Project Comeback

Creating vibrant rural communities by retaining and attracting a young adult population

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Executive Summary

In rural British Columbia, many communities face demographic trends that see the youth in their communities leaving to seek opportunities and experiences elsewhere. In December 2012, the BC Rural Network and the Fraser Basin Council, with support from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training, started Project Comeback. The project has helped communities in rural British Columbia understand youth-retention in their specific communities and has helped to create community-specific projects that address the issues identified.

Five communities participated in Project Comeback: Smithers, Williams Lake, Chase, Kaslo, and the Regional District of Mt. Waddington. Initial research on youth-retention helped each community create a survey specific to their own community. The surveys were used to create a baseline of data for each community so they could assess the push and pull factors that local young people face when deciding to stay, return, or leave. While each community created a different survey dependent on their target population, all surveys asked participants to identify the aspects of their community that made them stay/return/relocate, and those that pushed them towards leaving. Questions from the surveys also asked participants to reflect on what they might look for in an ideal community, to see where any gaps or overlaps existed.

The surveys created rich data sets for each community; those results were then presented back to community members via a Project Comeback workshop. The workshops, held in each community, allowed for community members to engage with the project and consider the survey results from their own community's perspective. During the workshops, participants discussed potential projects that might affect the survey result implications, and many worked to prioritize the ideas suggested. The workshop outcomes became the focus of Project Comeback working groups, many formed from workshop participants or other key community members. The working groups worked closely with Project Comeback representative organizations to then implement community projects.

From April 2014 to December 2014, the communities developed and implemented their projects. These communities shared both the trend of youth out-migration and a resounding community interest that generated around this project. Many of the communities identified

gaps in connectivity between young adults and local opportunities, be those social or economic, as significant to retaining the population. Each community continues to work towards addressing the specific gap that affects it the most.

Collectively, the communities involved in Project Comeback are a great example for other rural communities facing similar trends of youth out-migration. The conversations started by Project Comeback have already brought attention to the subject and generated great interest in the communities, an additional positive effect of this project. There isn't a quick fix for youth out-migration, but Project Comeback has provided 5 communities with an understanding of what local young adults say matters to them, and how to ensure those factors become priorities moving forward.

Introduction

In British Columbia, many rural communities face twin demographic trends of youth out-migration and an aging baby boomer population. These trends trigger concerns, including the prospect that some local businesses will close because of fewer young people to take them over. A vibrant young population is an important part of a healthy community, both in terms of succession planning for local businesses and in ensuring an active, engaged, and well-rounded citizenry. Having young people involved and advocating for their generation in rural communities creates a space for youth to be recognized and appreciated in their home communities, and provides them with a place they may look to stay in or return to as they themselves age. Project Comeback has helped rural communities in British Columbia understand how they can better meet the needs of their younger citizens. This work has involved baseline surveys, review of best practices, community engagement, and establishing local projects to attract, engage, and retain youth.

Participating Communities

Five communities have been engaged in Project Comeback, and represent a cross-section of the diversity of rural British Columbia. Communities of different size, economies, and location have different push and pull factors that affect the decisions of the young adult population. Project Comeback is richer for this diversity, and other communities throughout British Columbia can look to the community most like theirs to consider the information most pertinent to their own scenario. The participating communities are Smithers (Smithers and District Chamber of Commerce), Williams Lake (City of Williams Lake), Chase (Village of Chase), Kaslo (North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society), and a region of Northern Vancouver Island (Regional District of Mt. Waddington).

Research: Literature Review on Youth Out-Migration

The initial phase of Project Comeback included a research component to look into youth retention and out-migration trends and compile research data to assist the participating communities in establishing their own community baseline. The research conducted resulted in an annotated bibliography of pertinent sources (attached to this report as Appendix A), a document for a community's initial assessment of their own situation (attached at Appendix B), and a document of example survey questions and considerations to assist with the communities' survey development process (attached as Appendix C).

Trends in Youth Out-Migration

Significant research has been conducted on youth out-migration and the trend for youth to leave their rural home communities after finishing high school. While employment and educational opportunities play a critical role in this decision making process, quality of life factors are increasingly important for young adults deciding where to establish themselves (Cantrell et al 2008). Understanding the norms of a community, especially those associated with the value put onto higher education and local educational opportunities, also has a critical impact on youth decision-making.

In rural British Columbia opportunities for higher education are often limited and many migrate to urban centers to both pursue their education and fulfill a societal norm of attending post-secondary schooling. Assessing what stigma may exist for those who chose to stay in their hometown may provide insight into the pressures or expectations that youth experience and the factors that may influence their decision to leave the community (Corbett 2007).

Youth perceptions' of their home community also plays a role in their decision to either stay or return. Feeling that there is "nothing to do" or having been left out of community engagement processes, youth are more inclined to move away when they do not feel a sense of involvement or attachment to their home communities (Donaldson 1987, Davies 2008). Connecting youth to the opportunities within their own communities is a step towards building effective retention; this connection can be to entrepreneurship, business succession, or to local decision-making/governmental processes. Creating a positive perception of place and

encouraging youth to pursue education and experiences in other communities can be a means of attracting those same people home again, with the skills and knowledge they have gained, once they begin to think about finding a community to settle in.

Engagement is also a strategy towards retaining youth/young adults that are new to a community as a failure to connect to a place in a meaningful way means that it is easier to leave and that young adults may look for that fuller sense of belonging in a different community (Bruce et al 2005). While employment is a critical factor for the relocation of young adults, it is not enough alone to retain that demographic for the long term. The research indicates that young adults consider a variety of factors and circumstances when considering a place to live and work and while there are trends pertaining to these factors, there is no formula for retention (Kirstein and Bandranaike 2004, Siegel 2008).

Push and Pull Factors

An analysis of youth out-migration and retention literature indicates that there are a variety of push and pull factors involved in youth decision-making. These factors include employment, education, access to services and amenities, quality of life considerations, perception of place, and community engagement. Strategies for youth retention and attraction need to carefully consider the circumstances specific to a community. Creating training programs in an area where there is limited employment opportunity for the skills offered can create a "learning to leave" situation. Aggressive recruitment campaigns without a plan for engagement for those new recruits when they arrive will not provide for community longevity. Strategies need to be comprehensive and acutely aware of a community's own push and pull realities.

The research collected in the initial phase of Project Comeback provided some examples and potential strategies for participating communities, but also emphasized the need to create strategies tailored specifically to each community. The information gathered facilitated the development of community specific surveys, a means of assessing the push and pull factors that each community faces.

Survey Development

Each of the five participating Project Communities developed and delivered a survey in their communities over the fall/winter of 2013-2014. The surveys are attached to this report as Appendix D. The community representatives selected a target audience and created a survey and survey delivery methodology to reach their audience. As such, the surveys were all different but reflect common questions that assess the push and pull factors specific to a community. Target audiences and distribution methods were also decided upon by the partner organization delivering the project.

Survey Results and Community Workshops

The initial surveys provided each community with a baseline of data from which to begin planning to address their specific youth-retention issues. Because of the diversity of the communities involved, the results of the surveys varied and each community took them in the direction that best fit their situation. There are, however, some commonalities that seem to affect young adult populations across rural British Columbia. Survey results were compiled by community representatives and put into a format that could be communicated back to the community (handouts, posters).

It became clear in the survey analysis that each community had certain issues or areas that stood out to the survey participants. Finding the overlaps or emphasis on certain factors that affect young adults in the survey data helped to bring these areas into focus. Workshops held in each community gave area residents an opportunity to talk about the push and pull factors they face and what the possibilities may be for change. The workshop discussions provided prioritization of the factors and questions presented in the survey and helped engage local residents towards carrying a project forward.

Survey Discussion

The experiences of the communities participating in Project Comeback support current literature on issues related to youth retention: while each community faces push and pull

factors specific to their own community, there are trends that weigh on the decisions that youth and young adults make when deciding where to make their homes.

"Youth"

Deciding upon a specific target audience shaped the focus in each community as young adults inevitably identify different priorities as they age. It is critical to recognize how this impacted survey results and project direction. High-school youth identify very different push and pull factors than young adults with small children assessing where to buy their first home. The definition of "youth" has been discussed repeatedly throughout this process. Many decided to use the term "young adults" to better represent their target audience.

While "youth" might range from 15-39, it is important when attempting to engage a certain demographic to consider how they identify themselves. Many young adults, or young professionals in the 20-35 year age range, may associate the word "youth" to teenagers and not think about the factors that they themselves think about when choosing a place to live. Each community clearly identified their target audience when designing their survey; this is an integral first step towards creating an effective and engaging project within the demographic selected.

Common Themes

Survey results and workshops in all the participating communities indicated that connecting young people to their communities in a meaningful way can be an effective retention strategy. Many in the surveys identified a 'sense of community' as something that was important to them. Many also identified a lack of social opportunities in rural communities; in some of the communities this appeared to be due to perception or a lack of visibility or awareness about ongoing activities and events. Connecting local organizations involved in different aspects of community development to each other, to help pool both resources and capacity, has been a positive outcome of Project Comeback in the participating communities, and has become a means of supporting the community projects through implementation.

Recognizing the relatively small scope and budget of Project Comeback, community representatives encouraged their communities to dream big but to choose a feasible project. It

became clear in all of the communities that retaining and attracting young people is an interest shared by many in the community, from educators to employers, and that the communities' projects are more likely to find success if they complement the work that others are already engaged in, or are interested in supporting. A common theme in the communities was the far-reaching community interest generated by this topic. It seems everyone is interested in the good and bad their home community has to offer, and everyone has an idea for what could make the place better.

To some degree, each community identified a shared set of factors that affect youth decision-making processes. These are employment, education/training opportunities, access to recreation, access to health services, and quality of life. For many youth and young adults, they identify a need for balance of these factors in their ideal community, and that there also needs to be a positive association between young people and the opportunities they perceive to be available to them in their home community.

Community Working Groups and Action Plans

During the course of distributing survey results and engaging community members through workshop events, the communities participating in Project Comeback all identified prospective members of their Project Comeback working groups. The working groups worked in each community to finalize the project that would address their specific youth-retention issue or opportunity. A template for project action planning was been provided to community representatives with the intention that their working group approve and begin to implement the project.

Both the surveys and workshops proved effective not only in assessing the push and pull factors of each community but also in engaging the community in the project. The issue of youth retention/attraction is one that has impacts across community organizations, and therefore there appears potential for pooling resources and collaboration as Project Comeback community project impacts are reviewed and the data ripples out beyond the participating communities.

In development of their surveys, workshops, working groups and community projects, each participant in Project Comeback provides a case study for other rural communities to look to. From target audience to final project, the communities built their Project Comeback from the ground up and their results are indicative of British Columbia's broader youth-retention issues. It is hoped that the following case studies can assist additional communities in assessing their own situation and towards creating effective solutions.

Community Projects (Case Studies)

Smithers *District* Chamber of Commerce
...We Mean Business

Community Description

Located in northwestern British Columbia, the Town of Smithers has a population of approximately 5000 and an emphasis on tourism in their economic platform. Set in the Bulkley Valley, the town has access to a ski hill, a scenic mountain viewscape, and additional industrial development (forestry, mining) that provides the town's economic baseline. Smithers was involved in an earlier pilot of Project Comeback and as a result issued an engaging booklet documenting members of the community that had left Smithers to pursue education and other opportunities but then found themselves returned to their hometowns later in life. The Kids Came Back has been a very well received publication, documenting the positive aspects of the community that residents identify as the reasons they returned and the reasons they intend to stay. The booklet is used in employer recruitment/re-location packages and is distributed at local tourism outlets. The Smithers District Chamber of Commerce is the partner organization on Project Comeback and has been actively engaged in assessing and addressing the factors that will promote young adult retention in their community.

Survey Development

The Smithers District Chamber of Commerce selected three target audiences and adjusted their survey template to address these specific demographics. Their target audiences were: teenager (up to 18 years old), young adult (first job or university), and adult over thirty who has moved back to rural BC. The surveys all worked to assess the decision-making processes that young adults are either planning to make (as they finish high school or university) or have made (returning to Smithers after time away).

Smithers' surveys were distributed throughout the community. High school teachers were involved to distribute the surveys in class and have them filled out by students. Direct communication with the older young-adult demographic proved the best way to ensure the surveys were completed. Smithers did not find social media to be effective for survey distribution in their community but rather that direct communication facilitated a higher rate of survey distribution and completion. Over 100 surveys were completed in the community.

Survey Results and Community Workshop

The Smithers District Chamber of Commerce presented the survey results back to their community members at an evening workshop held on January 21st, 2014. Through analysis of their survey data they had identified eight priority areas to be discussed by community members at the workshop. The eight items were put into question format and distributed to small-group discussion tables. The questions were:

- How do we keep Smithers attractive and capitalize on and maintain our strengths: such as the main identified issues from the survey results… the importance of having our airport, our hospital and a safe environment while our population increases?

- Marketing: How to we compete with other communities in developing economic strategies to attract young adults to rural BC?

- Transportation and travel costs have been identified in the surveys as challenges to rural living. How do we ensure that these don't remain as obstacles to development in the north (air, bus, train, Highway 16, and road conditions)?

- Shopping: How do we celebrate the abundance of what we have and maintain our uniqueness while encouraging entrepreneurs to address the voids in retail products, customer service and the survey-identified need for more nightlife?

- Education: What can be added to existing post-secondary opportunities to address survey results that would lead to more people staying or returning to their roots?

- Industry: How do we attract the diversity of industries needed to grow our economy and maintain the Smithers experience?

- Housing: In the survey housing was identified as affordable but rental units difficult to find. How do we keep housing affordable and suitable for the kind of community you envision?
- How do we balance the realities of our population with the desire, from the survey results, to have big-city amenities in small rural BC?

The questions sum up the priority issues that became apparent for Smithers through the process of their survey, and they are issues that resonate with other rural BC communities. The workshop provided a space for community members to both discuss and further prioritize these factors, working towards identifying the specific project to carry forward. The workshop featured keynote speakers, members of the community that have had success and/or experience coming back to the community and balancing economics with quality of life.

