

BRAED “Voices of Prosperity” Symposium

Report and Evaluation Results

**REPORTING ON THE BRAED “VOICES OF PROSPERITY” SYMPOSIUM
KILLAM, AB | MARCH 17, 2011**

**PREPARED BY THE ALBERTA CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES
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About BRAED

The Battle River Alliance for Economic Development (BRAED) was established in 2002 and is composed of 38 member communities and 2 affiliate members. There are 67 000 people that fall under BRAED's catchment on a geographic basis. The focus of the organization is on regional development, promotion, service delivery, and on maintaining excellence in government. BRAED is also involved with defense industry procurement and agricultural tourism. The organization is partnered with Eastern Regional Corridor Project coordinators, and includes business leaders, community leaders, and youth leaders.

Opening Remarks – Justin Reimer, Alberta Finance and Enterprise

Justin Reimer is the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) for Finance and Enterprise for the Government of Alberta. He is concerned with industry development, as well as regional and northern development, and acts as the liaison between government and industry.

BRAED is an important member of the Regional Economic Development Alliance Initiative (REDA) family as it works to foster economic growth in the region. With a new position as the ADM for Finance and Enterprise, new goals for economic development have been approached in relation to the region. In addition, the Government is working hard with the REDA's to foster economic development. Today's event is focused on prosperity, which is equal to long-term competitive advantage. We must remember that there is a lot to be thankful for here in Alberta with our immense natural resources, which are strong on the economic indicator basis.

The most critical challenge that our province faces is the labor supply of the future. A demographic bubble is going to happen, as government wants to continue to develop skill sets to make sure that the needs of business communities are being met. We must work on policies to attract newcomers to our communities. By doing so, these newcomers can help to contribute to the viability and resilience of our communities and labor force. We must promote innovation, entrepreneurship and productivity improvements. In addition, it will be important to create a partnership with advanced education and technology, and to access funding through innovation funders and tapping into industry research.

The province's economic success is crucial. We are a partner of Business Link, a federal business centre open to the whole country that supports entrepreneurs and small businesses. In addition, we have taken steps to remain vigilant, have undertaken regional consultations, and we are continuing to improve access to business information and services. It is also important to improve services that already exist, and ensure businesses have the information that they need. An important resource for the success of the business industry in our province is Productivity Alberta (<http://www.productivityalberta.ca/>), which offers tools, resources, and services, with industry sectors all over the province. 360 assessments were done to identify where productivity is positive, and where it can be improved. We promote value-added and product diversification and are also working with industry to improve supply chains and focus on productivity. This results in higher valued good and services that stimulate growth, while diversification allows resiliency.

Capital Power, developer of Alberta's largest wind-farm, uses natural assets to diversify the economy. It will provide construction farms, but will facilitate the diversification of the energy base.

Important steps that need to be taken are to streamline the red tape and ensure that we are not preventing the government from doing business. Also, it is important to avoid duplication; the regulatory enhancement project is a streamlining regulatory project for the oil industry to focus to one window (one interface rather than multiple). It has one of the most competitive jurisdictions in the world. Another important feature for success in Alberta is that we need to create the right environment for competitiveness; where can we improve on our competitiveness? In addition, the government and industry can work together profitably, and the most important is that the government continue to support alliances like BRAED.

A Global Perspective – David Buerle, Innovative Leadership Australia (ILA)

We must end with some clarity with actions you want to take in the long-term and the short-term. Some questions to ponder: What should you be doing in the next year or two? What kind of world is evolving in front of us? How good is your future intelligence? How smart are you about the future? Emotional intelligence – how aware we are of ourselves? What is the rating of our future intelligence? How good are we about speculating, readings the signs of our future? Of the Battle River Region? In order to answer these questions, we must look at some of the issues facing the world we are living in.

These issues are almost always dealing with settings of groups of people living in a rural community who are worried about the future. There are common forces that may play out similarly across the whole world: global power and wealth, growth in Asia, energy, climate change, water, and food security.

The gap between the developed and developing world is most likely to be bridged in the next twenty years. The rate of change occurring in the world today in rural areas is a little bit on the slow side, and is fairly conservative. However, in the rest of the world, things may be moving faster than we have ever seen before and may not have the luxury of moving slowly.

The economic downturn seems not to be affecting growth curves in China and India, as they are still growing (one billion people in either country, plus or minus). What does China's growth mean? The US really only emerges as a player in the early 1800s, whereas China already had the largest economy in the world in the 1800s. However, there was a shift in the proportion of GDP as the nations go through industrialization. Is a re-balancing going on? China and India's relative share is going to continue to go up due to the population growth. It is expected that another 2-3 billion people will be added to the planet before the population growth stabilizes (and most growth is not occurring in our nations as developed countries). Within 10 years, India's working population will have increased by 250 million people. What do these major global trends and events in the economy and global population mean for the Battle River region?

The challenge is to work out the effect of the global population growth on the Battle River region. In a group discussion: what do you think those trends will be? (Imports and exports – if people can get cheaper products there, they will not buy from here; find ways to diversify the businesses more; wages issues – people can work for cheaper than people can here; manufacturers from developing countries is much cheaper – less than half; requires people to be a lot more creative – encourage companies to collaborate and work creatively together – work through the supply chain together, to work together and bid on supply chain together, create a bid together).

The trend in our hemisphere is going to be “north” and “urban”. Essential ideas to remember: (1) Food – Can we feed ourselves as a species on this planet (largely due to climate change?); (2) Energy – 2.5 billion people rely on burning wood and animal dung as their chief source of energy; 1.5 billion people do not have electricity – they want the same thing that ‘we’ have.; by 2030, energy consumption will have increased by 50% - consumption per capita is still going up, and will be providing energy to those that do not have it; (3) Peak Oil – used to describe this point in time that production/extraction of oil on the planet begins to decline – is a finite resource and we physically start to produce less oil, so rolls over and starts declining; there is a debate about when this peak might begin to occur – most studies agree that peak oil will begin to occur in 2010, probably happening right now – we will not know it has happened until after it has happened; the Hirsch Report done in 2005 suggests that peak oil is going to happen and it is going to be abrupt. However, economic upheaval is not inevitable if it is dealt with in time.

