



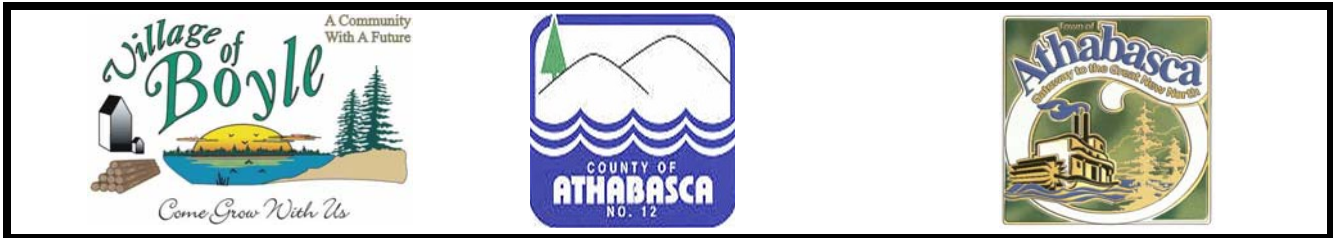
2006 Business Marketing Survey



**Town of
Athabasca**

**County of
Athabasca**

Village of Boyle



The Athabasca Regional Development Committee

The purpose of the ARDC Committee to create an orderly and positive impact in the region by focusing on:

- *Providing a visible mechanism for residents, businesses and municipal governments to identify economic development issues and to foster active partnerships and initiatives to address those issue.*
- *To work with other agencies to support regional community and economic development initiatives.*
- *To work with the greater region to unify and promote the said region, and*
- *To promote sustainable and orderly development within our defined and greater region.*

Business Marketing Survey of Athabasca, Boyle & County of Athabasca

This survey was conducted by Athabasca Regional Development Committee.

It is supported by:

Town of Athabasca

County of Athabasca

The committee would like to give a special thanks to the Lesser Slave Lake Community Development Corporation for giving us permission to use their marketing survey as a template.

We would also like to thank those people who did take the time to answer the questions in this survey. We also appreciate the assistance of those who helped to interview, compile and prepare the information within this report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	Page 2
Introduction	Page 3
Survey Process.....	Page 4
Business Marketing Survey of Athabasca, Boyle & County of Athabasca	Page 5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the summer of 2006, the Athabasca Regional Development Committee (ARDC) developed a business marketing survey to gauge the region's business climate with the objective of aiding ARDC in its endeavours, assisting community members and developers and ultimately providing the future community economic development officer with valuable source materials.

Various methodologies were considered and in the end it was decided to adapt a survey that had been provided by the Slave Lake Region. The original goal was to have 55 surveys completed but, eventually, only 31 businesses were able to participate. The composition of the sample included businesses and institutions of varying sizes and sectors from the Town of Athabasca, the County of Athabasca and the Village of Boyle. It should be noted that **due to size and make-up of the eventual sample, the results of the survey can only be viewed as a snapshot of those businesses participating. No attempt should be made to interpret the results as representing the balance of the businesses in our target region.**

The format of the survey was designed in six blocks, with questions that focused on the business's:

1. profile including the location, size, target markets and competitive advantage.
2. planning process (growth and anticipated changes).
3. competition including competitors, outside purchasing and barriers to expansion.
4. current challenges
5. approach to marketing and promotion
6. labour and management training needs

The survey also provided the respondents with an open-ended question, specifically:

'If there was anything that the community could do to help your business, what would it be?'

In general, the responses served to summarize the overall tone of the survey. They fell into the following categories (priority was not assigned to any category):

1. Community Directory – The need for, and promotion, of a community directory
2. Amenities – This referred to the use of local transportation companies and the need for more daycare, services for families and shopping opportunities.
3. Training – The desire for local training opportunities with a mention of a need for technical training prior to, and after, a business is established.
4. Business Assistance/Development - Responses related to a need for planning so that opportunities could be taken advantage of. There was also encouragement to develop both industrial and residential land. People want to see municipalities and businesses working together on local promotion. It was also suggested that new businesses should be welcomed and that there was a need for someone to direct questions to. A job fair outside the region was also proposed.
5. Housing – The need for more rental and affordable accommodation was mentioned. It was suggested that there be incentives to entice people to live here.
6. Miscellaneous – The value of employment by young adults and overall work mentality was stated. Also, a request for local suppliers and delivery was expressed.

