



# **Community Values Assessment for the M.D. of Pincher Creek No. 9**

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The Praxis Group™**

**For:  
The Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative  
and  
The Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9**

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## **Preface**

Achieving long-term rural community sustainability depends on the community's resilience and capacity to change in a manner compatible with the values held by its members. There is a need to improve community self-knowledge and understanding, particularly with respect to values and desired futures. Such information will assist municipal governments, proponents, and the public to assess the compatibility of proposed developments with the community's values and to make informed decisions about future development options.

At the request of the MD council, the Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative (SASCI) was asked to conduct a Community Values Assessment. With partnership funding from the MD, the Rural Community Adaptation Program and SASCI itself, The Praxis Group™ was commissioned to conduct a Community Values Assessment focused on the MD of Pincher Creek. The objectives of the Community Values Assessment were to:

- engage a broad spectrum of the public within the MD of Pincher Creek to identify and assess values related to economic, social, and environmental issues;
- identify commonly held values, conflicting values, and the relative priority of values;
- identify factors contributing to changing values within and across the MD (e.g., location, occupation, economic circumstances, demographics, etc.); and
- provide clear, current, credible, and accurate information regarding community values in a format that will support transparent, defensible decision-making by MD staff and Council.

This document presents the findings of the Community Values Assessment. We believe it provides a credible perspective on the current values and priorities of residents and landowners in the MD.

It is our hope the Community Values Assessment will improve rural community capacity for sustainable development and serve as a model of community self-assessment and decision-making that can be applied to other (rural) communities. In particular, the MD will be better positioned to consider community values in decision-making, and will be able to integrate their understanding of values with other information, such as the findings of recent cumulative effects assessments in southwest Alberta, to develop better practices for land use and management in collaboration with other stakeholders.

As conditions and priorities change over time, it is important to ensure our collective understanding of community values remains current. In this regard, we recommend the Community Values Assessment be reviewed by MD Council at least once in every three-year term, and updated as appropriate.

## **Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative**



Celesa Horvath  
Board Chair



David Green  
Manager

## Acknowledgements

The Community Values Assessment presented in this report was made possible by the financial support of the Province of Alberta (through a Rural Community Adaptation Program grant to the Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative) and the Municipal District of Pincher Creek, No. 9. Additional in-kind support was provided by the Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative, based in Pincher Creek, Alberta. The work was undertaken by The Praxis Group™, based in Calgary, Alberta.



This project would not have been possible without the cooperation and participation of residents and landowners in the MD of Pincher Creek, who generously shared their time and insights during the survey and discussion groups.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Background and Purpose.....	3
What are Values?.....	4
Factors that Influence Values.....	4
Content of the Report.....	4
<b>TELEPHONE SURVEY FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
About the Survey.....	5
What Residents Value.....	7
Demographic Differences in What is Important.....	9
Land Use .....	12
Differences in Opposition and Support for Land Uses .....	13
Appropriate Economic Development.....	16
Establishing Priorities for Improvement.....	18
The Best Thing About Living in the MD of Pincher Creek.....	21
The Worst Thing About Living in the MD of Pincher Creek.....	22
The Most Important Concern for the Future .....	23
<b>SMALL GROUP SESSIONS SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>24</b>
About the Sessions .....	24
Small Group Session Summary Roll-up.....	25
Values Inventory Diagram .....	29
<b>FOLLOW-UP SESSION SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	<b>60</b>

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## SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

Random sample telephone survey results showed that residents in the MD of Pincher Creek place high value on the experience of community life in the MD, as well as the services and amenities available within the MD. The survey asked residents of the MD of Pincher Creek to rate the importance of 38 'value statements' and over half of the 15 most important 'value statements' were related to social aspects of the MD (*access to health services, quick emergency response times, safe and secure area, quality of life for seniors, people look out for one another, area is not crowded, access to quality education, ranching and agricultural lifestyle*). In addition, when survey participants were asked to indicate the best thing about living in the MD, *friendly and community-minded people, peace and quiet, and the rural lifestyle* placed second, third, and fourth respectively. Similarly, across all small group sessions, sense of community or the shared community experience, access to health care and education opportunities, the availability of community facilities and recreational infrastructure, and the qualities of the people living in the area emerged as vital and valued characteristics of the MD.

Both survey and group session participants recognized the natural environment as an important aspect of the MD and identified environmental conservation as a priority. Again, five of the 15 highest rated 'value statements' pertained to environmental conservation (*protecting the natural environment within the MD, conserving and protecting water resources, practicing sustainable agriculture, protecting the natural environment around the MD, and maintaining natural wildlife and fish populations*). Survey participants also strongly supported *setting aside land in an undisturbed state for habitat protection* as a land use option, and identified the *beautiful scenery* as the best thing about living in the MD. Consistent with the survey results, small group session participants spoke about the importance of: maintaining functioning ecosystems, conserving ecological diversity, sustaining wildlife habitat, saving native fescues and grasslands, maintaining land productivity, and protecting water resources.

Survey and small group participants generally agreed that *having ready access to a range of outdoor recreational opportunities* is a valued benefit of living in the MD, and survey respondents strongly supported *increasing non-motorized recreational opportunities*. That said, concern was raised in the small group sessions about the negative impacts of unrestricted recreational land use on public lands, and both sets of participants backed *enforcing appropriate use of public lands*. In this vein, when asked about land use options, telephone survey respondents were in greatest opposition to *increased opportunities for motorized recreation (OHVs, dirt bikes, etc.)*.

Survey respondents named *loss of agricultural land to subdivisions* as the foremost concern for their future in the MD, and *subdividing land currently used for agriculture* was strongly opposed as a land use option. Likewise, individuals across all small group sessions largely agreed that minimizing future fragmentation of the land base and maintaining prime agricultural land should be priorities in the MD. Suggestions raised in the group sessions for minimizing landscape disruptions included designating areas suitable for subdivision, and restricting the number of acres eligible for subdivision. *Windmills destroying views* was identified as the second most significant concern for the future by survey participants. Although preserving the MD's natural beauty and views was identified in the majority of small group sessions as a shared community value, participants acknowledged the conflicts and tradeoffs between unobstructed views, regional economic development, and support for green energy.

In the telephone survey, *having the ability to make decisions about what occurs on your land* was rated as the most important of the 38 'value statements' and was additionally cited as one of the top items for improvement. The item with the largest gap between importance and satisfaction is *knowing your opinion influences planning decisions*. In the small group sessions, conversations regarding viewscales and the subdivision of agricultural land gave rise to discussions related to landowner rights. In this context, participants noted that windmills have provided much needed income to ranchers and farmers, and although unobstructed viewscales may be important to the broader community, some landowners want to maintain the ability to develop their property as they see fit. Further, some suggested that restrictions on the location and size of subdivisions may be unpopular among rural landowners.

Across all small group sessions, developing and maintaining a sustainable economy in the MD was seen as a priority and the need for economic diversification through entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation was acknowledged. In some sessions, participants talked about the importance of sustaining agricultural livelihoods and maintaining the agricultural way-of-life. When participants in the follow-up session were asked what type of development is appropriate in the MD, many said the focus should be on a knowledge-based economy and low-impact development that does not encroach on the MD's environment. Similarly, survey respondents strongly supported *increasing alternative economic opportunities (jobs in the green, knowledge, and digital economies)* and *farming/ranching* were considered the most important appropriate types of economic development in the MD.

In each of the small group sessions, participants were asked what the expectations are for the MD in terms of the priority values identified. Participants readily provided a range of directives for the MD, which have been included in the individual session summaries (Appendix A). That being said, it is worth noting that in all sessions, participants consistently called upon the MD to "act as the community's voice" and proactively represent the interests of the community - particularly regarding land and environmental management - even if matters are outside of municipal jurisdiction.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background and Purpose

The Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative (SASCI), in collaboration with the Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9 (the MD), is spearheading a Community Values Assessment (CVA) intended to help the MD consider community values more effectively in decision-making and develop better practices for land use and land management. The goals of the CVA are to identify and assess community values related to the natural, social, and economic environment, to establish the relative priority of those values, and to determine the factors contributing to convergence and divergence in values in the MD. To assist with the CVA, SASCI contracted The Praxis Group™ (Praxis), to conduct a consultation process to engage a broad spectrum of residents in the MD.

Praxis designed a three-phase consultation process to meet the objectives for the CVA.

- The first phase of the process involved a random sample telephone survey of residents within the MD to identify commonly held values, conflicting values, and the level of importance of those values. Administered in June 2011, 332 (37%) households in the MD were surveyed.
- For the second phase of the consultation, five facilitated small group sessions with a diverse range of stakeholders from the MD were held in late June and early July 2011. The objectives of the small group sessions were to generate a prioritized inventory of community values, to solicit in-depth feedback from participants regarding the priority values identified, and to identify participants' expectations for the MD with regard to preserving and enhancing community values.
- The third phase of the consultation process, conducted in September 2011, saw participants from the small group sessions reconvening to review the findings from the first two phases of the consultation and to provide feedback regarding the next steps in the CVA process.

The CVA was conducted in 2011, and to some degree is a reflection of conditions and circumstances facing the community at that time. Although it is impossible to know how such circumstances have affected participant responses, it may be useful for the future reader to understand the nature of some of these circumstances. At the time of the CVA, the Government of Alberta was implementing a new land use planning process pursuant to the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, and the land use plan governing the MD, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, was being drafted. There were various developments proposed on the landscape, including mining north of Burmis and logging in the Castle, as well as many ongoing activities, such as oil and gas development, tourism, and many forms of recreation. Property rights were a key issue for many landowners, and there was increasing subdivision pressure in parts of the region. A major recession occurred in 2008-2009, and the economy was recovering in 2010-2011. Over time, as circumstances continue to change, it will be important to ensure our collective understanding of community values remains current. In this regard, it is recommended the CVA findings be reviewed periodically and updated as appropriate.

## What are Values?

When we think of our values, we think of what is important to us in our lives (e.g., security, independence, wisdom, success, kindness, pleasure). Each of us holds numerous values with varying degrees of importance. A particular value may be very important to one person, but unimportant to another.

An individual's actions in pursuit of any value has the potential to be congruent or in conflict with others living within the community. Fundamental to understanding community values is understanding how people in a community are connected to each other and interdependent.

## Factors that Influence Values

Values are deeply held beliefs about what is good, right, and appropriate. Values are deep-seated and remain constant over time. We accumulate our values from childhood based on teachings and observations of our parents, teachers, religious leaders, and other influential and powerful people. There is a range of influences on the values people hold. A person's stage in life can make a difference, with young, single people more likely to be centered on themselves rather than the community. Family life brings with it commitments to others, which focus people more on social values. The type of work and the ways in which people learn to measure success and failure in their work may also have an impact. Schools, friends, and social groups will have a continuing impact on the values people hold. Patterns of child-rearing and parental values are also likely to have lasting consequences.

Over time, the public expression of personal values that society finds important form the foundations of law, custom, and tradition.

## Content of the Report

This report consists of four main sections:

1. The *Summary Highlights* provides a high level overview of the results from the random sample telephone survey, small group sessions, and follow-up session.
2. The *Telephone Survey Findings* presents the survey results in table or figure format by section reflecting the structure of the survey.
3. The *Small Group Sessions Summary* provides a summary of the key themes and areas of agreement from all five small group sessions. Individual session summary overviews encapsulating the discussions from each of the five small group sessions are appended.
4. The *Follow-up Session Summary* provides an overview of the follow-up session conducted in September 2011.



## *TELEPHONE SURVEY FINDINGS*

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## TELEPHONE SURVEY FINDINGS

### About the Survey

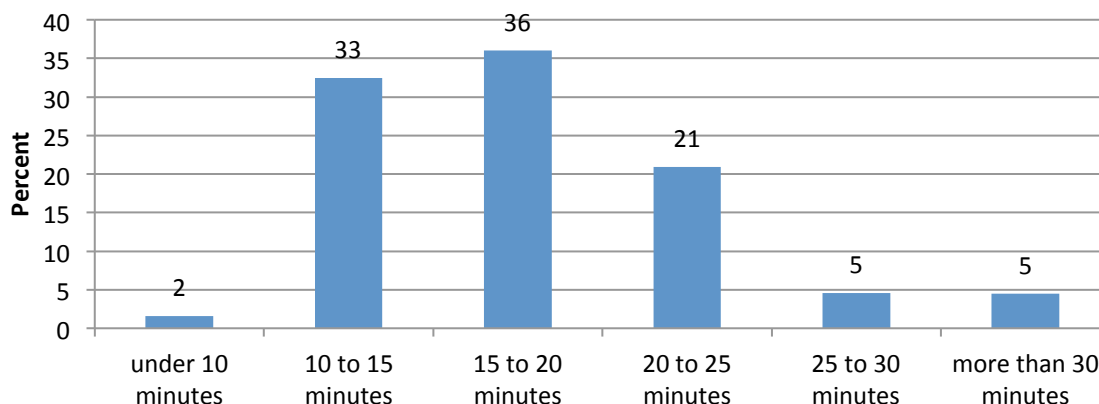
A random sample of 332 households within the MD of Pincher Creek No. 9 was conducted between June 10 and June 27, 2011. Due to the small population, all residential listings were called in the area defined by SASCI for inclusion in the sample. Due to overlap in the telephone number prefix between the Town of Pincher Creek and the MD, respondents were asked if they live in the town or in the MD. If they indicated their residence was in the town the interviewer explained the survey was intended for MD residents only and the interview was terminated. The sample accounts for 37% of the households within the MD and provides a margin of error of +/- 4.28%, 19 times out of 20.

Survey participants had to be 18 years of age or older and had to live within the MD of Pincher Creek, and not within the Town of Pincher Creek. Screening questions were used at the outset to ensure these criteria were met.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of 38 attributes in terms of living within the MD. Respondents then rated their level of satisfaction with the same 38 items. A five point Likert scale from strongly oppose to strongly support was used to assess perspective on 11 land uses<sup>1</sup>. The survey included open-ended questions to assess the top concerns, top strengths, and top future concerns. Limited demographics were obtained.

The average survey length was 18.01 minutes, with the shortest being 9 minutes 30 seconds and the longest being just over 57 minutes. Figure 1 shows the distribution of survey lengths (note second value is rounded, e.g., 10 to 15 minutes is actually 10 minutes to 14 minutes and 59 seconds). Eight people started the survey but did not finish – these records were removed.