There are three possible scenarios to dealing with this peak oil process: (1) In North America – working on the “panic” when peak oil strikes; (2) Europe – working towards mitigation and preventing; (3) Renewable Energies – still going to be a minor player in 2030 even if it grows significantly in the next few years (cost for renewable energy decreases as technology increases).

In regards to the future of oil production, future decades are going to judge the current US administration quite harshly. There are serious implications of peak oil including agricultural production, the price of food, food vs. fuel, housing (do suburbs become unviable because people will have to drive further), and transportation costs. Possible new renewable energies may help to alleviate the pressures of peak oil. For example, 35 000 megawatts of installed wind capacity is an economic investment and creates development opportunities for rural communities.

We might be at peak oil; what might these trends in energy mean for you? What is the competitiveness for your agriculture? Nuclear energy was going to be a big future; forces that are occurring may go for or against us.

The Kyoto Protocol: (1) global climate, (2) food and (3) water – science may be unequivocal.

(1) It will require 70% reduction in emissions to stabilize the climate change. North America is by far the highest emitter of greenhouse gases, however, Australia may actually be the highest, but it gets lumped in with the islands that do not have high emissions so the averages go down. The environment of Australia shows that their emissions may be high because they are getting hit hard with violent climate.

(2) Food access – more than 40% of children fewer than five years of age are underweight in places such as India (unlike North America that sees a high percentage of children who are overweight).

(3) Water wars – water is going to be a big issue in the coming years; water scarcity, not land scarcity is going to be a chief factor in food production issues in the future; there are declining crop yields in the same parts of the world that have underweight/hungry children; some growing seasons may extend for some perhaps due to climate change.

All of the issues discussed will play out within lifetimes of some people, and some are certainly going to have it play out in their lives most profoundly. Counties procure a lot of money from tax from oil and gas (even though oil and gas industries do not like to pay county tax). If we were de-populated it would be perfect for industry as they could use it solely for industry and pipelines. This will play out within our working lives.

Could speculate about 'black swan' events; events that are completely unexpected but that occur. For example, political unrest in Egypt, tsunami in Japan (could be a game changer) that no one expected. There will be challenges in a lot of rural areas as their strength has not been in moving quickly; steady as she does is what rural communities are strong at. But we are now facing a different pace of life than in previous times and that can cause some reactions from rural areas: feeling short of time, need more time to deal with challenges – need to think differently about things and work forward. The hardest intellectual challenge that exists for rural survival is: focusing on the future; ignoring is not really an option.

The Futures Game – David Buerle, Innovative Leadership Australia (ILA)

Rules of the Game:

By looking at various maps of the United States starting from *today* we can see that there are a range of endpoints all starting at the same place. The future of the region is in our hands – planning out the 20-year future for the game. The big event card tells you about the recent events around the world – some of it might have a very material impact on your future – (for e.g. Saudi Arabia democratic crisis could lead to effects here). You can make critical choices (A or B). We must reconcile your decision making against the triple bottom line. Every time you make a decision the map will change – get a new map; and then review the big event card and debate the decision either way. How would it pan out if you choose A or B? (1 time, 5 million dollar grant for the region).

Table Ideas

- Consolidate resources at home
- Look within rather than looking outside as to what the solutions might be
- Climate is unstable – weather plus increasing steel costs will really affect agriculture
- Governor has provided 1 time 5 million dollar grant to work on renewable forms of energy
- Biofuels vs. Research on new forms of energy
- Producers stop producing food quality crop and make more energy quality (less work) – might be better off growing food than bio fuels
- Only creating 50 jobs with biofuels, and B may create far more in the future
- Currently – agricultural industry would really be hurting RIGHT NOW, so is A better?
- A might be putting all eggs in one basket, and would be just as effected by climate and costs
- B might make it hard for certain farmers to continue farming right now, but be better for the region in the long term
- Better for the economic bottom-line, but perhaps not as good for the societal bottom-line- also hard economically short-term
- In future, looking at placing the “effect” of the R&D plan.
- We chose B- for resource Research and Development
- New choice is whether to build a low-risk renewable resource or bio fuels plant.
- Next choice: invest in businesses and industry, or in marketing and building community
- Proven in Forestburg that people will come but they won’t stay even if the industry is there

- Need to put money into the infrastructure as well, since we have put money into industry already
- Ex: Airdrie has grown a lot so that people can have that family feeling and still work in Calgary
- Concern is that transport costs will grow
- Choices – allow big box development outside communities, or invest in downtown development
- Big box store – goes outwards from the community, wages go out from here
- Camrose good place as viable downtown – local owners, live in the community
- Worry about prices in big box stores will be more affordable
- Perhaps consumption will have gone down by then and big box stores will not be as viable
- Example of Camrose – people come from all around to shop at the downtown stores.

Group Debrief Session

Using the simulation-learning tool provides a derivative product from scenario planning. There is a range of different future in the region. If the utilization of resources (of both people and natural resources) was maximized the results would be as follows:

Year 2030 – ‘E’ would be “best” future in the Midwest

Year 2030 – ‘C’ – a bet each way; doing a lot of zigzagging through the decision tree – managing risks both way, fairly positive outcome

Year 2030 – Eco-future – ‘D’ – want change and innovation, but not too much, slightly short of maximum risk, pretty cool place, growth but environmental

Most vibrant is 2030 ‘E’ – similar outcome but more entrepreneurship – whole organic zone and eco housing – eco-housing suburb and technology pretty good.

We did not maximize risks, but we maintained a good quality of community life. We preserved a lot of quality and preserved more environment. We must keep educated on what is happening, otherwise we might run out on opportunities and risks. If you knew where you wanted to end up so that you can work towards it, otherwise what basis or framework are you using to make decisions upon?

Return to Rural – Christie Dick, EDO – SAMDA Economic Partnership

Christie Dick was born and raised in Special Areas and is passionate about the future of rural communities everywhere.

