

Kaslo Business Retention and Expansion Project
Key Findings from the “Kickstart Kaslo and Area” Workshop



Final Project Report
Delivered August 17, 2016
by Dustin East, Project Coordinator



**Project
Comeback**

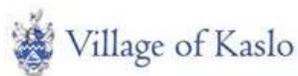


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Kickstart Kaslo event, October 21, 2015.

Executive Summary

The Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) survey was conducted in Kaslo and area between 2014 and 2015. The BRE survey is an action-oriented and community-based approach to business and economic development. The BRE survey consisted of an extensive survey of a combination of 80 businesses and NGO's (non-government organizations) in the area. It promotes job growth by helping communities to learn about business concerns, opportunities, and to set local priorities for projects to address those needs. Thanks go to the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute (RDI) who provided training, data analysis and support with report writing. The [results from the survey](#) have been released and can be found on the North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society website, www.nklcss.org.

A workshop entitled "Kickstart Kaslo and Area" was held on October 21st, 2015. The purpose of the event was to report the key findings from the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) survey and engage the community in determining strategies to support the economic future of the area. The three hour workshop consisted of the following components:

- A tradeshow
- A presentation of the survey results
- Presentations from five local speakers
- Audience participation via idea generation, and
- Voting on the top priority actions.

The speakers' presentations were recorded and can be viewed online through the Kaslo Institute, <http://kasloinstitute.com>. Our guest speaker Jonathan Buttle of the RDI commented, "This is a phenomenal turnout!" as over 80 residents participated in our in the event.

Between the survey findings and participant feedback, many viable actions were suggested. The action ideas garnering the most support were "Growth and Expansion in Local Food" and "Youth Employment and Retention." The audience was also very receptive to sharing their ideas of what we can do to improve our economic situation. See appendix B for more information on the audience's suggestions.

The Kaslo SEDS (Sustainable Economic Development Select) Committee has committed to using the results from this meeting as a primary tool to prioritize project action. The SEDS committee is in support of starting with a project focusing on growing our local food economy through business and agriculture. A sub-committee was struck to work with Dustin East, Kick Start Kaslo Project Coordinator, to develop a plan. Preliminary ideas included hosting a one or two day agriculture conference in Kaslo with the mandate to identify tangible actions that would serve our food economy. The aim was to bring together not only farmers, but others also involved in the food chain, from eaters to growers. The following conference outcomes were proposed:

- Strengthened support and encouragement for local entrepreneurs to create value added food products;
- Greater business connections between local and regional businesses and farmers
- Promotion of local agricultural businesses
- Greater public awareness of our local food security strategy

The resulting event, **Farm Food Fork 2016 “Cultivating Entrepreneurs,”** was held on March 19th and 20th in Kaslo and Meadow Creek with over 160 participants. Actions stemming from the “Strategic Doing” event are still unfolding, one of them including the Kaslo Food Hub’s Tool Library securing of a BCS walking tractor for rent by local famers. The remaining conference funds are being used to leverage other projects, including a joint NKLCS / RDCK application to the Rural Dividend grant.



A FARM FOOD FORK Cultivating Entrepreneurs

GROWING ECONOMY

Passionate About Food?

- Develop skills to make your Farm and Food Business Thrive
- Connect with Successful Farmers and Food Entrepreneurs
- Experience “Strategic Doing” with Local Stakeholders
- Saturday Social and Celebration

Saturday, March 19th

A Growing Economy
Food Convergence
and Tradeshow
Includes Lunch & Dinner
JVH School (Kaslo) 9am - 7pm

Sunday, March 20th

Business Bootcamp
with Chris Bodnar
Plan your path to success
Includes Breakfast & Lunch
LVCC (Meadow Creek) 9am - 5pm

Tickets and more info at

- FarmFoodFork.com
- Sunnyside Naturals
- Kaslo Food Hub

\$40/day or \$70 for both
Subsidies available.
Contact: dustineast@nklcss.org



Chris Bodnar and family.