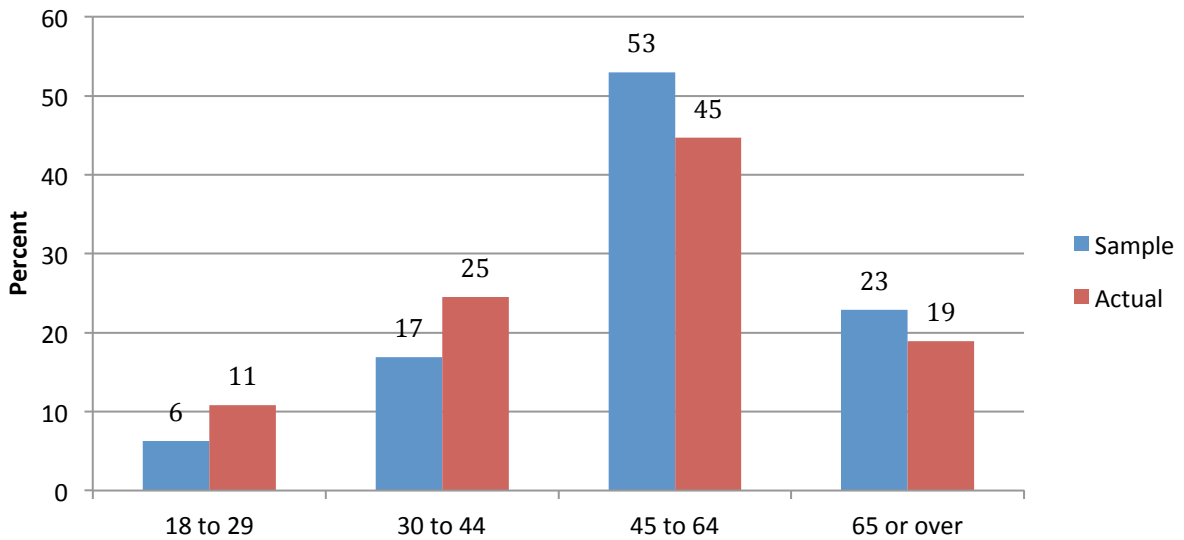
**FIGURE 1 SURVEY LENGTH - PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS**



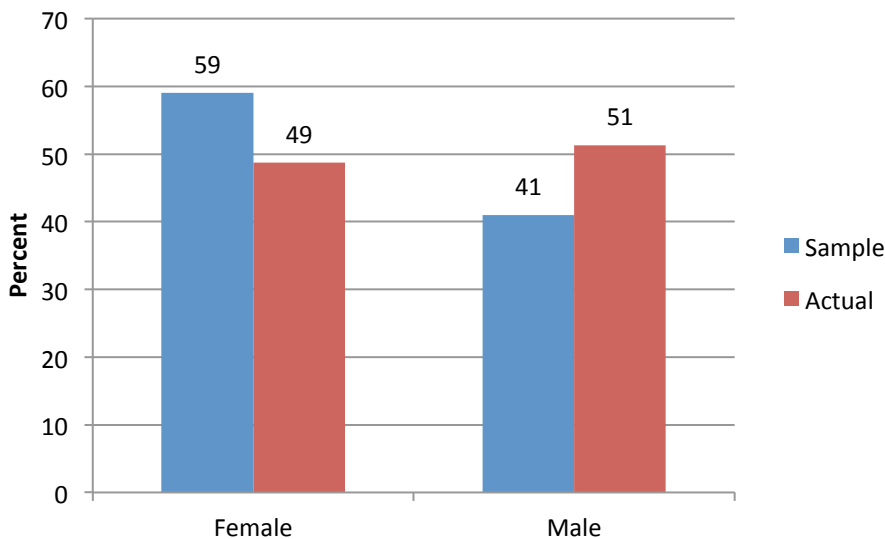
<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report data are presented as frequency distributions and means. Means provide a useful summary of the data; however, they can be misleading if data are bimodal or have significant outliers. Praxis has evaluated the use of means in terms of skewness and bimodality to ensure that the means are appropriate. It is important to note that none of the distributions in the data are bimodal and outliers are not an issue when presenting Likert scale data. A technical appendix has been provided under separate cover providing detailed breakdown and statistics.

When comparing sample proportions to actual population proportions from Census data, slight differences were evident in the sample data. As is typically the case in random telephone surveys, younger people are under-represented and females are over-represented. Data were weighted to population values for age and gender to correct for these differences.

**FIGURE 2 AGE COMPARISON - SAMPLE TO POPULATION**



**FIGURE 3 GENDER COMPARISON - SAMPLE TO POPULATION**



## What Residents Value

The survey asked residents of the MD of Pincher Creek to rate the importance of 38 'value statements' on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 being not at all important and 5 being very important. *Having the ability to make decisions about what occurs on their land* ranked first among residents of the MD. Lowest ranked was *attracting population growth*. Satisfaction scores for these values can be seen in Appendix B.

**FIGURE 4 RANKING OF IMPORTANCE FROM MOST TO LEAST IMPORTANT**



Survey results showed that residents in the MD place high value on the experience of community life in the MD, as well as the services and amenities available within the MD, with over half of the 15 most important 'value statements' relating to social aspects of the MD (*access to health services, quick emergency response times, safe and secure area, quality of life for seniors, people look out for one another, area is not crowded, access to quality education, ranching and agricultural lifestyle*) (Figure 4). Similarly, across all small group sessions, sense of community, access to healthcare and education opportunities, the availability of community facilities and recreational infrastructure, and the qualities of the people living in the area emerged as vital and valued characteristics of the MD.

Both survey and group session participants recognized the natural environment as an important aspect of the MD and identified environmental conservation as a priority. Again, five of the 15 highest rated 'value statements' in the survey pertained to environmental conservation (*protecting the natural environment within the MD, conserving and protecting water resources, practicing sustainable agriculture, protecting the natural environment around the MD, and maintaining natural wildlife and fish populations*) (Figure 4). Consistent with the survey results, small group session participants spoke about the importance of: maintaining functioning ecosystems, conserving ecological diversity, sustaining wildlife habitat, saving native fescues and grasslands, maintaining land productivity, and protecting water resources.

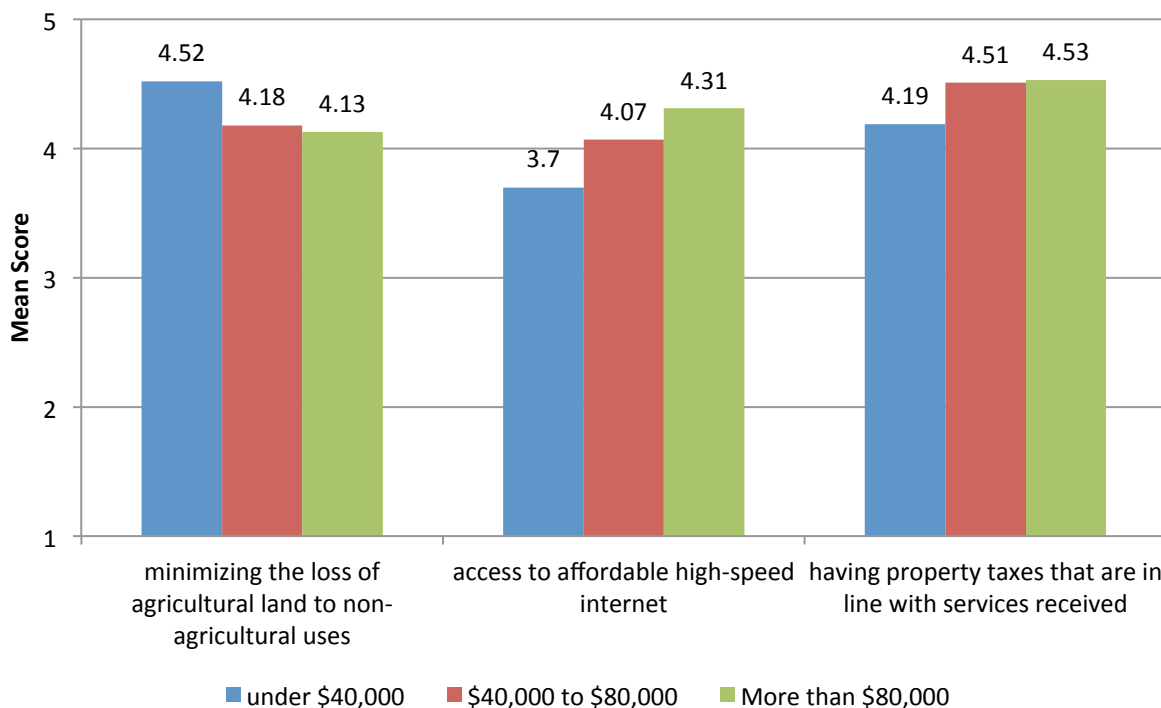


## Demographic Differences in What is Important

The survey asked respondents their income, age, level of education, and whether they live in a village/hamlet or farm/acreage. In order to evaluate how these demographic characteristics affect the importance ratings, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used. ANOVA identifies where there are statistically significant differences between the groups. It is important to note that in statistics, a result is called statistically significant if it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Significant does not mean important or meaningful, as it does in everyday speech. Therefore, while the following highlights the results which have statistically significant differences, whether or not these differences are meaningful is a matter of interpretation.

Statistically significant differences occurred in three factors in relation to income<sup>2</sup>. The mean score associated with *minimizing loss of agricultural land* decreased with income, while *access to affordable high speed Internet* and *having property taxes in line with services* both increased in importance as income increased.

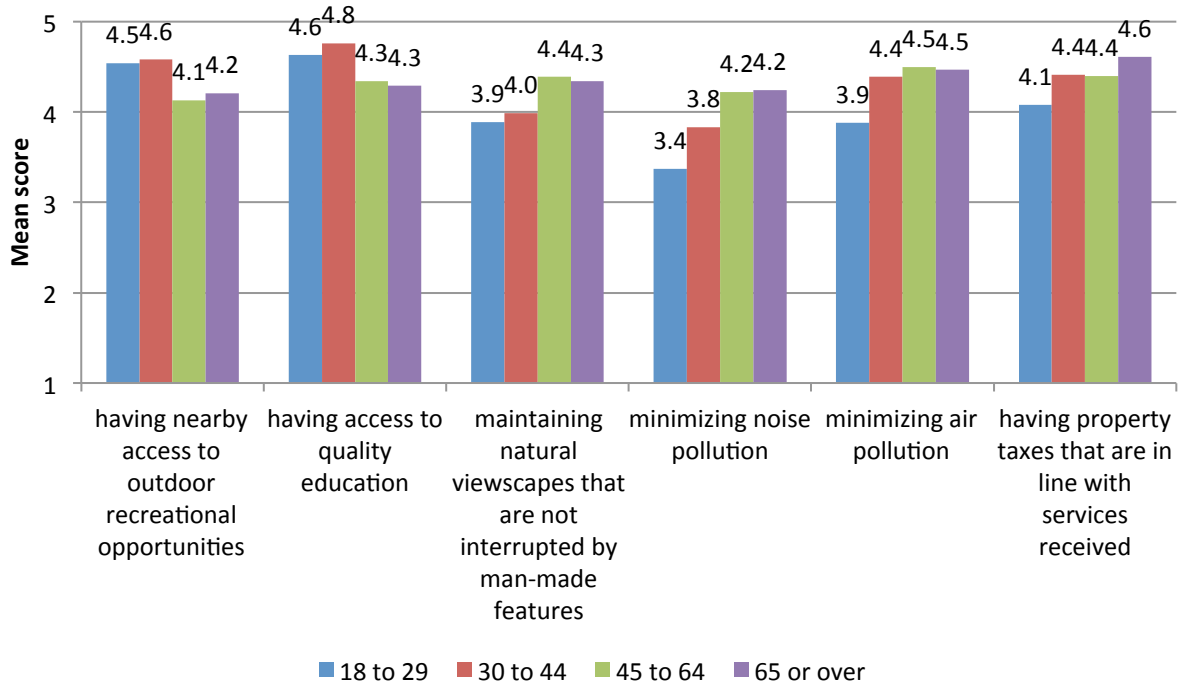
**FIGURE 5 IMPORTANCE FACTORS AFFECTED BY INCOME**



The age of participants appears to influence the importance of various factors more than does income level. *Access to outdoor recreation* and *access to education* are higher in importance for younger members of the community (those under 44). *Maintaining natural viewscapes, minimizing noise pollution and air pollution, and having property taxes in line with services* all increased in importance with age.

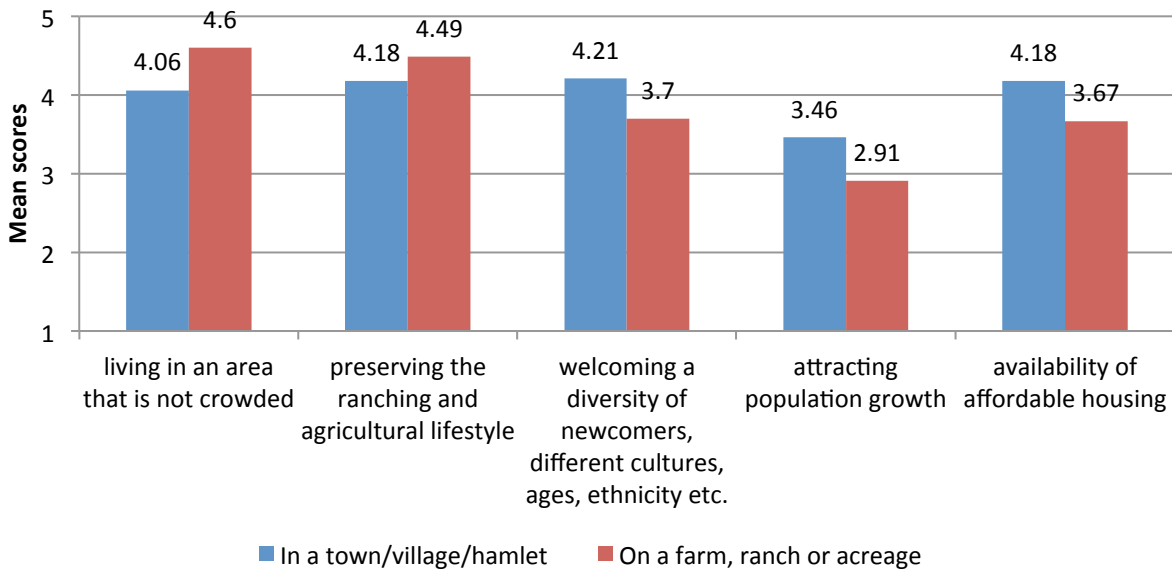
<sup>2</sup> Statistically significant at .05 based on Analysis of Variance

**FIGURE 6 IMPORTANCE FACTORS AFFECTED BY AGE**



Statistically significant differences were noted in relation to whether people lived in a town/village/hamlet or in a rural area (acreage/farm) for five items. *Living in an area that is not crowded* and *preserving the ranching lifestyle* were given higher importance by those living in the rural areas. *Welcoming diversity of newcomers, attracting population growth, and availability of affordable housing* were seen as more important by those living in a village/town or hamlet.