Technology is changing, even in small communities. It is now possible to leverage success using social media – the Return to Rural project. The purpose of the project is youth retention and attraction. In other words, it encourages young people to return home using technology. It states that anyone can live the dream life in a rural community. Before, it was just not possible to bring and keep young people in a rural community, but because of changing technologies much more is possible now. There was success for the youth migration project – using technology, community, and globalization. If the community has rural high speed internet it is possible for this project to work. Since there has been a shift in global and economic culture, this recipe has laid the foundation for the Return to Rural idea.

Return to Rural strategically capitalizes on key competitive advantages including the SAMDA economic partnership, which is a grassroots, municipally funded, rural development organization. Included in the Return to Rural project are five municipalities from Special Areas communities 2, 3 and 4. The communities are: Acadia, Cereal, Empress, Hanna, Veteran, and Consort. These communities have an aging demographic and a stable, but not growing population, large transportation routes, and the traditional employment is agriculture. Unfortunately there is an abundance of smart, well-educated young people that leave these communities and never return.

There is room to grow in Special Areas (approx. 5 million acres). These areas provide safe/remote communities (plus, rather than minus, economical housing option, and supportive and collaborative government ready for growth. The government is committed to doing whatever is possible to bring the youth in. The target groups are mid-early career families, and are being targeted using social media. Our young people are engaged using marketing and propaganda.

Must ask what is needed from others and that the future is young people – working online businesses, building new culture, re-building leadership and non-profit industry. This helps to connect young people with the right organizations. Another important step in the process is to work on parents and grandparents as well as youth so that they encourage youth to come home. We also work online, print flyers, use the radio, websites, Facebook and Twitter.

Return to Rural must be innovative so that the local people are engaged and are able to share the message that returning to the rural matters, it can speed up your career, and slow down your life.

The Return to Rural project has been featured on the Drew Rutherford Show, Jennifer Brooks, and has now hired a PR consultant to spread the message. Return to Rural has been working hard to keep up with social media, and an example of this is that a local videographer makes videos about young people in Special Areas. By posting them on facebook, 11 500 people were reach in one week.

Resources are needed to support these students/young people, and communities should try to get like-minded business specialists together to bring in ideas. Young people must be exposed to the idea that you can create your own *new* job – rather than saying that there are not any jobs.

Return to Rural has hired a technology specialist because people need learning development and research help. All of the municipal offices will be connected with technology and outfitted with everything they need to do that.

Idea to change: "If young people leave they are not coming back"

Ways to change:

- (1) There are quality of life differences with the new generation. Young people want to be more flexible and time is of the essence – young people are willing to move home to gain more time back.
- (2) Engaging young people – creating a relationship, and then affirming people in the way that they want to be engaged
- (3) "What's in it for me?" – this is all in the way that you frame it, give it, affirm it – gifts do not hurt, listen to what people want
- (4) Have a devoted support staff to go into client's home or business to help them get started or work further on business plans, marketing research, getting on the internet, partnering with every possible organization that there are so that there is an abundance of resources.

Some resources:

Return to Rural Blog (<http://www.returntorural.ca/blog/>)

YouTube – Socialnomics

(http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=socialnomics&aq=f)

Return to Rural FaceBook (<http://www.facebook.com/return2rural?ref=ts>)

Enabling Conditions for Successful Community Transition – John Parkins, University of Alberta, Department of Rural Economy

Communities in Transition are interested in community change, development and adaptation. Some communities are very good at transitioning and adapting, but other times communities put a lot of investment into transition. By looking at each case study we can see that some communities have been successful; how can we learn from the success stories? How/can/should we review good practice in successful community transition?

There are three success stories of economic transition and key insights from these transition communities:

Key Insights

- (1) Practice of community transition – vast amounts of literature on the subject – focus on internal condition and resources, rather than looking at the global economy, urban centres (e.g. asset mapping in communities)
- (2) Community control – resource management, effort and recognition that communities can assist
- (3) Study objectives – ID key characteristics of successful community transitions, and use case studies to demonstrate the successful transitions
- (4) Talking to communities and academics in local communities to find the case studies

Success Stories

(Pincher Creek, Battle River Railway, Grande Cache, Valemount, Drayton Valley, West Central Road and Rail, Quesnel, Craik, Revelstoke, Ogema – all of these communities were successful, but had varying catalysts for change)

- (1) Pincher Creek, AB
 - Catalyst for change: decline in the natural gas industry (locally), and a gradual community decline
 - Local entrepreneurs and local leaders were instrumental in working for change (e.g. wind turbines were built in 1994, which was way ahead of the time); there has been more wind energy/development recently
- (2) Battle River Railway
 - Catalyst for change: CN planned to abandon the rail line for Alliance to Camrose
 - Local farmers worked to keep the rail lines open – Battle River Railway Non-Profit
 - Local financial support from towns/municipal districts, etc...
- (3) Ogema, SK
 - Catalyst for change: population decline, losing power company and railroad
 - Recruit new businesses etc...

There are many crucial elements for successful economic transition including community leadership (elected as well as lay leaders - corporate leadership was not as apparent/obvious). In addition, planning for and taking small steps towards economic transition allows us to plan for the future and make a step-wise approach. It is crucial to become involved in regional cooperation and work together. In light of recent cutbacks, cooperation is going to be even more challenging. We must have the ability to respond to unexpected development pathways. Because there are many differences in local culture of community development, we cannot just transfer experience and ideas between two communities, or provinces. One of the most important elements for success is that there must be a community champion. To get true buy-in from the community, there should be a community leader in business that is willing to support these transitions.

Why are plans that are put forward moving ahead at the impetus from the municipality or the community, rather than from the businesses? Business leaders have to have a broader sense of how their businesses support the local economy in order to understand and assist in moving forward.

Action Plan and Notes

There are three priority areas identified by BRAED: youth engagement, manufacturing and productivity and management and attraction. For the afternoon, our goals are as follows (within the three priority areas):

- Identify why the priority area is important to the region and communities
- With the assumption of a core budget of \$25 000 per area, what specific actions should BRAED take in the 12 months to improve the area
- Identify how it will contribute to the goals and activities of the area and priority group you are in
- How do you know this is what you should do?
 - o Is it realistic to implement within 12 months?
 - o Can it be done with a \$25 000 budget?
 - o Can it be evaluated (did it work and in the way we thought it might)?