Sponsors:



Project Overview

The Business Retention & Expansion survey (BRE) is an action-oriented and community-based approach to business and economic development. It promotes job growth by helping communities to learn about concerns of, as well as opportunities for, local businesses and to set priorities for projects to address those needs. The BRE survey was conducted in Kaslo and area between 2014 and 2015. A combination of 80 businesses and NGO's in the area were extensively surveyed. Dustin East was the Project Comeback Coordinator and community lead for the project. The RDI provided training, data analysis and support with report writing. The Sustainable Economic Development Committee (SEDS) became the advisory group to determine the survey focus and project steps for the BRE. The final report can be viewed at <http://nklcss.org/home/sites/default/files/Kaslo%20BRE%20Report%20Final.pdf>.

The main categories of potential action steps in the BRE report included:

- Encouraging small, locally owned business,
- Youth employment,
- Business growth and expansion,
- Training,
- Succession and Business Planning,
- Economic stability and diversification,
- Government services, and
- Supporting our “NGO” sector.

Following completion of the surveys, data analysis quickly revealed the various levels of support required by local businesses. Businesses in danger of closure were identified as “red,” and “green” was used to flag businesses needing immediate support. The red flagged businesses were contacted by a BRE committee member. They received a resource package with information including wage subsidy programs, and supports such as the Business Basin Advisors program.

“**Kickstart Kaslo**” was held on October 21, 2015, to report the key findings from the BRE survey and engage the community in determining the economic future of the area. The three hour workshop consisted of the following components:

- A tradeshow with about 12 local businesses and non-profit organizations
- A presentation of the survey results by Jonathan Buttle from the RDI
- Five community leaders expressed five different visions for economic development in North Kootenay Lake correlating with the action areas outlined in the survey
- Audience participation via idea generation, and
- Audience voting on themes to help direct the \$5000 provided by CBT.

The top themes identified were Growth and Expansion in Local Food, and Youth Employment and Retention. The speakers were all recorded and can be viewed at <http://kasloinstitute.com/2015/11/07/kickstart-kaslo/>. A group email list consisting of anyone who attended the workshop as well as business who participated in the survey was created to inform participants of the next steps and how they can continue to participate. A new committee was struck to take action on administering a food conference and ensure tangible actions.

Five Presentations by Community Leaders

1. **Dawn Lang** of Selkirk College spoke about Training, informing the audience about the many business training opportunities available in the area, including:
 - CBT's \$800 training grant accessed through Kootenay Career Development society,
 - The Canada job grant,
 - The Basin Business Advisors program accessed through Community Futures, and
 - Two new programs from Selkirk College in Kaslo:
 - the Health Care Assistant program
 - Logger training initiative.

2. **Neil Johnson** spoke about youth employment and retention. The premise of his presentation was the creation of a business incubator where the \$5000 from CBT could be used to create a fund for micro lending in the area. This will allow for businesses to be able to get small loans for essential equipment.

3. **Patrick Steiner** of the NKCLSS Food Hub spoke about growth and expansion in local food. He demonstrated to the audience that local food business extends much further than farming. It includes varied careers in restaurants, operating food trucks, running food stores, farmers markets, and supporting tourism, accommodation and heli skiing lodges. He advocated for a conference in Kaslo to give people in the food business an opportunity to share information and encourage stronger entrepreneurial practices.

4. **John Addison**, President of the Kaslo and Area Chamber of Commerce, spoke about tourism diversification. He discussed the West Koot Route Tourism Initiative of the Slocan District and Nakusp District Chamber of Commerce. The three chambers banded together to be able to offer visitors a greater experience, to pool funds to have a stronger voice, and to seek a sustainable model for tourism in the three valleys.

5. **Randy Morse** spoke about opportunities within telecommunications and broadband. He suggested a live radio or TV station, and using Broadband to help showcase the opportunities and events in this area, combined with the natural beauty to attract new young entrepreneurs who work in the information industry.