"I moved back 100% for family, the environment and the mountains."
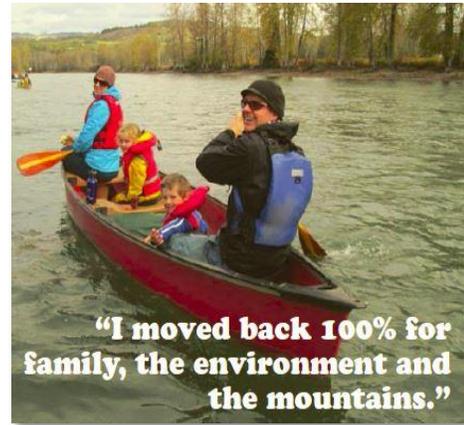
A particular issue identified during the Smithers' workshop was succession planning: how to connect local youth or young adults with the business opportunities in their own community. It appeared that this was an opportunity to address both the employment and education opportunities gaps identified in the survey results, by connecting young people with the skills they might need to take over existing businesses at home, and gaining the experience needed to do so.
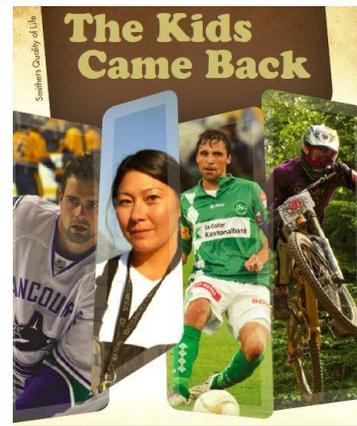
The Kids Came Back

Smithers also distributed an updated Kids Came Back publication at the workshop. The booklet features successful "comeback kids", community members that were raised in Smithers, left for education and other opportunities, and have returned to contribute their experiences back into the community. The publication has been very well received and is used by the Smithers Chamber of Commerce in their re-location packages for those new to Smithers and for employers looking to recruit people from out of the area.   The publication is available

online at http://smitherschamber.com/images/stories/kids-came-back.pdf. Highlighting positive stories and the potential for success and a high quality of life in rural BC has proved effective for Smithers and also illustrates to the young people still living there what their hometown has to offer them.

Project Plan and Implementation

The Smithers District Chamber of Commerce decided to carry forward their success with the Kids Came Back publication to address the newly identified youth-retention issues. As a part of their final project, the Chamber has produced a 'Smithers Shines' publication. The print booklet will honour and acknowledge 20 featured organizations that contribute to the vibrancy and culture of the community. The organizations are those that put on events, annually or monthly, that attract visitors (Midsummer Festival, Fall Fair, Telkwa Demolition Derby) and locals (coffee houses, backcountry toured hiking trips, guitar camps, etc.). The organizations have been thrilled to be featured in a publication that shines a light on their efforts. It was identified in the initial Project Survey that people live in communities (or come back to communities) if there is an abundance of events, activities and cultural/recreational opportunities for them and their families to participate in. Smithers' culture is rich and vibrant and 'Smithers Shines' showcases this in a comprehensive way.
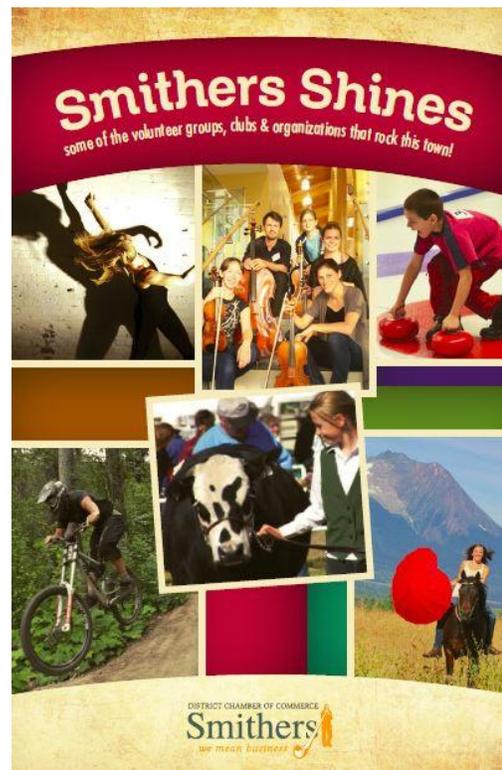
Building on this increased awareness for local events, activities, and cultural happenings, the Chamber also worked to develop an online events site. The website allow for organizations and individuals to add their upcoming events to a live site that is both available online, and is streamed in key locations around Smithers (Visitor Centre, local downtown coffee shop).

Smithersevents.com is a highly effective and comprehensive events site that makes both locals and visitors aware of the many activities happening around the town. It has been extremely successful in the operation of the Visitor Centre and keeping tourists longer in the community as they are made aware of events that will be occurring. As for the local's awareness, the site has contributed to sold-out events around town on a consistent basis. As

local entertainment opportunities were identified in the initial survey as a key component of 'quality of life' for young adults, the Chamber also organized an outdoor event series that took place on Friday evenings over the summer months. 'Music on Main – the Lawnchair Lounge' enjoyed a successful run over the summer of 2014 and not only engaged young people to attend, but also to participate. The evenings featured many local performers including youth.

As a final component of Smithers' project to enhance awareness of local opportunities and activities, the Chamber initiated a "pop up" location to highlight local retail and small businesses. These temporary stores are an excellent method of providing exposure for the 'hidden economy' in Smithers. Currently small rural towns are feeling the effect of shopping leakage that has accompanied the closure of large department stores. Through its work on Project Comeback the Chamber obtained a list of over 55 home-based businesses and is currently providing exposure to them as they "pop-up" at monthly Chamber luncheons.

The future plan is to obtain a retail lease space in the downtown core that will allow these businesses to "pop up" and be accessed by residents. Locals may think there is no place in town to buy linens, but the Chamber has home-based linen store interested in "popping up". Residents may also think they have to leave town to buy kids clothing and toys but both of

those are available locally as well. Many of these home-based businesses just need initial exposure to increase their clientele, to keep residents shopping locally, and to keep local people viably employed. The Chamber's hope is that once established the lease recovery cost will be covered by the businesses that will be in place for a particular month. Cooperative ideas have been discussed and the Chamber is currently in the process of finding out how many of businesses will participate. While this project is ongoing, Project Comeback provided the groundwork for its future success.

Contribution to Youth-Retention

Project Comeback has enabled the Chamber of Commerce to host many successful activities that address some of the initial survey responses (and roundtable response suggestions from a subsequent youth forum) and provide information on opportunities for business, for youth, and entrepreneurial ventures. The Chamber hosted Alan Mallory, a professional speaker and trainer who, along with his family, climbed Mount Everest. He used his experiences and adapted his training session to address succession planning. The speaking event had 75 people in attendance and allowed us to invite many of the youth who were involved in the initial survey to attend, meet and learn from Mr. Mallory.

Following this session the Chamber hosted a gathering with representatives from Venture Connect to discuss business acquisition opportunities. Through a relationship with the Women's Enterprise Centre the Chamber manager attended a Peer Mentoring Session at the Centre, delivered by the Humphrey Training Group. It is the expectation of the WEC that a 'Women in Business' Entrepreneurial Training Session, using the tools obtained, will be provided locally to the young entrepreneurs the Chamber has been in contact with through Project Comeback. Also there has been contact with a representative from Futurepreneur and a training day has been arranged where youth will be invited to talk about the opportunities this entity provides.

The publications created during Project Comeback highlight the positive experiences from young area residents as well as the many local opportunities and events there are for the young population to access and enjoy. The Smithers Events page also creates a conduit for area residents and visitors to learn about and access local events and activities. These initiatives all

connect to the identified need of having local information readily and easily accessible for youth and young adults.

Smithers Project Sustainability

The initiatives created in Smithers through Project Comeback complement the mandate of the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce and the needs of the community that the

Chamber has helped identify. As such, the publications produced and momentum gathered towards creating an enlivened space for young adults will sustain themselves within the organizational initiatives of the Chamber and the community as a whole.

The Chamber will continue to fund the Smithers Events site as it has proven to be an effective mechanism towards engaging the community and communicating the breadth of activities and events available both to locals and visitors. The Chamber will also work towards accessing additional funding to support their Pop Up initiative, estimating that an investment of $5000 annually would enable the success of the program.

Community Description

Williams Lake is located in the Cariboo region of British Columbia and has a population of approximately 12,000 but services a broader population that lives in areas outlying the city. With traditional industries of forestry and mining providing the city's economic mainstays, the region is also host to significant agricultural developments (ranching and farming) and tourism opportunities. The partner organization on Project Comeback has been the City of Williams Lake, and the project has had positive overlaps with current City initiatives, including a new branding campaign for the City's image and other support for local small business economic stability and development. Williams Lake faces youth-retention issues similar to many communities in British Columbia that are heavily reliant on resource industries and face pressures when those industries experience downturns. The City also has a rough and tumble reputation, a significant factor when considering recruitment of young adults from other places, and often a stereotype that does not reflect the actual populace or opportunities available. One of the larger Project Comeback communities, Williams Lake may provide a model for other similar sized communities facing a diminishing forestry sector and a need for economic diversification and community revitalization.

Survey Development

The City of Williams Lake chose a young adult target audience, focusing their survey on the demographic aged 20-35. The City conducted key informant interviews with select individuals from within the target audience in an effort to focus their survey questions and gain specific and meaningful data from the process. Four face-to-face interviews with young adults

new to the community helped to highlight the push and pull factors that those individuals associated with Williams Lake. The City then worked to develop survey questions that would further unveil these factors.

City representatives chose an online survey delivery system to distribute the questions amongst the target demographic. 'Thoughtstream' is a survey tool that allows participants to comment and collect their thoughts on all questions; it also provides mechanisms for following up and refining the questions after the survey closes. Thirty-three people completed the survey. While this number cannot be seen as representative of the larger community, the rich data provided by survey participants provided an insightful analysis of the factors young adults in Williams Lake face. Upon collection of the survey data the results were compiled and survey participants were contacted again to further prioritize components of the survey.

Survey Results and Community Workshop

After the initial survey responses were collected, participants were asked (via the survey tool) to revisit several questions and prioritize certain factors. Six questions were re-asked in a prioritization format; these questions were:

- What factors most influenced your decision to move (stay/return) to Williams Lake?
- What factors might make you consider leaving Williams Lake?
- What aspects are most important to you in a community?

- What were your early impressions of Williams Lake?

- What do you consider to be Williams Lake's strongest "selling features"?

- How do you find out about Williams Lake events or activities that are in your areas of interest?

Asking these questions helped to refine the survey data, and to identify what appeared to be the strongest push and pull factors for young adults new to the community. Williams Lake is a community that is greatly affected by people's perception of place and the reputation that the community has both from within and outside the community. It was clear in the survey results that young adults new to the community needed to be able to connect to the community beyond their first impressions of the city (not always positive). Survey participants identified very positive experiences when they were able to connect with events, activities, groups and individuals longstanding in the community. It appeared that a significant gap existed between the many things happening in the community and newcomers trying to access information about those events and activities.

As per the literature regarding youth retention that connects engagement with retention, it seemed imperative to Williams Lake to address the connectivity gap for their young adult population and those thinking about relocating to the area. In their community workshop, held February 24th, 2014, this was a priority area of interest for those participating. When presented with the survey results analysis and asked to brainstorm potential project ideas, workshop participants came

up with 4 priority areas. The top 2 ideas generated over the course of the evening were:

- Welcome Wagon: Revive the Welcome Wagon idea with more community involvement; connect longer-term residents with newcomers; use survey to link

people and services appropriately. A new Welcome Wagon format that would use social media tailored to the individual; maybe create an app.

- Organized Marketing Online: An organized, connected/linked online presence for Williams Lake events, activities, resources, groups, platform to links; promotion, coordination, information, entertainment, business services etc... a central online hub for information that is connected to a physical hub for finding out about what is happening in the community.

Williams Lake's survey results and community workshop indicated that while there are many factors that affect young adults deciding where to live, one critical area is connecting to the local community and the events/activities that are happening there. Young adults primarily use the Internet to find out about what is going on in a community, and many rural communities may not be as developed in this area or have a central place to have this information communicated. This identified gap became the focus of Williams Lake's Project Comeback.

Project Plan and Implementation

Input from the workshop and the advisory committee indicated that Williams Lake needed to improve its online presence to highlight and coordinate what the community has to offer to young people. Activities and information appeared hard to find, if it existed in online form at all.

The City identified that they wanted to collect as much information as possible about the services, clubs, activities, recreation and social opportunities that the community offers and establish a new online presence that would present that information in an easily accessible format. To do this, the

City has developed a database of information, including over 300 individual entries for information plus 115 annual events. This information will be presented on the new City of Williams Lake website (which was launched in 2014) as a searchable resource that provides a one-stop site for information about the community for new or prospective citizens.

The City has also established a 'community calendar' function on the website and has worked to market this tool within the community. The City is now regularly receiving information from community organizations about their events, which are then posted on the website at no cost to the group.

Additionally, the City has launched a new initiative called "Love the Puddle" which engages the community to contribute images, video, and stories about what they love about Williams Lake. These are then loaded up to a Tumblr site that is linked to the website and provides an opportunity to showcase the great things current citizens love about their community.
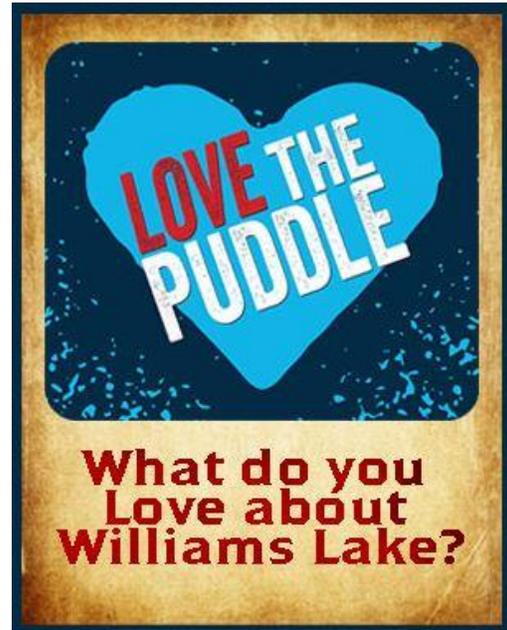
Contribution to Youth-Retention

Williams Lake's initial survey and workshop results indicated that 'first impressions' are critically important when choosing a community, that young adults want to have a 'sense of community', and that young people rely primarily on online and word of mouth sources of information. The City recognized that they need to engage new young residents quickly to give them a sense that Williams Lake is a welcoming community, one that has the things they want in terms of lifestyle, and link them with a social network of like-minded people early in their experience.

