

The City of Airdrie Business Survey

May 2022

Overview



Background

- The City of Airdrie Economic Development Department completed a business survey to understand how to best support local businesses. Business retention and expansion (BR+E) activities can be employed to ensure business needs are monitored and addressed; however, engagement can be time consuming and complex.
- A Business Survey was commissioned to engage the broader business community, while also allowing for the identification of potential expansion or retention opportunities for follow-up on a business-by-business basis.

Overview



Methodology

- A random sample telephone/online survey was conducted with 363 businesses out of an initial sample of 2266. The total response rate for the online and phone surveys was 17.2%, which is very high in the market research industry. The average phone interview length was 25.4 minutes.
- This scientific approach ensures that the results have a high level of accuracy (with a 5.1% margin of error at a 95% confidence level) and statistically represents the business community in the region.

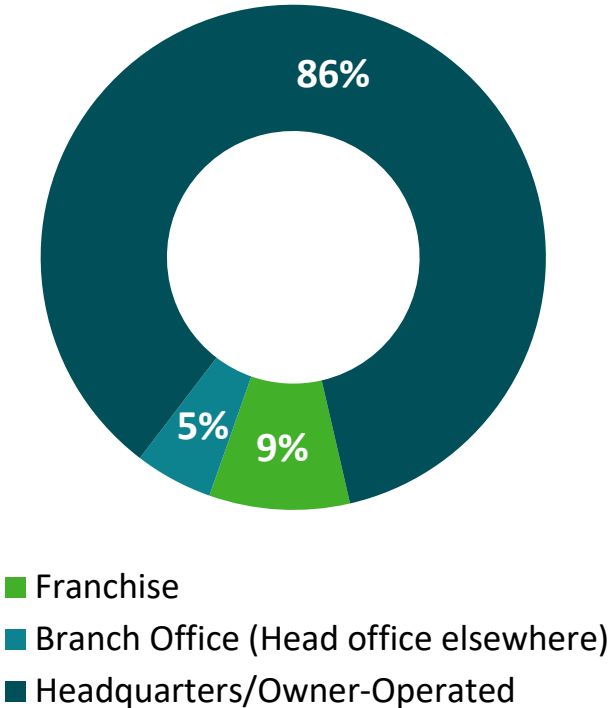


Business Community Firmographics

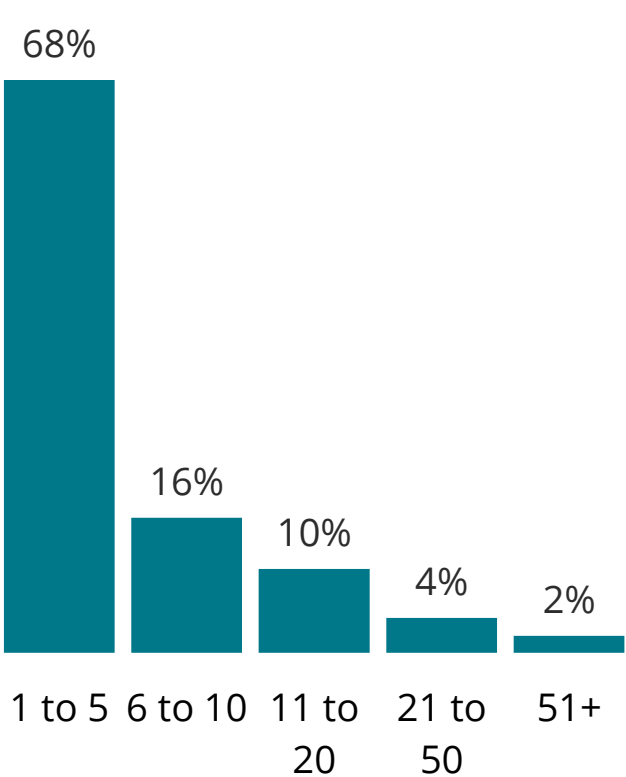
Firmographics



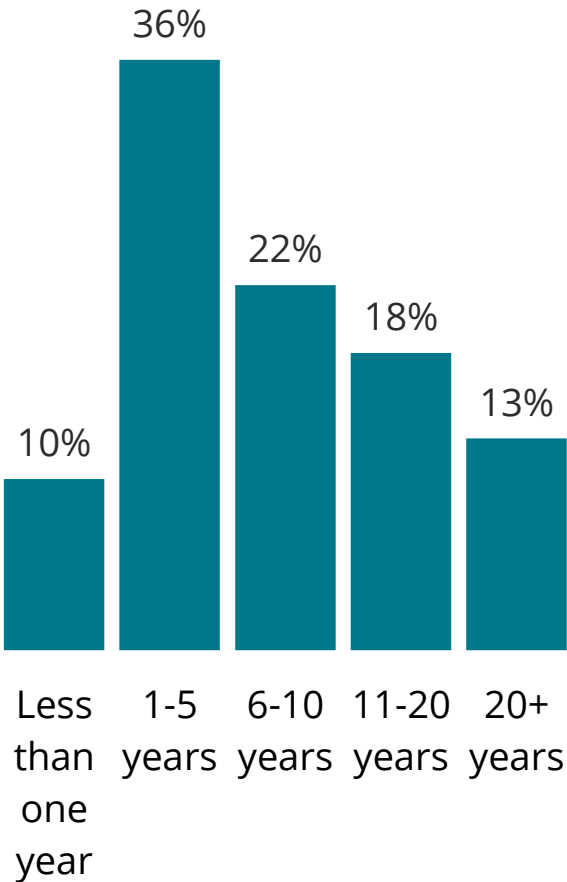
Ownership



Number of Employees



Years Operating in Airdrie



Firmographics



Industries surveyed

	%
Retail Trade	16%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	13%