Participant Engagement

During the Kickstart Kaslo event, participants were provided with sticky notes and pens to record their ideas for action. Following each of the five presentations, participants brought their ideas to the area they felt most drawn and further brainstormed actions with the rest of the community. This made for an engaging evening and helped ensure everyone was heard. See Appendix B "Participant

Recommendations by Category” to view a list of all the action items recorded that night. The following table summarizes the Speaker “Concepts,” the next steps and actions identified at the Kickstart Kaslo event and additional comments:

Speaker Concepts	Next Steps and Actions	Comments / Status
Host a Food Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form committee choose dates select a theme Select tangible action item 	This event took place in March 2016.
Business Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine most desired course and meet the highest priority first Promote Community Futures and Business Basin Advisors Hang Community Futures sign in Chamber window. 	The top voted were Marketing and Business Training. Selkirk to work on Video Webinar Technology to bring courses in via Community Futures.
Skills Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host Job Fair Continue to offer “Kaslo based industry courses” 	Discover innovative ways to reach young people for Logger and Care Aide Courses
Tourism Diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get Kaslo fully on board with the concept. 	Mountain biking and agriculture tours are building momentum
Business Incubator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a report on what this could look like Find an ideal space Create a database of all existing business currently in succession planning phase 	The Youth Mean Business program can help succession plan or assist in creating a new business plan.
Micro Lending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Impact Investment Fund from Community Futures 	For business and NGOs that may not be able to secure conventional financing
“Live TV” Kaslo Broadcasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine location for broadcast Inquire about Village Teleconference room 	There are many talented people and knowledge workers that could benefit from this space

The following table outlines the “Audience Concepts for Youth Employment and Retention”:

Concepts	Potential Next Steps and Actions	Comments
Youth Lead Music Festival and more gatherings	Encourage youth and other organizers to create events	
More busses going to Nelson and transportation up the lake	Find out issues or develop a efficient ride share system	Identified as high for youth retention. Sharing with School bus system suggested

Lab access and co-working space for Entrepreneurs	Create a community Working and “Hot Desking Space”	A successful co-working space in Revelstoke is creating community and utilizing broadband potential
Farm and garden work share board	Create an online community site where this information can be found	“Eat Share Learn” events are currently taking place and Nelson is looking for collaborators for skill sharing
Airport expansion	Encourage current committee to submit plans and move forward	
Wilderness training	Contact existing organizations to do more courses	Potential Work with Community Services and Rural Revival project in Area D

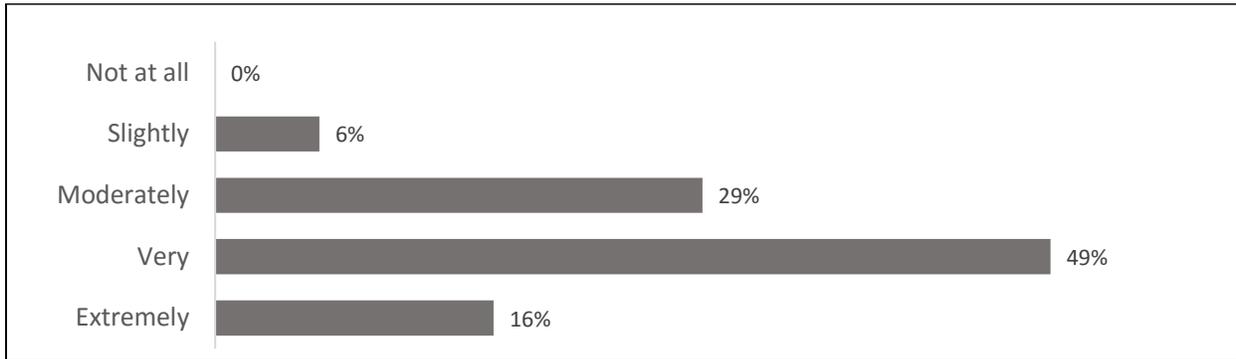
Overall Recommendations

The recommendations were based on the speaker’s presentations and the most common themes from the audience feedback. In the Sustainable Economic Development (SEDS) meeting following the event. It was determined that the \$5000 would be best used for one specific initiative. It was chosen to host a food conference as the food industry affects has a big impact on our economy and affects many of our small businesses.

