

# Play Ball!

Ever get that **sinking feeling**? As if your hot-air balloon has sprung a leak? Many towns & neighbourhoods do. And as things start to sink, local people – like passengers on a balloon – start looking for someone or something to **rescue** them.

Empty shops

People moving away

Pink slips from employers

Calls for food bank donations

Line-ups at Employment Canada

And no wonder! When things get this bad, where do you start? What do you do next? How? When? "Get rescued" looks like the right thing to do. Indeed, a few people & businesses & programs may be able to patch things up (& take off some of the passengers). The community may drift along ... for now.

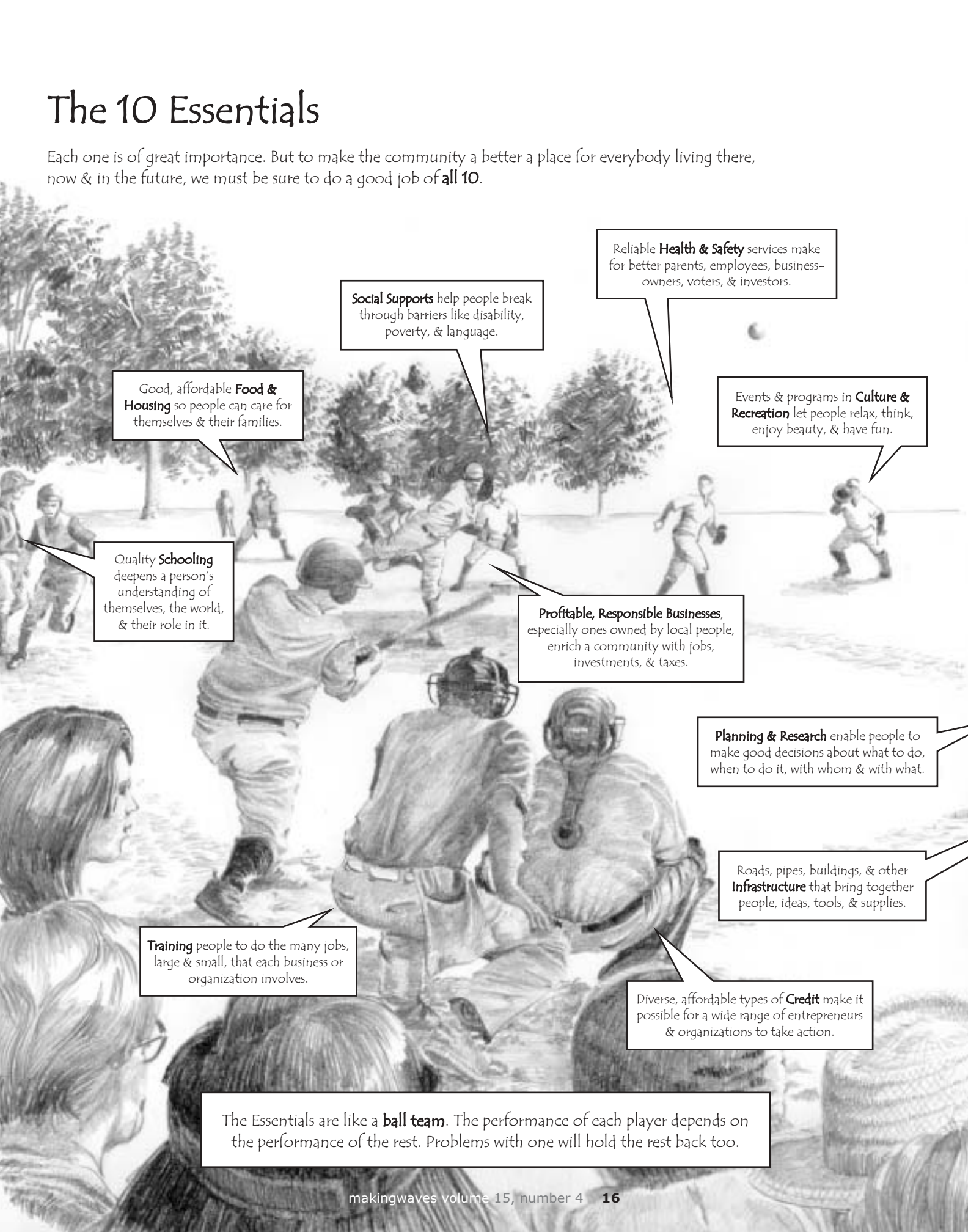
But for a town or neighbourhood to really **go** someplace, **more** is required. More thought, more time, & more effort is required from more people so that everything that really needs doing gets done.

What really needs doing? **10 things** in all. 5 concern the way local people make a living (their economy). 5 concern the way they care for each other (their social relationships)\*. They are the **10 Essentials**.

\*See Insiders' Guide #1.

# The 10 Essentials

Each one is of great importance. But to make the community a better place for everybody living there, now & in the future, we must be sure to do a good job of **all 10**.



Good, affordable **Food & Housing** so people can care for themselves & their families.

**Social Supports** help people break through barriers like disability, poverty, & language.

Reliable **Health & Safety** services make for better parents, employees, business-owners, voters, & investors.