Construction	12%
Accommodation and Food Services	11%
Health Care and Social Assistance	10%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9%
Education Services	6%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	6%
Manufacturing	6%
Finance and Insurance	3%
Transportation and Warehousing	3%
Wholesale Trade	2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1%
Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction	1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	1%



Business Classification



Reasons for Selecting Airdrie

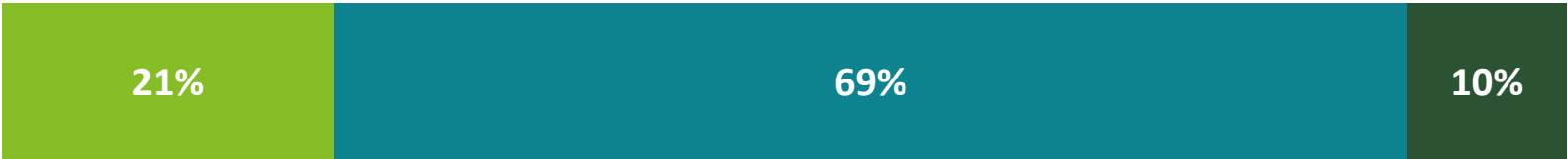
What was the primary factor that made you choose Airdrie when selecting a location for your business?





Business Performance

Business Performance - Employment



■ Increase ■ Remain the same ■ Decrease

Over the past 12 months did the total number of employees in your company...?



■ Increase ■ Stay the same ■ Not sure ■ Decrease

Thinking about the next 12 months, do you expect the total number of employees in your company to...?



Business Performance - Revenue



■ Increased ■ Remained the same ■ Not sure ■ Decreased

Over the past 12 months have your revenues at your business...



■ Higher ■ The same ■ Not sure ■ Lower

And what are your expectations for the next 12 months in total revenues compared to last 12 months?



Business Performance – Attitudes



Over the past 12 months would you say your attitude about doing business in the City of Airdrie is?

