



***Scenario Planning***  
***Community Engagement Events***  
***August 2010***



## MIGP Community Engagement Events – August 2010

After the July 8<sup>th</sup> RIG leadership meeting, the MIGP Board decided that before the next leadership meeting that 3 regional engagement events could be very beneficial to the process. Specifically, these 3 regional events were planned so that more residents of the MIGP region may learn more about the outcomes of the July 8th meeting, the regional innovation planning process, and become engaged in the region’s future success.

The regional engagement events included:

- Review and explore MIGP scenarios of the future, local implications and opportunities;
- Playing ‘The Futures Game’;
- An opportunity to be part of creating the region’s future!

Residents of the region were encouraged to attend the event closest to them—Iowa Falls, Humboldt, or Emmetsburg. The dates and locations were as follows:

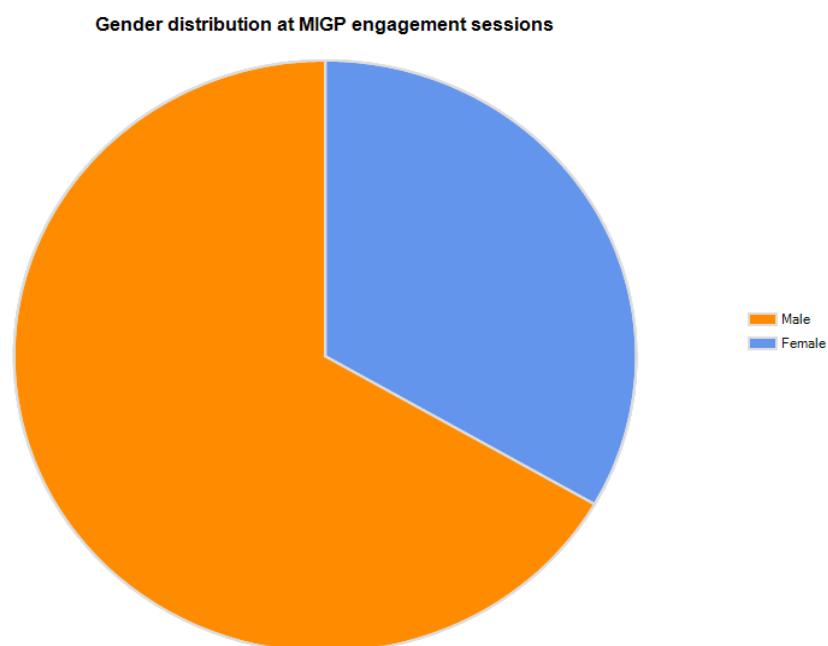
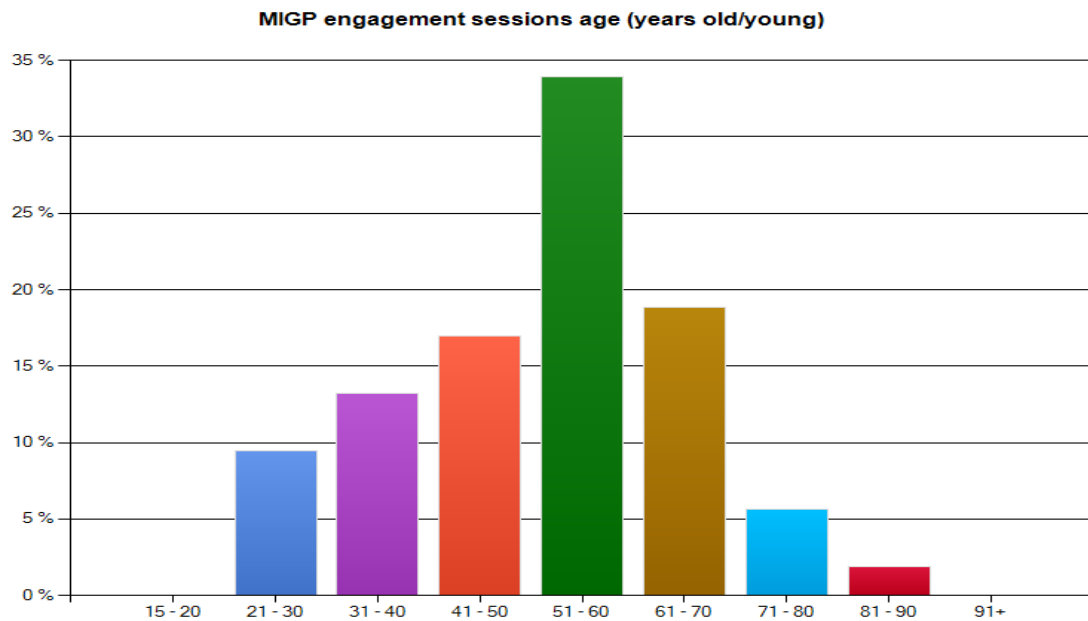
August 17<sup>th</sup>—Iowa Falls  
 August 18<sup>th</sup>—Humboldt  
 August 19<sup>th</sup>—Emmetsburg