**FIGURE 7 IMPORTANCE FACTORS AFFECTED BY RESIDENCE LOCATION**

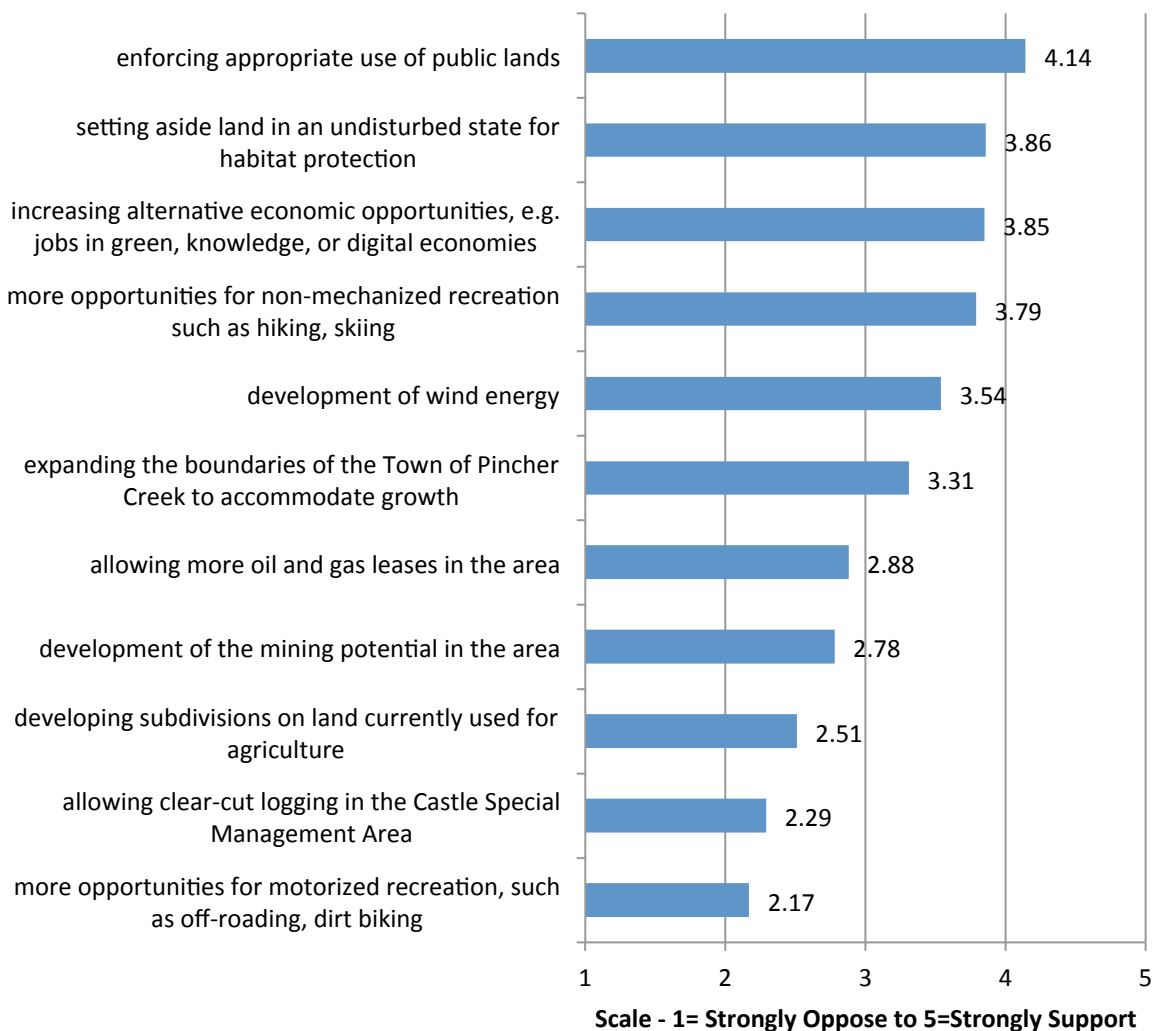




## Land Use

Survey participants were asked to rate the extent to which they opposed or supported various land use options in the MD of Pincher Creek and its immediate environs. The strongest level of support was for *enforcing appropriate use of public lands*. This was followed by strong support for *setting aside land in an undisturbed state for habitat protection*, *increasing alternative economic opportunities (jobs in the green, knowledge, and digital economies)*, and *increasing the opportunities for non-mechanized recreation*. By contrast, the strongest opposition among residents was for *increasing opportunities for motorized recreation (OHVs, dirt bikes, etc.)*, *allowing clear cutting of the Castle Special Management Area*, and *subdividing land currently used for agriculture*. It should be noted that some of the land uses listed in the following table are in provincial lands, rather than municipal, jurisdictions.

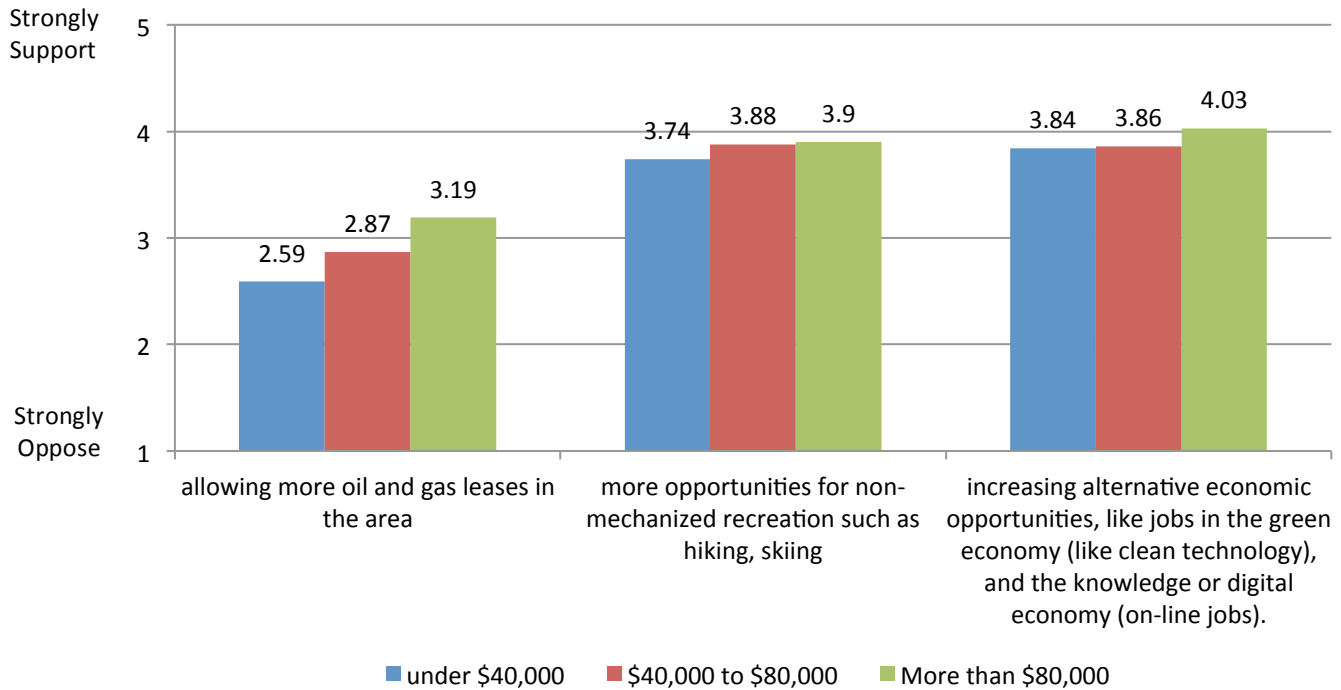
**FIGURE 8 OPPOSITION OR SUPPORT FOR LAND USES**



## Differences in Opposition and Support for Land Uses

There were no statistically significant differences in opposition or support by educational attainment. However, three items show statistically significant differences by income. *Allowing more oil and gas leases, allowing more opportunities for non-mechanized recreation, and increasing alternative economic opportunities* all saw increased support with increased income.

**FIGURE 9 DIFFERENCES IN OPPOSITION OR SUPPORT BY INCOME**



Statistically significant differences by age were noted for three items. Support for *development of mining potential* and *more opportunities for motorized recreation* decreased with age, albeit show low support irrespective of age. *More opportunities for non-mechanized recreation* showed strongest support in the oldest and youngest age categories.

**FIGURE 10 DIFFERENCES IN OPPOSITION OR SUPPORT BY INCOME**

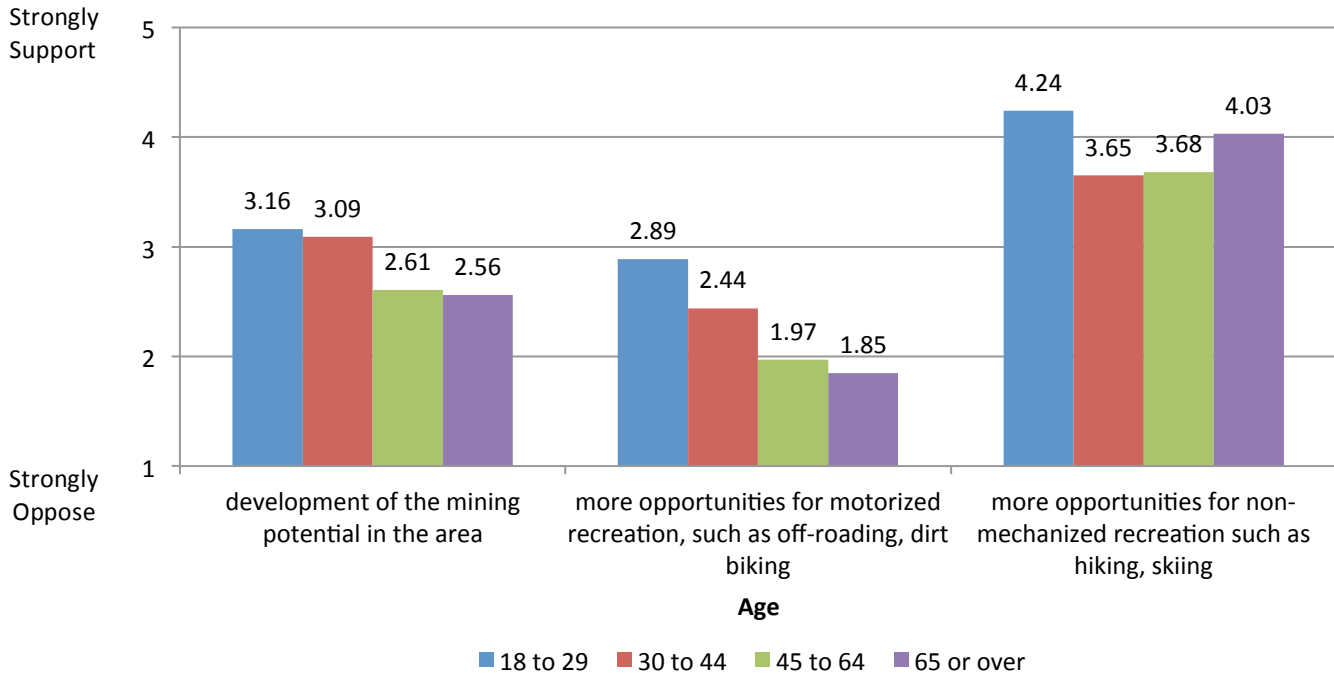
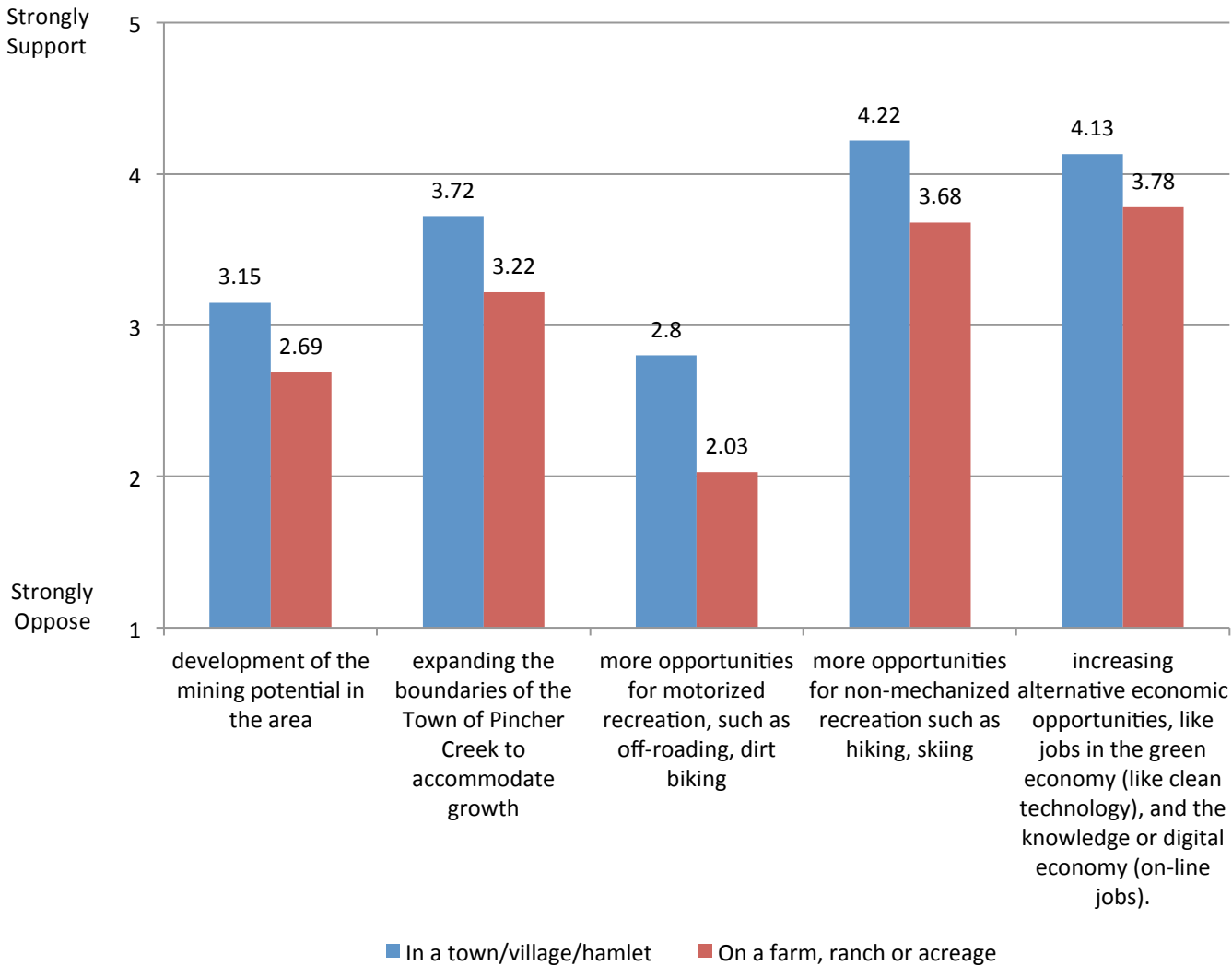


Figure 11 shows that those living in towns/villages/hamlets within the MD show greater support for *development of mining potential, expansion of Town of Pincher Creek boundaries* and *development of alternative economic opportunities*, than those living on farms and acreages. They also show stronger support for increasing both mechanized and non-mechanized recreation.

