



First Impressions Community Exchange

*“A Stepping Stone on the Path to Community Sustainability”*

# Final Exchange Report

## Black Diamond



Date of Visit: September 30, 2009    Visiting Community: Carstairs to Black Diamond

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# First Impressions Community Exchange Final Exchange Report

**Community You Visited:** Black Diamond

**Visitation Team Profile:**

Name	Gender		Occupation
	M	F	
Shirley Colby		F	Business Owner
Peter Unrau	M		Retired Councilor
Connie Irwin		F	FCSS Assistant for town
Rhonda Wise		F	Town Councilor, Postal Worker
Terri Sperle		F	Community Services Director
Laura Schulter		F	Resident of Carstairs

**Date of visit:** \_\_\_\_\_ September 30, 2009

**How long did you spend in the community:** \_\_\_\_ We were in the community for 6 hours.

**Weather on the date of visit:** Weather was cloudy and drizzly.

<b>Coordinator Name</b>	Terri Sperle
<b>Contact Number (s)</b>	403-337-3341

## Pre-Visit Feedback

- What was your impression of the community before the visit?
- I didn't let anyone know where we were going (except the driver!) until we were on the road. All had heard of Black Diamond, but most had not visited.
- I checked out the town website before leaving and found it to be very informative. The changing pictures are very beautiful, and I love the interactive map of the community. The only thing that I could see would be worth adding would be a rolling info square in the top right corner instead of a stationary one.

What were you expecting to see?

Historical Downtown, mountain view, one lady expected to see a sign with a big diamond surrounded by black.

Please comment on what you know about this community.

This form will summarize the comments and findings of the Visiting Team. Please use the same rating scale identified in the Visiting Team Guide.

- a rating of 1 = Needs urgent attention/action
- a rating of 2 = Needs improvement
- a rating of 3 = Satisfactory
- a rating of 4 = Good/Very Good
- a rating of 5 = Excellent!

When asked to respond to a "Yes" or "No", or to a "Very Easy, Easy, Difficult or Very Difficult", please circle your choice.

How easy was it to get information by mail, electronically and by telephone about the community you are visiting? Very Easy    Easy    Difficult    Very Difficult

Very easy

Were you satisfied with the quality of information received? Yes    No

yes

Did the information arrive in a timely fashion? Yes    No

Rating and comments on the community's online materials and information.

Quality of online materials:

1	2	3	4	5
Needs urgent attention				Excellent



Average Team Score	5	Range of Scores	From	To
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- Observations: I checked out the town website before leaving and found it to be very informative. The changing pictures are very beautiful, and I love the interactive map of the community. The only thing that I could see would be worth adding would be a rolling info square in the top right corner instead of a stationary one.

## The Five Minute First Impression

**After taking a five-minute drive through your Exchange Community, without stopping, what was your first impression?**

**Inviting drive in Main Street, small, quaint shops.**

**Lots of good signage for food & drink, bakery, soda shop, services. 2300 pop of Black Diamond.**

**What communities are closest to this community? Turner Valley is 3 km away, Longview, Okotoks 18 kms west - for major shopping.**

**How far away is the nearest community to your Exchange Community? 126 km**

**What lies between this community and the surrounding areas (e.g. farmland, mountains, lakes, communities, highways, industry)? Close to mountains, farm land rolling hills.**

## Community Entrances - Roads and Highway

What did you notice that would “Welcome” someone to the community or tell you something about the Community (i.e. billboards, signs etc)?

1. Info signs at all entrances to announce current events.
2. Bakery and Coffee Shop
3. Signs, Historical Site, Visitor Information, Flowers, western theme

***The following summarizes the ratings and feedback with respect to the various entrances in the community:***

**ENTRANCE #1 (Road name and direction): East – Centre Street, Main Street West,**

Rate and comment the impression of the community this entrance provides.