Participants were asked a series of key questions at the completion of the workshops. These data from the 54 completed surveys has been collated into this report.



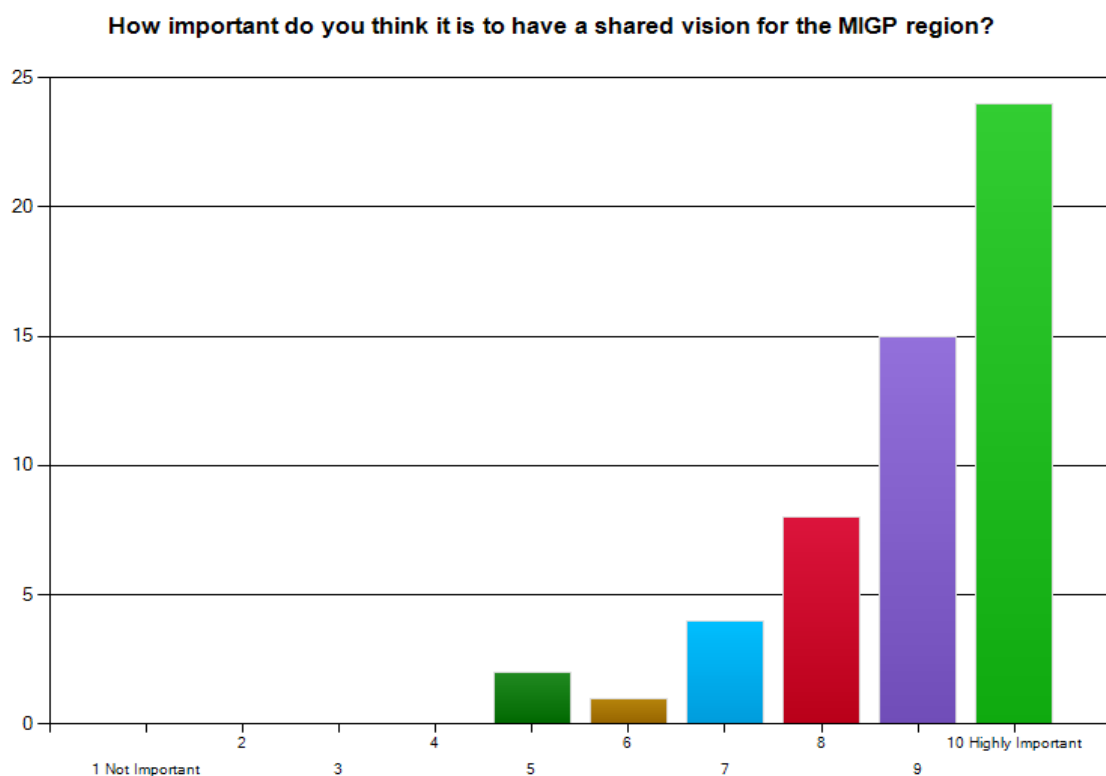
## Participant Profiles

The workshops were attended by regional stakeholders and community members that had an interest in a regional perspective. Participants were aged from 21 to over 80 years of age and came from locations throughout the MIGP region. Most of the participants were aged between 51 and 60 years (34%). Gender was represented unequally with Female 33% and Male 67%.

