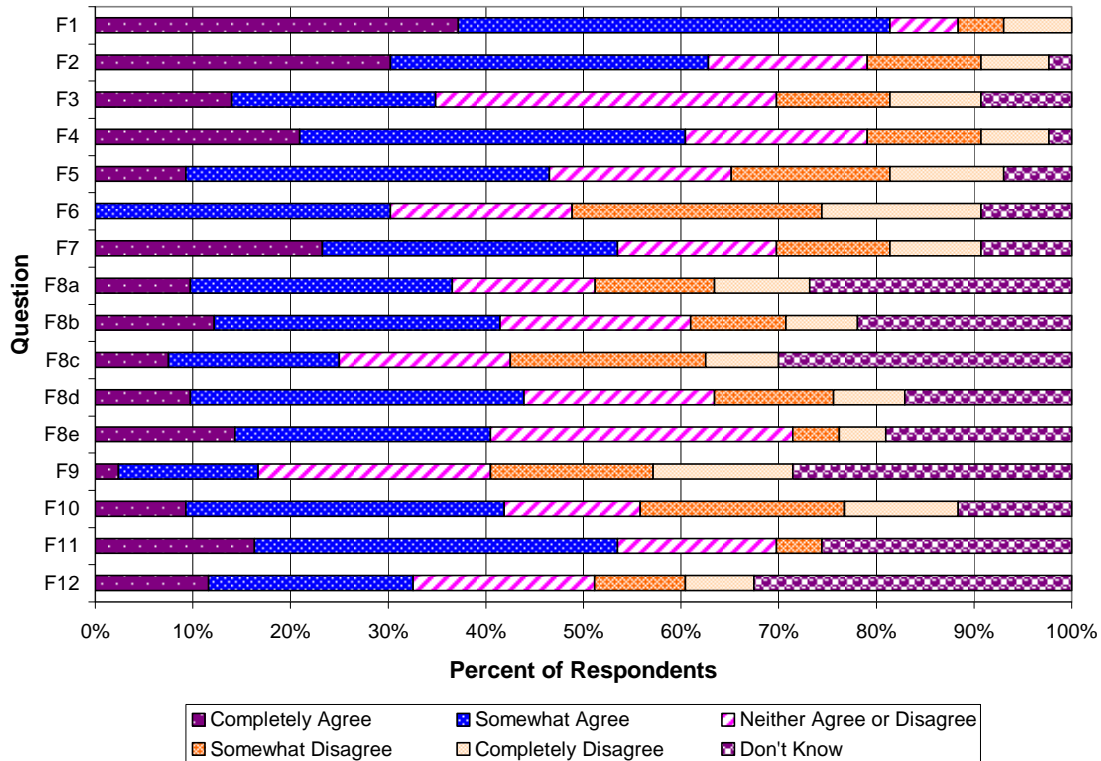
**Figure 13: Role of Government and Organizations Subsection Scores**

- The 'Governing body's Attitude' subsection is the highest scoring subsection with a score of 66 (7% above average).
- The 'Government Assistance and Processes' scored lowest with a score of 54 (2% below average).

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

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Hinton	17-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.	66	58	14%
	F2. The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	<b>74</b>	67	10%
	F3. The governing body is committed to assisting existing or startup business opportunities through policy and action.	<b>50</b>	44	14%
Government Assistance and Processes	F4. Community leaders and officials are willing to cooperate with business and business associations.	52	55	-6%
	F5. Local officials make it easy/reasonable for businesses to start or expand.	57	51	13%
	F6. Local regulations, policies, rules, bylaws, zoning are easily understood by business people, making it easy/reasonable for businesses to expand or start up.	56	42	35%
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.	57	42	37%
	F8a. Counselling	61	57	7%
	F8b. Training	59	52	13%
	F8c. Mentoring	66	58	14%
	F8d. Assistance for those seeking self-employment	<b>74</b>	67	10%
	F8e. Loans	<b>50</b>	44	14%
Delivery of Business Development Support & Programs	F9. Business development initiatives are effective and efficient, and do not duplicate each other.	52	55	-6%
	F10. Business programs are offered in a well-known and accessible location.	57	51	13%
	F11. Staff members delivering programs are knowledgeable, competent and approachable.	56	42	35%
	F12. Successful programs are repeated, reproduced, and further developed.	57	42	37%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>-1%</b>

- The highest and lowest scores in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **large bold type**.



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

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** F1 (municipal government recognition) at 81%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** F9 (efficient business development initiatives) at 16%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** F12 (successful programs are repeated) 32%.

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

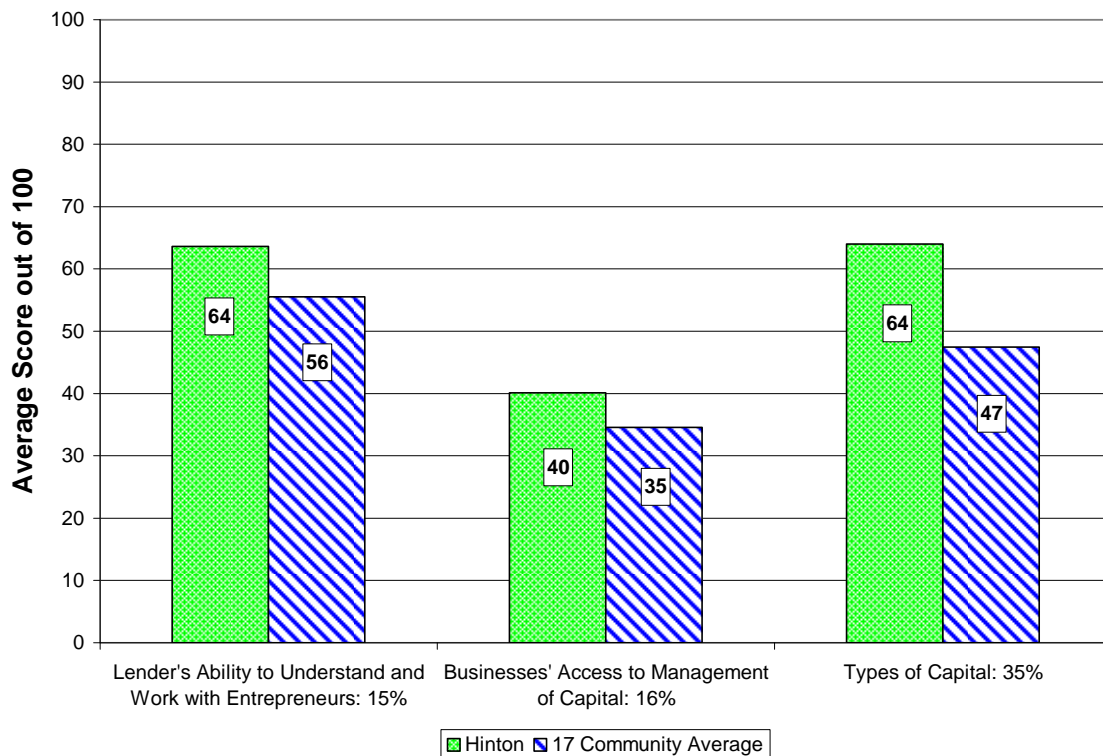
Strengths		Improvements	
Progressive, engaged council listens and is open to new ideas	13	More community involvement	4
Community futures, the new ventures program, EDC groups	4	Communication	2
Energetic, motivated, visionary people working to improve	4	Communication/dialogue between business community and town	2
Government and organizations are trying to diversity the economy and tie together social, economic development	3	Become good listeners-- hear what is being said and look at options	1
Trying to break into the green scene	1	Gov't needs to step back	1
Actively involved in the community	1	Community Futures needs to market itself to the masses.	1
CFWY has lots of potential	1	Consensus	1
Accessible	1	Too focused on exploiting natural resources for money, too focused on 12000 people in 2012-- work with what is now	1
Chamber - the goal is to become inclusive-- everyone is welcome	1	Don't simply attend council meetings when you don't agree with council-- show support by attending when you agree	1
Chamber/town	1	Clean up run down areas and storefronts	1
Volunteer base	1	Trust	1
Policy	1	Everyone buy into Hinton's long term sustainability	1
Level of expertise very high	1	Willingness and focus (\$) to business development, zoning, land, website, and town marketing	1
		Business Information - finance training	1
		Shop in Hinton first	1
		Let small businesses know about the resources available to them	1
		Stronger chamber, focus more on business than fundraisers	1
		Advertise them more so people know about them	1
		Fewer social programs more business programs	1

### 3.8 Section G: Capital and Funding (56 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 9<sup>th</sup> for Hinton out of 10 sections, and is distinguished by an extremely high incidence of “don’t know” responses (see Figure 16, below).

Appendix B, the list of the 20 lowest-scoring questions for Hinton, contains two questions from this section: G4 (business capital available), and G5 (fund-raising skill); however, both scores were still considerably above the 17-community average.