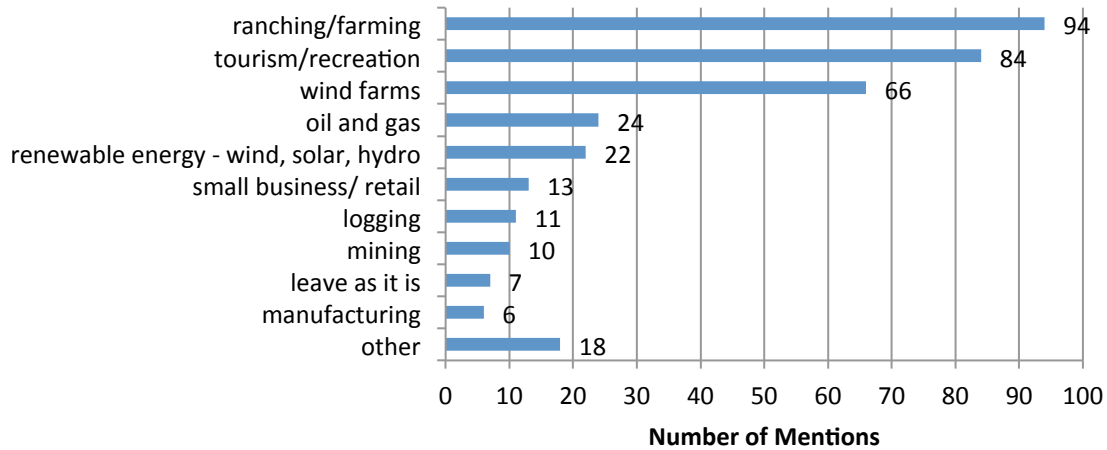
**FIGURE 11 DIFFERENCES IN OPPOSITION OR SUPPORT BY WHERE RESPONDENT LIVES**



## Appropriate Economic Development

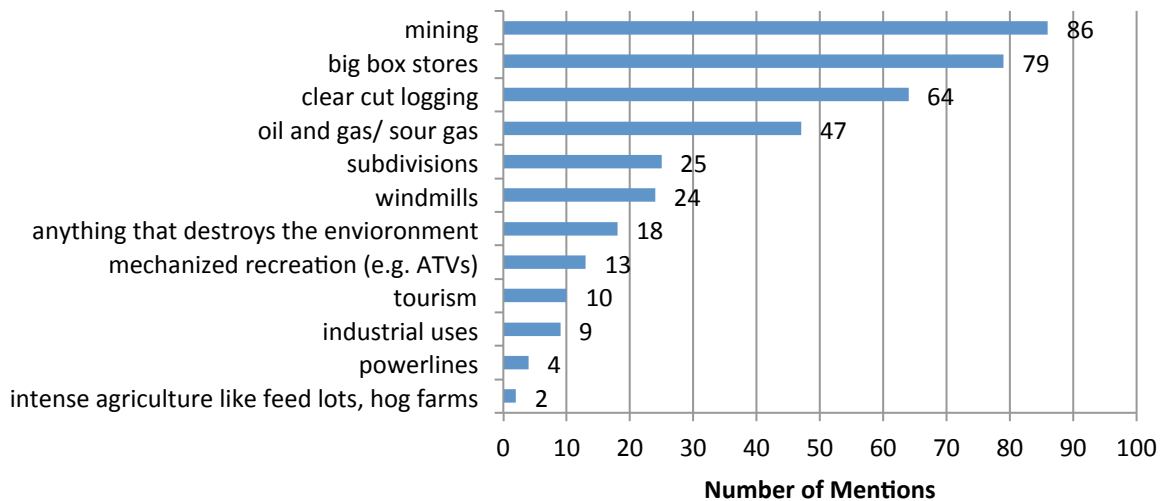
Open-ended questions were used to measure what type of economic development residents would consider appropriate and inappropriate<sup>3</sup>. Ranching and farming (94 mentions out of 355), tourism and recreation (84), and wind farms (66) were considered appropriate by the majority.

**FIGURE 12 CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



Economic development activities considered by respondents to be least appropriate are mining (86 mentions out of 389), big box stores (79), clear cut logging (64), and oil and gas/sour gas (47).

**FIGURE 13 CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



<sup>3</sup> Open-ended questions allow the respondent's to provide a verbatim response to the question. Categories are developed by the researcher based on common themes, therefore there is some interpretation in relation to placing the comments into the theme categories. Respondent can also provide more than one response, therefore it is the total number of mentions that is reported under each theme.

Across all small group sessions, developing and maintaining a sustainable economy in the MD was seen as a priority and the need for economic diversification through entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation was acknowledged. In some sessions, participants talked about the importance of sustaining agricultural livelihoods and maintaining the agricultural way-of-life. When participants in the follow-up session were asked what type of development is appropriate in the MD, many said the focus should be on a knowledge-based economy and low impact development that does not encroach on the MD's pristine environment. Similarly, survey respondents strongly supported *increasing alternative economic opportunities (jobs in the green, knowledge and digital economies)* and *farming/ranching* was considered the most important appropriate type of economic development in the MD.



## Establishing Priorities for Improvement

Figure 4 (page 7) shows the mean importance scores for 38 items. The most important items among those measured include:

- having the ability to make decisions about what occurs on your land
- conserving and protecting water resources
- having quick emergency response times
- living in a community where people look out for one another
- protecting quality of life for seniors
- living in an area that is safe and secure
- having access to adequate health services
- living in an area that is not crowded

Survey participants were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the same 38 items. Although satisfaction on its own is a valuable performance measure, when combined with the importance of the attribute, the measure is strengthened.

The combined use of importance and satisfaction was first reported by Martilla and James in 1977. The technique, known as Importance-Performance (IP) Analysis is well documented in research literature as a means of prioritizing attributes measured in a survey. The basic premise of IP analysis is that items high in importance should have equally high levels of satisfaction. Where satisfaction and importance are nearly equal, performance expectations are met.

Table 1 (below) shows the importance means, satisfaction means and the difference between the two. The items where the difference between importance and satisfaction is greatest can be regarded as the areas in need of most improvement.

The top ten items with the largest performance gap are:

- knowing your opinion influences planning decisions
- providing employment opportunities for youth
- having property taxes that are in line with services received
- having the ability to make decisions about what occurs on your land
- minimizing the loss of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses
- having quality employment opportunities within the community
- having well-maintained roads
- conserving and protecting water resources
- protecting the natural environment surrounding the MD
- having quick emergency response times

**TABLE 1 RESIDENTS' PRIORITIES**

Item Measured	Mean Importance	Mean Satisfaction	Gap
knowing your opinion influences planning decisions	4.14	2.90	1.24
providing employment opportunities for youth	4.28	3.09	1.19
having property taxes that are in line with services received	4.40	3.24	1.16
having the ability to make decisions about what occurs on your land	4.77	3.61	1.16
minimizing the loss of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses	4.23	3.12	1.11
having quality employment opportunities within the community	4.26	3.22	1.04
having well-maintained roads	4.32	3.31	1.01
conserving and protecting water resources	4.64	3.63	1.01
protecting the natural environment surrounding the MD	4.44	3.50	0.94
having quick emergency response times	4.75	3.88	0.87
protecting the natural environment within the MD	4.47	3.65	0.82
minimizing the environmental impacts of industrial development	4.17	3.38	0.79
having a diversified economy	4.17	3.38	0.79
supporting locally-based businesses	4.41	3.63	0.78
practicing sustainable agriculture	4.45	3.68	0.77
maintaining natural viewsapes that are not interrupted by man-made features	4.22	3.49	0.73
access to affordable high-speed internet	4.06	3.36	0.70
living in an area that is not crowded	4.50	3.82	0.68
living in a community where people look out for one another	4.64	3.96	0.68
protecting quality of life for seniors	4.64	3.96	0.68
preserving the ranching and agricultural lifestyle	4.42	3.75	0.67
encouraging economic development in the region	3.98	3.38	0.60
living in an area that is safe and secure	4.70	4.12	0.58
availability of affordable housing	3.77	3.21	0.56
having access to adequate health services	4.75	4.22	0.53
reducing our impact on and adapting to climate change	3.78	3.25	0.53
renewable and alternative energy development	3.89	3.39	0.50
having access to quality education	4.47	3.97	0.50
maintaining natural wildlife and fish populations	4.44	3.96	0.48
minimizing air pollution	4.40	3.98	0.42
welcoming a diversity of newcomers, different cultures, ages, ethnicity etc.	3.81	3.43	0.38
having access to recycling programs	4.28	3.97	0.31
having nearby access to outdoor recreational opportunities	4.30	4.26	0.04
minimizing noise pollution	4.03	3.99	0.04
having access to entertainment opportunities	3.47	3.69	-0.22
having access to cultural events and programs	3.40	3.66	-0.26
attracting population growth	3.00	3.39	-0.39
increasing the amount of paved roads	3.22	3.64	-0.42

Note: importance means above 4.5 and satisfaction means above 4.0 have been highlighted to assist the reader. These cutoffs are arbitrary.



The top ten items with the smallest gap (or a negative gap) are indicative of areas where satisfaction is on par with importance. In other words, performance expectations are met. These items include:

- maintaining natural wildlife and fish populations
- minimizing air pollution
- welcoming a diversity of newcomers, different cultures, ages, ethnicity etc.
- having access to recycling programs
- having nearby access to outdoor recreational opportunities
- minimizing noise pollution
- having access to entertainment opportunities
- having access to cultural events and programs
- attracting population growth
- increasing the amount of paved roads

Another perspective offered in Table 1 is the items of greatest satisfaction irrespective of importance. The top ten items are:

- having nearby access to outdoor recreational opportunities
- having access to adequate health services
- living in an area that is safe and secure
- minimal noise pollution
- minimal air pollution
- having access to quality education
- having access to recycling programs
- living in a community where people look out for one another
- protecting quality of life for seniors
- maintaining natural wildlife and fish populations

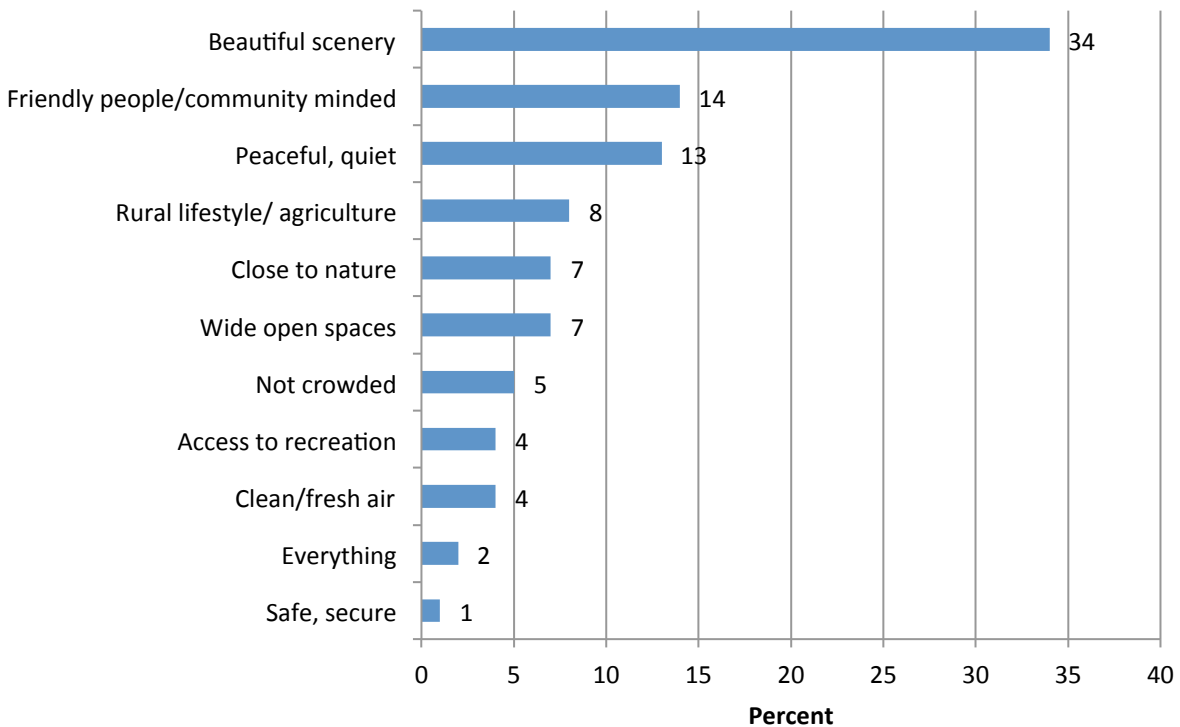
It is important to also note that while certain items may by themselves be ranked of lower priority, they may in fact relate to and support items of higher importance. For example, having a diversified economy, access to affordable high-speed internet, encouraging economic development in the region, having access to quality education, and renewable and alternative energy development, among others, all may contribute to the high priority of providing economic opportunities for youth.



## The Best Thing About Living in the MD of Pincher Creek

Respondents were asked to name the best thing about living in the MD of Pincher Creek. Respondents could provide more than one item. Categories were not provided to respondents, rather their views were recorded by the interviewer and the recoded into similar theme later<sup>4</sup>. The most common theme was *beautiful scenery* (34%); this was followed by *friendly people/community minded* (14%).

FIGURE 14 THE BEST THING ABOUT LIVING HERE IS ...



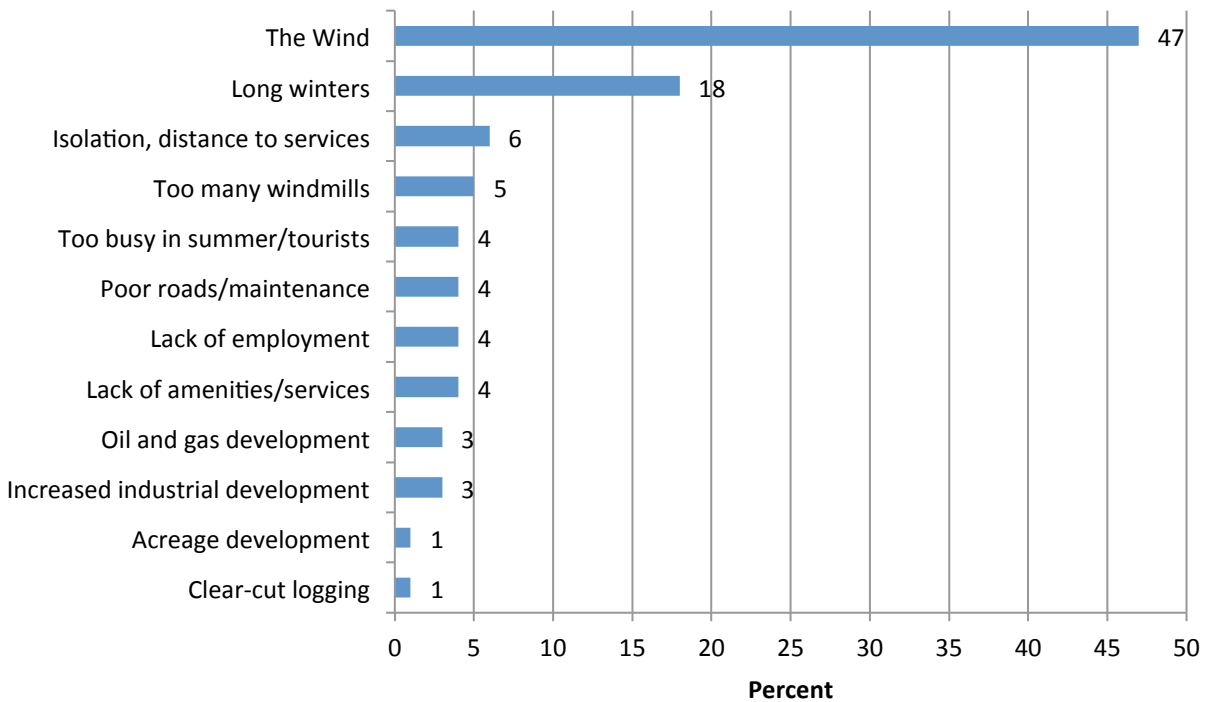
Note that comments that could not be categorized (unique comments which did not fit under a common theme) are not represented in this graph. The same applies to the comment analysis graphs on the following two pages. The purpose of this graph is to show the frequency of recurring themes.