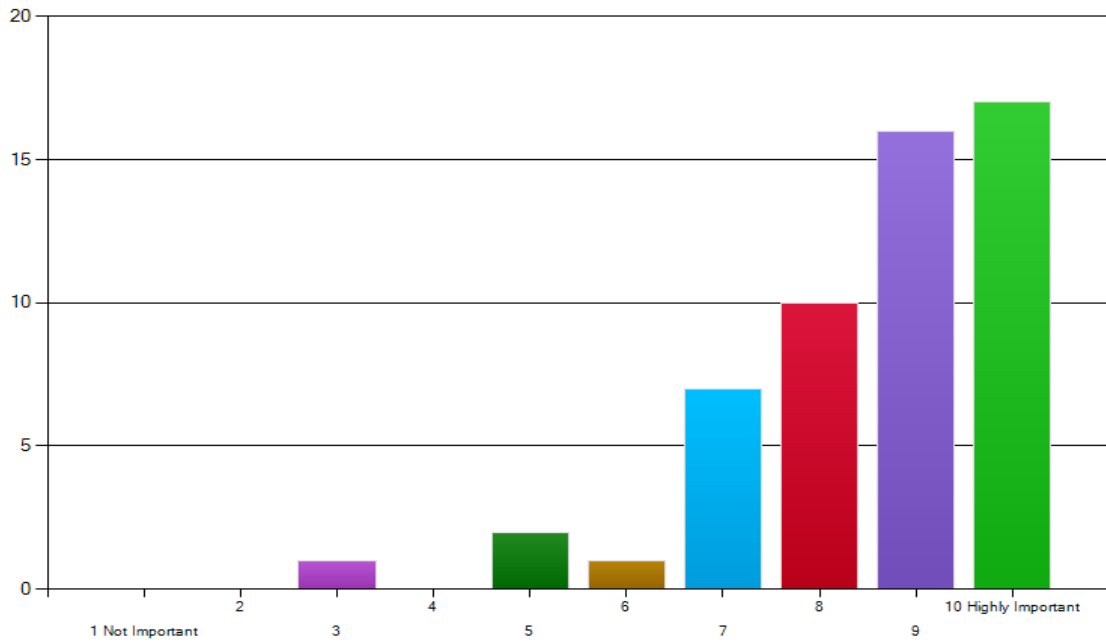


## Perspectives about the Future

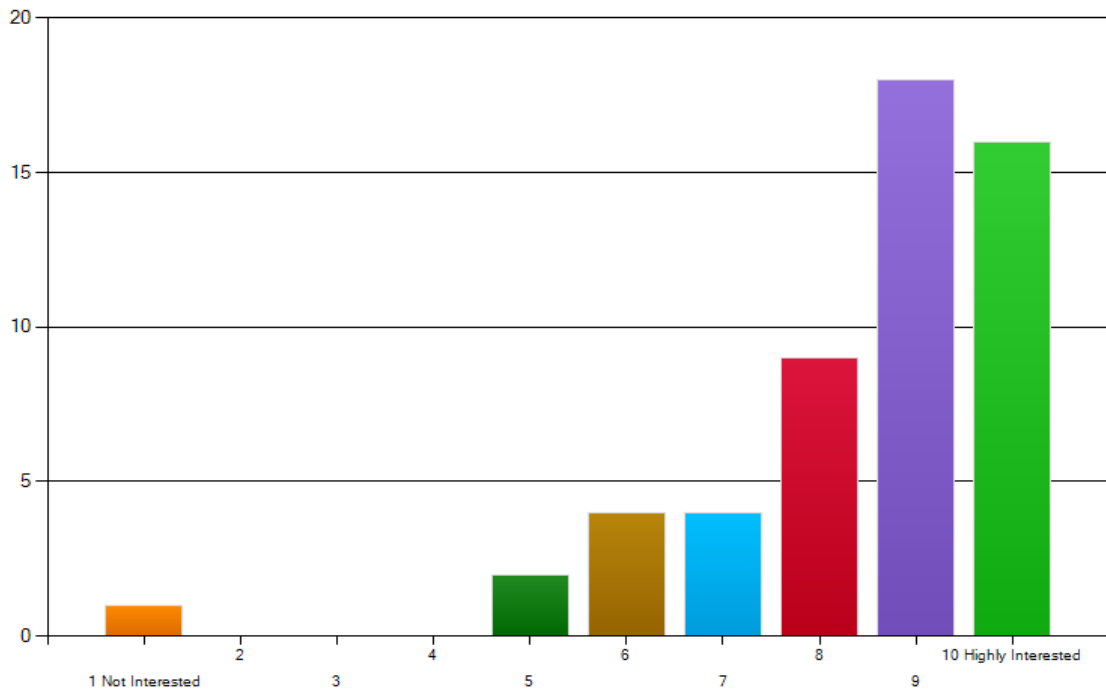
The participants at the community engagement sessions indicated that they thought that a shared vision for the MIGP region is very important. They also indicated that a shared vision was very important when making decisions about their local region. Furthermore the participants indicated a strong willingness to contribute to making a shared vision a reality for the region. These responses were supported by the participants' comments regarding these aspects. This represents strength for MIGP region into the future.