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

- The ‘Types of Capital’ and ‘Lenders’ ability subsections scored highest in the section with a score of 74 (35% and 15% above the average).
- The ‘Businesses’ Access to Management of Capital’ subsection is the lowest scoring subsection of the section with a score of 40, 16% above average.

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

Score out of 100

Subsection	Question	Hinton	17- 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	<b>88</b>	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.	<b>26</b>	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%

- The highest and lowest scoring questions in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **bold** type.

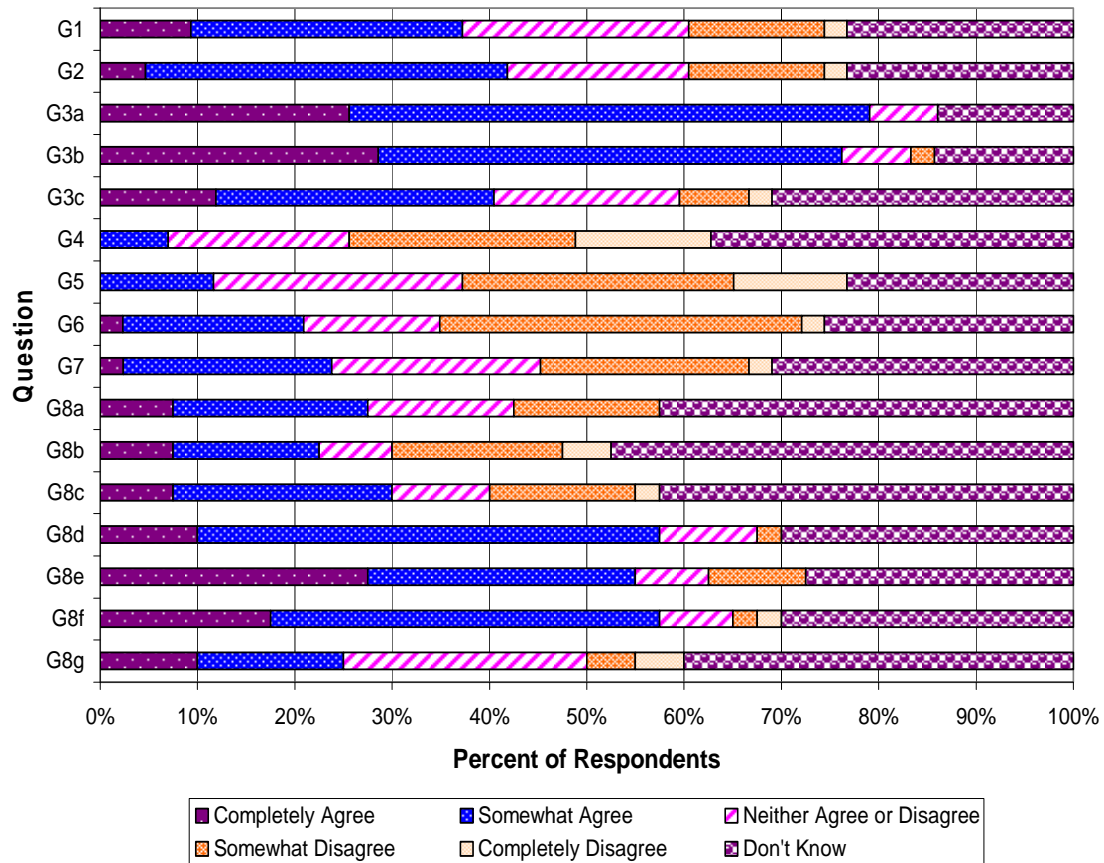


Figure 16: Capital and Funding Question Response Distribution

- **Highest level of agreement with the question: G3A (banks) at 79%.**
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question: G4 (business capital available) at 7%.**
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses: G8b (informal local investors) at 67%.**

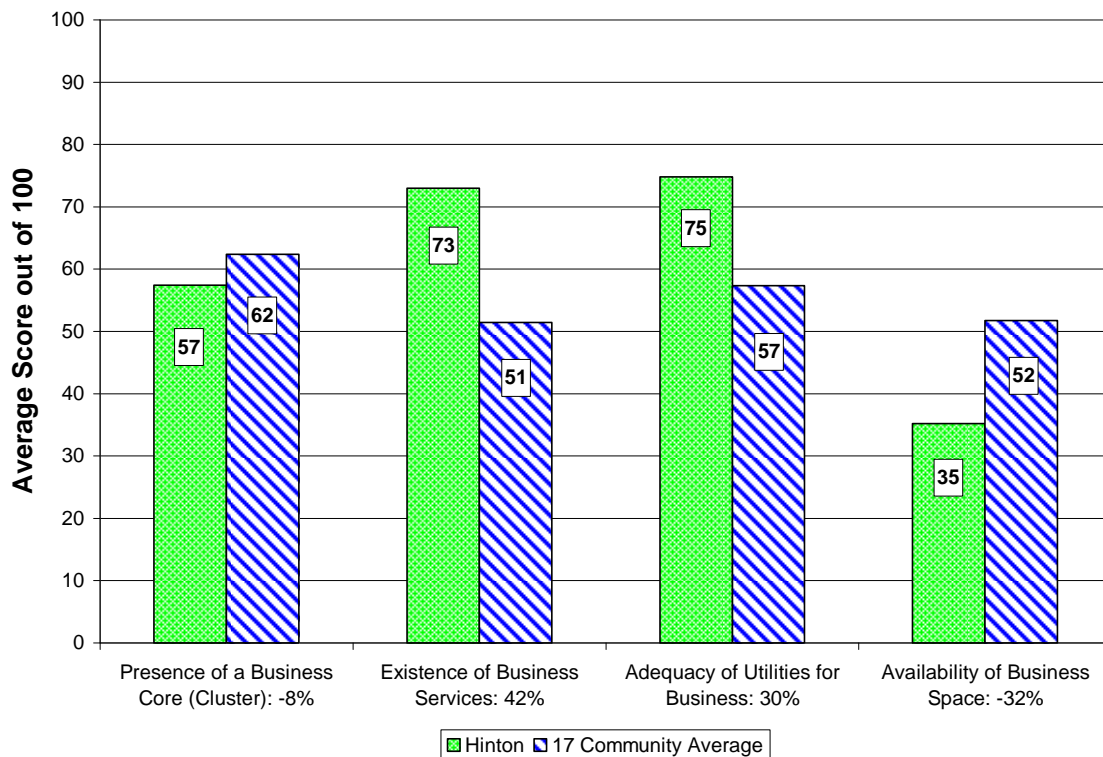
**Table 27: Capital and Funding Strengths and Improvements**

Strengths		Improvements	
Variety of financial institutions	11	Improve awareness of where to access funding	10
Community Futures	5	Develop a local investor/venture capital fund	2
Successful economy	2	Better info on how to start a new business	2
CFWY	2	Government should be much more open to local and out of town entrepreneurs	1
Oil and gas companies	1	High price of real estate makes it next to impossible for young entrepreneurs	1
Alberta Treasury Bank	1	CF West yellowhead more visible, hidden location, very conservative	1
Industry dollars/grants available to fund projects	1	Spend the money locally	1
Municipality is in good financial shape	1	Big picture, long term planning	1
Small town effect--bank staff know business people personally	1	Word of mouth of community futures program	1
Interact	1	Money directed to business development.	1
Lots of people have money to invest for the right idea of plan	1	Reassess criteria to get at the money	1
The park	1	More funding for high risk ventures with high potential for success.	1
Willingness to promote and aid in acquisition of needed funds	1	Make it easier to get	1
Western youth entrepreneurs program	1	Investment attraction initiative - large scale and shopped everywhere	1
The untapped potential of diversifying	1		
Approachable lending personnel	1		
Western youth entrepreneurs program	1		

### 3.9 Section H: Infrastructure and Business Services (66 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 third highest scoring section of the survey for Hinton with score of 66 (21% above average). Appendix A, the list of Hinton’s 20 highest scoring questions, contains 5 questions from this section. However, three of the lowest-scoring questions are in this section also: H8 (land for business expansion at 38% below average, H9 (rental space) at 25% below average, and H1 (vibrant downtown core) at 28% below average).