Although this survey did not generate as much input as we had hoped, it does demonstrate that there are some areas that people were satisfied with at that time and some other areas where a need for change is perceived.

INTRODUCTION

The Athabasca Regional Development Committee was formed to address the need for a community based approach to community and economic development issues. The committee decides as a group on the priority of issues and forms subcommittees to address ways to help municipal decision makers or community participants. Some of the top issues have been:

- need affordable housing
- need for a land inventory and infrastructure strategy
- need for an immigration plan
- interest in a venue for business incubation
- empty business space utilized

Often there are more questions than answers that arise and it is not known if we have specific issues or not. The idea of the business survey arose in order to get a better understanding of the reality in the Athabasca region. The process is explained below.

It must be noted that only 31 surveys were completed and generalizations cannot be made based on the small data set. This report is simply a snapshot of the businesses surveyed at one point in time. The numbers reported are frequencies and percentages have been added to make it easier to compare the data. They are not statistically significant. It is difficult to make any conclusions about this data. Each person can interpret the data as they will, but are cautioned against it being representative of the overall picture.

PROCESS FOR BUSINESS MARKETING SURVEYS PORTION OF THE PROJECT

A number of people who are economic development positions around the province were contacted to find out their experience with doing business surveys. A survey that was done by the Lesser Slave Lake Community Development Corporation (LSLCDC) was found to ask a lot of the same questions that we wanted answers for. We were given permission to use the LSLCDC survey as a template and made some changes to suit our communities.

This survey was not done randomly. Rather, a cross section of small, medium and large organizations were selected from the Athabasca Business Directory that were felt to reflect various aspects of the community. For example it was important to have input from the different regions of the survey area, representing different products and services offerings. Originally, the sample size was intended to be 55 organizations, but getting responses proved to be difficult, even after going back to the list and adding more organizations, the final number of completed responses was 31. Surveys were administered in person. Most of the data was compiled by an individual with statistical research experience from Athabasca University. Commentary and final assemblage of the survey was done by town employees and members of the committee.

Survey Process

The following report is based on the responses included on the 31 questionnaires that were completed.

Graphs and tables are provided as a summary of the different responses obtained. Before each table, the question that was asked to respondents is included as well as the number of responses they were allowed to give.

The tables presented show the different categories/options given to the respondents and also the corresponding percentages for each.

It is worth noting that there were different types of questions, some with a different number of responses accepted. That is, there were questions that accepted only one response, such as Q1 "How long have you operated this business in the Athabasca area?" In these types of questions, the frequencies presented in the corresponding table add up to the total number of respondents and the percentages add up to 100%.

There were some questions of this type that were subordinated or connected to a previous question. In these cases the totals add up to the total of the category it is linked to. For example Q3, no. "If no, where is business headquarters?" This should have only been answered by those who had answered "No" to question 3.

Another type of questions was where **up to three** responses were accepted, for example Q2. "Your business primarily provides goods/services to what industry(ies)?" In such cases the respondents were allowed multiple responses, as were they in those like Q4 where they were allowed ALL possible answers. Therefore, the sum of frequencies does not add up to the number of respondents. For better interpretation, the percentages shown are calculated as follows: number of responses in category divided by total number of respondents to the question.

For all questions where the option of "**up to three answers**" was given, if the respondent chose more than 3 options, it was coded as **wrong** and the actual categories circled were not included in the analysis. This policy was adopted because we cannot conjecture on which 3 choices were preferred by the respondent. Hence, rather than 'artificially' biasing the analysis of that response, we kept the ones that responded correctly (up to three choices).

Q1. How long have you operated this business in the Athabasca area?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
2 Years or Less	1	3.2
3 – 5 Years	2	6.4
6 – 10 Years	6	19.4
Over 10 Years	22	71.0
Total Responses	31	100.0

Of the businesses surveyed, more than three quarters indicated they have been established in the area for at least 10 years.

