

Quality of life

More than any other issue, community leaders considered the **quality of life** in Douglas to be a strength. Leaders felt the high quality of life in Douglas was due to the friendly and supportive community environment and adequate social services.

"There is a sense of community."

"It is a community that cares. People donate a lot of time, and we have excellent social services, school counselors and teen probation programs."

Some recommendations for improving Douglas' quality of life included an increase in child care services. Leaders commented that many working mothers and fathers were faced with a lack of available child care in Douglas.

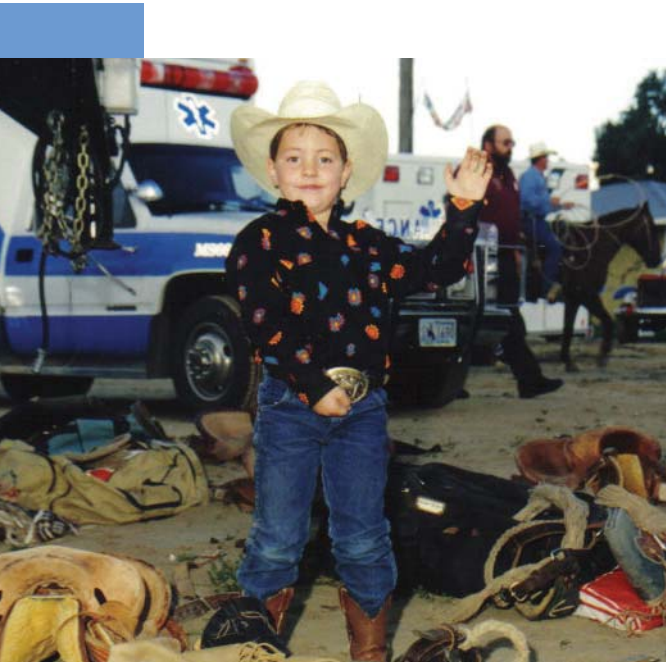
"Babysitters or enough child care is a major concern. Especially care for babies."



In response

The Community Needs Assessment identified some real challenges for Douglas. Through our dialogue, fifteen issues were discussed affecting the immediate future of the area. Our goal is to build a long-term sustainable relationship with the community by being part of a **coalition of local problem solvers**. Evaluating and sharing the results of our survey is the first step to identifying which issues can be addressed through the combined resources of the community, the local government and neighboring businesses.

KEC is pleased with the response to this effort and hopes that the results will help to drive further meaningful discussion. The result of our assessment will be used to help find the best way for KEC to play its role as a good citizen within the community, with a focus on sustainable development.



2005

Douglas Community Needs Assessment



Kennecott Energy Company (KEC) has been a part of the Douglas community for more than eleven years. As a member of this community, KEC strives to ensure continued growth - both economically and socially. The company also works to protect the environment and make efficient use of natural resources. We are committed to measuring and improving the effect KEC has on people's quality of life, now and in the future.

Because we are a mining company, our location is determined, in great part, by nature. KEC employs more than 1,700 people in three states. We are one of the nation's largest producers of low sulfur, high Btu "compliance" coal. KEC is affiliated with the Rio Tinto group of companies, leaders in finding, extracting and processing mineral resources.

To better understand the community's needs and to improve our many community efforts, KEC conducted a Community Needs Assessment in Douglas. This process involved interviewing community leaders to discuss the most significant challenges they saw for the region. We then sent KEC employees out into the community to interview a broad cross section of our neighbors.

We are pleased to share the results of our Community Needs Assessment in this report. We are also grateful to the community who helped gather people's opinions and share their insights. Our commitment to sustainable development means we are committed to the long-term health of the communities where we operate and where our employees live. We look forward to working together to identify and support projects that will be of lasting benefit to the community.



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A member of the Rio Tinto Group



What **community leaders** had to say...

Who was involved?

The Douglas Community Needs Assessment involved a cross section of our neighbors, including, representatives of local business, community groups, financial organizations, health professionals, government officials and educators.

"Alcohol is a problem because it's known and ignored."

"Meth is an easy drug to make and distribute."

How was it conducted?