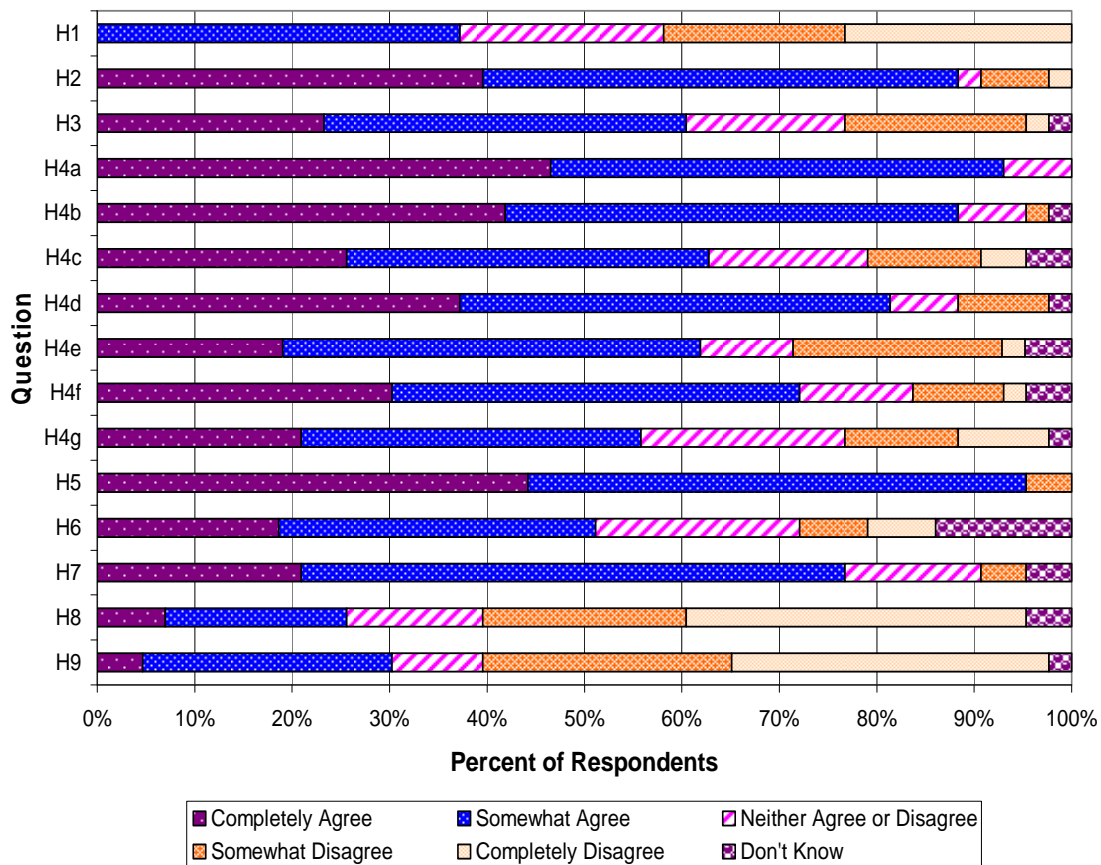
**Figure 17: Infrastructure and Business Services Subsection Scores**

- The ‘Adequacy of Utilities’ subsection was the highest scoring subsection of the section with a score of 75 (30% above average).
- The ‘Availability of Business Space’ subsection was the lowest scoring subsection with a score of 35 (32% below average).

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

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Hinton	17-community Average	% Diff.
Presence of a Business Core (Cluster)	H1. There is a vibrant, active town centre or community core.	43	50	-14%
	H2. Parking near core business areas is accessible and adequate.	79	81	-2%
Existence of Business Services	H3. Business services (i.e. printers, web designers) are affordable and modern.	65	59	12%
	H4. Professional services (i.e. legal, accounting) are easily accessible and affordable.			
	H4a. Banking	<b>85</b>	83	2%
	H4b. Insurance	83	82	1%
	H4c. Freightling	68	68	-1%
	H4d. Legal	78	64	21%
	H4e. Marketing	64	41	58%
Adequacy of Utilities for Business	H4f. Accounting	73	72	2%
	H4g. Graphic Design	62	51	21%
	H5. Existing infrastructure (i.e. power, water) is of good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	84	71	17%
	H6. The planning of new physical infrastructure (i.e. roads, power, sewage) considers business needs.	64	60	7%
Availability of Business Space	H7. Telecommunication infrastructure is reliable, well maintained and modern.	74	58	27%
	H8. A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation (i.e. home-based, town centre, industrial park).	<b>35</b>	56	-38%
	H9. Quality rental space is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	36	47	-25%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>21%</b>

- The highest and lowest scores in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **bold type**.



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

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** H5 (quality of infrastructure) at 96%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** H8 (available real estate) at 27%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** H6 (planning considers business needs) at 14%.

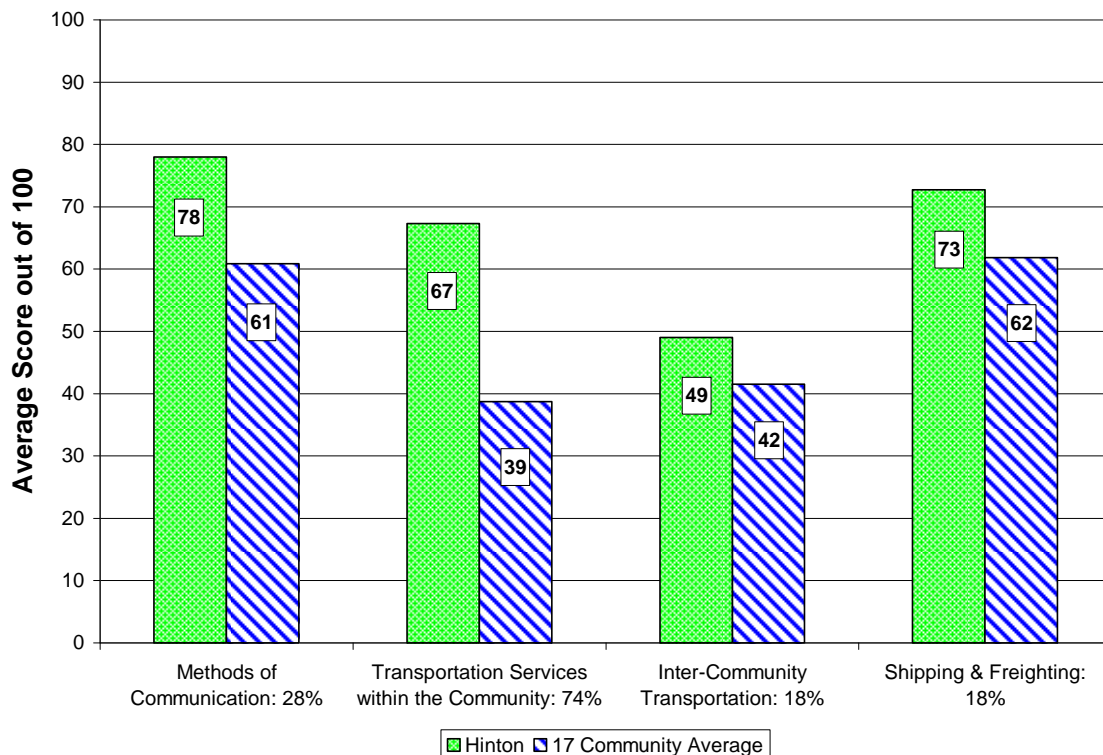
**Table 29: Infrastructure and Business Services Strengths and Improvements**

Strengths		Improvements	
Good choice of business services	5	Increase land base for business and industry	8
Lots of room available	2	Centralize and reduce sprawl-- there is no downtown, too spread out	5
Highway 16	2	Improve the look and design of there main downtown core-- not appealing to people moving to the area.	4
Town has infrastructure plan	2	Affordable housing including mobile home parks	4
EDC	2	Enable easier start-ups	2
Quality of town buildings	2	10-acre industrial parcels are needed-- accessible to oil fields to reduce in-town traffic	1
Oil and gas business services	1	More rental and purchase space not controlled by a select few realtors who are creating unrealistic price hikes	1
Well established core	1	Hinton's division into 3 main business areas is a challenge	1
It is so scattered that I cannot tell	1	More collaboration between the planning of community infrastructure and the business community	1
Modern telecoms	1	Improve significance and look of highway corridor	1
Transit	1	More incentive towards businesses that support new ideas	1
Good water quality	1	More business orientation by C of C	1
Business services are usually excellent to work with	1	Renovate and expand rec centre	1
Renovation of business fronts	1	New business incentives	1
Themed business area	1	Affordable leasing/financing	1
Great library	1	Stick to infrastructure plan	1
Design parameters, building code	1	Diversity	1
Beautification standards	1	Wider variety of people on committees of town	1
New industrial parks coming on stream	1	Too many traffic lights for a small town	1
Availability of building	1	Visitor Info Centre underutilized	1
Diversity	1	Safety in Willow Creek Rd an issue for gas/oil workers	1
Connections within business community	1		
Roadways	1		
New housing developments coming on stream	1		
Maintenance	1		

### 3.10 Section I: Communication and Connectivity (69 out of 100)

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

The Communication and Connectivity section is the second highest scoring section of the survey with a score of 69 (31% above the 17-community average). The second-highest scoring question of the survey is in this section: I1a (word of mouth business communication) with a score of 89 out of 100. Appendix A also contains five other questions from this section.