Q2. Your business primarily provides goods/services to what industry(ies) ? (Maximum of 3)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Accommodations	6	8.0
Agriculture/Fishing	4	5.3
Automotive	1	1.3
Building/Landscaping	3	4.0
Business Services	0	0.0
Communications	0	0.0
Education/Training	12	16.0
Energy	1	1.3
Entertainment/Culture	0	0.0
Financial	2	2.7
Food Services	10	13.3
Forestry	3	4.0
Health & Wellness	2	2.7
Industrial Services	3	4.0
Interior Decorating	0	0.0
Legal Services	2	2.7
Personal Services	3	4.0
Real Estate/Property	0	0.0
Management	11	14.7
Retail/Services	5	6.7
Tourism/Recreation	1	1.3
Travel/Transport	6	8.0
Total Responses	75	100.0

Education/Training, Management and Food Services can be taken as the ones that provide the largest market of the businesses surveyed, with each of these well ahead of the other categories (in a one to one comparison).

Q3. Is the business locally owned?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	26	83.9
No	5	16.1
Total Responses	31	100.0

Over 80% of the businesses who responded are locally owned.

3b. If no, where is the business headquarters?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
In larger urban center in Alberta	2	50.0
In northern Alberta	1	25.0
Out of Province	1	25.0
Outside of Canada	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Total Responses	4	100.0

Of the businesses that are not locally owned, about 50% have their headquarters in a larger urban centre in Alberta, presumably in Edmonton or Calgary.

Q4. Do you have any major problems currently affecting your business operations? (all appropriate answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
By-laws/local regulations	1	1.8
Distance from markets	3	5.5
Education/Training	4	7.5
Financing	0	0.0
Electronic communication	2	3.8
Qualified Labour	21	38.9
Lack of strategic planning	0	0.0
Municipal Regulations	3	5.5
Pollution	0	0.0
Provincial Regulations	1	1.8
Quality Control/ISO certification	0	0.0
Taxes	4	7.5
Technology	0	0.0
Transportation	3	5.5
Utilities (electricity, gas)	7	13.0
Waste Management	1	1.8
Water Quantity/Quality	1	1.8
Zoning	2	3.8
Other Problems	1	1.8
Total Responses	54	100.0

Finding qualified labour is clearly perceived to be a problem, being selected by more than half of those who answered this question.

Q5. Within the next three years, does your business plan to: (appropriate answer)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Relocate	1	3.2
Downsize	11	35.5
Expand	19	61.3
Stay the same	0	0.0
Total Responses	31	100.0

These responses portray a sense of confidence and stability in the market for the area, with over half of the businesses planning to stay and expand their business.

Q6. If your business relocates, would it be in: (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Central Alberta	0	
Close to or in a major Alberta city	0	
County of Athabasca	0	
Town of Athabasca	0	
Southern Alberta	0	
Village of Boyle	0	
Other	0	
Total Responses	0	100.0

The one business owner that indicated relocation in Q5, did not to respond to Q6.

Q7. Please indicate which problems, if any, that you think might occur when you downsize or expand your business using the list below. (all applicable answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Building costs	5	20.9
Financing	2	8.3
Labour	8	33.3
Land costs	1	4.2
Management	2	8.3
Marketing	1	4.2
Zoning/Regulations	3	12.5
Land/Building availability	2	8.3
Other	0	0.0
Total Responses	24	100.0

The businesses that plan to downsize or expand foresee a problem with labour. Building costs and zoning/regulations also seem to have an impact of contributing problems to businesses downsizing and expanding.

Q8. You established your business in the Athabasca area because: (all applicable answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Close to nature	2	3.8
Close to major markets	4	7.4
It was close to home	16	29.6
Physical appearance of community (ies)	1	1.9
You bought an existing business	14	25.9
You came here because of lifestyle	4	7.4
You saw marketing need in area	9	16.6
Land/Building availability	1	1.9
Other	3	5.5
Total Responses	54	100.0

Over half of the businesses in the survey area were established because they were close to home. Another major reason was the purchase of an existing business.

Q9. The greatest amount of total annual sales for the business come from: (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Agriculture & Farming	1	3.2
Forestry & Forestry Related	4	13.0
Government Agencies & Institutions	0	0.0
Local Residents/Households	9	29.0
Non-resident Highway Traffic	1	3.2
Oil Companies & Oil/Gas Field Related	13	41.9
Visitors to the Area/Temporary Residents	1	3.2
Other	2	6.5
Total Responses	31	100.0

Of the businesses that were asked in the survey area, the greatest annual sales come from oil and gas companies with over 40%. Local residents/households are the next most important customers in terms of annual sales to those surveyed.