Events & programs in **Culture & Recreation** let people relax, think, enjoy beauty, & have fun.

Quality **Schooling** deepens a person's understanding of themselves, the world, & their role in it.

**Profitable, Responsible Businesses**, especially ones owned by local people, enrich a community with jobs, investments, & taxes.

**Planning & Research** enable people to make good decisions about what to do, when to do it, with whom & with what.

Roads, pipes, buildings, & other **Infrastructure** that bring together people, ideas, tools, & supplies.

**Training** people to do the many jobs, large & small, that each business or organization involves.

Diverse, affordable types of **Credit** make it possible for a wide range of entrepreneurs & organizations to take action.

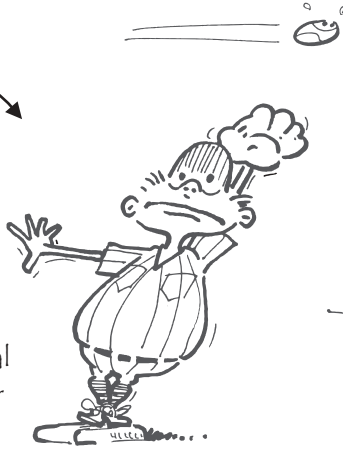
The Essentials are like a **ball team**. The performance of each player depends on the performance of the rest. Problems with one will hold the rest back too.



Trouble is, many communities **neglect** some of their players, or don't make them work together as a team ...

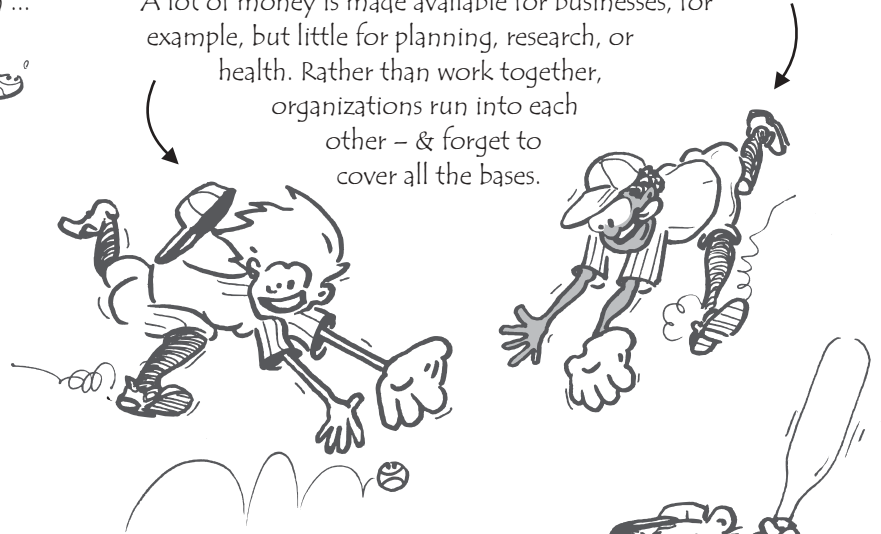
### Who's On First?

Sometimes there's training for entrepreneurs, but no credit that new businesses can afford. Or there's new businesses, but not enough training or social supports (like daycare or bus passes) to help local people take the new jobs.



### Mine! Mine!

When one organization doesn't know what another is doing, they end up spending money on the same thing. A lot of money is made available for businesses, for example, but little for planning, research, or health. Rather than work together, organizations run into each other - & forget to cover all the bases.



### Heavy Hitter

Small towns are prone to rely on a single company to carry the day. They count on a big mill, mine, or store to "slug it out of the park" year after year with jobs, investment, & taxes. So if slugger leaves town, the team is ruined.



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No matter how good each of your players may be, if you're going to win you need **team play** & a good **game plan**.

# Team Play

Here's how people in 3 communities have taken action on not one, but **several** of the Essentials at a time.

## Winnipeg

In Winnipeg's North End, some programs help people with drug abuse, career planning, and life skills. A business trains & employs some graduates of these programs to build & renovate houses for low-income people. With more jobs & better housing, the local crime rate is falling.

## Trois-Rivières

To fight poverty in Trois-Rivières, there are literacy classes, training, & social supports help people get ready to work. Special office space & loans help co-operatives & other businesses to make a start.

After careful research, the City of Revelstoke created its own logging company to supply local sawmills. The credit union made business loans easier to get. Training programs help people prepare for local jobs. These are all parts of one big community plan.

## Revelstoke

In each case, people & organizations with a variety of skills & resources first combined forces. With the help & support of the rest of the community, they looked at the local situation closely to see where the essentials were weak or strong. They drew up a plan. Then they made their move where things were really WEAK or opportunities were really GOOD.

It has put a stop to the community's downward spiral &, given time, will start an upward one.

Could this happen  
in your  
community too?

Photo: Dean Cebullak, [www.digitaldean.com](http://www.digitaldean.com)

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Their approach is known as community economic development (CED). It doesn't **rescue** communities. It **connects** people & businesses & projects & programs together to ensure that the community gets **all the Essentials**.