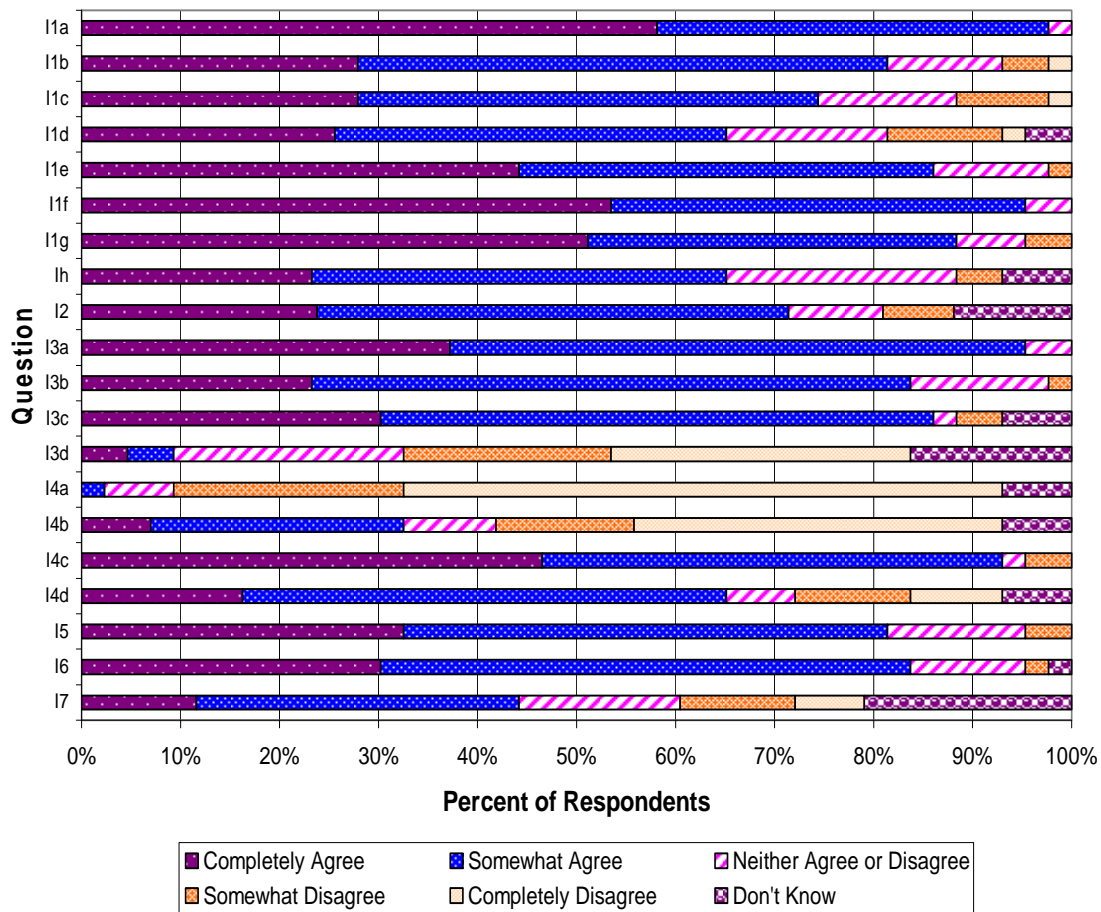
**Figure 19: Communication and Connectivity Subsection Scores**

- The ‘Methods of Communication’ subsection is the highest scoring of the section with a score of 78 (28% above average).
- ‘Inter-Community Transportation’ was the lowest scoring subsection, 18% above average with a score of 49.

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

		Score out of 100		
Subsection	Question	Hinton	17-Community Average	% Diff.
Methods of Communication	I1. The following communications services are accessible and utilized.			
	I1a. Word of Mouth	<b>89</b>	90	-2%
	I1b. Local Newspaper	75	75	1%
	I1c. Local Radio	72	58	25%
	I1d. Overnight express mail service (nationally)	70	56	24%
	I1e. Mobile phone	82	65	27%
	I1f. Basic Internet Services	87	83	5%
	I1g. Fast or High-Speed Internet services	84	57	48%
	I1h. Video Conferencing Capabilities	73	44	64%
	I2. Quality communication services (phone, fax, high speed internet) are affordable to business.	75	72	4%
Transportation Services within the Community	I3. The following transportation services are accessible and utilised within the community.			
	I3a. Public Transportation	83	34	147%
	I3b. Taxi Service	76	43	79%
	I3c. Special transportation services (i.e. Seniors, people with disabilities)	80	53	50%
Inter-Community Transportation	I4. The following transportation services are available between communities.			
	I4a. Air (commercial)	<b>12</b>	28	<b>-57%</b>
	I4b. Air (private)	37	47	-22%
	I4c. Bus	84	68	23%
Freighting	I4d. Train	64	23	177%
	I5. Main transportation and freight routes between communitys are safe, well maintained and well serviced.	77	68	14%
	I6. Regular and frequent freight to major centres is accessible and utilised.	79	70	12%
	I7. Freight services into and out of the community are affordable to businesses.	60	44	35%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>69</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>31%</b>

- The highest and lowest scores in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in large bold type.



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

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** 11a (word of mouth) at 97%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** 14a (commercial air services) at 3%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** 17 (freight services affordable) at 21%.

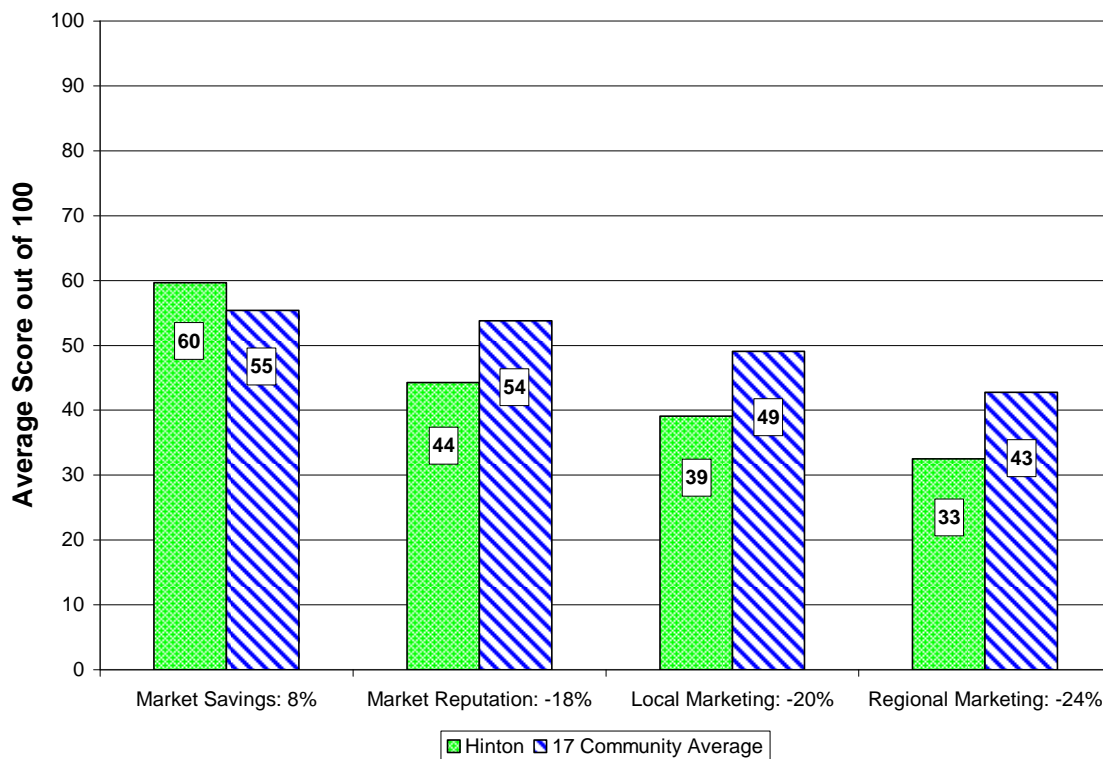
**Table 31: Communication and Connectivity Strengths and Improvements**

<b>Strengths</b>		<b>Improvements</b>	
Good telecommunications, internet	11	Better air service	3
Hwy 16	8	Chamber of Commerce	2
Newspaper	4	Better cell phone connections-- lots of dead spots	2
Radio	3	Better newspaper	2
Word of mouth	2	More video conferencing facilities	1
Local transit	2	Access to super-net for all	1
Railway	2	Public information-- making people aware of what's available	1
Volunteerism	1	Network more to determine synergies	1
Variety	1	Improve website-- should be simple with strategic plan to attract people	1
Our website	1	Regional networking	1
Fairly good messaging from council	1	Lobby communication tech providers to establish and maintain most modern technology	1
Available to all	1	Mini bus to Edmonton airport	1
Skilled resources	1	Awareness and training in doing business online	1
Long term residents.	1	Improve service	1
Chamber meetings	1	Extended transit times	1
CFWY video conferencing	1	Freight can be hit or miss	1

### 3.11 Section J: Markets and Marketing (45 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 lowest of all of the sections for Hinton. Question J9 (joint marketing) is the third-lowest-scoring question on the Hinton survey, at 29% below average. Other questions from this section in that lowest-score list are J8 (local purchasing), J5 (unique brand or marketing image).