<sup>4</sup> The results are displayed graphically to assist the reader in identifying the most common themes. However the results to this question are purely qualitative. It would therefore be inappropriate to attempt to cluster the values or perform statistical analysis on these results.

## The Worst Thing About Living in the MD of Pincher Creek

Respondents were asked to name the worst thing about living in the MD of Pincher Creek. Comments were categorized according to similarities to create themes. The most common theme was *the wind* (47%), followed by *long winters* (18%). Even though “wind” and “long winters” are beyond anyone’s control, it does not diminish the importance of these conditions in terms of what people dislike most about living in this area.

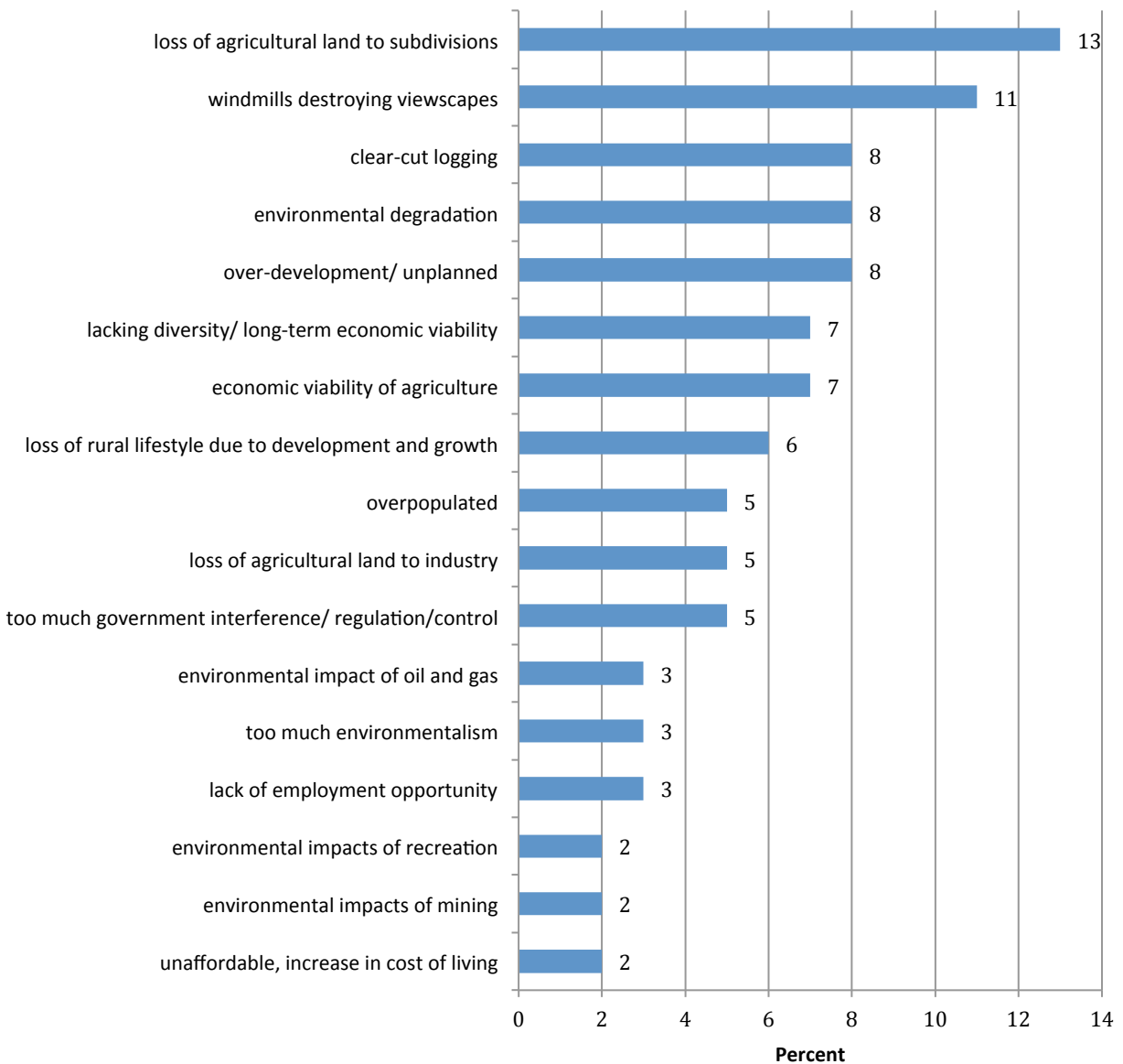
FIGURE 15 THE WORST THING ABOUT LIVING HERE IS ...



## The Most Important Concern for the Future

Respondents were asked to name their most important concern for their future in the MD of Pincher Creek. Comments were categorized according to similarities to create themes. The most common theme was *loss of agricultural land to subdivisions* (13%). There was no distinction made between the loss of public land or private land – it was simply the loss of any agricultural land. The second most frequently mentioned concern for the future was *windmills destroying views* (11%).

**FIGURE 16 ONE CONCERN I HAVE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE AREA IS .....**



## *SMALL GROUP SESSIONS SUMMARY*

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## SMALL GROUP SESSIONS SUMMARY

### About the Sessions

In early May 2011, members of the SASCI Board compiled a list of 70 MD residents to invite to participate in the CVA small group sessions. These individuals were selected because they were well informed opinion-leaders representing a broad demographic cross-section, as well as a range of perspectives and opinions. In mid-May, each of these individuals received a telephone call from a SASCI representative to explain the small group process and to encourage participation. Praxis subsequently called each individual to confirm participation and to schedule the sessions. A total of 29 individuals participated in five small group sessions conducted in late June and early July 2011.

A standardized guide was used to facilitate each of the two-hour sessions. The sessions were conducted in two parts. During the first half of the session, participants were asked to brainstorm which social, environmental, economic, and infrastructure values matter most to him/her. Responses for each values category were captured on individual flipchart sheets. Participants then engaged in a “dotmocracy” process where each individual was given 10 adhesive dots and asked to place his/her dots beside the values that were most important to her/him. The dots were then counted and the values with the most number of dots emerged as the priority values for the group. The second part of the session focused on the priority values, and participants were asked: to indicate the current level of satisfaction related to the priority value; to identify what could be done to improve the current situation; and determine if the MD had a role with regard to the priority value. An individual from Praxis recorded the content of the group discussions.

The information drawn from the recorded summaries and flipcharts from each small group session form the basis for this part of the report. When reviewing this section of the report, it is essential to remember that the information presented is a qualitative summary of the views, opinions and preferences of 29 MD residents who were invited to participate in the small group sessions.



## Small Group Session Summary Roll-up

This summary roll-up provides a high-level overview of the convergent and divergent themes that emerged during the small group session discussions. The summary presents participants' views and perceptions regarding social, environmental, and economic values, and provides a brief synopsis of participants' suggestions to the MD for preserving community values.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Social Values***

When asked about the social values the community holds dear, sense of community or the shared community experience emerged as a fundamental value throughout the sessions. In this context, participants described a safe and close-knit community with strong links to the past where people know, support, and “look out for” their neighbours. Participants valued the community's cooperative spirit and ability to collaborate at the grassroots level to achieve common goals. For some, the agricultural and ranching traditions and way-of-life, characterized by an appreciation for and commitment to the land, define the community. Some people appreciated the “small town environment” and social networks present in the community. For others, the peace, serenity, and privacy of life in the MD was a priority.

Throughout the sessions, access to high quality healthcare and education and the prevalence of community facilities (e.g., library, Ag Centre) and recreational infrastructure (e.g., swimming pool, sports fields) emerged as valued aspects of the MD. In this regard, some participants acknowledged the MD's interdependence with the Town of Pincher Creek. A few noted that the lifestyle opportunities and quality of life afforded by the MD draws topnotch professionals to the area. In some sessions, participants indicated that the community prizes the abundance of community activities, as well as the range of accessible outdoor recreational opportunities. In other sessions, the vibrant and multi-dimensional arts community emerged as a valued component of the social fabric.

Within the discussion regarding social values, participants across all sessions identified the qualities of the people living in MD of Pincher Creek as a community asset. Examples of words used to describe residents include: honest, trustworthy (“deals are made on a handshake”), accountable, creative, innovative, self-sufficient, hard working, and entrepreneurial.

In many sessions, the diverse population in the MD was cited as an important and valuable feature of the community; people referenced the variety of age groups and backgrounds, the array of professions, and the range in tenure. In this context, participants generally suggested that the community respects, accepts, and welcomes different types of people and different opinions. That said, the occasional conflicts between long-term, rural residents and new and/or part-time residents were acknowledged in a couple of groups. While some suggested that conflict arises because new residents do not make an effort to integrate into the community and do not understand the expectations and obligations associated with living in a rural community, a few maintained that established residents are resistant to change and do not reach out to newcomers. Members of another group claimed that because opportunities to socialize and social organizations in the community are largely geared toward senior citizens, there is an inter-generational disconnect between the younger and senior demographic groups.

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<sup>5</sup> Infrastructure has not been included as an independent values category in this report. Instead, the content of the discussions regarding infrastructure values has been integrated into the overall small group sessions summary.

### ***Environmental Values***

Without question, session participants placed high value on the natural environment, and environmental preservation was identified as a priority throughout the sessions. Participants spoke about the importance of: maintaining healthy and fully functioning ecosystems; conserving ecological diversity; sustaining wildlife habitat; saving native fescues and grasslands; maintaining the productivity and viability of the land; and protecting water resources. Some suggested that the social and economic well-being of the community hinges on a strong and sustainable natural environment.

While some participants acknowledged the environmental conservation strides made in the MD, largely due to the work of grassroots individuals and organizations, there was general agreement across the sessions that more needs to be done to protect the environment. In a few cases, participants advocated for the implementation of the Castle Special Places designation. Others said that to compensate for the lack of environmental conservation efforts at the provincial and municipal level, rural landowners have increasingly assumed an environmental stewardship role, particularly as it relates to weed management. In a couple of sessions, participants expressed dissatisfaction because land-use and environmental management decisions are being made at the provincial level and, although the community has been consulted, decisions often do not reflect the preferences and environmental values of the community. In this regard, some called for meaningful community-based consultation on issues or decisions affecting the environment, and for greater local control over decisions on the land base. Participants in a few sessions talked about the importance of basing environmental management decisions on sound, evidence-based science. These individuals indicated that several solid environmental studies have been conducted in the region; however, the information has never been consolidated.

The abundance and diversity of recreational opportunities afforded by the natural environment was generally regarded as an attractive aspect of the region worth preserving. While recreational access was clearly valued, some participants raised concern because unrestricted recreational use on public land is damaging the environment. In this vein, a few advocated for stricter regulations and more enforcement of recreational activities on public lands, and in one session, there was some support for designating “sacrifice” areas for environmentally destructive activities.

Participants across all sessions largely agreed that minimizing future fragmentation of the land base should be a priority in the MD. Some were supportive because of the negative environmental impacts associated with land fragmentation, such as loss of native grasslands and habitat destruction. Others wanted to maintain prime agricultural land, noting that once the land is taken out of agricultural use it cannot be restored. A variety of suggestions for minimizing landscape disruptions were identified, including: limiting industrial and commercial encroachment; designating areas suitable for subdivision; restricting the number of acres eligible for subdivision; encouraging nodal development over acreage development; and urging new residents to settle in existing hamlets and villages. Within the conversations around land fragmentation and subdivision, the topic of landowner rights surfaced and it was suggested that limiting the number of acres eligible for subdivision may be unpopular among landowners who require the revenue from subdividing to survive.

In the majority of sessions, preserving the MD’s natural beauty and viewscapes emerged as a shared community value. However, because industrial development, particularly wind energy development, is largely the cause of obstructed viewscapes in the MD, these discussions often gave rise to conversations about the conflicts and tradeoffs between unobstructed viewscapes and development. In a couple of



sessions, participants lamented the disruption to the natural environment and environmental impacts from industrial development, but acknowledged and appreciated the economic benefits brought to the MD by industry. A few participants contended that wind energy development has provided much needed supplementary income to agricultural producers and, although unobstructed views are important to the larger community, some landowners want to reserve the right to develop their property as they choose. In this vein, one group talked about how to compensate landowners who forfeit revenue from industrial development and choose to protect views.

Within the discussions around views, some claimed that on one hand the community recognizes the potential of wind energy development and generally supports the industry because it promotes green energy, but on the other hand, people are displeased when views are hindered by wind energy infrastructure. Others suggested that because green energy is a community value, people are prepared to tolerate wind turbines and transmission lines on the landscape. To protect views in the MD, some participants favoured banning the development of wind energy infrastructure from key locations such as mountain views and ridge tops, but supported wind energy development in locations where the impact on the views would be less significant, such as “to the east” or on valley bottoms. Others argued that forbidding wind infrastructure development in select locations to protect views and sacrificing other areas smacks of “NIMBYism”. Finally, a few pointed out that both the community and political leaders have been resistant to enact regulations to protect views.

In a handful of sessions, participants expressed concern because, in their opinion, economic development has trumped environmental conservation in the MD. In this regard, participants expressed a desire to “strike a balance”, and advocated for sensible and environmentally sustainable development.

### ***Economic Values***

During discussions regarding economic values, developing and maintaining a sustainable economy surfaced as the key priority in all sessions. While the significant amount of economic potential in the MD was acknowledged, there was recognition that the community is not producing as much wealth as in the past and that ways to generate prosperity and to increase economic productivity and profitability must be created. Throughout the sessions, participants readily talked about the importance of having access to high quality, local employment opportunities to provide community members with sustainable livelihoods. Many contended the lack of economic opportunities in the MD has resulted in the export of talent, opportunities, and youth.