Youth Engagement – Entrepreneurship and Succession

Working Group Input

Why are Youth Engagement, Entrepreneurship and Succession Important to the BRAED Region?

- There was a high awareness of importance of small business to the Region’s economy
- There was a lower recognition of the potential number of small businesses that are planning to close/retire in the next five years. This was seen as having negative consequence on many of the smaller communities
- There was a feeling that there is currently a “disconnect” between the Region’s youth and the Region’s leadership – a need to begin to communicate (both sides)

With a core budget of \$25,000, what specific action(s) should BRAED undertake in the next 12 months?

- A “youth” focused Marketing and Communications Strategy should be developed and implement specific to this topic
- A series of “Youth Entrepreneurship Fairs” should be implemented throughout the Region
- Discussions should be initiated with various youth program administrators to explore options/merits of extending their various offerings into the BRAED Region
- Development of “Mentorship Program” – using successful youth entrepreneurs as Mentors

How will BRAED be able to measure the success of its action(s)?

- Not addressed, however some Outputs (short term) might be:
 - Marketing and Communications Strategy is developed and implementation has commenced
 - X# of “Youth Entrepreneurship Fairs” completed
 - Y# of mentors are identified and connected with Z# of BRAED youth

Other input:

- “Disconnect” between Region’s youth and current leadership – not communicating, an example; currently community information on various issues and events is published in local newspapers a medium not used by youth – use of twitter/face book would be much more effective

- There was a feeling that there are many “targeted” services and programs that are specific to youth entrepreneurship – although virtually none are currently being extended into the Region
- Pertaining to the above – uncertainty of who could play a lead role to investigate options relating to the potential of “in-region” programming
- Awareness of the value of mentorship programs – feeling that youth mentors would be most effective
- There was a feeling that youth would have to be “at the table” in formulating strategies
- No strong feelings about the role of the schools

Manufacturing & Productivity

Working Group Input

Why is Manufacturing & Productivity Important to the BRAED Region?

- Opportunities for employment, especially youth
- Local tax base
- Provides stability for institutions e.g. church, schools, hospitals
- Local manufacturing can serve local area, result in spin-off business and value-added activity, and diversify the economy

With a core budget of \$25,000, what specific action(s) should BRAED undertake in the next 12 months?

- Develop and implement a Marketing Program to attract businesses, including the use of:
 - Tradeshows
 - Web
 - Collaboration e.g. RDI College Centre of Technology
- Undertake a Manufacturing forum
- Focus attention on the Eastern Alberta Corridor
- Ensure Welcoming Communities are part of business attraction

How will BRAED be able to measure the success of its action(s)?

- Not addressed, however some Outputs (short term) might include:
 - Marketing program developed and implementation has commenced
 - BRAED has participated in Eastern Alberta Corridor efforts to attract business
 - A Manufacturing Forum event is staged in the BRAED Region

Other input:

- Know what others are doing regarding manufacturing & productivity
- Land, transportation, labour and water are important marketing components
- Explore opportunities to expand at Hardisty

Business Investment & Attraction

Working Group Input

Why is Business Investment and Attraction Important to the BRAED Region?

- Improved local tax base, jobs and population growth

With a core budget of \$25,000, what specific action(s) should BRAED undertake in the next 12 months?

- Use existing research to develop a targeted marketing strategy that
 - Takes advantage of partnerships e.g. Central Alberta Manufacturing Association and the Eastern Alberta “high/wide” Corridor
 - Focuses on in region (e.g. Business Retention & Expansion) as well as external markets (e.g. via an Ambassador Program)
 - Makes use of social media, possibly virtual trade shows
 - Recognizes regional successes

How will BRAED be able to measure the success of its action(s)?

- Outputs (short term)
 - Marketing strategy is developed in collaboration with others
 - Marketing messages are developed and communicated using technology
 - X# of social media interactions resulting from the marketing strategy
 - Ambassador Program established and Y# of ambassadors are identified, armed with marketing messages and selling the BRAED region
- Outcomes (long term)
 - New regional jobs
 - Increased regional population
 - Increased local tax base

Other input:

- Don't do another study
- The BRAED Region is not known outside our region
- Demonstrate the value of the BRAED region to the province by comparing provincial taxes generated in the region to government spending in region

Evaluation Results

Following the BRAED Voices of Prosperity Symposium, participants were asked to complete an evaluation. The results are as follows:

<u>Question</u>		<u>Results</u>
1. Would you describe yourself as: (78 answers)	1 Business Person	12/78; 18%
	2 Citizen at Large	2/78; 3%
	3 Economic Development Officer	6/78; 8%
	4 Municipally Elected Official	16/78; 21%
	5 Municipal Administration	5/78; 6%
	6 Non-Profit Organization	11/78; 14%
	7 Student	20/78; 26%
	8 Other (please explain)	4/78; 5%
2. Do you work as: (77 answers)	1 Business Owner	14/77; 18%
	2 Front-line practitioner/Service provider	13/77; 17%
	3 Manager	14/77; 18%
	4 Other (please explain)	25/77; 32%
	0 Did not answer	11/77; 14%
3. In what setting do you work: (85 answers)	1 City	20/85; 24%
	2 Town	28/85; 33%
	3 Village	14/85; 16%
	4 Rural	19/85; 22%
	0 Did not answer	4/85; 5%

4. On a continuous scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all, and 5 being very much so, how would you rate your satisfaction with the following presentations:

David Buerle – Global Perspective	4.32 average, 5 median/mode
David Buerle – Futures Game	4.76 average, 5 median/mode
Christie Dick – Return to Rural	4.05 average, 4 median/mode
John Parkins – Communities in Transition	3.66 average, 4 median/mode

5. Please indicate what working group you were in: (77 answers)

1 Youth Engagement	22/77; 29%
2 Manufacturing and Productivity	25/77; 32%
3 Business and Investment Attraction	27/77; 35%
4 Other/did not answer	3/77; 4%

6. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with each of the following statements (with 1 being totally disagree, and 5 being strongly agree)

a) I had sufficient opportunity to participate in discussions	4.26 average, 4 median, 5 mode
b) I felt I could make a contribution to the issues being discussed	4.08 average, 4 median/mode
c) My work was valued during the workshop	3.96 average, 4 median/mode
d) The presentations were appropriate and relevant to the event	3.99 average, 4 median/mode

7. Do you feel the number of people participating in the workshop was: (74 answers)

1 Too few	3/74; 4%
2 Just right	54/74; 73%
3 Too many	17/77; 23%

8. Do you feel that participants provided a good representation of issues/practices related to the theme areas of (1) youth engagement, (2) manufacturing and productivity, and (3) business and investment attraction (74 answers)

1 Yes	63/74; 85%
2 No	5/74; 7%
0 N/A	6/74; 8%

9. Are there other groups/organizations/practitioners you feel should have been represented, or included in the future? (74 answers)

1 Yes	26/74; 35%
2 No	32/74; 43%
0 N/A	16/74; 22%

10. See next section.

11. See next section.

12. On a continuous scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being nothing and 5 being a great deal, please circle the number which best answers each of the following questions:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| a) Prior to the workshop, how much did you know about BRAED? | 2.82 average, 3 median, 1 mode |
| b) As a result of the workshop, how much do you now know about economic development and BRAED? | 3.80 average, 4 median/mode |
| c) Prior to the workshop, how much did you know about activities or programming in the theme areas in general? | 2.96 average, 3 median/mode |
| d) As a result of the workshop, how much do you now know about youth engagement – entrepreneurship and succession? | 3.66 average, 4 median/mode |
| e) As a result of the workshop, how much do you now know about regional manufacturing and productivity? | 3.12 average, 3 median/mode |
| f) As a result of the workshop, how much do you now know about regional business and investment attraction? | 3.24 average, 3 median/mode |

13. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with each of the following statements, with 1 being totally disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

a) There were sufficient opportunities for sharing during the workshop	4.07 average, 4 median/mode
b) I plan to work/connect with new people because of contacts made	3.81 average, 4 median/mode

14. See next section.

15. Do you feel that the action items and plans put forward as a result of this event are (check all that apply (226 Answers))

a) Relevant and suited to the needs of the region	60/226; 27%
b) Implementable	44/226; 19%
c) Suitable for a 12-18 month time frame	38/226; 17%
d) Going to have a positive effect	43/226; 15%
e) Appropriate for BRAED	41/226; 18%

16. Overall how satisfied were you with this event, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied	3.78 average, 4 median/mode
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17. See next section.

18. See next section.

Below are the written evaluation answers:

(Inclusive to this is any question that required further information, including any answers that followed 'Other (please describe)').

1. Would you describe yourself as:
 - Other: Provincial Government
 - Other: Liaison/Networking Source
 - Other: AEI
 - Other

2. Do you work as:

- Other: Retired
- Other: Retired
- Other: High School Student
- Other: Council, Board Member
- Other: Student in School
- Other: High School Student
- Other: Town Councillor
- Other: Retired
- Other: All of the Above
- Other: Funding Agency
- Other: Volunteer
- Other: Elected Position
- Other: Work at Management Level
- Other: Full-time Student
- Other: Bartender
- Other: Part-time Summer Farmer
- Other: Private Stock Broker
- Other: President
- Other: Stay at Home Mom
- Other: Business and Industry Liaison
- Other: Councillor
- Other
- Other
- Labourer
- Other

8. Do you feel that participants provided a good representation of issues/practices related to the theme areas of (1) youth engagement, (2) manufacturing and productivity, (3) business and investment attraction? If no, why not?

- Yes, but with a lot of repetition. Too quietly spoken much of the time
- 1- Yes, 2- No
- For 1 and 3 – Yes, for 2 – Maybe; need more info/work (For 2 – should be a part of 3 (business and investment attraction) – This should be combined as an overall – BIA and BR&E strategy
- For 2 and 3 – Yes; for 1 –No; youth engagement lacked time to get sufficient feedback from the youth- too much advent and adjudicator input
- Somewhat; a lot of off-topic, redundant discussion. Smaller groups would have been much better for this. Also, a lot of students in this group, needed more balance.
- No; businesses are small (perhaps 1-2 workers). These people do not have the time to attend. Fee was also an issue
- No; manufacturing and productivity was not strongly represented
- No; I do not believe that the ideas represented are effective, risk adverse, or are even in the budget. Trade shows cost a lot of money to be effective
- Yes; thorough selection of speakers
- No; not enough structure to begin the conversation
- Both; a bit between, the topics were on track, however, there are other ways to make money other than entrepreneurship. Youth engagement needed to focus on more than just "want to be business owners". The youth that want to be involved wasn't really addressed
- Not sure I understand the question. Do not know the composition of participants so cannot answer whether the three theme areas were represented or to what extent
- Yes; could have been more manufacturing and productivity
- Yes; only superficially
- No; Every community is unique. It is difficult to find common solutions

9. Are there any other groups/organizations/practitioners you feel should have been represented, or included in the future? If yes, what groups/organizations/practitioners?

- No; time constrained
- Yes; Councils for Futures Gain and Global Perspectives
- Yes; Business Owners
- Yes; Adult Learning, Immigration
- Yes; More business owners
- Yes; I know that BRAED's focus is on economic development, but of course BRAED does not exist in a vacuum. I think that insights can be gained from social service agencies or schools. They are the ones who see some of the fallout when the economy tanks, and they can also provide great insights. Hats off inviting younger people. The trick now is to keep up that momentum.
- Yes; More business people. How to get them involved is a good question
- Yes; Volunteer groups
- Yes; Business and industry leaders
- Yes; MLAs, more councillors/majors, educators
- Yes; Social community groups – see a better balance
- Yes; Trades people, entrepreneurs, young entrepreneurs, town reps (council, mayor)
- Yes; Representatives from each member community; Mayors possibly
- Yes; Education and healthcare
- Yes; Investors
- Yes; Bring in success stories – someone who either 'came back' or came in from somewhere else, why?
- Yes; Youth that are not university students
- Yes; Youth groups such as 4H or school groups – involvement and bridging gaps between youth groups and communities
- Yes; Industry/manufacturing/agriculture/tourism operators
- Yes; CARMA
- Don't Know
- Yes; More representation from current users/participants from groups and organizations operating in the area – non-governmental
- Yes; More business owners/citizens
- Yes; Community Futures, service clubs