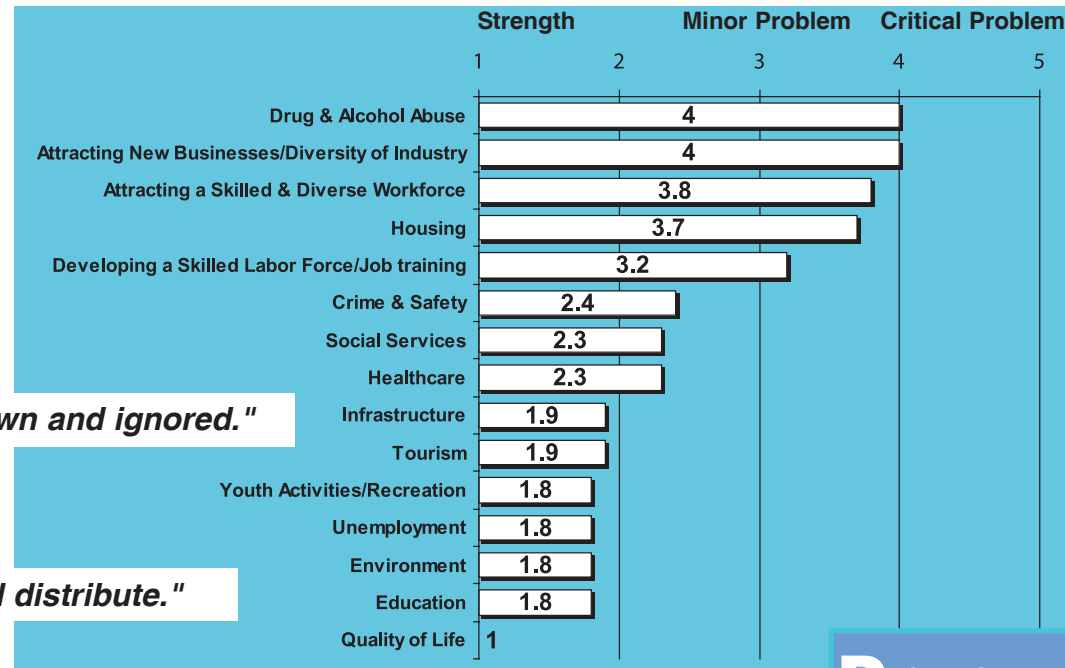
Thirteen community leaders were asked to participate in an interview conducted by KEC managers and employees. The interviews explored various issues facing the community ranging from "drug and alcohol abuse" to "quality of life."

Leaders were asked to discuss fifteen economic, environmental and social issues as strengths or weaknesses in Douglas. The interviewees rated each issue based on the nature of the challenge presented to the community. They then were asked to comment on each issue and suggest possible solutions.

Drug and alcohol abuse was considered one of the most critical problems facing the Douglas community. Economic issues - including **attracting new businesses** and a **skilled workforce** - were also defined as critical.

Community leaders also believe it was important for Douglas to find a way to **attract new businesses**.

"We need to tie into other resources besides coal, so when coal is gone, other resources kick in."



Many community leaders agreed they needed a coordinated effort to promote the city of Douglas and its benefits.

"We need to promote the school system and quality of life."

The lack of incentives for youth to stay in the area and the shortage of businesses in the community were considered to be ongoing problems. Community leaders pointed to training initiatives as one possible solution.

"Kids don't stay in the state but leave to find better jobs. This is a chronic problem in Wyoming."

"We need to train our youth to start and run businesses here at home"

Drug and alcohol abuse is the top issue of concern, followed by **economic development.**

Most community leaders were very concerned about the growing use of serious drugs that are easy to make and distribute, such as methamphetamines. Community leaders agreed the local police were doing everything in their power to counter the problem; however, law enforcement was inadequate to solve the issue.

"There are just not enough law enforcement officials to deal with the problem successfully."

Some leaders pointed out that preventive education could be an effective approach to solving the drug and alcohol abuse problem. However, there was a lack of proper anti-drug education, not only in schools, but also at home.

"Parents need teachers to do something, but parents also need to be accountable."

Another defined issue was the lack of drug treatment and counseling centers and psychiatric help for people who have already become drug and substance abusers.

"There are no treatment facilities locally; the closest is an hour away."

Community leaders agreed that **developing a skilled labor force** and **job training** were also critical challenges facing Douglas. Many pointed to the need for more educated people, and emphasized the importance of diversity of industry. Their recommendations focused on bringing more skills and education into the community by attracting industrial or research development businesses. Some comments commended Converse Area New Development Organization (CANDO) for working on diversifying local industry.

"We need to focus on bringing industrial or research development that will bring more skills and education."

Another issue for the Douglas community was the need for a more **stable workforce**. Lack of families and working spouses have increased the number of cyclical jobs in the community.

"Douglas wants families to come to the community. We need more working spouses and more stable workers. We don't want cyclical jobs."



Most community leaders agreed another critical issue for Douglas was the lack of **housing**. They pointed to an existing market bubble, lack of rental property, and the need for more building within city limits.

"Housing has gotten tight within the last year. Areas for building within the city limits are hard to find."

"The city needs to build more rental property."

Some leaders had a more positive view on housing and predicted that building would increase due to a boost in the number of carpenters.

"I believe housing is going to improve because more carpenters are in town and are building more."

Lack of affordable housing in the area emerged as another critical issue. According to community leaders, the cost of housing was too high in the Douglas area. They criticized high mortgage rates and poor zoning of rural housing, and agreed that providing affordable housing could be a valuable investment for the whole community.

"Housing is too high for Douglas. Rural housing is good but there is no local zoning enforcements. For example, trailers are next to nice homes."

"There are higher mortgages than what the house is worth and property values are not going to be sustainable."

Inadequate training and retraining programs also inhibited the community's ability to improve its local workforce. Community leaders agreed more **skilled workers** were needed in industries, such as trades and welding.

"Job training is inadequate. Skilled workers, such as welders, pipe fitters and electricians, need to be developed."

Some leaders recommended improvements in overall education and training initiatives, such as establishing a professional conference with intensive, topic-specific agendas, and more flexible class schedules. Leaders also recommended offering childcare while parents were being trained.

Other recommendations addressed collaboration among different businesses, such as developing joint recruiting initiatives.

"It is important to initiate joint recruiting between health care and the mines."