1
2
**3**
4
5  
 Needs urgent  
 attention Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Needs urgent  
attention

Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Housing and Residential Areas

**Overall quality of housing in the community:** *(Please use the 1-5 rating scale for the "overall quality" column 1= needs urgent attention and 5=excellent)*

Overall Quality *	Type of housing	Range of Scores	Comments
<b>3/4</b>	Existing/Older Homes		



**Overall appeal of housing in the following sectors: (Please use the 1-5 rating scale for the "appeal" column 1= needs urgent attention and 5=excellent)**

Overall Appeal	Group	Range of Scores	Comments
2.5	Single young adults		Price
2.5	Young families		
3	Low income		
3	Middle income		
3.5	Senior citizen		
3.5	Families		Saw no young mothers with small children, nor young adults. Assume they are working. Yet it was busy in town.
4	Upscale/professional		Probably would live in the city

\* The "Overall Appeal" is the average team score

## Education, Health, Social and Emergency Services

### Education

Comment on the availability and appearance of the following types of schools.

**Elementary:**

At first we were not sure it was a school but went outside to see the signage. Orange fence around the school gave it a very outdated look.

**Junior/Senior High:**

High school – Oilfields established in older area of town.

**College/University:**

Education Plus! Out reach high school.



**Home Schooling:**

Some education Plus Business on Main Street for one on one or specialized student needs.

**Other:**

- Preschools
- Private Schools
- Christian Schools
- Alternative/Upgrading Schools or programs
- 

Catholic School System

**What do residents (young and old) think about the quality and availability of their local schools?**

It's in the centre of town and within walking distance.

**Overall quality and availability of schools for a community of this size ?**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
 Needs urgent                                                                                                          Excellent  
 attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: It has a close proximity to the arena and the curling club.

**Health Care Services**

**Comment on the availability and apparent quality of healthcare facilities.**

**Hospitals:**

Very similar to the town of Didsbury. It could be advertised better only one Hospital sign There were two signs found but could be posted at the entrances.

**Physician, dentist, optometrist, and other medical offices and clinics:**

Found on main street in a facility with a chiropractor and fitness centre.

**Other health services (e.g., Chiropractor, psychotherapy, naturopath, massage, etc.):**

Yes

**Long-term care, assisted living, and nursing home facilities:**

Long Term – Rising Sun next to hospital and non profit facilities for seniors. Foothills Foundation







Needs urgent  
attention

Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: Very helpful and friendly. Willing to talk. Only one complained about business but was nice.

**Rate and comment on the overall signage in the downtown.**

1 2 3 **4** 5  
Needs urgent Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: Noticed some unique artistic signage but some pretty rough hand made signs which aren't as nice and welcoming. Street signs were great.

**Rate and comment on the window displays in the downtown.**

1 2 3 **4** 5  
Needs urgent Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: some stores had very tasteful displays and really drew you in. Others were not as inviting. Flower shop was very nice.

**Rate and comment on the variety and quality of merchandise in the downtown.**

1 2 3 **4** 5  
Needs urgent Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: No average gift and clothing prices to keep locals in town. Did not see any kids clothing or house wares.

**Rate and comment on the mix of facilities and services in the downtown (housing, professional services, retail, recreation, accommodation & food, industry, parks, etc.).**

1 2 3 **4** 5  
Needs urgent Excellent  
attention













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Would this community be an attractive location for industrial development? **Yes** No  
Why or Why Not?

**Need more of a tax base to accomplish some of the goals for revitalization.**

### Professional Services

Are banks and ATMs conveniently located? **Yes**

Do the banks have convenient hours of service? **Yes**

How would you rate the adequacy of financial services for a community of this size?

1 2 3 4 5  
Needs urgent Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score	1.5	Range of Scores	From1	To2
--------------------	-----	-----------------	-------	-----

Observations:

There is only one ATB

**What other professional services are available (accounting, insurance, legal, etc.)?**

All but one.

Are there any professional services missing? **Yes** **No**

We didn't see an accountant.

### Commercial Services

**What types of commercial businesses serve the local community (e.g., high-speed internet provider)?**

**What commercial services appear to be missing in the community (e.g., print shop, industrial cleaning service, car washes, windshields/glass shops, etc.)?**

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### Local Government Services



**Are municipal offices conveniently located? Yes**  
**Very friendly and helpful staff**

**How would you rate the availability and quality of the following information provided by the municipal government? (Please use the 1-5 rating scale for the “quality and availability” column 1= needs urgent attention and 5=excellent)**

Quality & Availability *	Type of Information	Range of Scores	Comments
5	Community Brochure/Guide		

Quality & Availability	Type of Information	Range of Scores	Comments
5	Business Directory		
5	Community Profile		
2	Tourism Information		
4	Community Events		

*\*Quality and availability is the average team score*

**What types of events occur in this community?**

Newborn group, Seniors building, iron work club, entertainment

**How did you learn about them or find information about the events?**

Bulletin boards are everywhere.