Q10. Where is your greatest competition from? (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Edmonton Area	9	29.0
Lac La Biche Area	5	16.1
Town of Athabasca & Immediate Area	11	35.5
Wabasca Area	0	0.0
Westlock Area	1	3.2
Other	5	16.2
Total Responses	31	100.0

The businesses consider their greatest competition to be from the Town of Athabasca and immediate area, with about 35% of the responses. About 29 % of the businesses in the survey area see Edmonton as the next competition.

Q11. What are your business's greatest competitive advantages? (all applicable answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Customer Service	25	15.8
Employees	22	14.0
Knowledge/Experience	23	14.6
Location	18	11.5
Low Overhead	4	2.6
Price	10	6.4
Quality Products/Services	23	14.6
Reputation	26	16.5
Suppliers	6	3.8
Other	1	0.2
Total Responses	158	100.0

In the survey area, there are many contributing factors to the competitive advantages of the businesses. Reputation, customer service, quality products/service and knowledge/experience are important to those who responded.

Q12. What target markets or customers are essential for the success of your business? (top 3 only)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Local Residents	26	83.9
Forest Industry	14	45.2
Hospitality Industry	1	3.2
Oil/Gas Industry	21	67.7
Retail Industry	3	9.7
Service Industry	3	9.7
Tourism/Visitors to the Area	11	35.5
Other	2	6.5
Total Responses	31	

Local residents are the main target market of those businesses surveyed.

Q13. What percentage of business revenue, coming from the local sales, is generated in the immediate area? (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Less than 25% Local Sales	7	22.6
Between 25% - 50% Local Sales	5	16.1
Between 51% - 75% Local Sales	16	51.6
Almost all Local Sales	3	9.7
Total Responses	31	100.0

The majority of businesses surveyed indicate that over half of their revenue comes from local sales.

Q14. Have business revenues over the past three years: (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Increased	26	83.9
Decreased	4	12.9
Remained about the Same	1	3.2
Total Responses	31	100.0

Over 80% of the respondents indicated business revenues have increased over the past three years.

Q15. In the next three years, do you expect business revenues to: (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Increase	24	77.4
Decrease	2	6.5
Remain about the Same	5	16.1
Total Responses	31	100.0

Most businesses surveyed expect their revenues to increase.

Q16. What aspect of your business offers the greatest potential for growth? (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Addition of greater variety of products	6	19.4
Expansion of market area	5	16.1
Expansion of one or two main product lines	3	9.7
Expansion of types of service	5	16.1
Greater concentration on providing better customer service	6	19.4
Relocation outside Athabasca	1	3.2
Relocation within the Athabasca area	0	0.0
Other	5	16.1
Total Responses	31	100.0

A variety of responses were received for this question.

Q17. How would you rate your industry's growth potential in the next few years? (only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Excellent	9	29.0
Fair	7	22.6
Good	13	41.9
Poor	0	0.0
Don't Know	2	6.5
Total Responses	31	100.0

Business owners are optimistic about their industry's growth potential.

Q18. What are the greatest challenges or threats your business will face in the next few years:
(maximum of three answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Changing consumer needs/expectations	7	22.6
Downturn in global economy	15	48.4
Increasing competition	8	25.8
Increasing labour costs	20	64.5
Increasing overhead costs	9	29.0
International trade disputes	0	0.0
Local/regional industry disputes	2	6.5
Lack of skilled workers	14	45.2
Legislation (Local, Provincial, Federal)	4	12.9
Other	1	3.2
Total Responses	31	

Businesses in the survey area feel that increasing labour costs are one of the greatest challenges. Lack of skilled workers and a downturn in the global economy are also anticipated challenges.

Q19. What methods of business promotion are most effective for you? (maximum of three answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Billboards	1	3.2
Cross promotions with other business	2	6.5
Flyers & Brochures	11	35.5
In-house Specials	3	9.7
Internet	2	6.5
Magazines/Other Publications	0	0.0
Newspaper Advertising	14	45.2
Radio	3	9.7
Signage (Store front, Vehicle, etc.)	10	32.3
Television	1	3.2
Trade shows & Business Events	0	0.0
Word of mouth	22	71.0
Other	1	3.2
Total Responses	31	

Remembering that reputation was deemed to be very important for businesses in Q11, it makes sense that businesses rely on word of mouth as one of their methods of promotion. For paid methods newspaper, flyers and brochures are preferred.