Some session participants said that sustaining agricultural livelihoods and maintaining the agricultural way-of-life are fundamental community values. These individuals indicated that high input costs have made it increasingly difficult for agricultural producers to make a living off of the land and, as a result, many agricultural operations, particularly small operations, are threatened. Further, because it is too expensive for the next generation to start or maintain farms and ranches, both the agricultural way-of-life and the family farm are being lost. Within the discussions regarding sustainable agriculture, some participants maintained that the right for landowners to control development and activities on private land is a community value worth preserving. In this regard, a few suggested that recent provincial land-use regulations have eroded landowner rights and have prevented landowners from subdividing or diversifying to supplement agricultural incomes.

There was general agreement that economic diversification through entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation is required to generate long-term economic sustainability, and to realize the opportunities

afforded by the abundance of natural and social capital in the MD. Some participants cautioned against diversification at any cost and advocated for appropriate, low-impact economic development that capitalizes on the unique aspects of the community and supports the community's social and environmental values. In a few cases, participants wondered who would decide what constitutes appropriate economic development.

Although session participants largely backed wind energy as a means of economic development in the MD, some people expressed misgivings. For example, participants in one session raised concern because electrical transmission infrastructure does not adequately support existing turbines; these individuals called for a suspension in wind energy development until additional transmission infrastructure is built. Others noted that, while the wind energy industry has provided supplemental income to some agricultural producers, the industry has increased prosperity for a relatively few number of MD residents.

In many sessions, participants talked about the importance of having up-to-date community infrastructure to support economic development. In this regard, most people agreed that the community needs access to reliable and affordable high-speed Internet to be economically competitive, to capitalize on the digital economy, and to support innovation.

A handful of participants talked about the importance of economic self-sufficiency. Some articulated this as “being your own boss” and having the ability to make your own decisions. Others saw it as having local access to all necessary goods and services.

While there was some consensus that long-term vision and leadership are required to achieve the community's economic development goals, there was a range of opinions about where the leadership should come from. Some maintained that youth or the younger demographic should assume a leadership role in the community. Others countered this assertion, claiming that the older population does not support the younger generation as community leaders and that the younger demographic lacks the time to devote to community leadership because they are busy earning livings and raising families. A minority voice supported hiring an individual with vision from outside the community to research and spearhead opportunities for innovative economic development. Still others believed that leadership should come from people, groups, and organizations within the community; as one group stated, the community needs to “step up to the plate” and take ownership and responsibility.

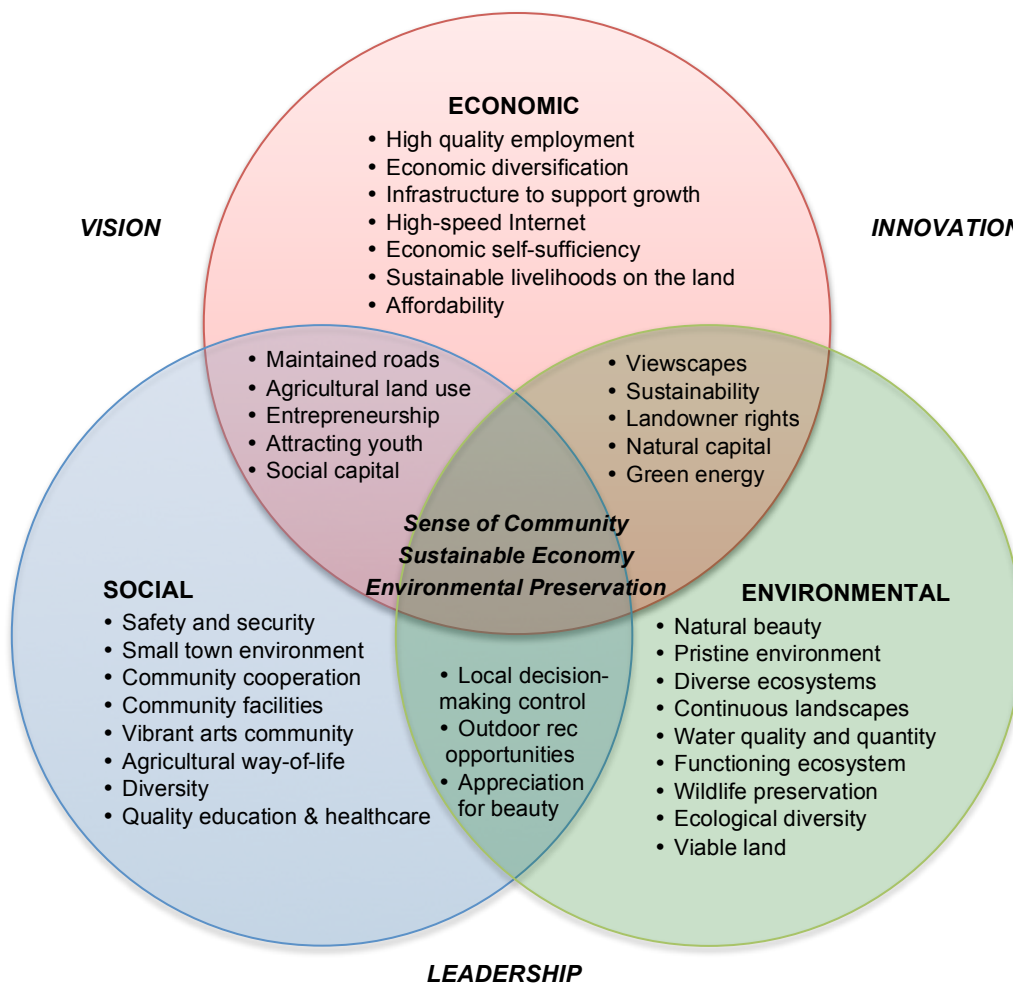
### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

In each of the small group sessions, participants were asked what the expectations are for the MD in terms of preserving and/or developing the priority values identified. Participants readily provided a range of directives for the MD, which have been included in the individual session summaries in this report. That being said, it is worth noting that in all sessions, participants consistently called upon the MD to “act as the community's voice” and proactively represent the interests of the community—particularly regarding land and environmental management—even if matters are outside of municipal jurisdiction.

## Values Inventory Diagram

In this section, the social, economic, and environmental values identified during the values inventory in the small group sessions have been plotted on a Venn diagram. Values that align with an individual values category remain in the circle for that values category (i.e., social, economic, environmental), and values that straddle two values categories are positioned where the original circles overlap. The overarching values that consistently echoed throughout all of the sessions are situated at the centre or hub of the diagram. Finally, because in the majority of sessions participants indicated that vision, innovation and leadership will be required to actualize the community's values, these words surround the diagram.

This diagram is not meant to be a definitive representation of the content of the small group sessions, nor does it intend to conclusively indicate how the community values identified should be grouped or categorized. It is recognized that this diagram reflects a single, subjective evaluation of the feedback from the sessions, and that different people would likely interpret the input differently, which would yield different diagrams. That said, this diagram aims to generate further discussion and to encourage the reader to consider the complex and interrelated nature of community values in the MD of Pincher Creek.



## *FOLLOW-UP SESSION SUMMARY*

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## FOLLOW-UP SESSION SUMMARY

On 20 September 2011, 16 individuals who had participated in the first round of small group sessions for the CVA process reconvened. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the types of development considered appropriate given the values that emerged from the study, and to talk about the next steps in the Community Values Assessment process. Following is a summary overview of the meeting proceedings.

At the outset of the meeting, SASCI provided an historical summary of other processes from which the CVA arose. It was noted that understanding the history, and in particular the “Best Practices Scenario” of Phase 3 of the Southern Foothills Study, provides a necessary context for the CVA process. Also noted was that in many previous sustainability studies, assessments, and community round-table events, the concept of “greater community” was always foremost (greater community being the MD and Town of Pincher Creek, Piikani First Nation, and other municipal neighbours). Further it was indicated that assessment processes over the years have always pointed to an awareness that no one functions effectively in isolation.

### ***What type of development is appropriate?***

When asked what type of development is appropriate for the MD of Pincher Creek, there was some agreement that it is a difficult question to respond to, because people in the MD are sometimes conflicted and there are often different sides to issues in the MD. A few believed MD residents want economic development, but they do not want it at the expense of the environment and they want development to be controlled. Another few suggested people in the MD want everything without tradeoffs; as one person said, “they want to have cake and to eat it, but they do not want the cake to leave any crumbs behind.” While the value of a healthy diversified economy was recognized, some wondered how decisions regarding appropriate economic development would be made, and by whom.

Some said that future development should focus on a knowledge-based economy, characterized by low-impact, small or single person businesses, and virtual offices. One participant suggested the correct balance going into the future would successfully marry farming and ranching with technology. That said, participants acknowledged the MD currently does not have sufficient infrastructure, such as high-speed internet or transportation links, to attract and support a knowledge-based economy. A few believed the MD should be actively marketing the community to attract the knowledge-based economy. It was pointed out that a healthy economy does not mean “no economic development”.

A few suggested that, to reduce land fragmentation and environmental impacts, future development should occur in the Town of Pincher Creek or in established hamlets, rather than in the MD. Further, any development that causes erosion of ecosystems is undesirable.

Some session participants noted many of the values expressed in the CVA, such as health care and education, are Town-based. A few said that some levels of development decisions affect both the Town and the MD. As such, session participants generally agreed that the Town and the MD must be integrated and mutually supportive. However, a few underlined that this does not suggest that the Town and the MD should be amalgamated. Another few advocated for regional economic development that integrates all the neighbouring MDs.

It was noted some items listed in the “opposed to” chart are not in the MD’s jurisdiction, but that the implication of inclusion sends a message that ratepayers expect the MD Council to be “a strong voice on our behalf”.

It was suggested that perhaps a couple of workshops could be offered in which various jurisdictional roles and responsibilities would be explained to ratepayers (Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, MD, Town, neighbouring jurisdictions).

Finally, while there was some consensus that the working relationship between the Government of Alberta (GoA) and the MD needs to be improved, a few talked about the challenges the MD faces because of too much government bureaucracy and the lack of integration among GoA departments.

### ***What type of development is inappropriate?***

A few said that industrial or residential fringe development around the Town of Pincher Creek is undesirable, even if it does bring money to MD coffers. Participants reiterated that future development should be centred in the Town or in existing hamlets and that a development-free buffer zone should be established around the Town.

Another few noted that many of the values articulated in the CVA hinge on the preservation of a functioning ecosystem; therefore, development that does not encroach on the MD’s pristine environment is most appropriate. While there was some agreement with this statement, a couple of individuals asked how, and by whom, the definition of criteria for environmentally appropriate development would be created.

### ***Where do we go from here?***

In the final portion of the session, participants were asked what the next steps in the values assessment process should be. The majority of recommendations were directed toward the MD, including:

- send the MD of Pincher Creek Community Values Assessment report to all GoA initiatives impacting the MD;
- post the CVA on the Town and MD websites, and circulate the document to local schools, service and community organizations, as well as the MLA and MP for Pincher Creek;
- identify how the CVA compares to and could be integrated into other studies conducted in the MD (e.g., Southern Foothills Study, and the Chief Mountain Study);
- ensure that the Municipal Development Plan and other land-use documents for the MD reflect the findings of the CVA;
- use the findings of the CVA as the foundation for new philosophies and guiding principles, which will inform all future policies, regulations, and by-laws in the MD;
- use the findings of the CVA to proactively represent the interests and preferences of MD ratepayers on all matters affecting the MD, even if they are outside municipal jurisdiction;
- ensure that the CVA remains a “living document” and that it is updated regularly (assign timelines for re-evaluation);
- conduct a CVA every five years to ensure that the changes in the community are understood and considered in decision-making;
- conduct additional research to delve deeper into findings from the CVA that are ambiguous, subjective, or could be interpreted in a number of ways;

- support the development of an umbrella organization that integrates all organizations currently active in the community, using the Blackfoot Challenge (Montana) and the Waterton Biosphere Reserve Group as examples;
- invite the public to the presentation of the final CVA report; and
- assign administrative responsibility for maintaining visibility of the assessment (use social media to distribute the CVA to libraries, schools, regulatory agencies, NGOs, etc.).

A few suggestions were for the MD ratepayers:

- ask the MD to respond to the CVA publicly;
- make certain that the MD reviews and considers the finding from the CVA (i.e., “hold their feet to the fire”); and
- be aware of MD Council’s activities.

## *APPENDICES*

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## APPENDIX A

### Individual Session Summaries

The following individual small group session summaries encapsulate the discussions from each of the five small group sessions. Each of the five session summaries begins with a cover page with a “word cloud” illustrating the text from the values inventory summary for that session. Word clouds are a stylized way of visually representing occurrences of words where words that appear more frequently in the source text are highlighted in bigger and bolder font.

The session summaries are divided into two main sections:

- The *Values Inventory* presents the community values identified at the beginning of each session by values category (social, economic, environmental, infrastructure) in order of priority as identified by the dotmocracy process; and
- The *Priority Values Discussion Summary* is a point-form overview of the conversations regarding the top priority community values identified during the dotmocracy exercise. The summaries are organized by the key themes emerging from the discussions.

It is important to note that the information contained in the session summaries represent a diversity of opinions, but not necessarily a consensus.





## I/ Values Inventory

### ***Social Values***

- Sense of community
  - Small town environment
  - Know your neighbours; close community
  - Accountable to the community and your neighbours
  - Agriculturally based community
  - Maintain community traditions; community knows and embraces its history
  - Regular celebrations
- Quality primary healthcare
  - Lifestyle opportunities attract committed healthcare professionals to the community
- Creativity
  - Translates into employment opportunity
  - Economically creative; entrepreneurship; innovative; ingenuity
- Quality education
  - Small schools; decentralized school system
- Access to outdoor recreational opportunities
- Privacy
  - Serenity, peace and quiet
- Diverse population
  - Balance between multi-generational, long-term residents and newcomers
  - New residents are welcomed
- Strong arts community

### ***Environmental Values***

- Natural beauty and viewscapes
- Clean water
- Local control over decisions on the land base
- Continuous landscapes
- Environmental sustainability
  - Intact environment
- Land use is primarily agriculture
- Maintaining open spaces
- Limited industrial and commercial encroachment
- Environmental diversity
  - Diverse ecosystems, biodiversity, wildlife, flora and fauna
- Resource rich

### ***Economic Values***

- Sustainable livelihoods
  - Sustainable means of making a living
  - Wealth creation
  - Generating productivity and profitability within the community to increase social and economic wealth
  - Affordable cost of living
- Developing natural and social capital
- Support for local businesses
  - Maintaining a viable economy to sustain local businesses
- Priority on agriculture over subdivisions and residential development
- Economic self-sufficiency
  - All goods and services are available locally
- Sustainable development
  - Striking a balance between environmental preservation and economic development
- Support for green energy

### ***Infrastructure Values***

- Abundance of community facilities (library, pool, sports fields, Ag complex)
- Access to high-speed, affordable internet (broadband)
- Well-maintained roads
  - Not necessarily paved roads because it increases the number of people accessing areas, which impacts both the environment and quality of life
- Well-serviced hamlets

## **II/ Priority Values Discussion Summary**

### **Value 1 - Sustainable Livelihoods**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- There is a significant amount of economic potential in the MD because of the amount of new development.
- Current situation is unsatisfactory because the community is losing people and opportunities.
- It is increasingly difficult for agricultural producers to make a living; family farms are being lost.
- The MD is not retaining or attracting a young demographic because of the lack of social and economic opportunities in the MD.
- The community cannot compete with higher paying jobs outside the area.
- Wind energy has increased prosperity for a limited number of residents; although wind energy development has sustained some agricultural producers in the MD. Regardless of the scale of the wind energy sector's tax contribution, wind energy is seen as an overall net loss.

