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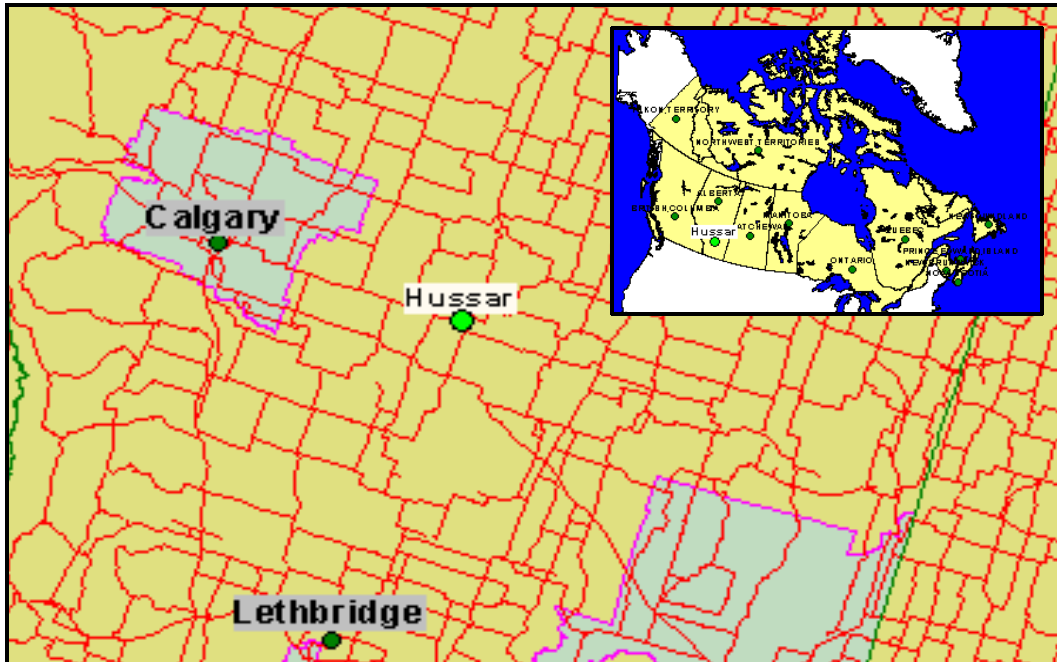
THE NEW RURAL ECONOMY



Site 25: Hussar, Alberta

Located in southern Alberta, Hussar's economy is based on agriculture, oil and gas, services and retirement. The Village is 100 km east of Calgary. The population of 157 has been increasing slowly in recent years. Hussar and area residents are actively raising money to replace the arena and sports complex to meet local needs, and as a business opportunity, selling ice time as far away as Calgary. The forthcoming removal of the grain elevators, with the imminent closure of the CPR branch-line, weighs heavily on the community. Loss of the elevators will result in a substantial reduction in the tax base for the village. This uncertainty mirrors anxiety over a loss of governing autonomy and control for the village. A continuing struggle to retain the high school has unified the wider community, providing much of the social glue holding the community together. At the same time, the academic achievements of the

graduates and lack of employment have contributed to out-migration of the youth. Farms are consolidating as farmers retire without a willing successor or give up because of high land prices. Very large commercial private operations and Hutterite colonies compete for the land. The Colonies are relatively closed communities with their own schools and social arrangements. Consolidation and considerable historical foreign ownership are weakening commerce, thinning the school population and diluting the social life for Hussar. Good road transportation, low cost housing and lifestyle are attracting people who work elsewhere to live in Hussar. The wide open rolling topography with its grassland ecology and the large dried marshy bed of Deadhorse Lake are viewed as amenities by the citizens. The economy is restructuring as its former commercial hinterland gives way to the influence and opportunities of its adjacency to Calgary.



Maps courtesy of Statistics Canada, Geography Division, 1998

Characteristics in 1996	Hussar	Alberta	Canada
Population	157	2 696 826	28 846 761
Population % change 1991-1996	7.5	5.9	5.7
% of population ages 15 and over	71.8	77.2	79.5
Unemployment rate	0	7.2	10.1
Participation rate	75	72.4	65.5
% Primary industry	21	11.6	5.6
% Secondary industry	36.8	15.2	20
% Tertiary industry	36.8	73.2	74.4
Average number of persons in married or common-law families	3.4	3.2	3.1
Average number of persons in lone-parent families	0	2.6	2.6

Source: Statistics Canada

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