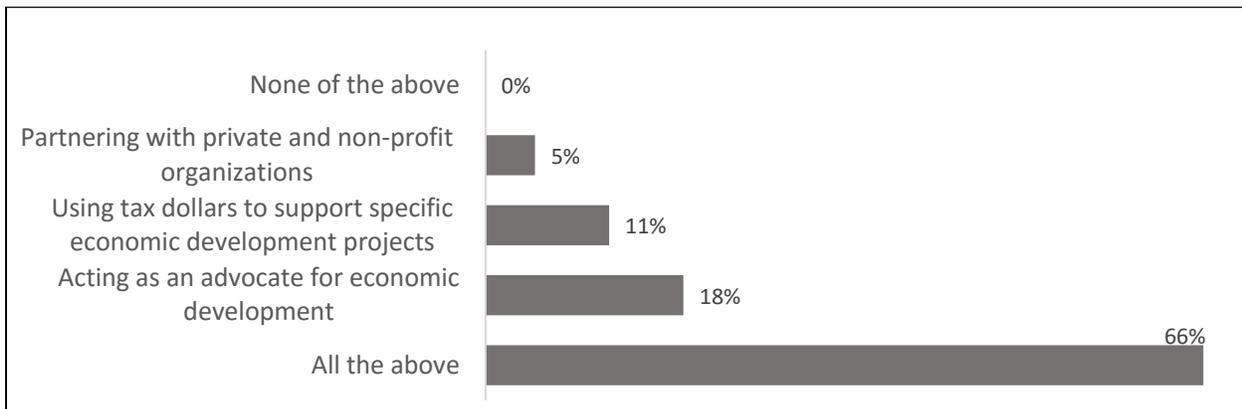
Appendix A: Voting Results

There were 49 active participants in the “Clicker Response” audience engagement. Respondents answered the following five multiple choice questions.

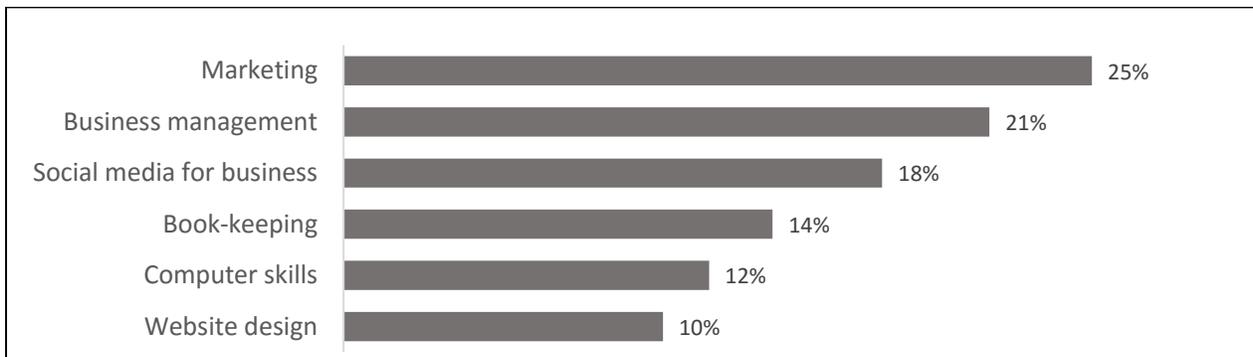
Question 1: Was the workshop content relevant and easy to understand?



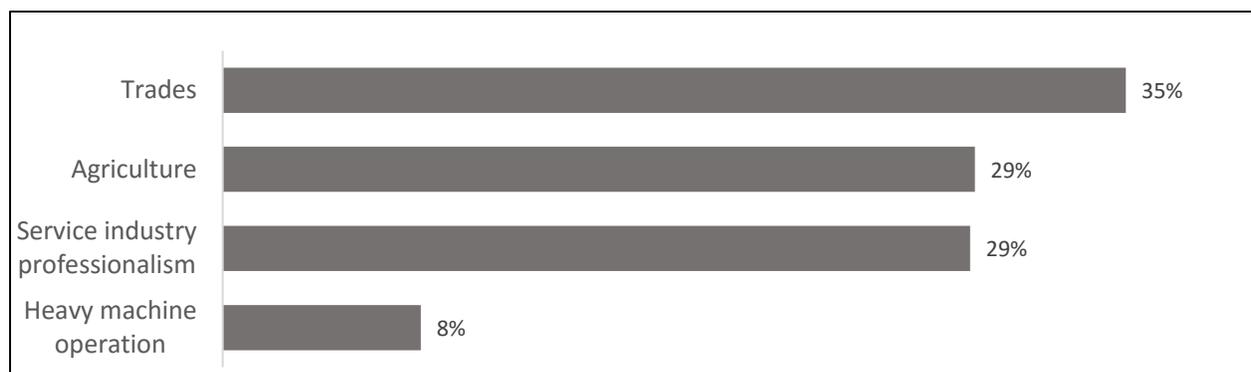
Question 2: What role do you think local government (Village & RDCK) should have in the economic development of Kaslo and Area D?