## ***Discussion Summary***

### *Wealth Creation Through Entrepreneurship and Innovation*

- The community needs to be actively looking for ways to create opportunities to translate natural and social capital into economic capital (e.g., wind).
- Entrepreneurs and innovation will be required to realize the opportunities afforded by the abundance of natural and social capital in the MD.
- Individuals need to create non-traditional employment opportunities.
- The community is not creating as much wealth as in the past and is forced to rely on lower yield industry, and needs to find ways to create wealth and to increase economic productivity and profitability.
- The community needs to produce products and services that will bring economic sustainability to the community; need to be more profitable for the community, not just for the individual.
- To sustain the economy, the community must replace what is being lost; if not windmills, what?
- Economic diversification through innovation is necessary.
- The region needs to be economically competitive.

### *Vision, Leadership and Accountability*

- There is a lack of vision and strategic leadership in the community.
- The community lacks the long-range vision necessary to inform the current approach; the community needs to identify what it wants to create as a community.
- Should the vision and strategies have a three or 50 year time horizon; targets in time can be intimidating.
- Leadership should come from the entire community, the community should “step up to the plate” and take ownership and responsibility.
- The broad community needs to be more knowledgeable about, and accountable for, issues confronting the community.
- Affluence has created a “pass the buck” culture where everyone believes that it is someone else’s responsibility; there needs to be a shift back to a culture of individual responsibility.
- Leadership should come from younger generation, particularly because many long-term community members are burnt out.
- Long-term residents and the older population do not support the younger generation as community leaders.
- The younger generation lack the time to be community leaders because they are earning livings and raising families
- Youth need to be mentored.
- Baseline information regarding the current conditions is required.

### *Integration and Collaboration*

- The range of interest-based groups and organizations (e.g., forestry, watershed groups) in the region typically work in isolation; there is a lack of community-wide integration and collaboration.
- The Chamber of Commerce is taking a leadership role to encourage collaboration regarding community issues.
- The Chamber will be conducting a community forum targeting business community, but recognize the scope needs to be broader.
- The culture of stewardship within the community could be used as the catalyst for collaboration.

- The Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association works with local people to integrate conservation values with traditional livelihoods and provides an organizational model for the community.

#### *Social and Networking Opportunities*

- Increase social opportunities within the community to allow community members to interact.
- Pincher Creek does not act as the social and networking hub for the region.
- Social enterprises in the community are largely for seniors.
- There is an inter-generational disconnect between younger and senior demographics.

#### *Affordability*

- Increasing economic development and the increase in transient residents are driving-up the cost of living, making the community less affordable for long-term residents – potential to divide the community.

#### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- Engage the community, particularly youth; encourage leadership from community members.
- Help to close the gap between the youth and senior demographics.
- Address community issues proactively.
- Improve communication with the community; provide direct information regarding MD activities and community issues.
- Gather and consolidate baseline information about current conditions in the community from a variety of sources (e.g., provincial government, universities, other organizations).

### **Value 2 – Natural Beauty and Viewscapes**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- There is conflict for individuals who support green energy because other energy sources (e.g., natural gas) are required to back-up the significant number of wind turbines in the MD.
- Increased development contributes to the local economy, but requires the development of roads and infrastructure, which damage the natural environment.
- The community is on the cusp of development, it is the time to develop plans to ensure environmental sustainability.
- The community recognizes the potential of and generally supports wind energy development, but do not like the damage to viewscapes.

#### ***Discussion Summary***

##### *Preserving Viewscapes*

- Wind energy development has a place in the MD, but it needs to be managed by both the community and the MD; people and the MD “need to get a handle on it”.
- Wind energy infrastructure (e.g., turbines, transmission lines) should be located on valley bottoms, not on viewscapes, ridge tops, or native prairie.
- There is a lack of political will to put regulations and zoning in place to protect viewscapes.

- How should landowners be compensated for maintaining views? Is compensation for environmental goods and services appropriate?

#### *Values, Individual Rights, Conflicts, and Tradeoffs*

- There are conflicts between personal needs and values and the greater good; someone has to pay for values and there are always tradeoffs.
- Prioritizing community values will help to establish future direction.
- If sustainability is the first priority, it constrains values; balance and compromise become necessary.
- Some “bottom-line” values are non-negotiable.
- Some types of development are preferable to others because they support community values; people are willing to deal with windmills because it is supporting green energy, which is a community value.
- There are conflicts inherent between individual rights and maintaining open spaces.
- A vocal minority within the community wants to maintain the right to develop their property as they choose.
- Windmills prevent further residential development.
- Trade-offs between windmills and subdivisions. Subdivision provides revenue for farmers, but decreases the agricultural land base. Windmills provide revenue and allow the farmer to maintain an agricultural way-of-life.

#### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- Not discussed.

Session II – Summary Overview

21 June 2011 – 7:00 p.m.





## I/ Values Inventory

### ***Social Values***

- Multi-generational family traditions
- Access to quality education
- Access to outdoor recreational opportunities
- Abundance of community-based activities
- Strong volunteer spirit
- Community cooperation
  - Grassroots involvement
  - People working together on community projects

### ***Environmental Values***

- Environmental preservation
  - Keeping the environment healthy and strong
  - Fully functioning eco-systems
- Sustainable land
  - Maintaining the productivity and viability of land
- Preserving native fescues and grasslands

### ***Economic Values***

- Sustainable livelihoods on the land
  - Ability to make a living from development or activities on private land
- Preservation of agricultural land
  - Maintain prime agricultural land
  - Minimize land fragmentation
  - Support and preserve family farms
- Preservation of landowner rights
  - Ability to make decisions about and to maintain control over private land
- Wind energy development

### ***Infrastructure Values***

- Well-maintained roads
  - Particularly for schools

## **II/ Priority Values Discussion Summary**

### **Value 1 - Sustainable Livelihoods on the Land**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- Landowner rights are being eroded and the increasing (and at some times prohibitive) rules and regulations regarding subdivision and development on private land are making it difficult for landowners to sustain a living from the land.
- Because it is increasingly difficult for agricultural producers to make a living; family farms are being lost and agricultural land is becoming fragmented.

#### ***Discussion Summary***

##### *Preservation of Agricultural Land and Land Diversification*

- MD requirements to change titles or subdivide private land are excessive.
- If a landowner wishes to pass their farm down to their children so the farmland continues to be viable, the landowner is forced to conduct studies, meet regulations and pay fees that are time and cost prohibitive.
- Landowners want to maintain prime agricultural land and reduce land fragmentation; once land is taken out of agricultural use it cannot be returned.
- There is a conflict between wanting to use private land in a variety of ways to generate income (e.g., campground, outfitting operation) and preserving agricultural land.
- Landowners should have the opportunity to diversify activities on their land to supplement agriculture incomes.

##### *Planning and Development Process*

- Because there is only one provincial planner for three MDs, and the planner is located in Lethbridge, local knowledge does not inform land-use decisions and decisions are typically “by-the-book”.
- The MD lacks local land-use decision-making authority; the MD is required to align with the larger provincial land-use framework.
- Landowners need be made aware of the rules and regulations about land use and to be provided with information about what options are available regarding development or subdivision on private land.
- Current land-use rules and regulations lack the flexibility to consider and respond to individual circumstances.

##### *Wind Energy Development*

- Favour wind energy development in principle, but have concerns because there is insufficient transmission infrastructure to support existing turbines; some windmills are not hooked into the grid.
- Windmill development should be suspended until sufficient infrastructure development is constructed.
- The major landowners in the MD are receiving the bulk of the benefit from wind energy development; however, farmers that truly need the windmill revenue have a difficult time getting windmills on their land, particularly if they live to the east.
- There needs to be some assurance that windmills will be decommissioned properly.

### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- Land-use planning function needs to be decentralized; each MD should have a land-use planner on staff to ensure local knowledge is integrated into decisions.
- MD should be more flexible regarding land-use regulations.
- MD should evaluate land-use proposals on a case-by-case basis and have the ability to use discretion when making decisions.
- MD needs to ensure there is sufficient electrical transmission infrastructure prior to approving additional wind energy development.

## **Value 2 – Environmental Preservation**

### ***Current Conditions***

- The economic value of land has trumped environmental values.
- Keeping the environment healthy and strong should be a fundamental priority.
- If land is good and well-maintained the social, economic, and environmental aspects of the MD will thrive.

### ***Discussion Summary***

#### ***Environmental Regulations***

- The provincial standards for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for industrial development have been lessened and ranchers and farmers have taken on the role of environmental stewards to compensate for a lax regulatory system.
- Landowners are not able to mitigate environmental issues on their land without approvals from various government jurisdictions.

#### ***Recreational Land Use***

- The MD has not adequately maintained recreational facilities, such as the campground.
- The MD is not interested in caring for idle land over the long-term, and it only does the minimum necessary to meet provincial requirements.
- Unrestricted recreational land use is damaging the environment.
- There is a lack of regulations regarding recreational use in the MD; “sacrifice areas” need to be established and enforced for environmentally destructive activities.
- The impact activities on public land have on private land is not recognized; the interconnectedness of land in the MD needs to be better understood.

#### ***Weed Management***

- Inadequate weed management in the MD is damaging the natural environment, particularly native fescues and grasslands.
- The MD is not putting enough money into educating new residents about minimizing the infestation of invasive species through weed management.

### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- The MD needs to work with the province to improve EIA standards; it needs to “stand up” to the province and advocate for protection of land in the MD.
- The MD could collaborate with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) to ensure that environmental regulations in the MD are sufficient and are being enforced.
- The MD could educate “new” landowners regarding land management practices.
- An additional MD division needs to be established to better manage MD issues and to spread out the workload; the increased population in the MD has increased demands on MD councilors.

Session III – Summary Overview

22 June 2011 – 10:00 a.m.



## I/ Values Inventory

### ***Social Values***

- Sense of community
  - Community works together, cooperates, connects
  - Community support, look out for one another
  - Multi-generational residents
  - Strong community and family traditions
- Diversity
  - Community is not uniform
  - Diversity of opinions are respected and accepted
  - Views are different by region within the MD
- Ranching way-of-life
- Honesty
  - People can be trusted; deals made with a handshake

### ***Environmental Values***

- Environmental preservation
  - Protecting all aspects of the ecosystem including wildlife, water, flora and fauna
  - Pristine wilderness
  - Maintaining fully functioning ecosystems, bio-diversity
- Balance between ecological protection and development
  - Change in a manner that allows the ecosystem to function
  - Sensible development, finding the middle ground
- Minimizing land fragmentation

### ***Economic Values***

- Sustainable livelihoods
  - Access to high quality employment opportunities
  - Employment that reduces the export of talent and youth
- Innovation and entrepreneurship
  - To develop environmentally and socially compatible industry and businesses
  - To capitalize on the area's environmental and social attributes
  - Economic diversification through innovation
- Community infrastructure to support economic growth
  - Access to affordable high-speed internet (broadband)
  - Infrastructure to support the jobs young people have been trained for

### ***Infrastructure Values***

- Well-maintained roads
- Abundance of community facilities (library, swimming pool, sports fields)
- Access to quality primary healthcare and seniors support
- Public transportation opportunities

## **II/ Priority Values Discussion Summary**

### **Value 1 – Environmental Preservation**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- The spectacular natural environment is often the primary reason for living in the community.
- More effort needs to be made to protect the natural environment; there is considerable room for improvement.

#### ***Discussion Summary***

##### ***Grassroots Environmental Efforts***

- Significant environmental conservation strides have been made in the MD, largely due to grassroots environmental organizations and individual activism.
- There has been a lack of support from government and industry for community-based conservation activities.
- Community members have given a significant amount of volunteer time to grassroots environmental initiatives and many individuals are experiencing “volunteer fatigue” and are burning out.
- Although volunteers have devoted a significant amount of time and energy, decisions regarding the environment are made from outside the region.
- The community has been consulted often regarding environmental issues, but they are still not being listened to; consultation goes nowhere.
- The MD is reluctant to fight against community issues that are outside of its jurisdiction.

##### ***Land Use and Land Fragmentation***

- Land fragmentation should be minimized by designating areas suitable for subdivision and by limiting the number of acres a landowner can subdivide.
- Limiting the number of acres eligible for subdivision may be unpopular with landowners who need the revenue from subdivisions to survive; landowner rights must be considered.
- The land must be protected to let ecosystems function fully.
- Small subdivisions overwork the land and do not respect the ecosystem.
- Need to recognize that changes on the landscape are inevitable, change must occur in a manner that allows the ecosystem to function.
- The MD should not be looked at as a whole, there are variances throughout the community; there should not be a “one size fits all” policy regarding land use.
- The guidelines for allowable activities on public and private land and land uses are not consistent and are often in conflict.

### *Industry and the Environment*

- Because it is less expensive for industry to pay the interest on leases than it is to reclaim abandoned wells, reclamation will not occur unless it becomes an ERCB regulatory requirement.
- The oil and gas industry's (Shell's) use of local water needs to be monitored more closely.
- Using water resources for fracking is not the best use for water; industry should be recycling water and there should be an increased cost to industry for the use of local water.

### *Perspectives on the MD's Role*

- The MD should advocate on behalf of the community on issues that are outside of its jurisdiction; the MD could have more influence with other levels of government if they were prepared to make a stand and raise a fuss.
- MD needs to restrict development on flood plains.
- The MD should establish and enforce regulations to reduce land fragmentation.

## **Value 2 – Infrastructure and Innovation**

### *Current Conditions*

- There is limited access to high quality jobs in the community, which, in some cases, has resulted in the export of talent and youth.
- The community needs good jobs and steady money locally.
- Although there may not be the “next generation” of local kids remaining in the community because they have chosen to leave home, the economic climate in the community needs to be attractive enough to attract a younger demographic.
- The community is losing the ranching way-of-life because it is too expensive for youth to start or maintain a ranching operation.

### *Discussion Summary*

#### *Opportunity Through Innovation*

- The community is well suited for the development of a Research Station for Alternative Energy, which would provide direct and indirect employment as well as learning opportunities; potential to partner with post-secondary academic institutions.
- Low-impact businesses, such as executive retreats and spas, offer opportunities for economic diversification.
- Youth (younger demographic) should be the new community leaders and should be driving innovation; however, many do not have time because they are raising families and earning livings.
- Need to find a way to support and engage youth.

#### *Infrastructure Development*

- The MD's infrastructure does not support the jobs that the youth are trained for (computer, Internet).
- The potential for economic development within the community may be reduced if community infrastructure does not keep pace.