**Was there adequate information to make an informed retail, commercial and/or industrial business investment decision?)**

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**Public Infrastructure and Planning**

Rate each of the following for quality, accessibility, or availability where relevant.

**Public Transportation:**

1
2
3
4
5  
 Needs urgent attention Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: There is no direct public transportation to the city, although a commuter bus may be starting. You have to drive to Okotoks to catch a bus. There is only one taxi.

**Sidewalks:**

1
2
3
4
5  
 Needs urgent attention Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: The sidewalks are in good shape downtown.

**Streets:**

1
2
3
4
5  
 Needs urgent attention Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: Many unpaved residential streets.

**Landscaping:**

1
2
3
4
5  
 Needs urgent attention Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
--------------------	--	-----------------	------	----

Observations: Beautifully landscaped areas downtown.

**Public Restrooms:**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Needs urgent                                                                                                          Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Street Signage:**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Needs urgent                                                                                                          Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: Lovely new street signs.

**Pay phones, drinking fountains, benches, etc.:**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Needs urgent                                                                                                          Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations Lots of benches

**Wheel chair accessibility, handicapped parking, entrance accessibility:**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Needs urgent                                                                                                          Excellent  
attention

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Planning**

**Do you see any conflicting land uses in the community (e.g. a residential subdivision next to a refinery)?**      **No**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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Are all land uses appropriate (commercial, residential, green space, etc.)? Specify where land uses are not appropriate? Yes

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Did you experience traffic or pedestrian congestion anywhere? If yes, please specify location? No

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Are community facilities and infrastructure generally accessible for people with disabilities? Yes

## Tourism

Does the community have a strong tourism sector? Yes **No**

Did not notice a tourist information booth.

Does the community have a slogan/brand? Yes No

If yes, what is it?

Not that we noticed

Is the community well known for an attraction, event or festival? Yes No

If so, what are they and how often are these events held? Not that we were aware of...

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What have you seen (natural or man-made) that could be developed into a tourist attraction?

More Park area and walking paths...

Rate and comment on the quality and appearance of existing tourist attractions.







No idea

Does the community have heritage or historical buildings or places? Yes No  
If so, how well are they maintained? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How are the heritage buildings being used?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If they are not being used, what suggestions do you have for their use?

We didn't notice any buildings that could be used for heritage, other than the hotel on the corner.

**Faith and Religion**

Comment on the number, appearance, and selection of religious buildings in the community.

Saw three churches

Are there any outstanding architectural or design features found on the religious buildings you visited? Yes No

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please rate and comment on the overall impressions of the religious buildings visited in this community.

1 2 3 4 5  
Needs urgent attention Excellent

Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: Churches were closed so only saw the outside.

**Entertainment**

What is/are the main sources of entertainment for the community?

**Sports related...hockey, curling**

**What entertainment opportunities do residents feel they lack?**

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**Does the community have a vibrant nightlife? Yes No**

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**Recreation**

**Comment on the availability / appearance of each of the following types of recreational facilities.**

**Parks:**



Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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**Observations: Campground has 62 campsites there were well maintained**

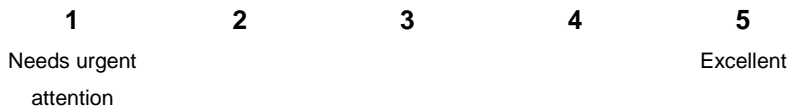
**Public recreation facilities:**



Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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**Observations: Arena was well maintained and is used by various age groups.**

**Private recreation facilities:**



Average Team Score		Range of Scores	From	To
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Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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Based on your impression, what recreation opportunities are available for residents in the community?

Hockey, curling skating and tennis

What recreational facility (private or public) in this community surprised you?

Noticed two out door ice areas near indoor arena.

What recreational activities or facilities seemed to be missing?

Looked good.

How accessible are the facilities for wheelchairs, strollers, etc.?