Q20. What type of goods/services does your business purchase outside of the local area? (all applicable answers)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Agriculture products/services	1	1.0
Automotive purchases/repairs	9	8.2
Banking services	3	2.7
Computers & related	9	8.2
Construction materials	3	2.7
Entertainment	1	1.0
Groceries/food stuff	4	3.6
Industrial supplies	12	11.0
Legal/accounting services	12	11.0
Livestock & related services	1	1.0
Office Supplies/furniture	1	1.0
Promotional materials & expertise	16	14.7
Raw materials	9	8.2
Technical services	6	5.5
Trades people	6	5.5
Training/professional development	5	4.6
Other	11	10.1
Total Responses	109	100.0

A wide variety of goods and services are purchased outside the area with promotional materials & expertise and industrial supplies being the top two services business indicated.

Q21. Why does your business purchase goods/services outside the local area? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Buying decisions are made at the regional or head office located outside the area	11	23.4
Goods/services are not available locally	26	55.3
Local goods/services are not competitively priced	7	14.9
Not satisfied with local customer service	2	4.3
Other	1	2.1
Total Responses	47	100.0

Lack of local availability is the main reason that respondents indicated they purchase goods from outside the area.

Q22. What types of goods and services does your business purchase locally? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Agriculture products/services	5	2.2
Automotive purchases/repairs	27	12.3
Banking services	26	11.9
Computers & related	18	8.2
Construction materials	16	7.3
Entertainment	12	5.5
Groceries/food stuff	19	8.7
Industrial supplies	11	5.0
Legal/accounting services	20	9.1
Livestock & related services	3	1.4
Office Supplies/furniture	16	7.3
Promotional materials & expertise	10	4.6
Raw materials	5	2.3
Technical services	10	4.6
Trades people	18	8.2
Training/professional development	3	1.4
Other	0	0.0
Total Responses	219	100.0

There are a variety of goods and services that organizations purchase locally with automotive purchases/repairs and banking services receiving the most responses.

Q23. Are there any products, supplies or services you wish could be readily available locally?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	11	35.5
No	20	64.5
Total Responses	31	100.0

Some businesses indicated that there are some goods or services that they would like to have locally available, but more said there were none.

Q24. The business has how many employees in total at this time?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
1 – 5 Employees	11	35.5
6 – 10 Employees	7	22.6
11 – 25 Employees	5	16.1
26 – 50 Employees	4	12.9
51 – 100 Employees	2	6.5
Over 100 Employees	2	6.5
Total Responses	31	100.0

Most of the organization who responded indicated that they have less than 50 employees.

Q25. How many employees did the business have two years ago?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
The same number as now	17	54.8
More than it has now	2	6.5
Less than it has now	12	38.7
Total Responses	31	100.0

Most of the businesses who responded indicated that they have a similar number of employees as they did 2 years before the survey with many others saying they had fewer.

Q26. Do you have problems recruiting employees? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
No	11	20.0
Cost of Living	2	3.7
Lack of suitable Employment for Spouse	1	1.8
Unable to recruit workers with required skills/training and/or experience	13	23.6
Workers are not interested in relocating to Northern Alberta	6	10.9
Workers do not want to leave their home, community and/or family	0	0.0
Workers expect higher wages that what your business can afford	18	32.7
Other	4	7.2
Total Responses	55	100.0

Although a large number of respondents indicated that they do not have recruitment issues, those that did indicated that finding skilled workers and being able to meet wage expectations were problems.

Q27. Are there any types of positions in your business particularly hard to fill? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
No	13	27.1
Administration/Clerical	1	2.1
Food/Beverage Service	0	0.0
Hospitality Service	0	0.0
Machine Operators	2	4.2
Maintenance	0	0.0
Management	3	6.3
Professionals	2	4.2
Sales/Retail	4	8.3
Trades People	7	14.6
Computer programmers/Technicians	0	0.0
Janitorial/Housekeeping	1	2.1
Graphic arts/Printing	0	0.0
Truck Drivers	3	6.3
Agriculture/Farm related	0	0.0
Supervisors	3	6.3
University/College Graduates	1	2.1
Construction/contractors	1	2.1
Technicians	5	10.1
Other	2	4.2
Total Responses	48	100.0

A large number of respondents indicated 'no' they do not have a particular type of position they needed filled. Of those that said yes, trades people and technicians were specified.