The City realized that it needed to take a pro-active approach to getting information out to young people about what the community has to offer. Response to the newly designed website has been extremely positive from the Project Comeback Advisory committee as well as

other community members. Adding information about opportunities collected through this project will demonstrate the incredible opportunities the community offers to young people. The Love the Puddle initiative will also contribute a positive presence to counter some of the other information that tends to 'taint' those first impressions.

Williams Lake Project Sustainability

The Project Comeback initiatives developed by the City of Williams Lake were created to fit within the City's own current initiatives. The focus on a young professional population, including those new or considering a move to Williams Lake, complemented the City's branding campaign and marketing initiatives underway. The research and materials developed during Project Comeback have contributed to a growing conversation around retaining and attracting young people to the community, as well as ensuring that those populations are aware of all that the City has to offer. This work will find itself sustained through continuing work done by the City. The City is also hoping to also deliver some training for community organizations about the value and practical skills of developing and maintaining a simple website, as well as how to use social media effectively. This is seen as an opportunity to strengthen the community's ability to reach out to young people, and also to maintain connections that will help to keep the information on the website consistently up to date.

Community Description

Chase is located in the interior of British Columbia and on the shore of Little Shuswap Lake. With a population of 2600, Chase is one of the smaller Project Comeback communities and is also one of the only communities located within close proximity (57 kilometers) to a major center (Kamloops BC). Forestry, tourism and agriculture are the main industries that support Chase's local economy. The partner organization on Project Comeback is the Village of Chase. With a large senior population and a general "retirement community" trend, Chase faces some distinct issues when it comes to retaining a young population. Seasonal employment and a nearby urban center make it easy for young people to leave Chase after high-school and also make it harder for them to return. Chase is an excellent example of a small community feeling the impacts of forestry's decline and navigating the ups and downs of fostering a local tourism industry. Aligning the needs and values of a large senior population with that of local youth and young adults has been one of Chase's biggest challenges, as has connecting local First Nations communities with non-First Nations area residents to create an improved community dynamic.

Survey Development

The Village of Chase hired a contractor to assist with survey development and distribution. A single survey was created to assess the needs and considerations of local young adults. A primary question asking participants to identify their age allowed for the survey to be completed by a range of youth and young adults. The survey was made available via the Village of Chase website and five local businesses were recruited to act as places where the surveys

could both be picked up and dropped off after completion. Surveys were distributed to local sporting teams, high schools, First Nations organizations, and were made available at local community events. Tickets to a local hockey game were donated as incentive for survey participation. 97 surveys were completed in the community.

Survey Results and Community Workshop

Through analysis of the survey data, Chase's project coordinator was able to identify three priority areas to focus the community workshop discussions. Held on February 18th, 2014, community members were presented with survey results at the workshop and discussed potential projects within three priority areas. These areas were:

- Employment of young people
- Activities for young people
- Intergenerational communication between young people and seniors

As a "retirement community", Chase faces some particular issues not shared by other Project Comeback communities. It was identified through the survey data that a 'sense of community' was a large factor for young people describing the aspects they look for in a place to live. In Chase, a demographic diversion between young and old seems to add tension to the local social dynamic and many workshop participants felt that this issue needed to be addressed. Chase is also struggling to provide year-round employment opportunities for local people. Tourism provides for seasonal work but many young people see the lack of local employment opportunities a reason to locate elsewhere. Proximity to a larger center (Kamloops, BC) also makes it hard for small local businesses to compete with those larger businesses and chains located within an hour's drive.

While the survey identified a local perception amongst young adults that there was little in the way of activities for youth, the workshop participants identified a need for a coordinator or some means of creating a centralized awareness of all the activities and events that do happen in the community. Youth in the community identified the need for a place (youth center) to be able to attend activities. Community organizations working independently identified the need for effective communication between groups so that the community as a

whole is aware of all activities going on and to increase attendance and interaction of local groups at each other's events.

The Village of Chase was proactive in engaging local First Nations organizations to be involved in Project Comeback, as their youth comprise a significant portion of the young adult population and their communities share the trend of youth out-migration to larger centers. Creating more positive relationships between First Nations youth and non-First Nations residents of Chase is another aspect contributing to a 'sense of community' that may encourage youth to stay or return to the community.

In the course of the workshop, local residents also brainstormed opportunities for a local social enterprise that could provide employment, economic stimulus, and activities in the community. Priority ideas for a project focused around connecting the community's population (including First Nation and non-First Nations populations), coordinating local events, creating spaces for young adults, and fostering a positive sense of community. All options were then considered and evaluated by Chase's Project Comeback working group.

Project Plan and Implementation

From information gathered through a local survey and community workshop, a working group of interested community members identified Events and Activities Coordinator positions as a project that could improve the attractiveness of Chase and area for young people. Some of the main priorities of the coordinators include:

- Development of a comprehensive database of all organizations/groups/individuals in Chase and surrounding communities that host, contribute to, support, or have space for events, activities and recreational opportunities;
- Initiate, coordinate and participate in efforts to publicize events (online and in-person);
- Develop and implement one community event for young adults based on activity suggestions from Project Comeback survey;
- Work to create stronger relations between First Nations and non-First Nations community members by giving particular focus to the promotion and support for cross-community interaction at events and activities.

The database is being created as a website (www.experiencechasebc.com) so that it can be routinely updated and easily accessible to all community members and guests. The website is now live, and is open for feedback and additions by the community. The coordinators are continually working to enter in the information they have collected over the past months. The coordinators have also worked with other organizations to help them with their publicity efforts, and the new website is also designed to be a tool to assist with marketing. A series of professional development sessions have been organized and hosted to encourage and support youth entrepreneurship. The coordinators have also been involved in organizing community events to assist with increasing community engagement as well as increasing their own profile as a service available to assist local community groups. They hosted a youth Halloween party and dance, and organized a dodgeball tournament for area residents. The coordinators have been busy assisting groups from all of the surrounding communities with event planning, promotions, sourcing resources, and volunteer engagement.
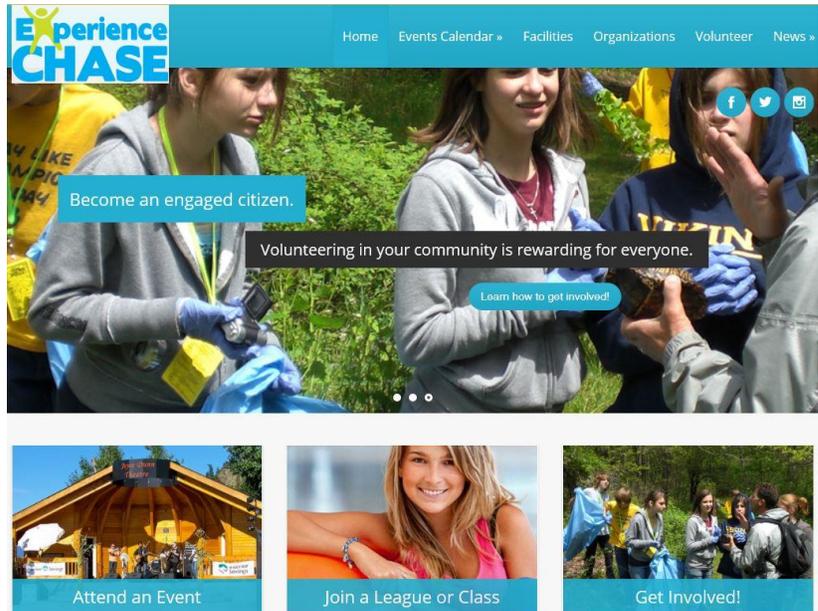
Contribution to Youth-Retention

The top five challenges that youth identified through the initial survey included:

- Boredom/lack of activities
- Lack of job opportunities
- Substance Abuse
- Transportation
- Lack of sports opportunities

Two of these items are being addressed through the creation of the online database/website that features the variety of activities, events, sports, and opportunities available for community engagement. From dialogue following the initial survey, it was noted that the issue was not that there are not activities or sports available, but rather that many people are unaware of what already exists or are unsure how to access those events/activities/organizations. The website has helped to overcome this gap in local knowledge.

Addressing the lack of job opportunities available locally is a difficult challenge; hosting workshops on starting and owning a business has contributed to aiding and inspiring entrepreneurship to area youth.

Project Comeback has also contributed to the planning and promotion of National Aboriginal Addictions Awareness Week and has worked effectively with the Village of Chase, Adams Lake Indian Band, Neskonlith Indian Band, Little Shuswap Indian Band, and the RCMP to deliver a full week of activities and sessions specific to substance abuse. This connectivity between area communities addresses the identified need for an improved intercultural community dynamic and relationships between First Nations and non-First Nations residents.

Chase Project Sustainability

The new website is terrific resource for ensuring that the efforts and relationships created during the project continue into the future. There have been many organizations who have committed to using and supporting the website as they understand the value that it has, not only to them but to youth and the overall community.

Additionally, the coordinators hired will continue to assist groups with event planning and promotion as well as other assist other groups with fundraising and development (an example of this includes efforts to build a skate park). The funding for this continued work will be provided by the Village of Chase.

Community Description

Kaslo is located on the shores of Kootenay Lake in the west Kootenay region of British Columbia. With a population of over a 1000 residents, Kaslo is another small community participant of Project Comeback. The partner organization for delivering the project locally was the North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society, a non-profit organization serving communities on North and East Kootenay Lake, including Ainsworth, Mirror Lake, Kaslo, Lardeau, Cooper Creek, Meadow Creek, Howser, Argenta, Johnson's Landing, Crawford Bay, Riondell, Boswell, and surrounding areas. Kaslo is set in a beautiful landscape and appeals to many as a lifestyle community – where people have chosen to live because of the natural beauty of the area, access to recreation and factors related to quality of life. Lack of employment opportunities is one of the issues Kaslo faces in relation to retaining a young population, as is access to affordable housing and health care. As a seasonal tourist destination, Kaslo is faced with the issue of inflated property values and a surplus of unoccupied vacation homes in the winter months. As a small community unable to attract medical professionals, Kaslo had also, during the run of Project Comeback, recently lost after-hours access to emergency medical care. Highlighting rural livelihoods and the emphasizing quality of life/employment balance of local residents may expand the options for young adults thinking about making Kaslo their long-term home.

Survey Development

The North Kootenay Community Services Society hired a contractor to act as a coordinator for their local Project Comeback initiative. They identified young adults aged 17-39 as the target of their survey and created question options within the survey to address and categorize this broad demographic (i.e. "if you answered 'a' please proceed to the following set of questions"). The survey was distributed using Fluid Survey, an online survey tool. Community members were made aware of the survey via notifications in local publications, coordinator outreach, posters, and flyers with the survey link distributed extensively throughout the community. Over 80 people completed the survey.

Survey Results and Community Workshop

The North Kootenay Community Service Society analyzed their survey data and presented the information back to the community at a workshop held on January 23rd, 2014. It was clear in the survey results that many residents have chosen Kaslo because of the lifestyle it offers them, with 49% of survey participants identifying lifestyle as their reason for choosing Kaslo as their home. Family was another important reason identified, at 39%. Jobs, however, only rated 12% as a reason that residents settled in the town. While employment still appears as a factor for people considering making a home in Kaslo, the responses of survey participants indicate that the benefits of local lifestyle opportunities weight the decision of whether to stay or go. An example of the youth-retention literature that suggests that 'quality of life' factors are a priority for young adults, Kaslo does still face the challenge of providing employment opportunities for local residents.

Another significant factor identified in the survey illustrates the impact of current events on both survey results and community priorities. Kaslo had recently experienced a cut to local emergency medical services, with no emergency
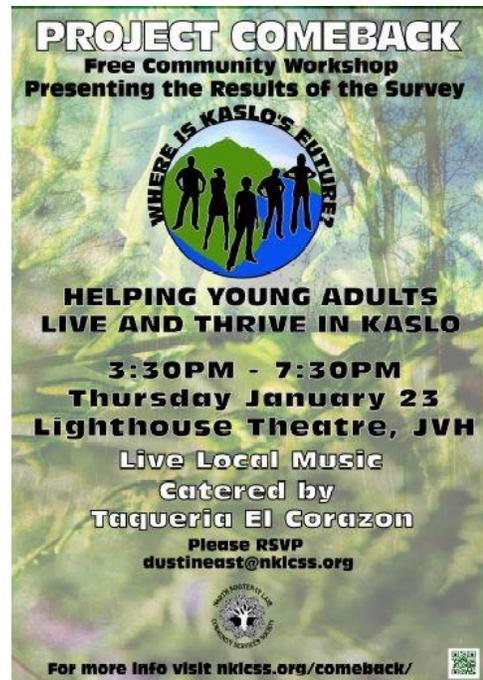
room services offered outside of regular business hours, a critical impact on a rural community. This was reflected in the survey results; health and medical services rated as the highest area where Kaslo could improve to help retain young adults and their families. Access to medical care can be a critical factor as young adults, particularly those with children, assess where they want to live.

In the course of the evening workshop, Kaslo residents were asked to brainstorm, in small group discussions, their ideas for projects that would address youth retention in their community. Suggested ideas included the need for high-speed Internet, affordable housing, opportunities for learning and skills development, and connecting local organizations and youth to funding opportunities to pursue local projects complementary to Project Comeback. Project ideas were prioritized and given action items towards implementation with the understanding that the local Project Comeback Working Group would further refine the project according to feasibility and community capacity.

Project Plan and Implementation

The main project that Kaslo committed to has been sponsoring and administering the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Project. The BRE project includes conducting a survey that examines the employment retention and expansion needs of locally owned businesses in the region. After the survey data has been analyzed, the results will be shared with businesses, local and regional government, and the regional community at an open meeting. From this meeting, recommendations and projects will be identified for improving the economic vitality of the Kaslo area.

For the interview process of the project, the North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society hired an additional interviewer and have been and will continue working closely with Village of Kaslo, Chamber of Commerce, Selkirk College, and the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) to conduct a useful project that will ultimately result in more mentorship opportunities, more skilled jobs, and increased services in the area. The Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) is also a funding partner on this project – their funds are helping pay for the second interviewer and will be used to implement identified recommendations. More information about the BRE can be found on the RDI website at http://www.cbrdi.ca/.