10. What did you like best about the workshop?

- Friendly social networking
- Participants brought a broad perspective to the discussions
- Cross section of participation
- It was provocative... hope to see some results
- Largest input from youth in quite some time. Its great to get youth involved. I look forward to seeing Christie's Youtube items
- The future game. I liked making decisions to try and make things better
- The decision/strategy of the workshop; Inform, practice decision making, inform, brainstorm 3 specific Q and 3 specific topics for BRAED economic improvement
- Thinking of issues not always at the fore
- David Buerle's 'A Global Perspective' presentation. It was very informative and relative. Also an energetic presenter/speaker; workshop discussion flowed freely
- The futures game with David Buerle
- Face to face interaction
- Good presenters
- Morning session with David Buerle
- Input from everyone
- Appreciated the opportunity to interact with other participants
- David Buerle; Christie - on Skype
- Collaborative Effort
- The manufacturing discussion in the last section
- Diverse group of participants openly sharing
- Futures game; working group activities
- It was very informative and engaging
- Awesome networking, great speakers, fabulous day
- Networking and learning's from the breakout groups; futures game - the interaction and discussion
- Meeting and Talking with People
- The fact that BRAED felt such a day was needed is refreshing
- Networking
- Variety of ideas presented
- X-section of participants; good presentations; input important
- Global perspective; Futures game
- I enjoyed the interaction with everyone and the open discussions about the different issues
- Sharing ideas; Trying to come up with concrete ideas
- Having a group discussion about what is currently available, what has worked in other areas, and creating new ideas
- Discussions and communication
- David Buerle provided a very profound understanding about the up and coming world. The interactions in groups was extremely beneficial to the better of BRAED's

program.

- David Buerle, Afternoon discussion groups
- The networking and opinions of others
- David Buerle's presentation
- The AM was more productive
- It moved right along
- All
- Good cross section of demographics and geography; good to see young attendees
- To hear about entrepreneurship
- The futures game
- The game, it was a great learning and different way of thinking
- David Buerle sessions
- Ideas that were told; Listening to discussions, becoming aware of what is out in society
- Futures game
- Free flowing discussion
- The futures game
- Very informative especially futures game and return to rural. Excellent starting point for this dialogue. Very complex issues -->this was very evident-->like that workshops is solution focused
- The futures game
- Game played group directed by David Buerle. It was good to see what decisions you made as a group and how it would impact the community with the choices that were made
- David Buerle was an excellent speaker. I enjoyed the practical components and ideas that were generated
- Networking through open discussion with group
- Facilitated discussion
- David Buerle's macro perspective on rural sustainability
- Discussion of future
- Christies presentation about aggressively recruiting youth to the rural
- The futures game
- speaker/information/networking
- The hands on activities and discussions of groups, presentations were good but kept my attention and engagement more during interactive activities; futures game
- David Buerle

11. How would you assess the facilitation and implementation of the event? Of the afternoon workshops?

- Too general for the time allowed. Is this symptomatic of BRAED in general?; N/A
- Ok; Ok but speaks too soft spoken
- Good Job!; Pretty pressed for time
- Good; Good
- Good; Time Short
- N/A; Good
- Good; Good
- N/A; Ok
- Informational and a good experience; good but too many people in one group
- Excellent; Very good
- Very Good; Good
- Very encouraging and open to suggestions; Good, but groups maybe should have been smaller to offer more feedback from everyone
- Very informative. A good experience; Good but hard to get a word in
- Great; N/A
- N/A; More of a brainstorming event, not really solid planning
- Excellent; Very unstructured. BRAED has already undertaken a study but this wasn't shared
- Good; Good
- Good- Appreciated attention on time; Facilitated well enough despite the size of the group and challenging set-up
- Great; N/A
- Good; Good
- Good flow and good participation; see above
- Very good; tables not conducive to easy sharing
- Well organized; very interesting and productive
- Absolutely wonderful; wish I could have been here for it
- Very good; Ok
- Good; I believe BRAED has lots of information to work with provided there is money
- Well done event
- Good; Good
- Good; Good
- Great; Too short. Not enough time to look deeper into questions
- Everything was well played; Good show
- Good; Smaller, voice from everyone in the group. Encourage everyone to share something
- Great, everything was time out well; Great
- Good, kept on time; Interesting but less focused
- Perfect!
- As a student, it was awesome. Good facility, great speakers; Great. It brought

- people together from different areas to discuss the issue. Awesome
- Fantastic; Again, fantastic
 - Both were well run and informative
 - Not that good
 - Very well organize and on topic; Groups could be just a little smaller - 4 instead of three
 - Good
 - Good; Good
 - They were really good/interesting
 - Good over all
 - Good; Good
 - Very full of information, lots of knowledge; Lots of discussion
 - Great
 - Adequate; N/A
 - Good; Good
 - Overall very good; it was really hard to hear in our group. It was also difficult to come up with what specific actions BRAED could do. Recognize the challenges BRAED faces...tough to represent so many communities and keep everyone happy
 - Good; Adequate
 - Good info; Good. Nice to see others point of view and get different perspectives on issues
 - Excellent - kept on time, good, Skype worked well; Good - kept discussions flowing and on time
 - Very good; Very Good
 - Very Well
 - Very good; Good but time management and staying on task was an issue. Some topic brought up multiple times
 - Very Good
 - Good; Good
 - Well done; Well done
 - Good!; Enjoyed the workshops, put together well. Maybe smaller groups for the facilitated discussions
 - Good; too short to provide adequate response and attention to detail

14. Please tell us about any ways you feel economic development in the region may change as a result of participating in the workshop:

- May is the important word. Good first steps - take advantage of others success - do not try to reinvent the wheel
- I think BRAED took this as a great opportunity to discuss and plan for the future while listening to a wide range of people from our area
- Must market ourselves
- Greater youth engagement
- Implement a core group to further investigate the models that were developed
- Research on Alberta and global needs. Inventory of what the region has. Approach businesses and advertise
- We will be more informed of what happens
- A revitalized East AB corridor, ie. Increased population, new industry/manufacturing tax base, engaged citizens --> more positive attitudes/climate
- Making information more widely known
- More focus towards engaging youth in school about the opportunity to become an entrepreneur
- We are more informed on the issues on economic development
- Synergies and collaboration will be the keys to future development
- More focused projects/committees
- Through the contacts I have made in Bashaw and Viking
- Hopefully we will work cooperatively to achieve success
- I don't see much coming from this. The young people are going to need WAY more than what was discussed
- Youth needs to be at the table with BRAED and input for the future. As well as local and county councils
- I think we will see many projects in the near future
- New ideas
- I would hope that people have a greater sense of the importance of long range - big picture thinking
- Hopefully people realize they can do something positive
- I am hopeful
- Include social media
- Getting to know what is in our area
- Hopefully more focused
- I think social media will be much more applied to new ideas for drawing in markets for economic development
- More youth engagement, businesses staying open; Keeping communities alive
- Youth being involved and aware of what is occurring
- I feel BRAED will try and engage students further because of this workshop. More labor = more economic benefit

- Just having the workshop itself gets facetime and allows for opportunities to take place or formulate
- More youth involved. BRAED and members of the community now have an idea of how to push and advertise entrepreneurship
- People may become more aware of global events during business
- Better communication between youth and business. Hopefully.
- Wait and see
- Not sure yet!
- I feel like I wanna start a business of my own
- Hoping that a marketing plan can be developed and implemented to grow interest in the area
- People will be more aware and be able to put their ideas to use in the future
- I hope that communities will keep an eye on global trends in order to capitalize on future opportunities
- Invest time into developing social media i.e facebook, twitter
- Maybe invest money into getting people aware of what BRAED is and get opinions of community including youth on what they would like to see in their community
- More awareness of BRAED to youth and others through social media
- Slowly
- Moving from large scale industry/business to local ones (hopefully)
- Not likely too much
- Hopefully sustainable development will results from retaining and attracting youth to the community
- Wait/watch/participate if required or requested
- BRAED will actually develop a business plan that reflects the wishes of the membership

17. What are your suggestions for improving the event, or the work of BRAED in the 3 priority areas:

- A decision for action needs to be taken. Discussion and studies can go forever but in the end accomplish little
- Live online events (Facebook, etc...)
- I think having a speaker to discuss and focus on the youth and how to engage. Take it a step further than what Christie discussed
- Keep knocking down doors
- Getting information out to a greater number of people
- Smaller workshop groups
- First experience with BRAED and its platform. New concepts but a worthy concept
- More focus, planning needed to narrow down all the ideas
- Greater representation from companies within the region; I always like really good maps; Develop a priority area concept first
- Smaller breakout groups, assigning individuals to groups proportionately by occupation, area of expertise, etc.
- More youth grades 9-12
- These situations are a little broad
- Getting more schools involved (junior and senior); more college and university involvement
- More money
- Must get the people who might invest in the area involved
- More businesses to identify what is required
- More open discussion on the issues BRAED is facing
- More discussion, less 'being talked at', assign tables, have facilitators encourage discussion. (Put a discussion question on the table to encourage discussion). "Buy Local" campaigns?; I'd like to see a youth speaker/entrepreneur
- Greater and more effective communication; Clearly set goals
- You have to be willing to put the money out there in order to gain or make any headway. You need to create staff to get things going and create a business label and a network!
- Just getting more people involved. Trying to reach out to as many people as possible
- The key to economic prosperity is synergism. Small towns do not work
- Leadership programs and lecturers
- I had the impression that BRAED was putting the info out there and waiting for a contact. I would like to think that BRAED was going out to make contacts.
- Promotion
- Still more to do
- A little more variety or one or two more speakers
- If the events were held on weekends, then working council members could attend
- For the youth, bring in more companies/employers or services, to show youth what they are able to do, that is already in place in society

- Little focus was placed on the 3 bottom lines. ED seemed to drive the discussion with little time or energy placed on environmental or social pillars of sustainability
- Use the resources that are already out there to your advantage, and seek out partnerships/collaborations. Educate businesses on these resources; don't reinvent the wheel
- Yes
- Networking with communities, groups and business
- Try to get students from Lakeland and Portage College as well as more business people. Perhaps move symposium around the region
- If you are speaking about youth entrepreneurship then the majority of the people should ideally be youth. (I know that's hard)
- More time for discussing the actions for \$25,000 and fewer people
- Youth involvement, they are the future
- Get more people involved that are currently operating in these 3 priority areas
- Advertisement and communication!! Especially for youth, social networking
- More time was required

18. Overall, do you feel that this is a viable method for informing/directing the work of BRAED? If no, please explain why.

- Yes
- Yes, it is essential to engage the community - you did a good job - keep up the good work. Continue to engage - use resources that are already out there
- Yes there should be more
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- It is a very good method
- Definitely
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes; Face to face interactions are very educational
- Yes
- Yes; Stakeholder input is necessary
- More stakeholders should be involved in the process - ex. Individuals who work predominately in the "social" sector but who inevitably are affected by the decisions of BRAED
- Yes; very good information
- Yes
- Yes
- It will help
- Only if the large percentage of the participants are beyond the BRAED membership
- Yes; input comes from membership
- Yes
- Yes
- Yup
- Yes, but I am not still very clear as to what exactly you do. I want to hear some info, projects done by BRAED
- Yes
- Yes; helpful
- Yes
- Very viable
- Informing, yes. Directing: No. Majority of people are stupid, so don't rely on the masses to make decisions for you, or you will make stupid decisions
- On a small scale yes, larger crowds would obviously bring about issues
- It is viable, need more definite positive steps
- This is a very good method - EVERY community should be represented
- Ok
- Yes