**How important is it to consider a regional shared vision when making decisions for the MIGP region?**



**How interested are you in helping to make a preferred vision a reality for the MIGP region?**



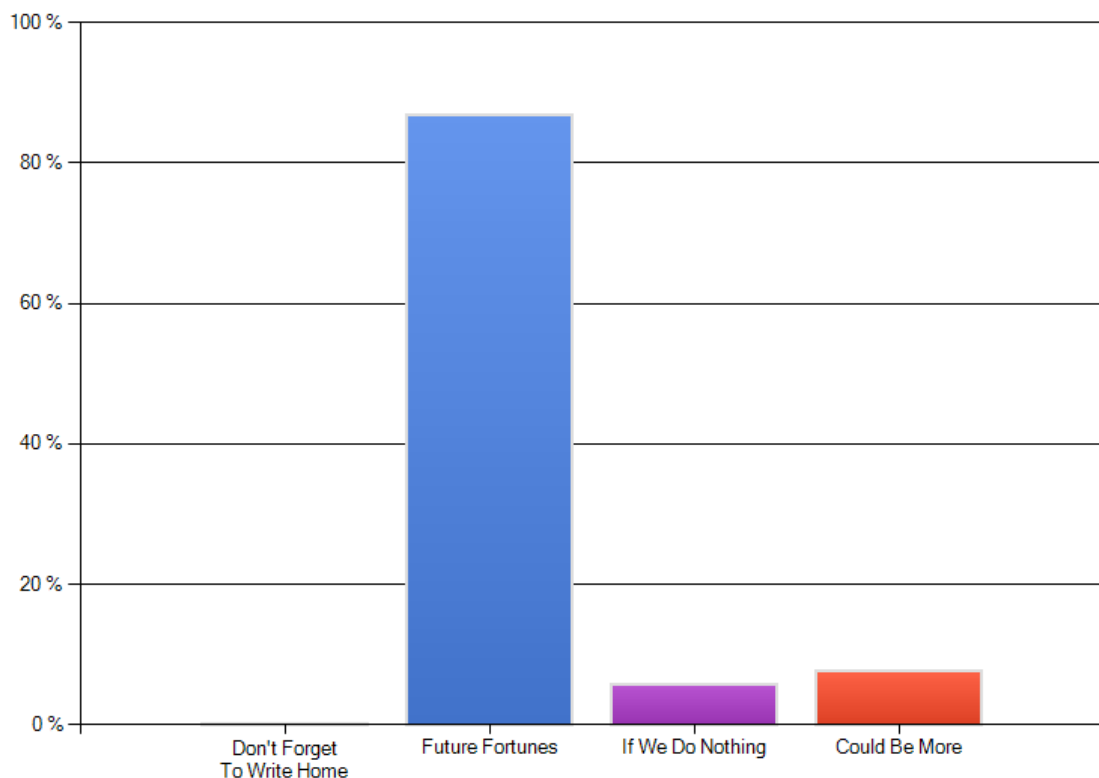
## Preferred Scenario for the Future

The participants at the Community Engagement events indicated unanimously that Future Fortunes is the preferred scenario in the engagement post-workshop questionnaire. The participants' comments regarding their preferred scenario reinforced the numeric responses and indicated an interest and commitment in developing a shared regional vision. It is encouraging to have such a strong alignment with a single scenario, and if this were repeated in the wider community, it would assist with creating a cohesive vision for the region.

*"I want to see the community grow and prosper. It can't happen by standing still and doing nothing"*

The survey results reported here were consistent with the 'show of hands' votes for the preferred scenario that was done at the scenario planning workshop on 8 July 2010. This indicates, at least on a preliminary basis, a very high level of support and alignment around the preferred scenario 'Future Fortunes'. This scenario represents the emerging shared vision for the region.

Preferred vision from MIGP engagement sessions



## PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

As part of the survey process, participants were given the opportunity to make individual comments on specific questions. The responses are listed below.