Project Comeback has also helped local entrepreneurs apply for and receive additional funds from Columbia Basin Trust. Additional funds were obtained to support a "Rural Revival" school which organized and implement six very successful workshops in 2014. More information on the Rural Revival project can be found at: www.theruralrevivalproject.wordpress.com

Contribution to Youth-Retention

The four main barriers for youth retention identified were health care, education, housing, and agriculture opportunities. The Rural Revival School taught young people skills for utilizing energy, harvesting forest edibles, and preserving food and demonstrated how young people can successfully sustain their rural life. All of the workshops were developed to teach young people how to live in their rural community, save money, and be creative and resourceful at making a living in a rural area.

The BRE project is focused on helping current businesses retention and succession planning (e.g., to find young people to train and carry on with the business). The project is also designed to improve the economic viability for business operation in the area. This will help increase job opportunities for youth and will provide young people with information and resources on needed education and skills to successfully run a rural business.

Kaslo Project Sustainability

The Business Retention and Expansion project results will inform the Village of Kaslo's Official Community Plan. Columbia Basin Trust funding is available to support ongoing work that will build upon our Project Comeback initiatives.

The Rural Revival School has developed plans to possibly provide avalanche training this winter and to continue with another series of workshops next summer. Other independent projects have happened based ideas and concepts form the PC workshop such as the creation of a new healing arts studio and organization of more entertainment events for young adults

(e.g., "Sundance on the Lake" ecstatic dance events). These initiatives found their foundations from Project Comeback but will carry forward with community involvement and the momentum generated around the projects.
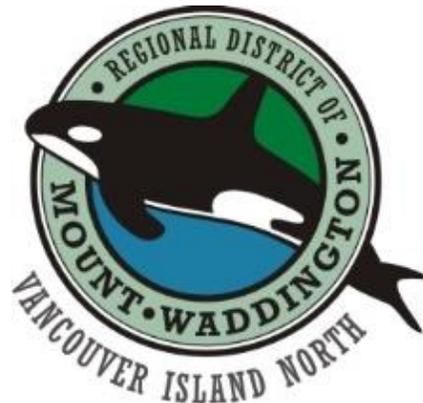
Community Description

The Regional District of Mt. Waddington is the Project Comeback partner on Northern Vancouver Island. The regional district services the communities of Malcom Island, Winter Harbour and Holberg, Coal Harbour, Hyde Creek, Quatsino, Woss, Alert Bay, Port Alice, Port Hardy, and Port McNeill. These communities are the most remote of the Project Comeback communities and face significant out-migration from youth following high school graduation. With an economy based primarily on the forest sector, the communities on the north island have been hard hit by the recent economic downturn and employment opportunities for young adults are a significant factor for retention strategies.

Survey Development

The Regional District of Mt. Waddington focused on high school aged youth as their target audience, particularly those in their last years before graduation. The survey created was distributed via local teachers in high school grade 10, 11, and 12 classrooms. 70 students completed the survey.

Survey Results and Community Workshop

Targeting a population of youth in the process of considering their future prospects provided a means of gauging the area's push and pull factors as perceived by those youth. While youth identified the positive recreational opportunities in their area, they expressed desire for more opportunities related to training, education, employment, nightlife, and social activities. The majority of survey respondents identified a good paying job as their highest

priority and also indicated that they did not plan on staying or returning to the North Island after graduation. Interestingly, youth did not indicate that they would return to their hometowns should a well-paying job be available for them there, perhaps reflecting a 'norm' of leaving for youth of that age.

Two community workshops were held at the secondary schools in Port Hardy and Port McNeill. In the course of the workshops participants discussed ideas and projects that could address the issue of youth-retention in their area and prioritized those ideas according to three categories: jobs, culture, and community. Attendees identified the gap between training and local employment opportunities as an area affecting youth and their future prospects for staying in the area. Complementing the data collected in the survey, this priority area became the focus moving forward. The local Workforce

Ideal Neighbourhood vs. North Island

The graph below shows the gap between perceived availability of neighbourhood features on the North Island and what the respondents would have in their ideal neighbourhood

Planning and Action Committee took on the role of Steering Committee for Project Comeback and engaged the participation of four local youth representatives.
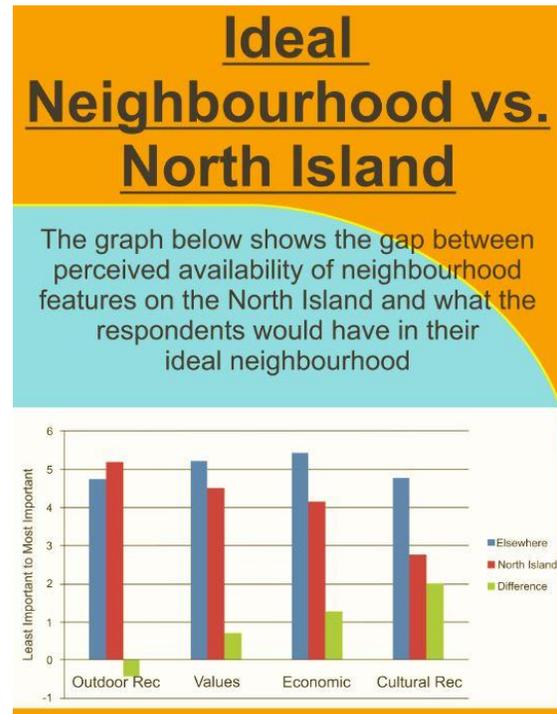
Project Plan and Implementation

The Regional District of Mt. Waddington worked with a local steering committee and representatives from North Island College (NIC) and School District 85 to develop a Co-op program for grade 12 students who are enrolling in NIC's programs. The program will be offered to graduating students who have participated in a Transition Program developed by NIC and SD 85 that provides students with a pathway into a directed learning experience. A brochure that outlines the intent and application process for the co-op program has been created and the project has been handed-off the School District for administration.

Contribution to Youth-Retention

The program initiative builds on two existing programs, the Connections initiative and the Transitions learning program, both of which are designed to introduce students and graduates to employment opportunities in the North Island region. A lack of summer employment opportunities was identified by workshop participants as one of the factors that made the North Island unappealing as a residential area. It was also apparent from workshop comments that students did not appreciate the potential job opportunities that were available in the North Island.

RDMW Project Sustainability

This program is ongoing and may be expanded during subsequent years to included students in other Transition streams in addition to the current Office Assistant and Health and Human Services programs. The Regional District of Mt. Waddington will provide funding of $10,000 to the School Board to help defray program administration costs and training costs incurred by employers during the first year of the program.

The Transition Co-op Program will be administered by SD85 and future funding will be provided jointly with North Island College. Based on preliminary discussions, it appears that NIC may adopt the program design as a template for a much more ambitious co-op program that would be offered across the board to their students.
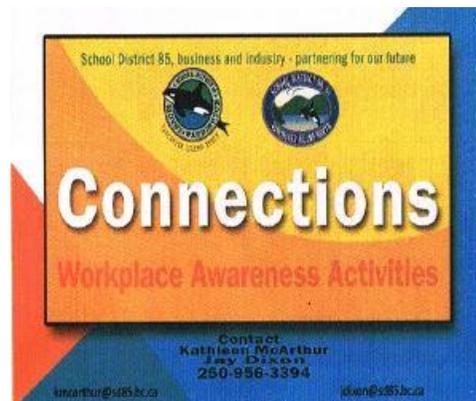
Implications for Rural Communities

Communities across British Columbia share the Project Comeback participants' demographic trend of youth out-migration and presumably have their own set of push and pull factors that affect the decision making processes of young adults. As such, other communities looking to make an impact on out-migration may benefit from the Project Comeback experiences. The diverse cross-section of communities will hopefully provide examples that others can look to and perhaps see their own circumstances reflected. The process of survey development, community engagement (via the surveys, workshops and working groups), and project development provided a ground-up means of addressing the concerns particular to each community. This method seems an easily reproducible way of communities gaining knowledge both about their current situation and the direction they want to head.

Throughout the two-year course of Project Comeback, the project coordinator was invited to speak about the project on a number of occasions and each presentation generated significant interest. The primary feedback was that this pilot project be expanded to reach other communities facing similar circumstances and needing the resources to address the issue. In a time when urban centers are increasingly inaccessible to young adults due to their high cost of living, it seems an ideal time for rural communities to find their marketability. Discovering the niche where what young adults identify as important to them and what the community has to offer overlap can provide a community with a positive image of itself to be shared both locally and amongst those who might consider relocation.

The participating communities all showed that a priority area was connecting the young adult population with what was available locally, both in terms of employment and lifestyle opportunities. Creating an ease in access to these services, organizations, events and activities will help get beyond what may be current perception of what is offered (i.e. "there's nothing to do here") to help both high school aged youth and young adult professionals make an informed decision. As the literature and the surveys indicated, 'quality of life' is increasingly important for younger generations, and having these amenities front and center is a key strategy toward promoting not only retention but also attraction. The case studies provided above offer

examples to inspire additional communities and to keep Project Comeback an initiative promoting community wellbeing across the province.

Sustaining Project Comeback

In order to maintain momentum for Project Comeback following the initial two-year pilot project, the BC Rural Network is currently working towards securing additional funding to expand the project's reach. A Phase 2 of the project would recruit new communities to conduct baseline youth retention research within their communities (surveys and community workshops), an online resource database of materials generated through the course of the pilot, and a mentoring partnership between new communities and those involved in the pilot.

Each community involved in the 2012-2014 Project Comeback has built some level of sustainability into their community specific projects. The energy generated by this project in each community has fostered interest from a broad range of residents, ensuring that the projects are carried forward within the future direction or mandate of community organizations.

Conclusion

Project Comeback has been very well received in each participating community, and each community witnessed a positive impact upon just beginning a conversation about youth retention amongst their residents. The initial surveys provided a baseline of data that the communities will be able to use towards both Project Comeback and other initiatives they pursue towards finding a healthy and balanced demographic of residents. Sharing the data via community workshops provided a means both of communicating the information out to local people and engaging those residents with the next steps of the initiative.

The Project Comeback Advisory Committee, representatives from each community, became great resources for each other as they worked towards their community specific projects, sharing materials and learning from each other's process via monthly meetings. The information is of value not only to the participating communities, but also to other rural BC

communities struggling to retain and attract young adults to their regions. This project has instilled foundations to build upon, and to ultimately create spaces that are vibrant and desired places for young people to settle and invest their futures.

Appendix A – Annotated Bibliography

Project Comeback – Literature Review
Annotated Bibliography

Andreson, Will
    2009   Attracting and Retaining Young People as an Economic Development Strategy. Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs: Rural Research Report 20(5): 1-8

Abstract: The importance of "place" is critical when designing retention and attraction strategies for youth. Studies clearly indicate that job opportunities alone are not sufficient to attract or retain youth if a place has little 'social capital'. Additionally, social networking strategies and programs for young professionals, that involve them in the community and connect community members, are a critical component of retention and should be considered by communities looking at strategies to retain a young professional population.

Audas, Rick and Ted McDonald
    2004   Rural-Urban Migration in the 1990s. Canadian Social Trends; Statistics Canada – Catalogue No. 11-008. Pp. 17-24

Abstract: Common characteristics amongst migrants include being young, single and university educated. Migration often provides increased economic gain for migrants though it may also increase instability, as migrants are more likely to move again than non-migrants. While trends of movement from rural to urban are common, this study indicates that counter flows of people from urban areas to rural settings may offset the population dynamics.

BC Stats
    2005   Migration Between Core and Peripheral Areas. June 2005. Pp. 1-4

Abstract: Statistical information connects the trends of resource extraction, commodity prices and interprovincial migration.

Bruce, David and Gwen Zwicker
    2006   Cumberland County Repopulation Strategy. Prepared for the Cumberland Regional Economic Development Association. Rural and Small Town Programme, Mount Allison University

Abstract: Repopulation strategies for rural Nova Scotia and an accompanying action plan for implementation place emphasis on two critical components: 1) "youth retention, attraction, and repatriation of those under 30" and; 2) promoting immigration in the region. Phase 3 of this project directly addresses youth retention and attraction; the methodology for this section includes a review of literature discussing youth issues within the area, an assessment of services and amenities available in the area, the creation of youth focus groups at participating high

schools and community colleges, and interviews with high school administrators and alumni. Strategies for youth retention concluded in this report emphasize the need to connect youth with local career and training opportunities, promote entrepreneurship amongst youth, and encourage youth who have left to bring their acquired skill-sets back to the community.

Bruce, David with Gwen Lister and Katrina Ellis
   2005   Rural Repopulation in Atlantic Canada: Discussion Paper. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Rural Partnership (Rural Research Project Inventory). Pp. 1-57

Abstract: There are three key components people take into consideration when relocating: economic opportunities, access to services, and an overall good quality of life. There are also collaborative strategies that can be mobilized to both retain and attract new residents to a community. These strategies vary according to the target audience, but for youth include their involvement within community development strategies, creating opportunities for employment, new business start-up, and apprenticeships, and demonstrating the importance and value of youth in the local community.

Canadian Policy Research Networks
   2009   Policy Actions Report: Making Newfoundland and Labrador a Province of Choice for Young People. Pp. 1-50

Abstract: Policy changes are needed to promote youth retention and in-migration in Newfoundland and Labrador. As part of the region's Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy, research conducted with youth aged 18 to 30 leads to recommendations for policy actions and changes that will make Newfoundland and Labrador a "province of choice" for youth. Different life stages of youth require different strategies towards promoting retention in a community; recognizing the values asserted by youth throughout these stages is critical in building effective youth retention strategies. Policy recommendations based on four areas are highlighted; these include: "ensuring access to high quality and affordable education and better transitions between school and work; fostering economic development that creates good quality jobs and is diversified and sustainable; improving public services, protecting the environments; and, strengthening diversity and immigration."

Canadian Press NewsWire
   2001   Canada West Survey Shows That Western Canadian Youth are on the Move. Toronto: The Canadian Press. May 11, 2001: n/a

Abstract: A survey, conducted by the Canada West Foundation, indicates "… 21% of Western Canadians between 18 and 24 won't be living in the same province within five years." The rates are higher in BC at 34% between 18 and 24 and 25% of students.