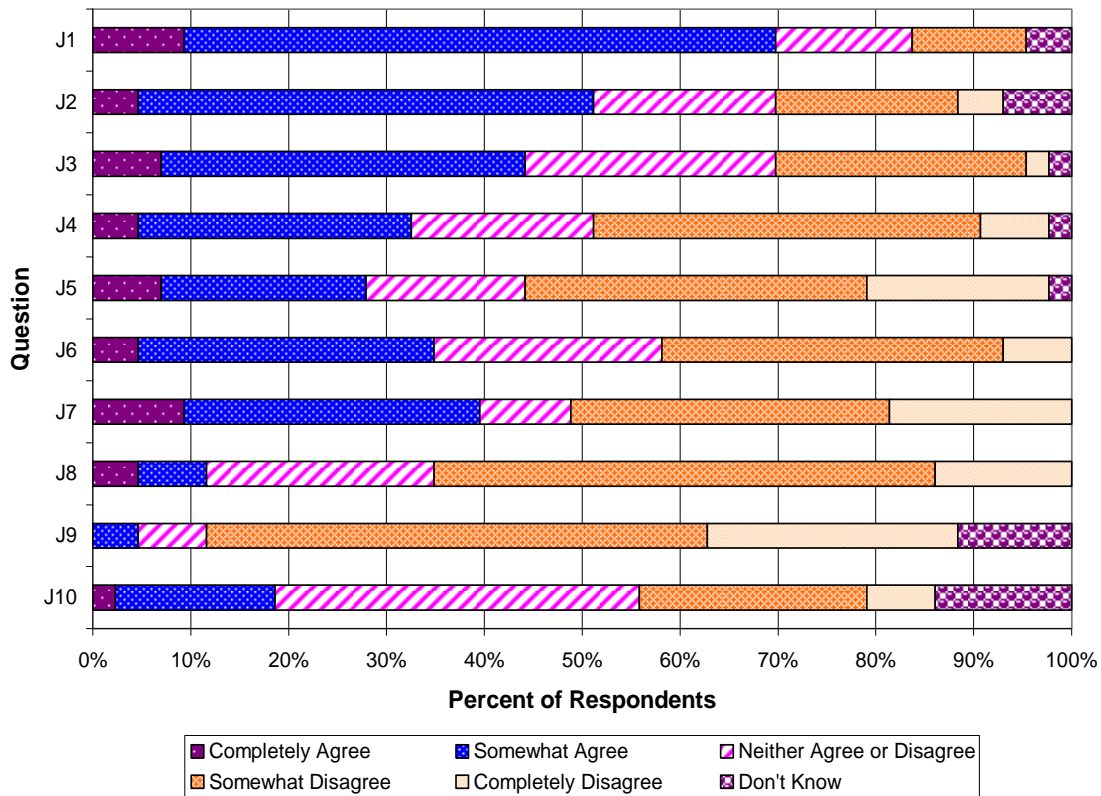
**Figure 21: Markets and Marketing Subsection Scores**

- The 'Market Savings' subsection was the highest scoring subsection with a score of 60 (8% above average).
- The 'Regional Marketing' subsection was the lowest scoring subsection with a score of 33 (24% below average).

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

Subsection	Question	Score out of 100		
		Hinton	17- community Average	% Diff.
Market Saviness	J1. Businesses have a good understanding of their customers and their purchasing behaviour.	<b>68</b>	62	10%
	J2. Business people have knowledge and an awareness of the global economy and market trends, and its relevance to local markets.	58	53	9%
	J3. Local businesses demonstrate creativity and innovation in seeking new customers, both locally and outside of the area.	55	53	5%
Market Reputation	J4. The community has a reputation for high quality products and/or services	46	55	-16%
	J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image.	40	44	-8%
	J6. People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	48	67	-29%
Local Marketing	J7. Products and services are reasonably priced in comparison to regional and city competitors	45	57	-22%
	J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	34	42	-19%
Regional Marketing	J9. Businesses in the community / region market their products and services as a group.	<b>22</b>	31	-29%
	J10. Locally developed goods and services are marketed both in the community and in other regions.	45	57	-20%
<b>Section Score</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>-12%</b>

- The highest and lowest scores in terms of the community average are shaded in green and red, respectively, above.
- The highest and lowest absolute scores are in **large bold** type.



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

- **Highest level of agreement with the question:** J1 (businesses understand their customers) at 70%.
- **Lowest level of agreement with the question:** J9 (group marketing) at 4%.
- **Highest level of “Don’t know” responses:** J10 (local goods and services) at 13%.

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

Strengths		Improvements	
The location on Highway 16	5	Market Hinton more effectively, improve image and brand	11
Key big industry players-- mining, oil, forestry	4	Shop local, produce local, with better prices and education	6
Access to high-speed internet	2	Better collaboration and cooperation	3
Only the resource industry is marketed	1	Better pricing	2
A very diverse community	1	Get more people involved	2
Regional centre not too close to Edmonton	1	Local gas pricing	1
Lots of good business people who set the standard for sound marketing practices	1	Better customer service	1
Strong presence of marketing business	1	Website design education	1
Ability to build and maintain a website if business location is off the main highway	1	Fairs, trade shows, arts and crafts	1
Our mountains	1	Small businesses need to be seen as key players, not just results of resource industry	1
Ability to build brand	1	Better business and community interaction	1
Tourism adds a good seasonal local market	1	Expand farmers market	1
Word of mouth	1	Networking and connectivity between businesses	1
Good customer service	1	More regional focus	1
Excellent businesses who provide great service and quality products	1	World economy	1
Quality of life	1	Business diversity and ability to change to meet local demands	1
Community businesses have a strong desire to bring products to town	1	More variety in zoning to allow larger variety of businesses	1
Town website	1	Tailor to a 25-35 age group market	1
Variety of local offerings	1	More things for families to do	1
Our marketing image	1		
Chamber of Commerce	1		
Always seeking ways to improve	1		

## Appendix A: Top 20 Highest Scoring Questions

Question	Score out of 100		
	Hinton	17-Community Average	% Difference
B9. There are many high quality recreational opportunities in the area (i.e. ski hills, lakes, hiking trails, parks).	94	82	15%
I1a. Word of mouth is utilized.	89	90	-2%
I1f. Basic Internet services are accessible and utilized.	87	83	5%
B11. Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	86	83	4%
B1. A quality health care facility is accessible, well serviced and within a reasonable distance.	85	69	25%
H4a. Banking services are easily accessible and affordable.	85	83	2%
H5. Existing infrastructure (i.e.. Power, water) is good quality, well maintained, serviced, and modern.	84	71	17%
I1g. High speed Internet services are accessible and utilized.	84	57	48%
I4c. Bus services are available between communities.	84	68	23%
I3a. Public transportation services are accessible and utilized within the community.	83	34	147%
H4b. Insurance services are easily accessible and affordable.	83	82	1%
I1e. Mobile phone services are accessible and utilized.	82	65	27%
G3a. Banks are utilized for business needs.	80	79	2%
I3c. Special Transportation Services (i.e.. seniors, people with disabilities) are accessible and utilized within the community.	80	53	50%
G3b. Credit Unions are utilized for business needs.	80	77	4%
B2. There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	80	79	1%
C4. There is an organization through which training and educational programs/opportunities can be offered.	79	63	25%
H2. Parking near core business areas is accessible and affordable.	79	81	-2%
I6. Regular & frequent shipping to major centres is accessible and utilized.	79	70	12%
H4d. Legal services are easily accessible and affordable.	78	64	21%

## Appendix B: Bottom 20 Lowest Scoring Questions

Question	Score out of 100		
	Hinton	17-Community Average	% Difference
I4a. Air (commercial) services are available between communities.	12	28	-57%
C3. There is an entrepreneurial development program in elementary and secondary schools (K-12).	22	34	-37%
J9. Businesses in the community /region jointly market their products and services	22	31	-29%
I3d. Carpooling system is accessible and utilized within the community.	30	26	17%
C8. A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	30	35	-14%
G4. Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	32	21	51%
J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	34	42	-19%
H8. A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	35	56	-38%
H9. Quality commercial rental space is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	36	47	-25%
B13. Quality residential real estate opportunities (both purchase and rental) are available and affordable.	36	61	-41%
C1i. University programs are utilized.	37	35	5%
I4b. Air (private) services are available between communities.	37	47	-22%
G5. People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	37	28	32%
A9. A pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs.	40	48	-16%
J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	40	44	-8%
F9. Business development programs are effective and efficient, and do not duplicate each other.	41	43	-4%
D6. Businesses that do research or research facilities are geographically concentrated (clustered) and interact with each other.	42	32	31%
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.	42	48	-11%
H1. There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	43	50	-14%
A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	43	61	-28%