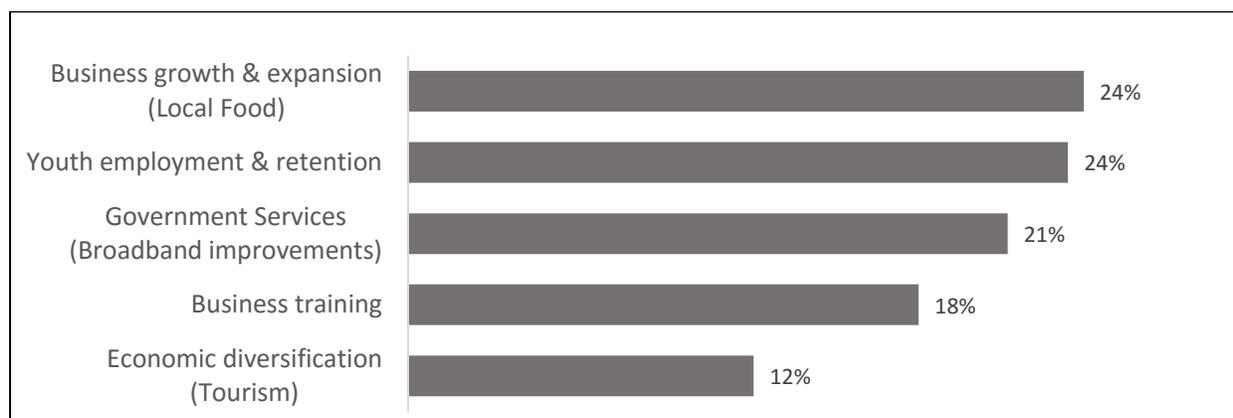
Question 3: What types of business training are needed? (Priority Ranking)



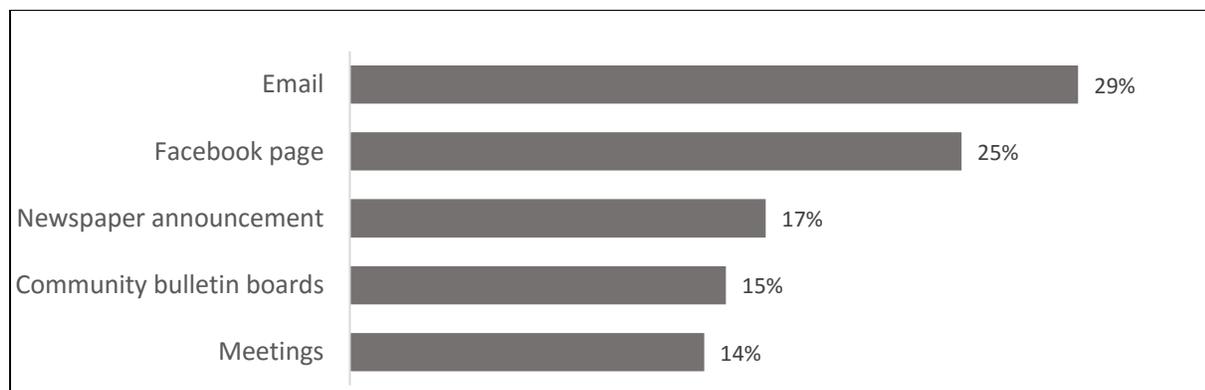
Question 4: What types of vocational training are needed? (Priority Ranking)



Question 5: Five potential areas for action were identified in the BRE survey. Which area do you think should be the priority this year (and that we will apply the \$5000 CBT grant towards)? (Priority Ranking)