Cantrell, Randy with Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel, Bruce Johnson, Charlotte Narjes and Rebecca Vogt

    2008   Moving to the Rural Great Plains: Point of Origin Differences in the Decision-Making Process. Great Plains Research 18(Fall): 155-63

Abstract: While employment opportunities are critical to in-migration, the "quality of life amenities" available in a rural community can be the determining factor of relocation. In Nebraska's Panhandle, migrants that have moved from urban to rural areas reflect on their decision-making processes, the push and pull factors influencing decisions, and the implications this has for workforce recruitment marketing strategies.

Coddington, Mark

    2007   Youth Movement? Nebraska Counties Losing Younger Population. The Independent. October 10, 2007

Abstract: Increasing out-migration in rural Nebraska and is having an impact on the sustainability of communities. There is a need to connect young professionals upon their arrival in rural communities to both foster their involvement in the community and ensure they stay in their new location.

Corbett, Michael

    2007   Travels in Space and Place: Identity and Rural Schooling. Canadian Journal of Educations 30(3): 771-792

Abstract: The social and economic position of youth, within their families and within their communities, impacts their decision-making processes and the different ways in which they envision their futures and the opportunities available to them. The connection of higher learning and mobility may compound societal biases that subjugate those who decide to stay, live, and work in their home communities, a decision that reflects a variety of factors, not just a failure to pursue education and opportunities elsewhere. The normalization of leaving as an indicator of success or youth rite of passage serves to further the negative associations of 'stayers', also undermining the sustainability and community interconnections of rural areas.

    2005   Rural Education and Out-Migration: The Case of a Coastal Community. Canadian Journal of Education 28(1&2): 52-72

Abstract: There is a link between higher education and out-migration in a rural Nova Scotia community, indicating that trends of out-migration need to be contextualized within cultures, communities, and family structures. Studies of three generations indicate that higher learning has been seen as a stepping-stone to out-migration as increased education within a rural setting doesn't provide the "payoff" it would in a more urban centre.

Davies, Amanda
    2008   Declining Youth In-migration in Rural Western Australia: the Role of Perceptions of Rural Employment and Lifestyle Opportunities. Geographical Research 46(2): 162-171

Abstract: A survey study of university students located in an urban center (Perth, Australia) illustrates the role perception has on in-migration to rural communities. The perception of rural areas, formed either by experience in a rural area or current geographic location, impacts decisions over relocating or returning to a rural community. Findings indicate that understanding the perception of a place is critical to creating strategies of recruitment for in-migration.

Donaldson, Gordon A.
    1986   Do You Need to Leave Home to Grow Up? The Rural Adolescent's Dilemma. Research in Rural Education 3(3): 121-125

Abstract: Perceptions of what it means to "grow up" and the specifics of every location have an impact on youth migration patterns and the norms around leaving from, or staying in, a home community. Current theory that fails to contextualize the circumstances of youth and their communities falls short of being able to recommend effective strategies towards retaining youth. It is necessary to take into account the diversity within and between rural communities and the factors that youth themselves identify as important, and as a component of "adulthood," to begin to work towards understanding why youth leave and how to encourage them to stay.

Drozdzewski, Danielle
    2008   'We're moving out': Youth Out-Migration Intentions in Coastal Non-Metropolitan New South Wales. Geographical Research 46(2): 153-161

Abstract: In coastal non-metropolitan communities located in New South Wales, Australia, local determinants are a focus for youth out-migration decision-making processes and intention setting. These determinants include education and employment opportunities as well as youth perceptions of current and future prospects in their home communities or in larger, urban centers.

Dupuy, Richard with Francine Mayer and René Morissette
    2000   Rural Youth: Stayers, Leavers and Return Migrants. Report funded by the Canadian Rural Partnership and by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. No. 152

Abstract: Studies indicates that although rural areas may experience a net loss of youth within the 15-19 age group, there is a net gain of people with the 25-29 age group in most provinces, based on youth migration patterns in both rural and urban areas throughout the 1990s in, and between, Canada's provinces. With findings that only 25% of those who leave their home community will likely return, this study indicates that population stability will necessarily involve in-migration of young people from other areas.

Feser, Edward J. and Stuart H. Sweeney
  1999   Out-migration, Population Decline, and Regional Economic Distress.
  A report prepared under an award (Project #99-07-13792) from the
  Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of
  Commerce. Pp. 1-80

Abstract: Results of a 1997 study commissioned by the Economic Development Administration are analyzed and conclusions made. Three principle findings indicate a) a "fundamental difference between out-migration/population loss and unemployment and income in terms of their relationship to economic well-being" 2) there are circumstances in which out-migration/population loss may not be considered or reflected in studies that relate to income or employment measures. These circumstances involve access to markets, technologies, and opportunities available in higher-growth areas as well as the economic instability caused by boom and bust cycles and; 3) there may be a means to identify regions potentially adversely affected by out-migration and population loss, providing an ability for developers to address all forms of local economic distress acting on the region in question.

Gibson, Chris and Neil Argent
  2008   Getting On, Getting Up and Getting Out? Broadening Perspective on
  Rural Youth Migration. Geographical Research 46(2): 135-138

Abstract: Introduction and brief analysis of collected essays on youth out-migration in rural Australia. Asked to write on a topic of concern for rural youth, all authors returned with essays on youth out-migration, highlighting the significance of the trend and its impact on rural communities.

Gouliguer, Dianne
  2001   Youth Out-Migration Study Launched. Northern Ontario Business,
  26.1: 11B

Abstract: A study is announced to assess out-migration of youth in northern Ontario, undertaken by the Far Northeast Training Board and focusing on youth between 15 and 29 years old.

Halseth, Greg and Lana Sullivan
  2003   'The Bright Lights of the City': Intra-Regional Migration and the
  Challenge for Resource-Dependent Towns. Geography Research
  Forum 23: 138-168

Abstract: Migration patterns of rural resource workers are examined in an attempt to better inform the literature on rural community population dynamics and issues related to retention. Residents living in larger centers and commuting to work in smaller, rural communities express concerns over "economic uncertainty and instability in resource industries, the vulnerability of local employment, and concern over lack of services" as their reasons for living in a place different from the location of their current employment and justifying a commute to work.

2000   Implication of Changing Commuting Patterns on Resource Town Sustainability: The Example of Mackenzie, British Columbia. Prepared for the Northern Lands Institute, Prince George, BC.

Abstract: Perceptions of a community, in combination with "push and pull" factors, have an impact on the decisions residents make when choosing where to live. If "routine needs" are not met, people may feel compelled to relocate. In instances where employment and services do not align, the decision to commute from the workplace to a different community becomes a reality. Focusing on commuters living in Prince George, BC and working in Mackenzie, BC, this study examines the factors that people site as their reasons for making the decision to work in one place and live elsewhere. Critical factors in this decision-making process include the instability of resource-based economies on housing prices (i.e. investing in housing in a larger centre is more stable) as well as the lack of services (health care, shopping, education, etc.) available in smaller towns. Strategies identified to combat this trend of "extra-community commuting" include enhancement of facilities and services, a change to shift-work schedules to encourage people to live in their community of work, and also promotion of the services that do exist in the community that residents and/or commuters may not be aware of.

Hamilton, Lawrence C.
  2008   Footprints: Demographic Effects of Outmigration. A Chapter Expanding on Research Prepared for a Presentation to the BOREAS Workshop on 'Migration in the Circumpolar North: New Concepts and Patterns', Held at Roskilde University in June 2007. October 9, 2008. Pp. 1-13

Abstract: Out-migration from northern communities to southern, and often more urban, centers is the result of migration decisions that depend both on individual decision-making and socioeconomic factors that weigh on the decision-making process. While resulting from varying factors, the trend of out-migration has a significant impact on the source community. Two of these impacts are the gendering of out-migration, with studies showing that young females identify an expectation to leave their home community at a higher rate then young males, and the impact on age demographics, with out-migration primarily moving the younger population from rural, northern communities. Conclusions indicate that despite policies or strategies of retention, the norms and influences from within communities, i.e. an emphasis on youth leaving the community to pursue higher learning, opportunities, etc., will have a critical influence on population demographics.

Hearwood Centre for Community Youth Development
  n.d.   Putting Teens at the Top of Rural Communities' Agendas: Retaining Youth in Our Rural Communities through Volunteerism, Civic Engagement, Employability and Entrepreneurship. A Report Developed With the Support of the Nova Scotia Child and Youth Strategy. (~2011) Pp. 1-8

Abstract: The role of youth within communities is often underappreciated but their involvement can be a way of engaging and encouraging a broader citizenship and creating a vibrant

community. Recognizing that leaving a rural community may be norm for youth and is often encouraged, there are strategies towards establishing a positive environment for youth that they will be more inclined to return to with their education and experience. Four methods encompass the opportunities to engage with youth, involve them in local community functions, and encourage their staying in, or returning to, the community. These include: youth volunteering; civic engagement through service learning; youth employment; and, entrepreneurship.

Howley, Caitlin
>**2009 Does Staying in a Rural Community Mean Young People Must Sacrifice Economic and Educational Opportunity? A New Study Looks at an Old Dilemma. Book Review. The Daily Yonder, October 26, 2009**

Abstract: Review of Hollowing Out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What It Means for America by Patrick Carr and Maria J. Kefalas (2009). The authors describe the dilemma faced by rural youth between staying in their home communities or leaving for more urban areas to pursue educational or economic opportunities as well as the vision of the "American ideal" tied to success and independence. Suggestions to retain youth describe school curriculum that connects to local community needs and entrepreneurial talent that is nurtured in youth and supported through incentives (business start-up, land/lease assistance).

Howley, Caitlin and Kimberly Hambrick
>**2010 Rural Youth: Who's Staying, Who's Leaving? The Daily Yonder, October 28, 2010**

Abstract: A North Carolina study of rural youth indicates that students with lower social economic status prefer to leave their home community but are less likely to do so then their higher social economic status peers who will inevitably leave to pursue greater opportunities for education. The study indicates a continued pace of rural out-migration

Irshad, Humaira
>**2013 Chapter 2: Attraction and Retention of Youth to Rural Areas. Attracting and Retaining People to Rural Alberta: A List of Resources and Literature Review. The Province of Alberta, Rural Development Division. Pp. 17-36**

Abstract: Recognizing the trend and consistency of youth out-migration from rural communities, this report lists resources for Alberta communities working to retain youth. Included are projects that other communities have undertaken to study youth out-migration as well as programs developed to retain and attract youth to communities.

Kantor, Debra
> **2012   Jump for the Clouds: An Innovative Strategy Connecting Youth to Communities. Journal of Extension. April 2012. Pp. 1-6**

Abstract: Retaining youth in a rural community can be promoted by connecting those youth to the opportunities available to them at home. Youth in Somerset County, Maine, between 14-19 participated in a program to foster entrepreneurship and increase youth knowledge of the business opportunities in their community as well as connecting them to positive community role models. Participating youth interview local business owners to hear their stories of local success. Video of the interviews is then made available to other local youth.

Kirstein, Kim and Suniti Bandranaike
> **2004   Rural Youth Drain: Attitudes, Behaviours And Perceptions. Paper Prepared for the 12th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, 15-17 September 2004, Canberra. Pp. 1-12**

Abstract: Migration from rural areas of Australia has increased over the past twenty years. This research surveys youth living in a rural community and youth living in a destination area but formerly from the same rural community.   Questions asked pertain to "demographic characteristics, attitudes, behaviours and perceptions of youth and their intensions of either staying or leaving the bush."   Conclusions indicate that youth leave their home communities for diverse reasons and that youth migration seems inevitable within the life stages although it happens earlier for those living in rural areas.

Kodrzycki, Yolanda K.
> **2001   Migration of Recent College Graduates: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth. New England Economic Review, January/February: 13-34**

Abstract: Studying the cross-border moves of recent US college graduates, this study indicates that while people appear to move for a variety of reasons, successful recruiting relies on the ability to attract those qualified for particular employment opportunities. Other factors contributing to graduates relocating have to do with past migration histories, as well as housing costs.

Madden, Michelle
> **2012   The Trouble with Preventing Youth Out Migration. Economic Development News and Insight. Economic Development.org. October 17, 2012**

Abstract: Strategies to retain youth in rural communities should not come at the expense of their own pursuit of "formal and informal learning opportunities far from home." While emphasis is often place on keeping youth in their home community, it may be a better strategy to re-attract those who have left, bringing back to the community their acquired education and skills.

Markey, Sean with Greg Halseth and Don Manson
    2008   Challenging the Inevitability of Rural Decline: Advancing the Policy
    of Place in Northern British Columbia. Journal of Rural Studies 24:
    409-421

Abstract: Renewed rural development, and creation of rural sustainability, both in terms of retaining a youth population and ensuring economic stability, depends upon a investment in "province building" rather than a view of rural areas as "resource banks." Comparisons between the governance of W.A.C. Bennett from 1952-1972 and that of post-1980s indicate that the former years of community infrastructure development and industrial expansion provided more opportunity for rural populations. Viewing rural areas as resource hinterlands without investing in community development in those areas facilitates out-migration patterns. This article argues that the pattern of rural population decline is not inevitable; it is rather a product of the exploitation of rural resources without reciprocal investment into those places.

Marshall, Joan and Natalie Foster
    2002   "Between Belonging": Habitus and the migration experience.
    Canadian Geographer 46(1): 63-83

Abstract: Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' is explored in relation to a community's sense of place as experienced by both long term residents and migrants. Experiences are different for those who come to a rural New Brunswick community for seasonal work versus those who decide to stay permanently. Employment remains a critical factor in the rationale behind migration but factors of adjusting to a new place, new identities, social norms and expectations weigh on families and individuals and impact the process of adapting to new circumstances in a new place.

Nelson, Ross and Robert MacKinnon
    2004   The Peripheries of British Columbia: Patterns of Migration and
    Economic Structure, 1976-2002. Canadian Journal of Regional
    Science 27(3): 353-394

Abstract: Migration patterns have become more complex in post-industrial societies, complicating the once consistent trend of standard migration of people towards higher density regions and centers. The "deconcentration hypothesis" relates to the movement of people from larger, urban centers to smaller places citing reasons of community, recreation, and ideal visions of small town living. Also associated with these movements are a sense of nostalgia, sense of place and also cost of living practicality. References to other studies indicate that "amenity-driven migrants are willing to trade attractive and less expensive living environments for lower wages." Migration patterns related to staple resource economics might no longer be as predictive as in the past as regions diversify and quality of life factors contribute to migration decision making. Looking at British Columbia as two components – urban (lower mainland) and rural (the rest of the province), no longer encapsulates or illustrates definitive migration patterns.