- An MD tax could be added as an additional income tax to help finance infrastructure development in the MD; property taxes alone are not sufficient.
- Property taxes are only a small portion of MD revenue, the MD receives a significant amount of industrial tax money; the MD is not fully disclosing its financial reserves.
- The community needs accessible, reliable, low cost Internet access to be economically competitive, to capitalize on the digital economy, and to support innovation.
- There is currently fiber optic to Waterton and the Shell plant.
- Private companies could tap into existing fiber optic to provide services to the community or a system of public utility ownership could be developed.
- Industry should be pressured to help provide high-speed Internet access to the community.

#### *Leadership*

- Infrastructure and economic development initiatives in the community need the support of all levels of government.
- The provincial government often lacks the long-term commitment necessary to actualize infrastructure and innovation.
- An individual with vision and commitment from outside the community needs to be hired to research and spearhead opportunities for innovative economic development.
- Leadership should come from within the community; look within the community for people with passion and leadership and support them.

#### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- MD needs to invest money into championing innovative initiatives.
- MD could provide funding to hire an individual to identify and champion opportunities for innovation.
- MD could lobby the provincial government to make a long-term commitment to economic and infrastructure development.
- The MD could provide private businesses with incentives to expand Internet access in the community.
- The MD could pressure local industry to assist with broadband development.

### **Value 3 – Sense of Community / Community Experience**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- There is a strong sense of community in the region; many people are drawn to the “small-town” environment and social connections present in the area.
- The community is diverse, and although there are a variety of opinions, the community typically works together and supports one another.
- There are occasionally conflicts between long-term, rural residents and new residents or “urban refugees”.
- Effective communication and dispute resolution between the various types of residents (e.g., “urban refugees”, ranchers, acreage owners) and stakeholders (MD councilors, ratepayers) is lacking.

- Individuals in the MD are reluctant to share personal information, such as amount of compensation for industrial operations on private land, which has at times generated conflict and mistrust.

### ***Discussion Summary***

#### ***Integrating New and Part-time Residents into the Community***

- There is sometimes conflict between established and new residents in the MD because new residents do not understand the expectations and obligations associated with living in a rural community (e.g., land management, fencing, weed control).
- New rural residents do not understand the impact activities or development on their land have on their neighbours.
- New residents typically do not make an attempt to reach out to the community.
- Part-time residents typically lack the time to volunteer and have not become integrated into the fabric of the community.
- Established residents do not make an effort to get to know new people and offer resistance when new landowners make changes; “it is a two way street”.
- An orientation package should be developed to provide new residents with information about the responsibilities of rural land ownership.
- Real estate agents should be required to provide prospective new owners with information about living in the MD as well as suggestions for integrating into the community.

#### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- The MD should make it mandatory for real estate agents to brief new residents regarding rural life and land ownership.
- The MD could oversee the development of an orientation package for new residents; expand on the existing Guide for Community Living.

Session IV – Summary Overview  
22 June – 2:00 p.m.



## I/ Values Inventory

### ***Social Values***

- Diversity and abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities
- Safety
  - Safe place to raise your children
- Privacy
- Sense of community
  - Cooperation, support, collaboration
  - Small town living; neighbours know one another
- Vibrant arts community
  - Visual artists, dancers, writers
  - Supported by the community
- Shared appreciation for natural beauty
- Diverse community
  - Acceptance of the range and diversity of people
- Political awareness
  - Disturbances on the landscape have generated grassroots community activism
- Trust and honesty

### ***Environmental Values***

- Uninterrupted Viewscapes
  - Unobstructed views of the mountains and the broader landscape
- Protecting water resources
- Preservation of wildlife habitat
  - Protecting wildlife diversity
  - Peacefully co-existing with wildlife
- Trail access and diversity
  - Lack of developed hiking trails
- Ecological diversity
  - Diversity of wildlife, birdlife, flora, fauna, geology, landscapes
  - Several ecosystems within the MD

### ***Economic Values***

- Tourism development
  - Controlled development
  - Development of environmentally and socially compatible tourism
  - Community members have a say in how tourism is developed in the MD
- Economic diversification
  - Range of sustainable economic and employment opportunities
  - Balance between economic development and environmental preservation

- Local access to good and services
  - Like access, but don't want growth

**Infrastructure Values**

- Access to high-speed internet
  - Need high-tech infrastructure to allow people to live in the community and work from home
  - Develop the digital economy to alleviate the need for industrial development

<b>II/ Priority Values Discussion Summary</b>
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**Value 1 – Environmental Preservation**

**Current Conditions**

- Economic development currently trumps preservation of the natural environment.
- There are a range of perspectives in the community regarding human and wildlife interactions.
- The GoA's land use policies and environmental management practices often do not represent the preferences and values of the community.
- The MD's level of decision-making authority regarding land use and environmental management in the area is inadequate.

**Discussion Summary**

*Human/Wildlife Interaction*

- There are a variety of opinions and values within the community regarding human/wildlife interactions. For example, some individuals see coyotes as pests and shoot them, while others feel they should be a protected part of the ecosystem.
- The culling of wolves is a particularly contentious issue; compensation to farmers for cattle kills is a potential approach to addressing the issue.
- The Land Use Framework (LUF) includes regulations to protect wolf populations.
- Land-use management, including designations, regulations, and enforcement, is an effective means of reducing human/wildlife conflicts.
- Residents and the government are better informed about large carnivores and omnivores in the community, but more education is required.
- Wildlife management decisions should be based on sound science.
- There is currently a lack of consistent and reliable baseline data inventory of wildlife and wildlife habitats.

*Land-use and Environmental Management*

- LUF legislation is trying to reduce the MD's role and jurisdiction regarding land-use and environmental management.
- Land-use planning should respond to what the community and landowners want.
- The GoA does not take the community's environmental values into consideration when making decisions.
- The community wants to be consulted about issues and decisions that affect the environment.

- Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties is an independent association that lobbies on behalf of rural councils, and might be approached to put pressure on the GoA regarding land use and environmental management.
- The Alberta Agricultural Service Board may serve as an avenue for moving the Castle Special Places designation forward.
- All environmental decisions need to be founded on evidence-based science; facts are necessary to put arguments forward.
- There have been a variety of solid environmental studies conducted in the region, but the information has not been consolidated. There is a need for a centralized repository for regional environmental studies.
- Good information = good discussion = good decisions.

#### *Viewscapes*

- While unobstructed viewscapes are considered a common value, there are inherent trade-offs between industrial development to fuel economic growth (oil and gas, wind energy) and unobstructed viewscapes.
- Windmills have provided supplementary income to agricultural producers.
- There are conflicts between landowner rights and unobstructed viewscapes.
- The community pushed back on viewscape regulations.
- Do not mind windmill development to the east; NIMBY?

#### *Minimizing Landscape Disruption*

- Population growth needs to be managed to protect the environment.
- Acreage development should be minimized to reduce land fragmentation.
- Nodal development is preferable to acreage development.
- New residents should be encouraged to settle in existing villages and hamlets.

#### *Perspectives on the MD's Role*

- The MD needs to act as the community's voice regarding land management and the environment; the MD should pressure other levels of government to ensure the environmental issues in the region are given the weight they deserve.
- The MD should push for as much decision-making authority as possible.
- The MD could actively lobby to have the Castle Special Places designation implemented.
- The MD or SASCI could act as the central repository for regional environmental studies.

### **Value 2 – Economic Diversification / Infrastructure Development**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- Access to affordable high-speed Internet in the MD is inadequate, making the region less economically competitive.
- Economic values are swayed toward energy development; diversification is necessary for long-term economic and environmental sustainability.

## ***Discussion Summary***

### ***Economic Diversification***

- Economic development should be “appropriate”, do no harm, and align with social values of the community.
- It should not be diversification at any cost (uranium, magnetite); development should not erode the social and environmental capital.
- Innovation, entrepreneurship, and creative partnerships (e.g., universities) are needed to develop economic opportunities that complement community resources and values.
- Diversification could lessen the reliance on the extractive energy industry and create a more vibrant economy.
- The energy industry has provided the region with sustainable employment, as well as supplemental incomes for agricultural producers, and has made significant gains toward reducing its environmental impact.

### ***Visioning***

- Who decides what constitutes “appropriate” development? What are the boundaries?
- What are the community’s values?
- Community visioning sessions or “Visioning Day” for the community could help to identify what the community wants and what type of economic development would be best suited to the area.
- The level of thinking could be raised with questions like “what if...” or “if we could...”

### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- The MD could spearhead a series of community visioning sessions to identify economic development preferences and opportunities.

**Session V – Summary Overview**  
6 July 2011 – 2:00 p.m.





## I/ Values Inventory

### ***Social Values***

- Heritage preservation
  - Continuity of generations, commitment to the land, trust each other to respect the land
- Small
  - Small farms, small community atmosphere, local participation, neighbourly culture
  - Don't like big urban centers, big agribusiness
- Strong work ethic
  - In raising children, in their everyday lives, in doing more with less
- Pride in the community's attractiveness
  - Draws in professionals that would not otherwise be here (e.g., medical professionals)

### ***Environmental Values***

- Environmental preservation and conservation
  - Preserving native plants, wildlife, birds, prairie sod
- Stewardship of land and water
  - Respecting and caring for the land, looking after watersheds
- Beauty and viewscapes
  - Open space, no subdivisions, no windmills in certain places

### ***Economic Values***

- Sustainable agricultural livelihoods
  - Small agricultural operations threatened, input costs are extreme, loss of family farms, high land costs
- Independence and self-reliance
  - Being own boss, freedom when determining schedule, deciding what to do with own land
- Economic diversity
  - Diversity of industry (e.g., Shell, windmills, feedlots) support local businesses
  - Economic strength in diversity
- Support for local business
  - Keeping hard-earned profits in the local community
  - No big packing houses exporting the money, no faceless international investors, no taking business to Lethbridge

### ***Infrastructure Values***

- Self-supporting
  - Small town with wide range of services and facilities (e.g., hospital, roads, recreation facilities, fair grounds, sports)

## **II/ Priority Values Discussion Summary**

### **Value 1 - Stewardship of land and water**

#### ***Current Conditions***

- The community values the diversity of wildlife and the native plant species and more should be done to protect these resources.
- The community is at risk of losing valuable and irreplaceable natural resources if stewardship does not become a key community priority.

#### ***Discussion Summary***

##### ***Conserving the Land***

- Farmers and landowners act as stewards of the land and water.
- Farmers care for the land by practicing weed management and keeping their land free of garbage.
- It is disturbing because people in other areas are not conscientious about garbage clean-up and we do not want our land to be trashed like their land.
- Environmental conservation is a fundamental value; we need to be innovative to preserve our environment; innovation in the context of conservation.

##### ***Reducing Land Fragmentation***

- Open spaces should be promoted and maintained; we do not want the land to be further fragmented.
- Subdividing the land for residential or industrial development (e.g., gas lines) tears areas to pieces.
- Native grasslands are being destroyed for residential development.
- More value should be placed on maintaining prairie sod; prairie sod is being broken up in so many places where it shouldn't be happening.

##### ***Maintaining Viewscapes and Open Spaces***

- Preserving our landscapes and viewscapes is very important to the community.
- Wind turbines should not be allowed west of Highway 6.

#### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- The MD needs to regulate the type of development allowed in the MD; we need to define what is appropriate; we can't let just anyone come in and do anything.
- The MD must defend the community's values; development from other countries (e.g., China) may be the biggest threat to our values.
- MD bylaws need to be amended to reduce land fragmentation; the current bylaws have resulted in the fragmentation of land; corporations have no allegiance towards anything but money.
- The provincial government does not do enough to protect MD lands; the provincial government is the weak link in terms of policies, there is a real disconnect.
- The MD should maintain the bylaws; exceptions come up and they shouldn't allow them.
- More effort is required to control noxious weeds and plants.

## **Value 2 – Self-supporting**

### ***Current Conditions***

- The community is proud that most goods and services are available in the MD and the Town of Pincher Creek – it's all offered here, so we need not go elsewhere.

### ***Discussion Summary***

#### *Local Access to Goods and Services*

- Unlike many small towns, we have excellent services in Pincher Creek.
- The community has an extensive service area.
- Our community is lucky to have excellent health care services and facilities and road systems.
- We are fortunate to have great recreation facilities, fair grounds, sports facilities that are not available in other places.

#### *Diversity of Industry*

- There is a diversity of industry in the MD; existing industry (Shell, windmills, feedlots) supports local industry.
- When the rest of the world is having economic troubles, the MD is able to sustain itself because the community has diversified successfully.
- The MD has a strong arts community that contributes to the local economy.

### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- Our MD has to be cognizant of our infrastructure, they need to keep pace with the growing demand usage; our population is increasing and the roads and infrastructure need to be improved to keep up with the growth.
- Concern that the MD is going to build a new MD building with \$15 million slush fund instead of using it for the benefit of the community.

## **Value 3 - Pride in area's attractiveness to others**

### ***Current Conditions***

- The area, its facilities and its industries, make it a very desirable place to live.

### ***Discussion Summary***

#### *Attracts Top Professionals*

- The quality of the healthcare facilities and services in Pincher Creek is excellent.
- The community is able to readily attract healthcare professionals and other highly educated people because of the beautiful natural environment, access to recreational activities, and overall quality of life.

### ***Perspectives on the MD's Role***

- The MD should continue to work to attract well-qualified professionals to the region.

## APPENDIX B

Satisfaction Scores	Mean
Access to outdoor recreational opportunities	4.26
Access to adequate health services	4.22
Level of safety and security	4.12
Level of noise pollution	3.99
Level of air pollution	3.98
Access to quality education	3.97
Access to recycling programs	3.97
Extent to which people in the community look out for one another	3.96
Quality of life for seniors	3.96
Maintenance of natural wildlife and fish populations	3.96
Emergency response times	3.88
Level of crowding	3.82
Preservation of the ranching and agricultural lifestyle	3.75
Access to entertainment opportunities	3.69
Level of practicing sustainable agriculture	3.68
Access to cultural events and programs	3.66
Protection of the natural environment within the MD	3.65
Amount of paved roads	3.64
Conservation and protection of water resources	3.63
Support of locally-based businesses	3.63
Extent to which you are able to make decisions about what occurs on your land	3.61
Protection of the natural environment surrounding the MD	3.50
Maintenance of natural viewsapes that are not interrupted by man-made features	3.49
Welcome a diversity of newcomers, different cultures, ages, ethnicity, etc.	3.43
Availability of renewable and alternative energy development	3.39
Population growth	3.39
Environmental impacts of industrial development	3.38
Economic development in the region	3.38
Diversification of the economy	3.38
Access to affordable high-speed internet	3.36
Roads maintenance	3.31
Opportunities to reduce your impact on and adapting to climate change	3.25
Property taxes in line with services received	3.24
Quality employment opportunities within the community	3.22
Availability of affordable housing	3.21
Loss of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses	3.12
Employment opportunities for youth	3.09
Extent to which your opinion influences planning decisions	2.90