Q28. What percentage of your present employees lived in the local area (Athabasca, Boyle or County of Athabasca) at the time they were hired?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
80% - 100%	25	80.6
50% - 79%	3	9.7
Less than half	3	9.7
Total Responses	31	100.0

The majority of respondents indicated that their present employees were already living in the area when they were hired.

Q29. Does your business have any major staffing problems? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
No	13	22.5
Budget restraints	2	3.5
Employee salary expectations too high	9	15.8
Employee/Spouse transfers/relocation	1	1.8
Inadequate employee training	1	1.8
Lack of employee qualifications	6	10.5
Lack of employee work experience	5	8.8
Lack of employee communication/people skills	3	5.3
Lack of employee technical skills	7	12.3
Poor work ethic of work force	7	12.3
Other	3	5.3
Total Responses	57	100.0

A number of respondents said that they do not have major staffing problems. Of those that did, high salary expectations, lack of technical skills and poor work ethic are issues.

Q30. Do you plan to increase your labour force in the next three years?

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	13	41.9
No	7	22.6
Don't Know	11	35.5
Total Responses	31	100.0

When asked if they plan to increase their labour force, many respondents said yes or they do not know.

Q31. If education and training are major staffing problems, what types of education and/or training are needed? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Basic Work Skills	15	24.6
Bookkeeping & Record Keeping	1	1.6
Clerical	1	1.6
College Degree & Other Programs	2	3.3
Computer	2	3.3
High School Upgrading	0	0.0
Management & Supervisory	5	8.2
Technical	4	6.6
Telephone Etiquette & Customer Service	11	18.0
Trades	11	18.0
Sales/Marketing	5	8.2
University	1	1.6
Other	3	5.0
Total Responses	61	100.0

The types of education and training that are needed are basic work skills, telephone etiquette & customer service, in addition to trades training.

Q32. In what areas do the management team and/or supervisors need additional training? (all answers that apply)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Communication (verbal)	8	10.1
Communication (written)	4	5.1
Conflict Resolution	9	11.4
Customer Service	6	7.6
Filing Systems (electronic and/or manual)	4	5.1
Management Succession Planning	8	10.1
Marketing	4	5.1
More Effective use of Internet	3	3.8
Quality Control	5	6.3
Record Keeping	5	6.3
Strategic Planning	3	3.8
Telephone Etiquette	5	6.3
Time Management	14	17.7
Other	1	1.3
Total Responses	79	100.0

A variety of responses were given for the areas of training that management and supervisors could use.

Q33. If there was anything the community could do to help your business, what would it be?

The following responses were given from the Business Marketing Survey in regards assistance that is required in the community in no particular order. They are recorded verbatim.

Community Directory

- Community directory listing available
- Have a business directory that was promoted more so more people were aware of it

Amenities

- Awareness of the airport in Athabasca
- Use local transport company
- The community could encourage more local shopping; encourage more variety of businesses in the area. For business owners who are not residents of the town, to have some say in town issues that affect the business and business owners
- Open reasonably priced daycare
- More community amenities i.e. Services for families

Training

- Training available for employees and employers to attend locally while still being able to keep up with their home life and not putting the employee or employer at a disadvantage
- Additional local technical training; make it easier for new business to open and to support existing business better

Business Assistance/Development

- Work together on progressive planning and thinking, taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves
- The town needs someone at the office at all times to answer questions that can answer questions about developments and on property in the town
- The town has to develop more land for commercial and residential use and to have and open ear to commercial business, welcome commercial business more, town and county need to work together better
- Encourage more people to move to this area by developing more businesses and infrastructure
- Be more cooperative for new businesses to open in the community
- The community could make an effort to have it's local consulting companies; the community could make the public more aware of local business
- EDC sponsored job fairs in large centre's to promote Athabasca and its employers

Housing

- More rental accommodations
- Affordable high density housing
- Entice people to live here, have more incentives

Miscellaneous

- People in the community, especially young adults, need to place more value on employment
- We are located in the county; more delivery to our door would be much appreciated. Not all local suppliers have service, although Edmonton's suppliers show up once a week

Q34. Overall, would you say the area is: (circle only one)

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
A great place to operate a business	13	41.9
An okay place to operate a business	17	54.8
A difficult place to operate a business	1	3.3
A terrible place to operate a business	0	0.0
Total Responses	31	100.0

Overall, those that responded feel that the area is a great or okay place to operate their business.