Phyne, John and Linda Harling-Stalker
   2011   "Good to be Alberta Bound?": Out-Migration, In-Migration and the
   Strait Region of Nova Scotia, 2001-2006. Halifax, NS: Atlantic
   Metropolis Centre. Pp. 1-43

Abstract: Data from Statistics Canada is used to illustrate the effects of population decline in rural Nova Scotia both on those who leave and on the remaining populations in rural communities. Findings indicate that out-migration can contribute to increased upward mobility for migrants while it results in decreased vitality in aging communities. The study also indicates that migration does not guarantee upward mobility, within findings that some migrants experience lower earnings and increased economic instability. Strategies of return migration and immigration present a challenge for small, rural communities without a clear picture of who the "next wave" of residents may be. Local residents need to be active in the integration of new migrants to ensure their retention and renew the population dynamics of aging communities.

R. A. Malatest and Associates Ltd.
   2002   Rural Youth Migration: Exploring the Reality Behind the Myths. A
   Rural Youth Discussion Paper Prepared for: The Canadian Rural
   Partnership, Government of Canada; Atlantic Canada Opportunities
   Agency; Canada Economic Development – Quebec Regions; Western
   Economic Diversification Initiative in Northern Ontario; Human
   Resources Development Canada; Policy Research Canada, and;
   Statistics Canada. Pp. 1-44

Abstract: Identifying the need for a rural youth strategy, this discussion paper provides a "blueprint for the future design, delivery and coordination of youth programs and services for young adults throughout Canada." Negative perceptions of home communities, combined with the expectations of financial, educational, and social opportunities associated with urban living, provide the foundation for increasing youth out-migration patterns. Six strategies for youth retention are identified: Enhancing Employment Opportunities, Facilitating Access to Education and Training, Civic Engagement, Tax and Fiscal Policies, Work Orientation/Rural "Exposure" Programs, and Recreation/Social Activities and Infrastructure.

Rothwell, Neil with Ray D. Bollman, Juno Tremblay and Jeff Marshall
   2002   Migration To and From Rural and Small Town Canada. Rural and
   Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin 3(6): 1-24

Abstract: Canadian Census data from 1971 to 1996 identifies different migration groups from within Canada. Analysis of this data in reference to migrant "human capital," i.e. education, experience and abilities, as well as age, indicate the movements of different demographics within the country. Different time periods experience different migration trends, illustrating the social and economic circumstances that impact the migration influences acting on a population at any given time. The data indicates that youth have been the most mobile population during this 25-year period with 20-24 year olds being most mobile amongst youth. Rates of in-migration to rural small towns were highest for the 25-29 year age range.

RuralBC Secretariat
**2011   Supporting Business Continuity and Success in Rural BC. A Report
on Business Succession prepared for the Province of British
Columbia, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation.**

Abstract: Businesses in rural British Columbia are facing hurdles when it comes to succession planning. As business owners approach retirement very few appear to have identified a successor to take over for them. In rural areas this decline in succession could result in increased obstacles for rural participation in the business market, a crisis in small business availability, and an entrepreneurial skill shortage. Strategies need to reach beyond business owners and potential successors to address regional economics and community circumstances and create an environment for addressing specific needs, diversifying opportunities, and supporting successful succession planning.

Seyfrit, Carole L. with Thoroddur Bjarnason and Kjartan Olafsson
**2010   Migration Intentions of Rural Youth in Iceland: Can a Large-Scale
Development Project Stem the Tide of Out-Migration? Society and
Natural Resources: An International Journal (23)12: 1201-1215**

Abstract: The intentions of 15 to 16 year old youth attending high-school in rural Iceland showing an increase towards out-migration (from 1992-2007). Comparisons with another rural area indicate that a large-scale industrial development built to promote job creation had little effect on out-migration trends amongst youth.

Siegel, David
**2008   The Young are Restless: The Problem of Attracting and Retaining
Young People. Canadian Journal of Urban Research 17(2): 105-124**

Abstract: A variety of reasons, unique to each community and in this case a study area within the Niagara region of Ontario, have a role in whether young people stay or go. While employment is a significant factor in attracting/retaining youth, it is one consideration amongst a variety of factors that young people consider throughout their decision-making process.

Sherman, Jennifer and Rayna Sage
**2001   Sending Off All Your Good Treasures: Rural Schools, Brain-Drain,
and Community Survival in the Wake of Economic Collapse. Journal
of Research in Rural Education 26(11): 1-14**

Abstract: The role of formal education, and the way it is perceived by individuals, families and communities, has implications for the future direction of rural youth. Those from families with lower social economic status may experience school as a reinforcement of social divisions and barriers that can limit opportunities while others may experience school as an important institution and stepping stone towards individual success. In the face of economic collapse, it becomes more difficult for those staying to find employment in their home community and makes a high school degree even more important for economic stability. The study indicates that the role of community norms, in the form of teacher expectations and class divisions, are

significant in "deciding who becomes educated" and how youth life goals and decision-making processes are influenced.

Smithers District Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Smithers Economic Development Committee
    n.d.   The Kids Came Back. A publication produced courtesy of the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Smithers Economic Development Committee. Pp. 1-8

Abstract: Community residents that have returned to Smithers after having left to pursue educational or professional opportunities are featured in a publication highlighted their successes. Emphasizing the decisions and attributes of the city that have led former residents to bring their qualifications home draws positive attention to the community and promotes attraction of youth, both former residents and non-residents, as a supplement to a singular focus on retention.

Southcott, Chris
    2007   Youth Out-migration Trends in Northern Ontario: 2001 to 2006. Prepared for the Local Boards of Northern Ontario. Census Research Paper Series. Pp. 1-44

Abstract: Using data from the 2006 Census, trends related to youth out-migration indicate that while youth out-migration remains high it has decreased since the previous census in 2001; youth in the 20-24 age range have increased in population; youth out-migration is higher for males than for females; youth out-migration declines in older age groups; Aboriginal communities show lower rates of youth out-migration; mining-dependent communities have reduced rates of out-migration and/or have increased youth in-migration; communities with the highest rates of youth out-migration were those with smaller populations, "unorganized areas, and forest-dependent communities."

Winchester, Ben
    2009   Rural Migration: The Brain Gain of the Newcomers. University of Minnesota: Extension Center for Community Vitality. December 10, 2009. Pp. 1-9

Abstract: Although there may be a 'brain drain' (i.e. out-migration) of the 18-25 year old cohort from rural areas, there is a corresponding in-migration of the 30-49 year old cohort (and their 10-14 year old children). This older age group primarily relocates from larger centers to rural areas citing need for "a simpler pace of life," "safety and security," and "low housing costs." The question for rural retention/attraction strategies should not be "how do we get these newcomers" but rather "how do we keep them?"

Wylie, Jeff
   **2008   Rural Youth Retention: Creating Community Connections. Queens
   School of Business, The Monieson Centre. Pp. 1-21**

Abstract: Using a "connection lens," the challenges rural youth face are looked at to identify strategies that may address these challenges and provide improvements and incentive for youth to stay in rural communities. Challenges include: Transportation, Socializing/Extra-Curricular, Employment, and Education. Three key values and principles are identified in relation to retaining youth, these are: Engagement, Participation, and Leadership. Retention strategies for the aforementioned four challenges are identified and emphasize the involvement of rural youth in the process of encouraging and building the infrastructure for them to stay in their rural community.

Appendix B – Assessment for Participating Communities

Project Comeback – Initial Assessment for Participating Communities

Introduction

Rural communities across Canada struggle, for a variety of reasons, to retain and attract youth. The factors that "push and pull" youth depend upon the specifics of their home community but there are trends across locations that the research indicates weigh significantly on the decision making process. When a community decides to take initiative and build strategies to retain their youth population or attract young people to the community from elsewhere, it is critical that they assess what factors (amenities, employment opportunities, education, quality of life, place perceptions) are specific to their location and that youth will take into consideration when they make the decision to stay or go.

Assessing the Push and Pull Factors

Studies on youth out-migration describe the "push and pull" factors that youth in rural areas consider. Positive aspects related to living in rural areas ("pull" factors) and identified by youth include: a sense of community, safe streets, fondness for a rural childhood, and affordability. "Push" factors include: limited educational opportunities, limited employment opportunities, the societal norm/expectation of leaving to gain experience, see the world, etc, and influences from parents/educators to pursue opportunities elsewhere (often an urban center).

What are the "push and pull" factors in your community?

- What is the highest level of education available?

- What (if any) types of programs are in place to transition local high school/post-secondary youth into local job opportunities/entrepreneurship?

- How is your community perceived? Consider both local perceptions and those from outside the community.

- Is your community affordable? Consider the cost of purchasing a home; living expenses vs. average household income.

- Are youth engaged in your community? What programs facilitate this engagement? (Example: Youth Council, Young Entrepreneurs, etc.)

- What social services does your community offer? Are these services known about/accessed by youth?

- List the quality of life aspects of your community (i.e. recreation, arts and culture, etc.)

Assessing Who the 'Youth' Are

It is important when developing strategies to attract or retain youth that 'youth' be defined. Is it those between the ages of 18 and 29? Does it include young professionals 20-35? It will also be important to decide upon a target audience for strategies/research. The values/attributes/amenities identified by local high-school youth as critical to their ideal community will likely be different than those identified by young professionals making a decision about where to start their families. Some questions to consider asking include:

- If your community does not offer any form of post-secondary education, or limited post-secondary, a factor that may cause a majority of youth to leave after high-school, is it more realistic to focus resources on attracting young professionals from elsewhere, and/or to build a instill a sense of positive community that those leaving will want to return to?

- What do the young professionals from elsewhere now living in your community identify as their reasons for moving? What do they identify as factors critical to them staying?

- Are there young people that grew up in your community, left, and then returned home? What do they identify as their reasons for returning? What factors are critical to them staying?

- What factors to local youth identify as positive factors that make them want to stay in their community?

- What factors make local youth want to leave their community?

- What factors do local youth identify when thinking of their ideal community?

- Is there a culture of leaving within your community? How is staying in the town you grew up in perceived locally?

Creating a Survey and Building a Youth-Retention Project

The previous questions will help create a framework for addressing your specific community's needs related to youth retention. As each community offers different amenities, opportunities, locations, and experience, it will be necessary to create the initial survey to best suit the target audience decided upon and to be in conversation with the context of the place that those participants are located within (or coming to/leaving from). The survey results will then set the stage for a community project related to retaining and/or attracting youth. Some questions to consider here include:

- Who is your target audience (who is answering the survey questions?)

- Who is going to deliver the survey (and by what means will the survey be delivered? i.e. online, in print, etc.)

- Do you already have an idea for your project that specific survey questions could help facilitate?

There are certain things to consider when it comes to designing survey questions. Brevity is perhaps the most important factor as it directly relates to response rates. Longer questionnaires show both a decrease in response rates as well as a decrease in the quality of responses near the end. While a short survey can retrieve a lot of information it is important that the questions engage quality responses from participants. A few things to consider when writing a survey include:

- An introduction. What is the study about and how will participant answers aide in the research?

- Clarity. Clear, concise questions that make it easy for participants to understand the line of questioning and to answer thoughtfully.

- Language. Remember your target audience and word the questions appropriately and without the use of technical terms or jargon.

Survey Types/Methods of Administration

There are various means of administering a survey and your target audience will likely determine the methodology employed. There may also be a benefit in taking a couple different approaches to ensure maximum participation and accessibility. Some options include:

- Interviews. In-person or over the phone interviews can potentially ensure that a survey's questions are fully understood and answered by participants. This method does require more staff/volunteer time to facilitate and it is important that those delivering the surveys are trained in how to ask the questions and accurately record the answers given to them.

- Online surveys. Online survey tools (Survey Monkey, for example) are available to facilitate data collection over the Internet. These programs can also organize the data collected, saving time both at the end phase of the survey process as well as during administration. Online surveys can also be linked to social media to increase response rates, however if the survey is intended for a specific sample population then the link to the survey will need to be provided directly to selected participants. Ensuring the survey contains a section on participant information (age, demographics, etc.) may make online surveys an opportunity to engage a broader populace. Survey questions will need to adapt, in that case, to the potential for a range of participants.

- On-site print or mail-in surveys. There may be a location or an event where survey administration can take place (at a high-school, for example, or a local youth hang

out). Participants can then fill out a survey on the spot with assistance from project staff or volunteers, or perhaps pick up a survey to be mailed in once completed. If a mail-in option is given it should be accompanied by a clearly indicated deadline for submission as well as a postage paid envelope. Having a brief yet engaging survey can help when having participants fill out a survey on-site.

These survey methodologies, alone or as a combination, should allow for the collection of critical information to assist your community in planning for a specific youth-retention focused project. Survey Monkey is very easy software to use and is an ideal option for engaging youth participation even as an addition to interview and on-site survey delivery.

Appendix C – Example Survey Questions

Project Comeback – Survey Questions/Considerations

Main Questions to Consider:
- "What perceptions are held by rural youth regarding rural and urban communities?"
- "What are the key factors associated with rural youth's decisions to move?"
- "What actions or programs could be implemented to enhance the attractiveness of rural communities to youth aged 15 to 29 years?"(R.A. Malatest and Associates Ltd. 2002:4)

Target Audience: "Youth" = age range?
- Youth living in the community
- Youth that have left the community
- Youth from elsewhere that have moved to the community
- Youth from the community that have left and then returned

Survey Components:

(Example Questions from *Ashland County Location Decision Making Survey*)

Location Preferences

- "If you could live anywhere in the world and still work in your chosen field, what types of areas or neighborhoods would you be likely to choose?" Options: In the downtown area of a large city; Neighborhood near the downtown of a large city; The suburbs of a large city; The downtown of a medium-sized city; Neighborhood near the downtown of a medium-sized city; A small town; In a rural area with lots of open spaces. Ratings: Very Unlikely 1 – 7 Very Likely.
- "How Important are each of the following to you when choosing a neighborhood you would most like to live in?" Options: Safe streets and neighborhoods; A good public school system for children; A place where I can start my own business; A place without high taxes; Near trail systems and park for running and jogging, cycling, roller blading or hiking; Near where my friends and family live; A place with concern for the environment; A place with a strong sense of community; Lots of natural scenic beauty; An affordable place to live; Art or culture (symphony, opera, theatre, ballet, museums, etc.); A city with many different kinds of job opportunities; A place with lots of people my age; Nightlife (clubs, bars, dancing, etc.); A 4-seasons climate; Near small service-oriented businesses like drug stores, grocery stores, dry-cleaners and restaurants; Accessible, walkable streets; A place for people with many different lifestyles; Easy access to adventure sports (backpacking, rock climbing, kayaking/canoeing, whitewater rafting, etc.); Neighborhoods with interesting and unique historic or architectural character; Warm weather year-round; Near large malls and shopping centers; A place that welcomes diversity; Near gaming/gambling places and casinos; Easy access to beaches or waterfront; A place with professional sports; A vibrant music scene; An area without a lot of traffic congestion; A good public transportation system; A place to raise a family; Lots of gathering places like sidewalk cafes, live performance areas, outdoor

markets and street fairs; Hunting and fishing opportunities; Skiing and snowboarding opportunities; Close to health care facilities; Near trails for motorized recreation (snowmobiles and ATVs); Near a Four-Year College; Near faith-based institutions. Ratings: Totally Unimportant 1 – 7 Absolutely Essential.