## Appendix C: Top 20 Highest Positive Deviation from the 17-community Average

Question	Score out of 100		
	Hinton	17 Community Average	% Difference
I4d. Train services are available between communities.	64	23	177%
I3a. Public transportation services are accessible and utilized within the community.	83	34	147%
D7. Skilled and knowledgeable scientists and researchers do academic and/or practical work in my community or region (Not necessarily about the region).	63	28	124%
I3b. Taxi services are accessible and utilized within the community.	76	43	79%
D8. There are formal and informal forums (Conferences, Workshops) on technology and technology applications	48	27	75%
I1h. Video conferencing capabilities are accessible and utilized.	73	44	64%
H4e. Marketing services are easily accessible and affordable.	64	41	58%
C1j. Professional development programs (i.e. certification sessions) are utilized.	54	36	52%
G4. Business capital is available to anyone committed to a venture, regardless of credit history or any other factors	32	21	51%
C1b. Basic business skill development programs (i.e. sales, pricing, display) are utilized.	63	42	50%
I3c. Special transportation services (i.e.. seniors, people with disabilities) are accessible and utilized within the community.	80	53	50%
C1h. College programs are utilized.	51	34	49%
I1g. High speed Internet services are accessible and utilized.	84	57	48%
C1c. Advanced business skill development programs (i.e. financial planning, marketing, accounting, communication) are utilized.	57	40	41%
E7. There are opportunities for small business to learn and develop management and leadership skills	57	42	37%
C6. Flexible timing for skills training is available to meet local business needs.	57	41	37%
I7. Shipping and freight services into and out of the community are affordable to business.	60	44	35%
E6. There are opportunities for leadership training and development for individuals of all ages and interests (i.e. professionals, youth).	56	42	35%

C5. Training programs are affordable for anyone (i.e. business owners, youth, professionals)	64	48	35%
B2. There are quality elementary and secondary schools in the community.	95	79	21%

## Appendix D: Bottom 20 Largest Negative Deviation from the 17-community Average

Question	Score out of 100		
	Hinton	17 Community Average	% Difference
I4a. Air (commercial) services are available between communities.	12	28	-57%
B13. Quality residential real estate opportunities (both purchase and rental) are available and affordable.	36	61	-41%
H8. A variety of real estate is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	35	56	-38%
C3. There is an entrepreneurial development program in elementary and secondary schools (K-12).	22	34	-37%
J6. People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	48	67	-29%
J9. Businesses in the community /region jointly market their products and services	22	31	-29%
A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	43	61	-28%
H9. Quality commercial rental space is available to accommodate business expansion, attraction, or creation.	36	47	-25%
I4b. Air (private) services are available between communities.	37	47	-22%
J7. Products and services are reasonably priced in comparison to regional, and big city competitors	45	57	-22%
B6. The community is physically beautiful, and environmentally safe (i.e. pollution, water quality).	69	88	-21%
J10. Locally developed goods and services are marketed both in the community and in other regions	45	57	-20%
J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	34	42	-19%
J4. The community has a reputation for high quality products and/or services	46	55	-16%
B10. The community is a safe place to live.	76	90	-16%
A9. A pool of motivated employees is available to meet business needs.	40	48	-16%
C8. A pool of skilled and trained labour is available to local businesses.	30	35	-14%
H1. There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	43	50	-14%

G3c. Development organizations (i.e. BDC, CFDC) are utilized for business needs.	65	74	-13%
A10. Managers & supervisors are motivated in their work and about their staff	52	59	-12%

## 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		
	Hinton	17 Community Average	% Difference
A2. The community is facing an economic crisis.	43	61	-28%
B7. Young adults (25-34) consider the community a desirable place to live.	57	50	15%
B11. Successful businesses want to remain in the community.	86	83	4%
C7. The education and business communities work together to provide convenient training	52	41	26%
C11. Citizens are motivated to learn new skills and to develop existing ones.	56	51	9%
F2. The governing body is committed to recruiting or attracting businesses to the community, and may use strategies or incentives to do so.	67	58	15%
F3. The governing body is committed to help existing businesses or creating new businesses through policy and action.	55	50	11%
G5. People who are interested in expanding or starting a business are skilled in raising funds	37	28	32%
H1. There is a vibrant, active downtown area or community core.	43	50	-14%
J5. The community has a distinctive or unique brand or marketing image	40	44	-8%
J6. People from outside the community see it as a desirable place to live.	48	67	-29%
J8. People prefer to purchase local products and services before those from out-of-area.	34	42	-19%

## Appendix F: Focus Group Results

**Question One:** What makes this community a great place to do business in?

	Count	Theme
Opportunities for new business	5	Business
Transportation corridor (for business and tourism)	5	Location
Regional service provider	3	Location
High wages, prosperity	3	Economy
Oil and gas/ other resources	3	Economy
Arts and culture (events, festivals)	2	Arts and Culture
High speed internet	2	Infrastructure
Innovista Eco Industrial Park	2	Innovation
Public transit	2	Infrastructure
Health care services	2	Services
Education	2	Services
Parks, recreation	2	Services
Hinton Training Centre, YRAF creative campus, post secondary.	2	Services
Young town (50yrs)	1	Community
Friendly	1	Community
Community Futures (business supports)	1	Services
Safe	1	Community
Low water/sewer rates	1	Infrastructure
Volunteer opportunities turn into business operations (event planner, bike servicing)	1	Business
RCMP services	1	Services
Aging population	1	Community
New EDC strategic plan	1	Government
Small town values	1	Community
Amenities	1	Community
Relatively affordable real estate	1	Real Estate
Diverse population (age)	1	Community
Spirit of entrepreneurship	1	Business
Desire to shop locally	1	Community
People	1	Community
Value in the goods and services provided	1	Economy
Quality of life	1	Community
We're more than a pulp mill	1	Community
Opportunity for pollution standards from industry	1	Environment
To see Hinton as forward looking eco friendly community	1	Environment
Drop in rec leagues	1	Community
Have 5 video conference sites	1	Infrastructure

**Question Two:** What changes can be made to help business in your community?

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Business mentoring and networking	5	Business Development
Marketing Hinton to the world	4	Marketing
More commercial and industrial land, fewer restrictions	2	Real Estate
Branding review	2	Marketing
Improve signage	2	Infrastructure
Get the corridor plan completed, in place now	2	Infrastructure
Major event/ festival	2	Community
Increased awareness in the community of lending opportunities	2	Business Development
Affordable housing for younger population	1	Real Estate
Appropriate zoning	1	Infrastructure
Beautification of community	1	Community
Believe in the people in your community	1	Community
Better internet information	1	Business Development
Chamber of commerce more focussed on business development	1	Business Development
Continued support of public transit	1	Infrastructure
Determine what types of businesses we're most wanting to attract	1	Business Development
Environment	1	Environment
Framework to access funding (subsidy)	1	Business Development
Increased opportunities for networking and mentoring (possibly set up formal mentor program)	1	Business Development
Increased awareness of business plan development assistance available	1	Business Development
More visible resources (community futures west yellowhead)	1	Business Development
Pave out of town roads	1	Infrastructure
Quality of municipal services	1	Infrastructure
Restaurants and hotels to work together	1	Business Development
See problems as opportunities	1	Community
Shop local = sustainability	1	Business Development
Statistics	1	Business Development
Think outside the box	1	Community
Where is AB Business Development Office?	1	Services

## Appendix G: Community Profile Results

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

### Positive

	Count
Beautiful, scenic	9
Outdoor recreation	9
Active, energetic	7
Progressive	6
Location (gateway, hub)	6
Vital, vibrant	4
Resource/industry based	4
Diverse	3
Growing	3
Mountains	3
Wealthy	2
Engaged, involved	2
Friendly	2
Inclusive	2
Resilient	2
Natural environment	1
Multi industry	1
Play	1
Picturesque	1
Attractive	1
Has everything you need	1
Versatile	1
Committed to future initiatives	1
Leader	1
Rocky mountains	1
Potential	1
Political	1

Adventurous	1
Resourceful	1
Culture and arts	1
Diversified business	1
Strong community spirit	1
Jobs	1
Dynamic	1
New population	1
Opportunity	1
Committed individuals	1
Comfortable	1
Open	1
Great kid activities/programs	1
Visionary/engaged	1
Contrasting	1
Challenging	1
Nice family atmosphere	1
Wildlife	1
Crossroad - need to choose which way to proceed	1
Work hard play hard	1
Independent	1

### Neutral

	Count
Central	1
Resource based	1
Small	1
Outdoor	1
Seasonal	1
Status quo	1
Lots of highway traffic	1
Young	1
Close knit (perhaps exclusive)	1
Industrial/stinky	1

### Negative

	Count
Closed	1
Close minded on tourism	1
Cliquey	1
Struggling	1
Discombobulated	1
Smells	1