**Q1 Do you have any comments about working toward a common vision that my community chooses (even if it is different than the one I choose). Please comment below**

- I am flexible if I know we all share a common goal
- I will help move the community toward a common goal but will not be afraid to voice my opinion if the vision is different than my feeling on the future.
- I am normally a team player. Would also try to get some of my ideas in acted, by working closely with leaders.
- Work together to understand the common goal. Focus on communicating to all players
- Listen to the employers of the area. They will tell you what they need for future growth and economic prosperity.
- Most put personality aside for the best interest of the community. Only chance to make good things happen.
- Strength in numbers and commitment to a common goal are crucial. Everyone must "buy in"
- This might be hard
- Need to talk to small groups in community with a common message
- Find a part that can agree with a work in that area.
- Want to see the community grow and prosperity. It can't happen by standing still and doing nothing.
- Education priorities growth in #'s, rather than placement at grad, ave salary, placement in desired field.
- There can be some diversity of opinion, but there must be a unifying common goal.
- We have to be team players before it takes all of us to move our region forward.
- All depends of the vision. If they choose D - the # would be lower on the scale.
- As long as their decision is not to maintain status quo
- I would work toward the vision that my community chooses although I wouldn't be as passionate about it I strongly agreed.
- I am willing to work toward a common goal if I am convinced that a solid majority believes it to be best for the region.
- I want the community (ies) pulling together, however there needs to be the impetus to do better injected also.
- Once a decision is made, everyone must be on board with the decision. We must be united to survive and prosper
- Local media involvement is key
- If vision is to do nothing, I would not support that.
- Working together regionally will benefit everyone
- This is a worthwhile project to ensure a continuing high quality of life in NW Iowa.
- Very interested in the dialogue of bringing in opportunities

**Q2. Comments on the preferred scenario as it relates to your community? (Please list below)**

- We are in denial. We need to evaluate where we are and then decide where we want to go.
- Have to develop trained workforce. Must be able to attract new businesses. People must be willing to accept change.
- Feel very strongly about quality of life issues.
- We have a lot of work to get there, but we have recently gained momentum.
- Title are misleading, we all think "there could be so much more"
- After 22 years involvement in community development, we are heading in the right direction.
- Who will replace the aging workforce?
- Need to have a lofty goal and set sights high.
- Prior to past year would have been 'If we do nothing'
- Planning is crucial. We must have the fortuity and vision to take calculated risks if we expect to not only survive but thrive as a region.
- Scenario Planning activities have shown me that future fortunes may be our ideal but it still doesn't come without some possible negatives.
- I am concerned about 'succession planning' as it relates to our community: many, many older folks - committed to their community - need to bring along side the next generation of leaders.
- We need to leverage the community collage to accelerate the training of our youth
- We do a great job at building out maintaining our infrastructure; education is high, but not creating enough jobs for highly trained, technical people.
- We have a visionary council, a community that is positive and wants to make headway to a better future. The fight is two-fold can we show results to satisfy the "want it now" and can we push past the "don't do anything"
- Keeps people on the ball, looking for ways to improve. No complacency, hopefully.
- Leaders are ready to lead but can't get too far ahead of citizens - some tensions needed
- To get there - we need buy in from all segments of the community, ie, schools, government, industry, employees and organizations.
- We need to move past the "do nothing" mode.
- I think we have national resources and local assets that make this scenario easily attainable. I think our leadership thinking is so backwards it might NEVER happen.
- Must deal with population & fewer youth translate to lower expectations?
- Workforce is the key retaining our young leaders & workers.
- We are not currently working towards Future Fortunes!!
- A lot of attitudes need to change to get to Future Fortune
- We are making progress but not there yet. The good ole boys have to let of the reigns & control. They are detrimental to process.
- This would be optimal - we need to take advantage of our resources and skilled workforce.
- Growing community focused on highly skilled and well trained individuals.
- Right now, it doesn't.
- I have always believed we could be so much more - I just did not have the knowledge of how to proceed.
- Getting more people involved in discussions
- Develop existing & bring in new business
- Make sure that the community uses every resource available to grow into a vibrant community. Never become complacent as is that attitude will allow a community slide.
- I am glad that we have leaders who are 'future-minded'
- It is opposite to the direction we are headed
- I believe we have too many cave people - need to change and take risks
- Good education - need more forward thinking officials
- Wanting more opportunities
- Encouraging to see this movements
- Complete agreement that the best formula for economic growth is utilizing your resources and recruit through educating on jobs based on those resources.
- Need to attract businesses to bring in trained workers