- "What other characteristics are important to you in the place you would most like to live?"
- "How much to you disagree or agree with the following statements?" Options: I would prefer to live in a place that fits my lifestyle more than a place with a job that pays the most money; With my education and skills I can get a job in almost any place I want to live; A good paying job is my highest priority. Ratings: Completely Disagree 1 – 7 Completely Agree.

Perceptions of Participating Community

- "How would you rate (participating community) on the following factors?" Options: Safe streets and neighborhoods; A good public school system for children; A place where I can start my own business; A place without high taxes; Near trail systems and park for running and jogging, cycling, roller blading or hiking; Near where my friends and family live; A place with concern for the environment; A place with a strong sense of community; Lots of natural scenic beauty; An affordable place to live; Art or culture (symphony, opera, theatre, ballet, museums, etc.); A city with many different kinds of job opportunities; A place with lots of people my age; Nightlife (clubs, bars, dancing, etc.); A 4-seasons climate; Near small service-oriented businesses like drug stores, grocery stores, dry-cleaners and restaurants; Accessible, walkable streets; A place for people with many different lifestyles; Easy access to adventure sports (backpacking, rock climbing, kayaking/canoeing, whitewater rafting, etc.); Neighborhoods with interesting and unique historic or architectural character; Warm weather year-round; Near large malls and shopping centers; A place that welcomes diversity; Near gaming/gambling places and casinos; Easy access to beaches or waterfront; A place with professional sports; A vibrant music scene; An area without a lot of traffic congestion; A good public transportation system; A place to raise a family; Lots of gathering places like sidewalk cafes, live performance areas, outdoor markets and street fairs; Hunting and fishing opportunities; Skiing and snowboarding opportunities; Close to health care facilities; Near trails for motorized recreation (snowmobiles and ATVs); Near a Four-Year College; Near faith-based institutions. Ratings: Not at all positive 1 – 7 Very Postive.
- "What do you like about living in (participating community)?"
- "What don't you like about living in (participating community)?"
- "Do you believe that (participating community) is attractive to people in the 20s and 30s as a place to live and work?" Options: Yes; No; Not sure. "Why or why not?"

Participant Information

- "What is your gender" Options: Male; Female
- "Are you…?" Options: Attending High School; Attending a Technical/Two Year College; Attending a Four Year College; Attending a Graduate School; Working (and not attending school); In the Military; Unemployed; Retired; Other (please explain).

- "Which of the following best describes you (please circle only one)?" Options: I grew up in (participating community) and never moved away; I grew up in (participating community), moved away and returned; I grew up in (participating community), moved away and have not returned; I moved to (participating community) from outside the community.
- "What is your age group?" Options: Under 18; 18-29; 30-39; 40 and Over.
- "What is your highest level of educational attainment?" Options: High School Diploma; Technical/Associate's Degree; Bachelor's Degree; Advanced Degree; Other (please specify).
- "What is your current field of employment?" Options: Engineering, Architecture Design and Science; Art, Entertainment, Writing; Programming, Analysis, Research; Education; Finance and Legal Professions; Health Care Professions; Business Managers and Entrepreneurs; Office and Administrative Support; Sales; Personal Care and Healthcare Support; Production, Construction, Transportation and Maintenance; Food Preparation and Service; Other (please specify).
- "Are you (please circle one)?" Options: Single with children; Single without children; Living with spouse/significant-other with children; Living with spouse/significant-other without children.
- "How much to you disagree or agree with the following statements?" Options: I chose to live in (participating community) because the community fits my lifestyle; I chose to live in (participating community) in order to find a job; I plan to build my resume so I can move to a community that better fits my lifestyle; I plan to build my resume so I can find a better job someplace else; I plan to live in (participating community) for quite some time. Ratings: Completely Disagree 1 – 7 Completely Agree.
- "How much to you disagree or agree with the following statements?" Options: I plan to return to (participating community) because the community fits my lifestyle; I plan to return to (participating community) in order to find a job; I plan to return to (participating community) to raise my family; I plan to return to (participating community) to retire; If I could find a good job in (participating community) I would consider returning. Ratings: Completely Disagree 1 – 7 Completely Agree.
- Since moving away [if applicable], how have your perception of (participating community) changed?" Options: They have become more positive; They have become more negative; They have not changed. "Please explain "why" you selected the answer above.

Other Interesting Questions:

- "If your own teenage child, or the child of a close friend, asked you for advice, would you recommend that they should plan to stay in this town as an adult, or move away for opportunities somewhere else?" (Hamilton 2008:11)

Appendix D – Community Surveys

Smithers

Project Come Back Survey (Teenager - up to 18 years old)

Thank you for assisting the Smithers Chamber of Commerce, the Rural BC Secretariat and the Fraser Basin Council with your thoughts, ideas and opinions to guide us in future planning and development.
Return to the Smithers District Chamber of Commerce fax 250-847-3337 or drop off 250-847-5072

Gender   Male __   Female__   High School Student   Yes__   No__

1. **Have you lived in Smithers your whole life?**   Yes__ No__   If No, years you've lived here ___

2. **What do you like about living in Smithers**? (ie: lifestyle; strong sense of community; vibrant music scene; etc)

   _____

3. **Please rate Smithers from 1-7** (with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive the following factors:

Safe streets and neighbourhoods	__	Good public school systems	__
Good work opportunities	__	Good recreation facilities	__
Place with environmental concerns	__	Near family & friends	__
Strong sense of Community	__	Affordable	__
Scenic Beauty	__	strong cultural scene	__
Post-secondary opportunities	__	Welcoming Community	__
Other	_____		

4. **How would you rate the amenities/recreational opportunites/cultural activites Smithers offers,** again using 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive

Recreational Facilities Winter	__	Recreationall Facilities Summer	__
Cultural Events	__	Cultural Facilities	__
Airport	__	Hospital	__
Parks	__	Restaurants	__
Nightlife	__	Shopping	__
Educational Opportunities	__	Job opportunities and assistance	__
Entrepreneurial Opportunities	__		

5. **What are you planning on doing after high school graduation? (check or X)**

Out of area college/university	__	Local college (NWCC)	__
Area of study	_____		
Work in the area	__	Work out of the area	__
Work type you'll be pursuing	_____		
Travel	__	No plans yet	__
Other	_____		

6. **Do you currently have a job? (full or part time)**

Full time	__	Part Time	__

7. **How would you describe your perfect community?**

_____
_____
_____

8. **Keeping in mind population** (supply and demand) accounts for amenity/shopping/cultural activity and opportunities how do you rate Smithers as a small, rural town, in its provision of community amentities required to create a happy, healthy place of residence, again using the 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive.) _____

9. **Should you leave your hometown for other life experiences** (travel, education, work) **would you consider that the town is attractive to move back to and make a good life here.**   Yes__ No __.

Project Come Back Survey (*Adult amenity migrant who chose Smithers and the Valley as home*)

Gender   Male __   Female__   Name (only if you'd like to submit) _____

10. **Where were you were raised and what opportunities were you seeking that made you leave your hometown?**
    Post-secondary education   Yes___ No___   Travel Yes ___ No___   Work   Yes___ No___
    If "Work" was a Yes, were you unable to find work in your chosen profession in your hometown.   Yes ___
    No___
    Other _____

11. **What do you like about living in Smithers**? (ie: lifestyle; strong sense of community; vibrant music scene; etc)
    _____

12. **Please rate Smithers from 1-7** (with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive the following   factors:

Safe streets and neighbourhoods	__	Good public school systems	__
Good work opportunities	__	Good recreation facilities	__
Place with environmental concerns	__	Near family & friends	__
Strong sense of Community	__	Affordable	__
Scenic Beauty	__	strong cultural scene	__
Post-secondary opportunities	__	Welcoming Community	__
Other		_____

13. **How would you rate the amenities/recreational opportunites/cultural activites Smithers offers,** again using 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive

Recreational Facilities Winter	__	Recreationall Facilities Summer	__
Cultural Events	__	Cultural Facilities	__
Airport	__	Hospital	__
Parks	__	Restaurants	__
Nightlife	__	Shopping	__
Educational Opportunities	__	Job opportunities and assistance	__
Entrepreneurial Opportunities	__		

14. **Do you own your own home or are you renting**
    Own _____ Rent _____   Did you find finding accommodation a challenge: Please explain
    _____

15. **Do you currently have a job? (full or part time)**
    Full time ___ Part Time___

16. **Are you currently working in your chosen profession which is**

   _____

   and/or would you consider opening your own business　　**Yes ___ No____**
   or have you opened your own business, which is

   _____

17. **How would you describe your perfect community?**

   _____
   _____
   _____

18. **Keeping in mind population** (supply and demand) **accounts for** amenity/shopping/cultural
    activity and opportunities how do you rate Smithers as a small, rural town, in its provision of
    community amentities required to create a happy, healthy place of residence, again using the
    1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive.) _____

19. **What are some challenges our community faces in attracting more young people to our
    town?**

   _____
   _____

20. **What are some of the things done well in attracting more people like yourself?**

   _____
   _____

Project Come Back Survey (*Adult who has been away from the community and returned to Smithers*)

Gender　　　　　　　Male __　　　Female__

21. **If you were raised in Smithers, what opportunities were you seeking that made you
    leave?**

   Post-secondary education　Yes__　No__　　　　　　Travel　Yes __ No__　　　　　　Work　　Yes__　No___
   If "Work" was a Yes, were you unable to find work in your chosen profession here in Smithers　Yes __　No___
   Other _____

22. **What do you like about living in Smithers**? (ie: lifestyle; strong sense of community;
    vibrant music scene; etc)

   _____

23. **Please rate Smithers from 1-7** (with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive the
    following factors:

Safe streets and neighbourhoods	__	Good public school systems	__
Good work opportunities	__	Good recreation facilities	__
Place with environmental concerns	__	Near family & friends	__
Strong sense of Community	__	Affordable	__
Scenic Beauty	__	strong cultural scene	__
Post-secondary opportunities	__	Welcoming Community	__
Other		_____	

24. **How would you rate the amenities/recreational opportunites/cultural activites Smithers
    offers,** again using 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive

Recreational Facilities Winter	__	Recreational Facilities Summer	__
Cultural Events	__	Cultural Facilities	__

Airport	__	Hospital	__
Parks	__	Restaurants	__
Nightlife	__	Shopping	__
Educational Opportunities	__	Job opportunities and assistance	__
Entrepreneurial Opportunities	__		

25. Do you own your own home or are you renting
Own _____ Rent _____ Did you find finding accommodation a challenge: Please explain
_____

26. Do you currently have a job? (full or part time)
Full time ___ Part Time___

27. **Are you currently working in your chosen profession which is**

_____

**and/or would you consider opening your own business   Yes ___ No____
or have you opened your own business, which is**

_____

28. How would you describe your perfect community?

_____
_____
_____

29. **Keeping in mind population** (supply and demand) accounts for amenity/shopping/cultural
activity and opportunities how do you rate Smithers as a small, rural town, in its provision of
community amentites required to create a happy, healthy place of residence, again using the
1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive.) _____

30. **What made you come back to Smithers**

_____
_____
_____

31. **What are some challenges our community faces in attracting more young people to our
town?**
_____
_____

Project Come Back Survey (*Adult who has stayed in the Valley after graduation*)

Gender   Male __   Female__
**32. If you were raised in Smithers, what opportunities did you find that made it attractive
for you to stay and make your life, postsecondary school, in your hometown?**
Post-secondary education Yes___ No___   Work   Yes___ No___
If "Education" was a Yes, what course did you take at the college? _____
If "Work" was a Yes, were you able to find work in your chosen profession here in Smithers   Yes ___
No___
Career choice _____

33. **What do you like about living in Smithers**? (ie: lifestyle; strong sense of community;
vibrant music scene; etc)

_____

34. **Please rate Smithers from 1-7** (with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive the following factors:

Safe streets and neighbourhoods	__	Good public school systems	__
Good work opportunities	__	Good recreation facilities	__
Place with environmental concerns	__	Near family & friends	__
Strong sense of Community	__	Affordable	__
Scenic Beauty	__	strong cultural scene	__
Post-secondary opportunities	__	Welcoming Community	__
Other		_____	

35. **How would you rate the amenities/recreational opportunites/cultural activites Smithers offers,** again using 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive

Recreational Facilities Winter	__	Recreationall Facilities Summer	__
Cultural Events	__	Cultural Facilities	__
Airport	__	Hospital	__
Parks	__	Restaurants	__
Nightlife	__	Shopping	__
Educational Opportunities	__	Job opportunities and assistance	__
Entrepreneurial Opportunities	__		

36. **Do you own your own home or are you renting**
Own _____ Rent _____   Did you find finding accommodation a challenge: Please explain
_____

37. **Do you currently have a job? (full or part time)**
Full time ___ Part Time___

38. **Would you consider opening your own business in Smithers   Yes ___ No ___**
Would you consider purchasing an existing business   Yes ___ No____
or have you opened your own business, which is
_____

39. **How would you describe your perfect community?**
_____
_____
_____

40. **Keeping in mind population** (supply and demand) **accounts fo**r amenity/shopping/cultural activity and opportunities how do you rate Smithers as a small, rural town, in its provision of community amenities required to create a happy, healthy place of residence, again using the 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive.) _____