Very Easy    Easy    Difficult    Very Difficult

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Rate and comment on the overall suitability of the recreational facilities/activities for each of the following community sectors. (Please use the 1-5 rating scale for the “overall suitability” column, 1= needs urgent attention and 5=excellent)

Overall Suitability*	Community Sector	Range of Scores	Comments
3	Senior citizens		
3	Families		
Overall Suitability*	Community Sector	Range of Scores	Comments
	Singles, young adults		
3	Teens		
3	Children (12 and under)		



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\* The "Overall Appeal" is the average team score

## Information from Community Residents

Comment on the quality of information and assistance provided by residents and employees of local businesses.

Were community residents knowledgeable about their community? **Yes** No

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Did they refer you to someone else who would help? Yes **No**

If so, who? \_\_\_\_\_

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If residents you spoke with had a positive or negative attitude toward their community, describe their reasons.

**Campground and town office staff was friendly and positive. Good information was given.**

Did you sense community pride and spirit? **Yes** No

**Yes we noticed this at the Seniors Lodge ...they were willing to answer all our questions.**

Did residents identify any issues to be of major concern (e.g. safety)? Yes **No**

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Rate and comment on the quality of information you received from community residents and business employees?



**Taste: Was there any specialty food item, bakery, restaurant, or candy store that you will remember?**

**The bakery**

**Smell: Is there a scent that characterizes the community?**

**Fresh clean mountain air!**

**Sight: Was there any colourful or striking feature that made an impression on you?**

**Businesses for the most part were neat and clean.**

**Sound: What sounds did you hear? Please comment on the level of noise in the community.**

**Very quiet walking through town.**

**How would describe the overall environmental health of the community (air quality, litter, noise pollution etc.)?**

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**What, if anything, did you experience that had a strongly negative or positive impact on the way the community felt to you? Be specific.**

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## Wrap Up

**The following questions should be discussed and answered as a group following your visit.**

**In what ways was the community different from what you expected?**

**Many businesses on the main street with good curb appeal.**



Did the information you collected prior to the visit accurately reflect what you observed/experienced?      Yes    No

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the most outstanding feature of this community?

**It's in a great location nestled in the foothills. Clean and tidy streets.**

How suitable would this community be for a young family?

Very Suitable    Suitable    Unsuitable    Very Unsuitable

\_\_\_\_\_

How suitable would this community be for a retired couple?

Very Suitable    Suitable    Unsuitable    Very Unsuitable

**There are many services here and it's an easy community to get around in.**

How suitable would this community be for a young single adult?

Very Suitable    Suitable    Unsuitable    Very Unsuitable\

**Not at all (but no reason given?)**

Would you consider visiting this community as a tourist?      Yes    No

Why or why not? **Some nice shops and good eating places.**

Would you consider locating your retail or service business here?    Yes    **No**

Why or why not? **Black Diamond appears to be more of a tourist town . Year round businesses may not survive.**

Would you consider locating a manufacturing business here?    Yes    **No**

Why or why not?

**Doesn't appear that there is much manufacturing business here. It might be a struggle to survive.**

List 3 positive things you observed about this community.

\_\_\_\_\_



1. Friendly - show casing historical significance
2. Easy access in getting around
3. Unique shops and good eating outlets.

List 3 potential opportunities available to this community.

1. Motel or hotel
2. Another grocery store
3. Information centre

List the 3 biggest obstacles/challenges facing this community.

1. Business opportunities
2. Needs more green space...parks, walking paths
3. Side streets need to be paved for future development

What will you remember most about this community six months from now?

Liked the location, friendly and many nice shops.

What have you learned here that has changed your impression of your own community?

Carstairs could be more vibrant...

Has this experience given you any new ideas about what is needed in your own community? **Yes** No

More unique shops, coffee shop, bakery, business area and more eating places.

Describe ONE idea that you will borrow for use in your own business/community and describe how you will start to implement it within the next 72 hours!

We need a good town map...with all new area on it .

Investigate boys and girls clubs

After school programs

Other Comments:

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to come into your community and explore another similar size town.

We learnt about some new ideas for seniors.

Are any photographs included with this assessment? **Yes** No

If so, please complete the Photo Log chart below.



## Photo Log

Photo #	Description	Location
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
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11.		
12.		
13.		
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23.		
24.		
25.		