Question 6: What is the best way to inform you of projects and/or opportunities to be involved? (Priority Ranking)



Appendix B: Participant Recommendations by Category

Youth Employment and Retention

- Business Incubator... For Art Therapy, help with vocational choices/career path/creative training routes
- Mentorship from business owners
- Micro Lending System
 - Encourage Volunteers
 - Youth lead music festival
 - More Gatherings (Music, Art, Circus,) – week long events during summer
 - More Buses going to Nelson
 - Junior Dragons Den
 - Support for online education and lab access

Business Growth and Expansion

- Two day food conference in Kaslo
 - Free campground for travellers
 - Airport expansion
 - Consolidated advertising for business... too many choices
 - Bus tours from lower mainland
 - Seed capital for knowledge-intensive entrepreneurs
 - More cross promotion of complementary businesses
 - Alternative Energy Production Center
 - Eco Village concept (See vision flyer with poster board)
 - Free food and stuff stand
 - More think tanks
 - Arts and Culture as Economic Drivers
 - Destination events and festivals
 - Infrastructure including washrooms, guest services and information for visitors
 - Farm and Garden workshare board (See sheets for more information)
 - Micro Brewery
 - Jam factory for local produce (Community kitchen)

Training

- Lunch and learns (For businesses)
- Leverage funds for a business to have an employee
 - Local Diet Club
 - Wilderness Training Center
 - Healing Arts Training – Dance, yoga, massage
 - Technology training – i.e. solar panels
 - Forest Preschool
 - Foodsafe training

- Leverage Women’s Enterprise Center
- Learning in Retirement for seniors
- IT and social media training (company specific)
- Teaching people, what is economic development
- Promoting online Selkirk Courses
- Conversation Cafes with Groundswell, Eco Society, etc.
- Community facility with education
- Local Theater
- Training for online marketing

Succession and Business Planning

- Business Incubator
 - Open source public space for all ages to share
 - Willingness to experience entrepreneur to train and mentor new business owners
 - Use Invest Kootenay
 - Regional Mountain Bike Tours
 - Initiative to support industry, offering training/apprenticing to succeed in the workforce

Economic Stability and Diversification

- Support in the Koots Rout (Fund for bringing local tourists)
 - Alternative Power economy
 - Community Facility and Spa, alternative energy, conservation, recreation
 - Sustainable housing project (Tiny housing)
 - Permaculture demonstration and workshop tours
 - Spa and Bathhouse retreats
 - Heritage building and interpretive tours
 - Nature, culture heritage tours
 - Arts and culture components are the most resilient, and secure in their economy.
(remember and discuss frequently)
 - Communities have to network together
 - Trail systems, networks and advertising especially xc skiing and mountain biking
 - Marketfest during Artwalk (Close front St.)
 - Get some more expertise on tourism planning and management
 - Food production and seed production for local markets and export
 - Value added wood products
 - Wood pellet manufacture
 - Wood pallet manufacturing

Government Services & Broadband

- Produce live streams out of Kaslo to capture major events and news
 - “Live from Kaslo” cooking show
 - Showcase Kaslo’s natural beauty
 - Create a space for more local networking with a global outlook

- Actively market Kaslo as a place for internet business workers (Marketing to social media and Google ad words.
- IMPROVE BUS SERVICES
- Expanded infrastructure – sewer, broadband, water
- Public washrooms downtown

Schedule B

SCHEDULE B				
Recipient:	NORTH KOOTENAY LAKE COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY			
CBT Program Name:	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM			
Project Name:	BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION STUDY			
	<u>Financial Statement</u>			
Revenue				
CBT Contribution			\$10,000.00	
North Kootenay Lake Community Services Society			\$23,482.34	
Total Revenue				\$33,482.34
Expenses:				
Interviewer Wages			\$16,769.96	
Supplies/materials			\$7,628.92	
Advertising			\$587.04	
Travel			\$170.67	
Administration / Overhead / Office			\$6,450.00	
Other - Contractors - Conference Presenters			\$1,235.75	
Other - Facility Rental - public meeting and Conference			\$640.00	
Total Expenses				\$33,482.34