41. **What are some challenges our community faces in attracting more young people to our town?**
_____
_____

Project Come Back Survey (*Youth who has moved away from the community*)

Gender   Male __   Female__   Name (if you choose to disclose)
_____

42. **If you were raised in Smithers, what opportunities were you seeking that made you leave?**
Post-secondary education   Yes__ No__   Travel Yes __ No__   Work   Yes__ No___
If "Work" was a Yes, were you unable to find work in your chosen profession here in Smithers Yes __ No___

Other _____

43. **Please rate Smithers from 1-7** (with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive the following factors:

Safe streets and neighbourhoods	__	Good public school systems	__
Good work opportunities	__	Good recreation facilities	__
Place with environmental concerns	__	Near family & friends	__
Strong sense of Community	__	Affordable	__
Scenic Beauty	__	strong cultural scene	__
Post-secondary opportunities	__	Welcoming Community	__
Other		_____	

44. **How would you rate the amenities/recreational opportunites/cultural activites Smithers offers,** again using 1-7 with 1 being not positive and 7 being very positive

Recreational Facilities Winter	__	Recreationall Facilities Summer	__
Cultural Events	__	Cultural Facilities	__
Airport	__	Hospital	__
Parks	__	Restaurants	__
Nightlife	__	Shopping	__
Educational Opportunities	__	Job opportunities and assistance	__
Entrepreneurial Opportunities	__		

45. **Do you own your own home in your new location or are you renting**
Own _____ Rent _____   Did you find finding accommodation a challenge: (ie: Price, location, etc). Please explain
_____

46. **Are you currently working in your chosen profession which is**

_____

and/or would you consider opening your own business   Yes ___ No____
or have you opened your own business, which is

_____

Is there an opportunity for you to work in your chosen profession if you choose to return to Smithers   Yes ___ No ___

47. How would you describe your perfect community?
_____
_____
_____

48. **Please explain why you prefer your current location**
_____
_____
_____

49. **What are some challenges our community faces in attracting more young people to the area?**
_____
_____

50. Would you consider, sometime in your future, a return to Smithers?

If yes, why
_____

If no, why
_____

Williams Lake

Project Comeback Survey Questions – Delivered online via Thoughtstream

1.   How long have you lived in Williams Lake?

2.   Where did you live before coming to Williams Lake?

3.   What sector do you currently work in? (eg. Business, Service, Health, Education, Trades, Forest Industry, Mining, Government)

4.   What is your age?

5.   What factors influenced your decision to move (stay/return) to Williams Lake?

6.   Are there factors that make you consider leaving Williams Lake? What are they?

7.   If you envision a "perfect" Williams Lake, what things change from how it is today?

8.   What aspects of the community are most important to you in a community? (eg. access to health care, good schools, opportunities for education/training, safe streets/low crime, access to diverse recreation, strong sense of community, progressive direction/policies in municipal leadership, etc.)

9.   What were your early impressions of Williams Lake?

10.   How have your early impressions of Williams Lake affected your decision to stay or leave?

11.   Upon moving to Williams Lake, what steps did you take to meet local people and get to know the community?

12.   When you describe Williams Lake to friends or family who don't live here, what do you say?

13.   Would you recommend Williams Lake to other young people as a place to live and work? Why or why not?

14.   What, if any, do you consider to be Williams Lake's "selling features"?

15.   How do you find out about Williams Lake events or activities that are in your areas of interest?

Chase

Project Comeback

This survey is to collect knowledge and ideas about attracting and retaining young adults in Chase and the surrounding area. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Results are confidential. Information collected from the survey will be presented in a workshop in early 2014 in Chase and be used to develop a strategy which encourages youth to stay in or move back to their rural hometown.

1. **Age**:_____
2. **Do you consider yourself to be a rural youth?** ___Yes ___No.   **If 'No', why not?**
   _____

3. **Have you ever discussed or shared your views on how to make Chase a more attractive place for young people before?** __Yes ___ No.   **If so, where?** _____

4. **What do you like most about living in Chase (or the surrounding area)**?
   _____
   _____

5. **What are the challenges you face as a young person in Chase and surrounding area?**
   _____
   _____

6. **Can you see yourself working and living in Chase (or surrounding area) in the long term**? ___Yes ___No
   If Yes, what are your reasons for wanting to stay? If not, why not?
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. **Do you believe a strong sense of community and belonging, especially among youth, exists in Chase and the surrounding area?** ___Yes ___No. **Why or Why not?**

   _____

8. **What are some ways to increase a sense of social cohesion and sense of belonging among youth in Chase and area?** (ex., more youth groups/sports/activities, more community volunteerism opportunities, etc**.)**
   _____
   _____

9. **Do you think that the loss of young people from Chase and area to larger urban centres is a problem for your community?** ___Yes ___No. **If so, what solutions could help to overcome this problem? If not, why not?**
   _____
   _____

10. **Do you think you are or will be able to reach your maximum potential as a leader, student, entrepreneur, employee, etc., in Chase**? __Yes ___ No. **What opportunities and tools could help you achieve this potential without leaving your community**?
    _____

11. **How important are each of the following when choosing a community you would like to live in?**
    Please rate each aspect as to whether they are 'totally unimportant', 'somewhat unimportant', 'neutral' 'somewhat important' or 'very important' as a reason to live in Chase (and surrounding area). Please answer by checking one box per aspect.

	Totally unimportant	Somewhat unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat important	Very Important
Steady employment within driving distance					
Professional development/training opportunities					
Nearby trail systems and parks (Greenspace)					
Beach Access/Water sports					
Strong sense of community (feelings of belonging, friendly people, etc)					
Arts & Culture (theater, museums, art gallery etc.)					
Access to locally grown or produced food					
Affordable housing					
A safe and friendly place to raise a family					
Health and medical services					
Fun Nightlife (clubs, bars, dancing)					
Variety of activities for children/youth					
Good schools					
Preschool/affordable 5 day a week daycare					
Nearby community recreation (golf, curling, hockey, fitness)					
Nearby family, friends, loved ones					
Crime Rate					
Traffic congestion/transit infrastructure					
Other (please explain):_____					

12. **Pick the top three things the Village of Chase could improve to help young adults and young families in the area?**

__Music/folk/art festivals
__Outdoor recreation/water sports
__Farming
__Health and Medical services
__Alternative Healthcare
__Tourism Industry
__Child care
__Housing
__Professional development/training opportunities

__Alternative education
__Forest Industry
__Industrial Development (primary, secondary tertiary)
__Telecommunications infrastructure
__Arts & Culture (theater, museums, art gallery etc.)
__Other (please explain) _____

13. **Gender:** ___Male   ___ Female   ___Other   ___Prefer not to disclose
14. **Occupation**: _____
15. **Current Employment Status**: ___unemployed, ____ casual, _____ full-time, ____part-time, ___ seasonal
16. **Have you lived in Chase (or surrounding area) your whole life? ____**Yes   ____No   If No, years you've lived here _____
17. **Do you identify as First Nations?** ___Yes   ___No   ___Prefer not to disclose.

Thank you for your participation! Please email your survey to cao@chasebc.ca or bring it to the Village office.

Kaslo

Project Comeback – Survey distributed online via Fluid Surveys

This survey is to collect knowledge and ideas about attracting and retaining young adults (age 17-39) in Kaslo and Area. This information will be used to create an innovative strategy, which encourages youth to stay in or move back to their rural hometown.

1) How important are each of the following when choosing a community you would like to live in?
Totally Unimportant (1), Somewhat Important (2) – Totally Important (3)

Steady employment within 30 km of Kaslo
Professional development/training opportunities
Nearby trail systems and parks for running, cycling, skateboarding, hiking, backcountry skiing
Water sports
Strong sense of community
Arts and Culture (theater, museums, art gallery etc.)
Access to locally grown or produced food
Affordable housing
A safe and friendly place to raise a family
Health and medical services
Fun Nightlife (clubs, bars, dancing)
Variety of activities for children/youth
Good schools
Preschool/affordable 5 day a week daycare
Nearby community recreation (golf, curling, hockey, fitness)
Other (please explain):

2) Are there any particular areas that the Village of Kaslo could improve to help retain young adults and young families in the area? (Circle your Top 3 choices)

Music/folk/art festivals
Outdoor recreation/water sports
Farming
Health and Medical services
Alternative Healthcare
Tourism Industry
Child care
Housing
Professional development/training opportunities
Alternative education
Forest Industry
Industrial Development (primary, secondary tertiary)
Telecommunications infrastructure
Arts and Culture (theater, museums, art gallery etc.)

Other (please explain) _____

3)   Which of the following best describes you?
a)   I am a currently a high school student
b)   I grew up in Kaslo and never moved away;
c)   I grew up in Kaslo, moved away and returned
d)   I grew up in Kaslo, moved away and have not returned;
e)   I grew up elsewhere and moved to Kaslo

If you answered "a" on question 3:

3 (a.i.) What are your plans after high school graduation? (check all that apply)
-       Attend Selkirk College
-       Attend other post-secondary training or education
-       Travel
-       Work
-       No plans yet
-       Other _____

3(a.ii.) Do you want to live in Kaslo after graduation (Yes/No – Please explain why)

If you answered "b" on question 3:
3 (b.i.) Why did you stay in Kaslo? (check all that apply)
-       It fits my lifestyle
-       To attend college/training
-       I found a job
-       To raise my family
-       I have family here
-       Other – Please explain _____

If you answered "c" on question 3:

3 (c.i.) Why did you leave Kaslo? (check all that apply)
-       Education
-       Travel
-       Work
-       Other _____
3 (c.ii.)How long were you away from Kaslo?
3 (c.iii.) Why did you return to Kaslo? (check all that apply)
-       It fits my lifestyle
-       I found a job
-       To raise my family
-       I have family here
-       Other – Please explain _____

If you answered "d" on question 3:

3 (d. i.) Do you ever plan to return to Kaslo full time? (yes, no, don't know)

If you answered "e" on question 3:

3 (e.i.) Why did you move to Kaslo?
-         It fits my lifestyle
-         I found a job
-         To raise a family
-         I have family here
-         Other _____

4)   How long have you lived in Kaslo?
< 1 year
 1 year to <3 years
3 years to <5 years
5 years to 10 years
>10 years

5)   What's your age?
15 to 19 years
20 to 24 years
24 to 29 years
30 to 34 years
35 to 39 years
40 years and over

6)   What's your gender?
M or F or Other

7)   Do you have a job? (yes/no)

8)   If yes, is your job (check all that apply):
a.   full-time,
b.   part-time
c.   seasonal
d.   casual

Regional District of Mt. Waddington

Location Preferences

1. If you could live anywhere in the world and still work in your chosen field, what types of areas or neighborhoods would you be likely to choose?

Ratings: Very Unlikely 1 – Very Likely 7

Types of Neighborhoods	Rating
a) In the downtown area of a large city;	
b) Neighborhood near the downtown of a large city	
c) The suburbs of a large city	
d) The downtown of a medium-sized city	
e) Neighborhood near the downtown of a medium-sized city	
f) A small town	
g) In a rural area with lots of open spaces	

2. How Important are each of the following characteristics to you when choosing a neighborhood you would most like to live in? How would you rate the North Island on the same factors?

Ratings: Ideal Neighborhood - Totally Unimportant 1 – Absolutely Essential 7
North Island – Not Available 1 – Fully Available 7

Neighborhood Features	Ideal Neighborhood	North Island
a) Safe streets and neighborhoods		
b) A place where I can start my own business		
c) Near trail systems and park for running and jogging, cycling, roller blading or hiking		
d) Near where my friends and family live		
e) A place with concern for the environment		
f) A place with a strong sense of community		
g) Lots of natural scenic beauty		
h) An affordable place to live		
i) Art or culture (symphony, opera, theatre, ballet, museums, etc.)		
j) Many different kinds of job opportunities		
k) Lots of people my age; Nightlife (clubs, bars, dancing, etc.)		
l) Near small service-oriented businesses like drug stores, grocery stores, dry-cleaners and restaurants		

Neighborhood Features	Ideal Neighborhood	North Island
m) Near a recreation center with many different activities.		
n) Easy access to adventure sports (backpacking, rock climbing, kayaking/canoeing, whitewater rafting, etc.)		
o) Warm weather year-round		
p) Near large shops, malls and shopping centers		
q) Easy access to beaches or waterfront		
r) A place with professional sports		
s) A place with live music, festivals and concerts		
t) A good public transportation system		
u) Lots of gathering places like sidewalk cafes, live performance areas, outdoor markets and street fairs		
v) Hunting and fishing opportunities		
w) Skiing and snowboarding opportunities		
x) Close to health care facilities		
y) Near a Four-Year College		

3. What other characteristics are important to you in the place you would most like to live?

4. "How much to you disagree or agree with the following statements?" Ratings: Completely Disagree 1 – Completely Agree 7

   a) I would prefer to live in a place that fits my lifestyle more than a place with a job that pays the most money;

   b) With my education and skills I can get a job in almost any place I want to live;

   c) A good paying job is my highest priority.

   .

Participant Information

5. What is your gender   Male;   Female

6. What is your grade   10   11   12

7. Which of the following best describes you (please circle only one)?

      a) I have lived in northern Vancouver Island for more than three years;

      b) I moved to northern Vancouver Island in the last three years.

8. What is your planned field of employment? (Circle preferred field)

a) Engineering, Architecture Design and Science	b) Art, Entertainment, Writing	c) Programming, Analysis, Research
d) Education	e) Finance and Legal Professions	f) Health Care Professions
g) Business Managers and Entrepreneurs	h) Office and Administrative Support	i) Sales;
j) Personal Care and Healthcare Support	k) Production, Construction, Transportation and Maintenance	l) Food Preparation and Service
m) Other (please specify).		

9. How much to you disagree or agree with the following statements? Ratings: Completely Disagree 1 – Completely Agree 7.

Statement	Rating
a) I plan to remain or return to northern Vancouver Island because the community fits my lifestyle;	
b) I plan to remain in or return to northern Vancouver Island in order to find a job;	
c) I plan to remain in or return to northern Vancouver Island to raise a family;	
d) If I could find a good job in northern Vancouver Island I would consider remaining or returning.	

10. Other Interesting Questions:

"If a close friend, asked you for advice, would you recommend that they should plan to stay in this town as an adult, or move away for opportunities somewhere else?"

A) Stay

B) Move