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

	Count
Geographic location	14
Diversity of resource industries	11
Wilderness, mountains, parks	10
Volunteers	10
Outdoor recreation	7
People	5
Involved and engaged people	5
Quality of life	4
Strong council and mayor	3
Healthcare, hospital	2
Diverse employment	2
Recreational options for all demographics	2
Engaged community leaders	2
New mountain bike park	2
Young families/seniors - diverse ages.	2
Highway 16	2
Opportunities are available for people with all levels of education	1
Environment	1
Trail system/beaver boardwalk	1
Jasper's limitations on development gives Hinton opportunities	1
Friendly	1
Diversity	1
Complete services	1
Weather	1
Good local trading support, shop in town.	1
Nice layout of the town	1

Good sports programs for kids	1
Community spirit and pride	1
Small business owners	1
Young community	1
Alberta town	1
Comfortable - a nice place to raise a family.	1
Variety of possible retail outlets	1
Mountain lodge theme on hill and old Drinnan in valley.	1
Orderly planning	1
Still frontier	1
Businesses that take risks and try new things	1
Opportunities	1
A core of people that believe anything is possible	1
The amount of wealth in the community	1
Transit system - not many communities our size have this.	1
Community is addressing diversifying its economy	1
Close enough to affect and be affected by neighbours (Jasper, Edson, Grande Cache)	1
Nordic centre	1
Young and old	1
Good paying jobs	1
Strong base of long term families living since early 50s	1
Ability to join forces on issues/events (partnerships)	1
Lots of things for senior citizens	1
Excellent amenities (health, schools, library, recreational)	1
Up and coming leaders - it is time for the next generation	1
Vision is progressive	1

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

	<b>Count</b>
Post secondary education	8
Have less dependence on resource based industry	7
Retail diversity	7
More community involvement	6
Improve appearance along highway	5
Availability of commercial/industrial land	5
Better and bigger indoor rec facilities	4
Foster improved relations between businesses	3
Affordable housing	3
Consultation and consensus re municipal planning	3
More positive attitude	3
Sustainable, greener way of life	2
Friendliness	2

Marketing	2
Improve and embrace tourism	2
Beautification	2
Local policing - crime	1
Progressive government	1
More arts and culture events	1
Planning and urban design - need to drive everywhere	1
Less mill pollution	1
Diversity	1
Signage	1
A renewal of the entrepreneurial spirit	1
A place for live entertainment	1
Increasing knowledge of diversification opportunities	1
Airport	1
Lower taxes - Municipal taxes are too high.	1
More snow	1
Partnerships	1
More people joining activity based events (highway cleanup)	1
Investment attraction initiatives	1
Better paying service industry jobs	1
Embrace opportunity and recognize volunteer efforts	1
Perception of a closed community run by the old boys club	1
Education/training centre	1
Education -explore innovative models at all levels	1
Less cold	1
More people out of comfort cliques to interact with the neighbours	1
Cleaning up our surrounding recreational areas	1
Working together	1
Better relationship between various town departments and business community	1
Needs to be safe in valley district	1
Communications	1
Be more willing to listen to oil and gas companies about their needs	1
Clearly supportive town council	1
Better customer service skills	1
Local education of home grown activities - hiking to music festival	1
New, vibrant members moving to the community	1
Attitude - no risk takers	1
Clean up old buildings - business storefronts look run down - too many look like this	1
Investment into retail sector - growth in this area to provide choices	1
Close the pulp mill	1
A professional business area could be developed in the hill square area	1
Save the core - our hill and valley areas are suffering (vandalism, loss of business)	1
Affordability of some extracurricular activities	1
Need for more self reliant leaders who take initiative instead of reacting to others	1

Partnerships between town/friendship centre/parks/learning and literacy/lifelong learning	1
Municipal leaders that serve the people, not themselves	1
Good quality of life	1
Have the main logging needs to people can better access outdoor recreational areas.	1
Better networking between businesses and community partners	1
Planning-- best views are the landfill/.dump and the river bank is are lined with various industries	1
More doctors	1

### 3. What is the most important reason why you live in Hinton?

	Count
Employment	18
Family	9
Lifestyle, quality of life	8
Proximity to mountains - recreation	6
People	3
Location	3
Business opportunity	2
Provided me an opportunity to learn and grow	1
Adjacent to Jasper	1
Friends	1
Small town life and values.	1

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

	Count
Mountains and outdoor recreation	22
Variety of natural resources	19
Location	7
Rural lifestyle but with most benefits of larger centre	5
On Trans-Canada highway	2
Economic diversity	2
Spread out	2
Opportunity for both resource and tourism has divided the community thereby holding us from moving forward	1
Opportunities for lifestyle and good income	1
Size and quality of arts community	1
Quite isolated	1

Community leadership (council)	1
Geography	1
Community vision is overall more progressive than more other communities.	1
Advantages in synergies with regional communities	1
Hill and valley districts - distinct needs and benefits to both areas.	1
Mountains bike skills park - 1st free park in AB	1
The mill - smell	1
Median age	1
Surroundings	1
Belief that we are not able to expand-- limited geographically	1
Volunteerism	1
Young and willing to embrace our future	1
No agricultural land available	1
Community involvement	1
Huge opportunities for growth	1
Possibility to be the central hub of our region, especially for arts, education, medicine.	1
Hinton is really two communities (hill and valley) in one--makes for a lot of barriers, especially transportation.	1
People like it here (residents)	1
Progressive council	1
Quality healthcare for community of this size	1
Young community	1
Town will take a chance on new ideas (Eco industrial park, Hinton transit program)	1
Well planned growth strategy and development infrastructure	1
Limited land to develop at mercy of realtors	1
Good community services and people	1
3+ business sections	1

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

	<b>Count</b>
Tourism development	11
Restaurant other than fast food	4
Performance venue for arts and entertainment	4
Activities for young people other than bars	3
Post secondary education	3
Arts and culture development	2
Bike store	2
Youth entrepreneurship development	2
Sports shops	2
Not letting a few business people dictate what goes on in town.	1
Industrial land development	1

No social gathering place for 30-somethings	
Shortage of land available to be developed for trucking	
Blue lake lodge - soft adventure market	
Ask youth what would keep them in Hinton	
Mountain biking opportunities	
Farmers market/other markets	
hiking campings etc businesses	
Finalizing highway beautification	
Affordable land for small business/entrepreneur to develop commercial ventures.	
Recycling and environmental leadership	
Central for shopping - larger retail chains	
Shopping mall half empty- vacant retail space	
Open air amphitheatre - Canadian Tire area	
Parks on river	
Competition needed for food retailers	
R&D	
Unused/rental/owned business/commercial building	
Nursing school	
More attractive and utilized rec centre	
Don't have a Hinton fair day.	
Nordic centre and mountain bike park.	
Arts and culture festival	

Racetrack that never gets used	
Affordable youth program	
More summer/winter festivals	
Retail	
Services to small business (equipment repair)	
Grow medical destination abilities like Banff/Canmore has done	
Banquet facilities	
Specialty niche shops	
Hinton golf club - a more economical option	
Nordic centre is currently growing to host off season events	
Lack of retail variety (sports store, clothing, shoes)	
Regional service centre opportunities	
Sporting teams	
More rec. facilities	

## 6. What is the one thing you most proud of in your community?

	Count
Determination, commitment to the future	5
Recreation, camping, skiing	4
Community involvement and pride	4
Mountains, outdoors, wilderness	4
Volunteering	4
Beaver boardwalk	3
The community has a vision	2
The support for family and children activities	1
The early history, before the pulp mill.	1
Diversification of Hintonites	1
The support from the town(community)	1
Enhancement initiatives - urban streetscapes	1
Healthcare	1
Support for mentally physically challenged.	1
Strategic and thoughtful planning	1
Arts and culture support	1
Community support is not obvious but runs very deep.	1
The good character of its citizens	1
Actually lots of little things, not really any great big one	1

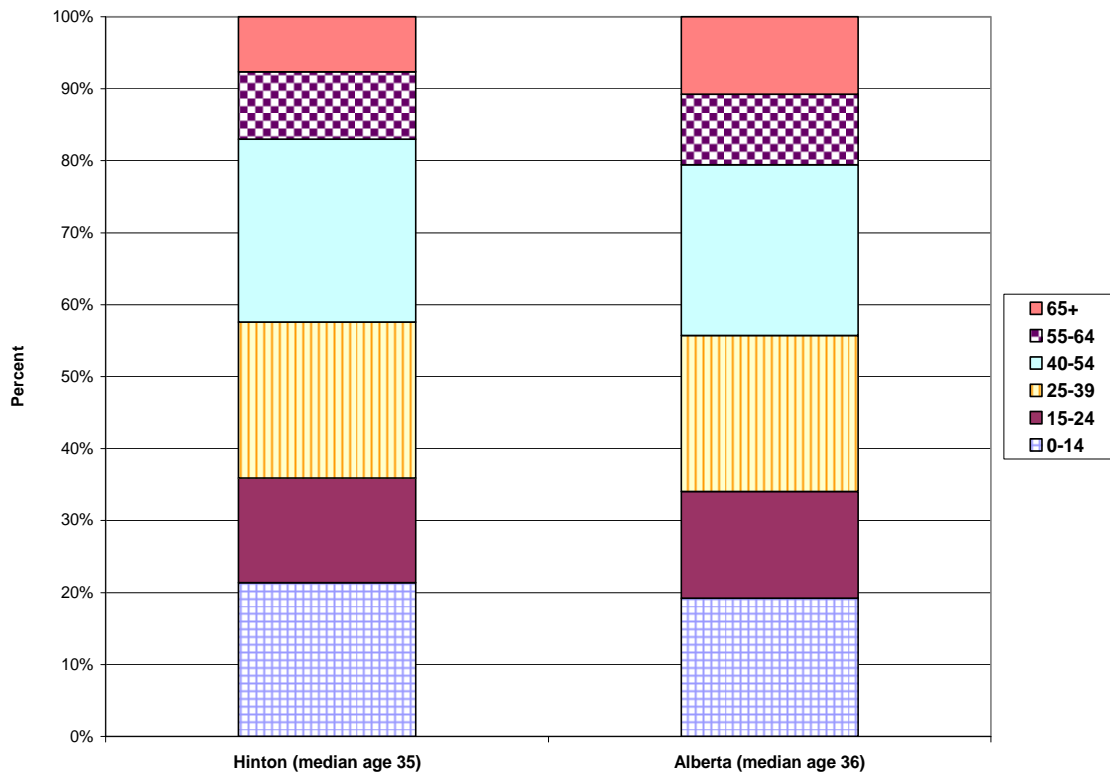
## Appendix H: Phase 1 Session Attendance