- Yes
- Yes!
- Yes
- Yes; gives a chance for group brainstorming
- Yes
- I think this event may have fell short of its intentions. Participants came with their own set of expectations and I am unsure if they completed the day satisfied with the information that was shared
- it depends if action is taken. Ideas are great, but the implementation is the key to success
- Yes
- Yes, but utilizing social media in future would be beneficial
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, in a general sense. Trips should be made to schools, workshops in towns. People don't know about BRAED, so get into the communities
- Short history of BRAED would have put the discussions in context

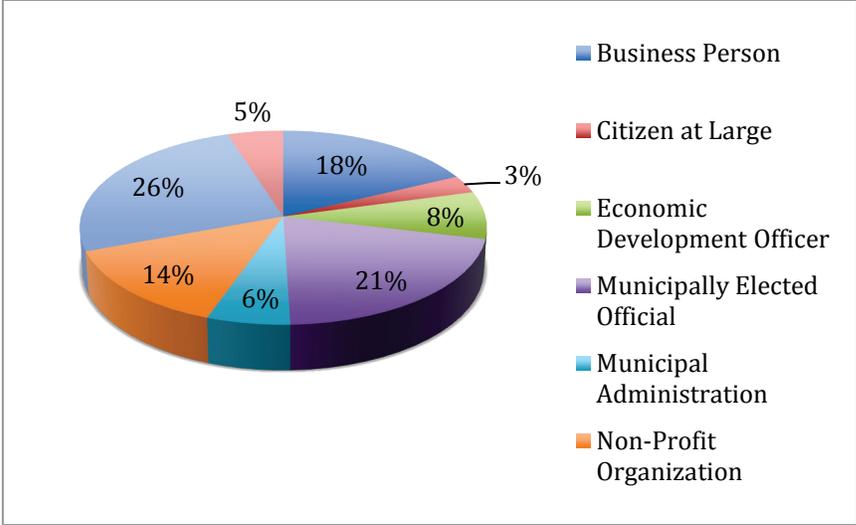


Figure 1: Description of Attendees (Question 1)

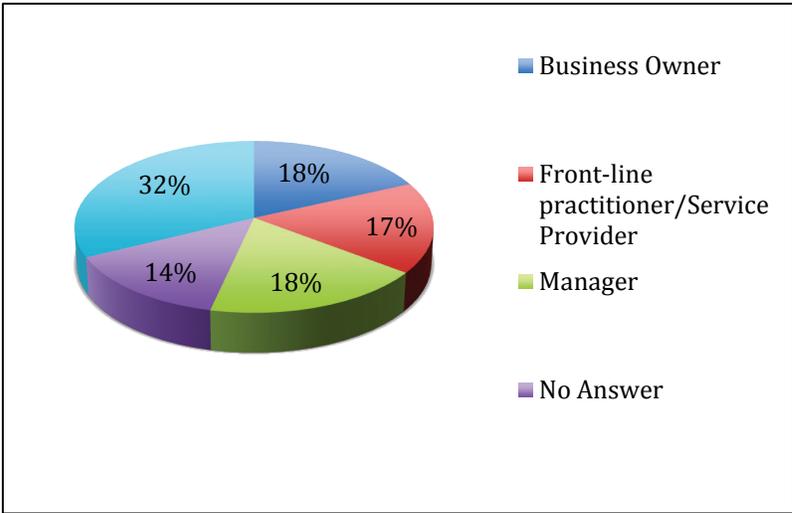


Figure 2: Description of Attendee Careers (Question 2)

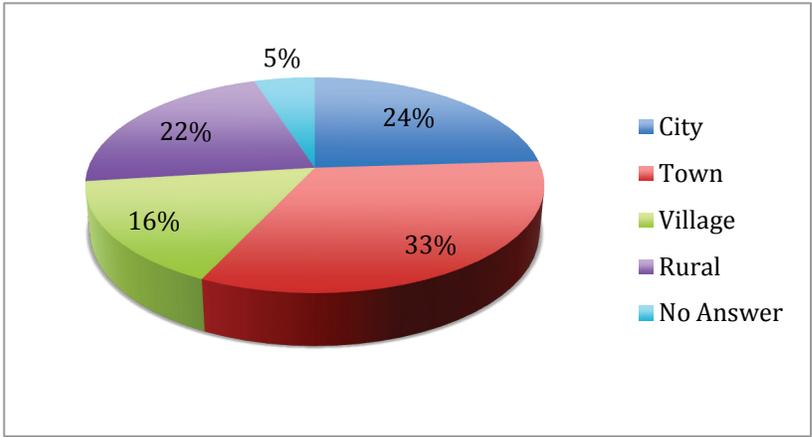


Figure 3: Description of Attendee Region Demographics (Question 3)

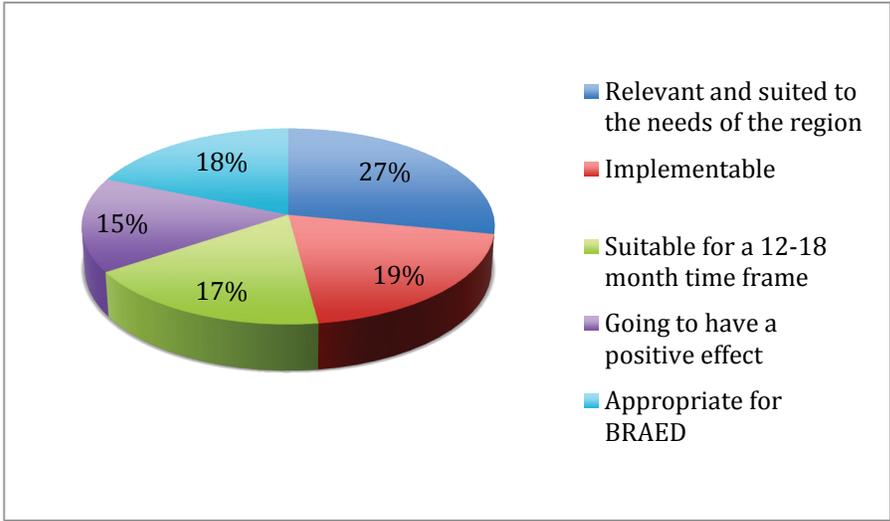


Figure 4: Description of Possible Results of Action Plans