**Q3. If you attended a MIGP session, did you find it a valuable experience? Please comment**

- Iowa Falls - Yes, I appreciated how well it was put together!
- I think it was interesting to see how diversity and risk dramatically change the vision for the future.
- I thought it was a good session. Moved along at a good pace.
- It was eye-opening. Wonderful interaction! Great opportunity to get engaged
- Yes. Interesting scenario thinking.
- Interesting, but it will it make a difference in the community?.. Maybe?
- Yes, very interesting and something that is needed in the area.
- Yes. (9 x responses recorded just a Yes)
- Yes, it is important that we realize that all decisions (or indecisions) have consequences.
- Yes - tied together discussions from July meeting and incorporated additional ones.
- Absolutely. Time of day is difficult to have "thinking cap on".
- Yes, Helped to look at the differing ideas and possible outcomes
- Yes. We need to make conscious choices, after committing to what we need to do.
- Yes. Good follow-up to July 8th.
- I try to be positive, but sessions such as these (& I have been to many) seem to lose their focus as people leave the room.
- Yes, Chance to think outside of the box.
- Yes, enjoyed looking at scenarios.
- Very interesting, food for thought my 1st meeting.
- Yes, I think it has opened my eyes to the real problems facing our area.
- Thought provoking. Most scenarios are very complex. Need to help parents and communities raise their expectations of youth. Need to reward youth that train & stay in state.(forgivable loans, incentives for businesses or creation of jobs, incentives venture capital)
- Yes, but since I was at the 1st RIG leadership meeting I may have had an advantage.
- Not much new. Disappointed that we did not have better attendance.
- Yes, I did attend the first workshop so some of it was a repeat.
- Yes, except a lot of repeat for those attending session in July.
- Yes. Not looking for solutions but teaching people to understand the issue.
- I attended the first session - so I didn't find this session as valuable. There was a lot of recap.
- Yes, enjoyed the map game.
- Very valuable.
- Yes, game was eye opening.
- Excellent, thought provoking and encouraging.
- Yes, it leads us to think critically about our present situation as well as the future
- Yes, very valuable.
- Yes, each of the sessions has invoked new "thinking" processes and options.
- Game was Excellent! Each EDC needs to play it once or twice.
- Yes, the game gives a realistic view of how decisions are made and the long term effect on communities.
- Yes - the game was fantastic!
- Yes, very informative.
- Yes - learned that you need to take risks.
- Yes. I was able to learn new facts about expansion & more about MIGP
- Absolutely - the Futures Game was very valuable in helping understand our decision-making process
- Yes, risk/reward analysis helpful.
- Yes, very thought provoking.
- Very, Particularly on the "Future Fortunes" formula
- Yes Fun and informative.

**Q4. General Comments, please list below**

- Well Done!
- I would be interested to see how other communities in the Midwest view hurdles and visions for the future.
- Good Job! Great presentation, time went quickly.
- Thank you for this opportunity and keep up this training.
- More if a focus needs to be placed on the importance of leadership structure of communities.
- I believe that I was the only one believing that we are headed towards 'future fortunes'. The alternative energy in the region, the direction of the regional colleges, etc. are all indications that we are moving in the right direction. We may not be there yet, but we are going in the right direction.
- We need to support employers!
- Wasn't sure what the program would be, but was very pleased with the session.
- Creative thinking.
- You may want to ask people to think regionally for the exercise and drive home the interconnectedness of individual communities/economies.
- Well Done!
- Wish we had even more people here, but our city had 2 of 5 council members.
- Thank you!
- The session itself was interesting.
- Like to see what practical information and future discussions develop because of this.
- I would like to see some of my questions answered on the website.
- Thank you for this process.
- Real good presentations made me think.
- Great session.
- Excellent.
- Good method to get people thinking similarly.
- Look forward to 9/9/10

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

This report summarizes the survey results from the 3 Community Engagement Sessions. Material has been presented as recorded from the survey sheets, with some minor grammatical editing. This report complements the Scenario Planning Workshop report prepared for the MIGP region.

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**Report and Community Engagement Sessions prepared by Juliet Fox and David Beurle,**  
Innovative Leadership; September 2010

Innovative Leadership is a global consultancy company that specializes in assisting communities, regions and organizations to plan and prepare for their future. With staff in Australia and USA, the company aims to develop the tools and approaches to allow regional communities to think about their future in a new way and to respond to a rapidly changing world. Innovative Leadership is a market leader in the field of regional scenario planning and has undertaken projects across Australia, USA, Canada and Ireland.

### **About The Authors:**

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