Jason Paterson  
Lori Phillips  
Randy Reich  
Merv Bashforth  
Shirley Pasioka  
Ben Oosterveld  
Jean Anne Fraser  
Carol Demong  
Ian Duncan  
Marc Retallack  
Doug Kopp  
Janice Callihoo  
Natalie Charlton  
Yvonne Oshanyk  
Lisa Jones

Rita McLaughlin  
Louise Gale  
Renée LaBoucane  
Ashley Kalk  
George Higgerty  
David Hargreaves  
Alex Hotte  
Andrea Cote  
Carol Kihn  
Mahnaz Bouroubia  
Cheryl Bauer  
Allison Rutley  
Lyle Hryniuk  
Gail Dunn  
Karla Bailey

Stephen Mitchell  
Glenn Taylor  
Harry Lasconder  
Brad Humphrey  
David Hargreaves  
Shawn Ritchie  
Gerry Brandt  
Myrna Norquay  
Dawn Gravel  
Vivian Sergeew  
Buzz Johnson  
Terry Fredin  
Jim Marshall

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



Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

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

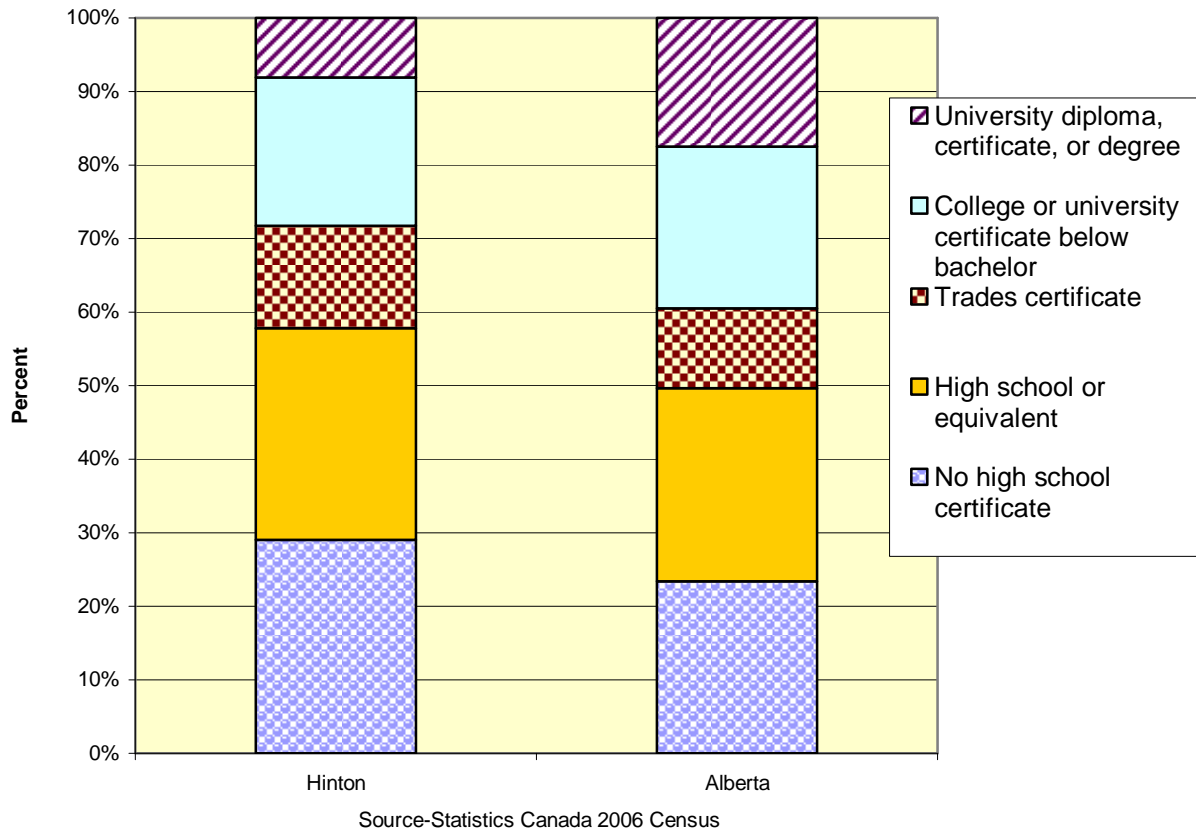
### Top 5 Industries of Employment by Participation

Hinton		Alberta	
Agriculture and resources	18%	Business Services	18%
Manufacturing	12%	Agriculture and resources	12%
Retail	13%	Retail	11%
Business services	13%	Health and social services	9%
Health and social	6%	Construction	9%

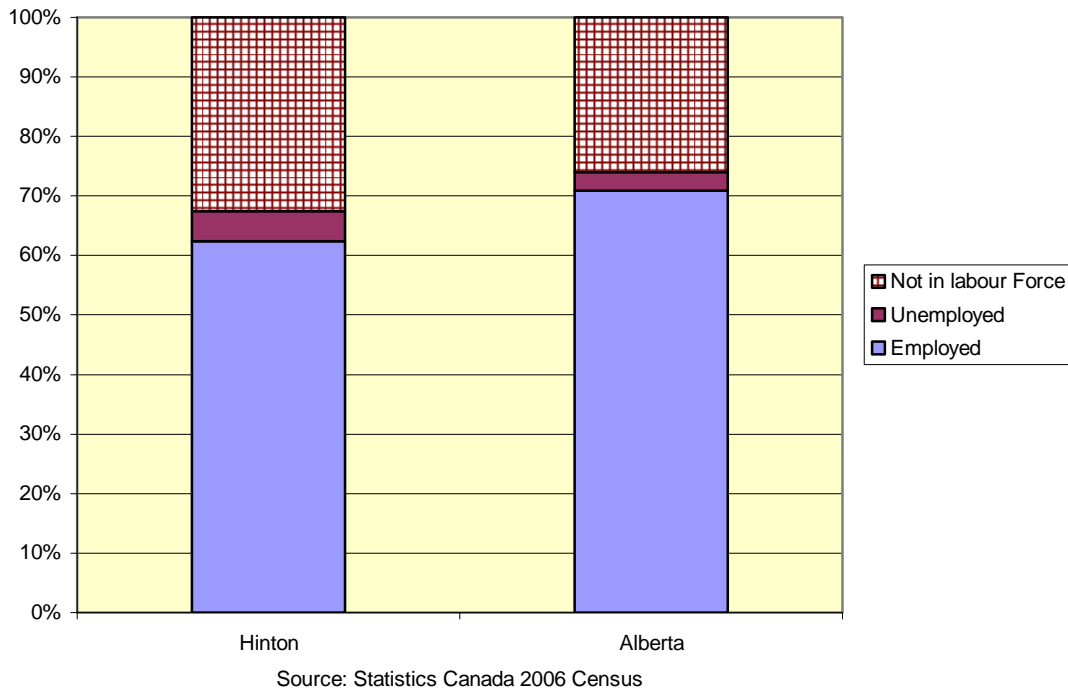
services

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

## Appendix K: Hinton Community Profile—Educational attainment, population over 15



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



## Appendix M: Hinton Community Profile—Earnings and Income in 2005

	Hinton	Alberta
Median Earnings (people over 15)	\$31,679	\$29,738
Percent of population in low income category	4.9	9.1
Government transfers as % of all income	6	7.2

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

## Appendix N: Population Growth

	Hinton	Alberta
Population in 2006	9,738	3,290,350
Population in 2001	9,405	2,974,807
Percent Increase	3.5	10.6

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census

## Appendix O: 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 P: 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 Q: 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.