Net Positive = 13%



■ Better ■ The same and has not changed ■ Worse

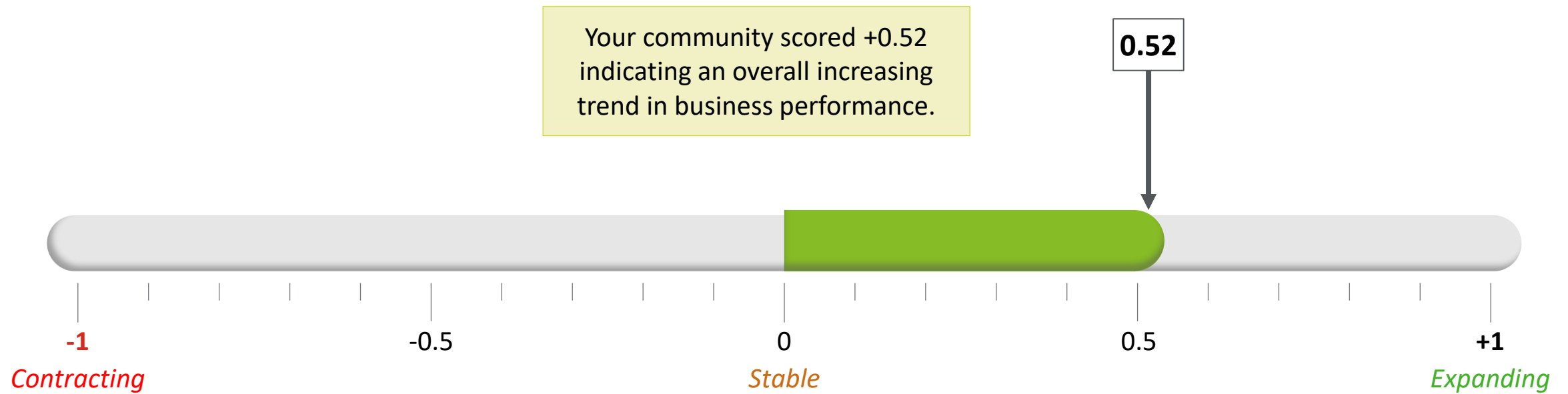


Business Performance Forecast

Business Performance Forecast



The Business Performance Forecast is a metric created by combining the five business performance questions. It considers the changes in staff, revenue and attitudes among businesses in the region for an overall directional picture of the business climate in the area.





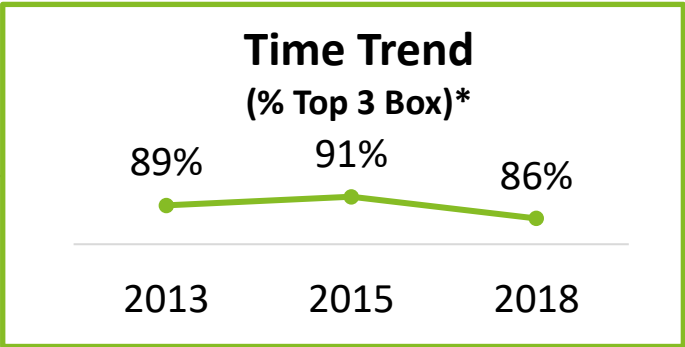
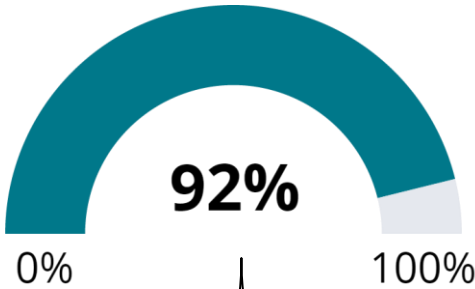
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)



Overall, how satisfied are you with the City of Airdrie as a place to own and operate a business?

KPI:



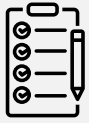
■ Very Satisfied ■ Somewhat Satisfied ■ Somewhat Dissatisfied ■ Very Dissatisfied

*Note: The scale was changed in 2022 to improve response accuracy. In previous years, the Top Box included “Excellent, Very Good or Good”.

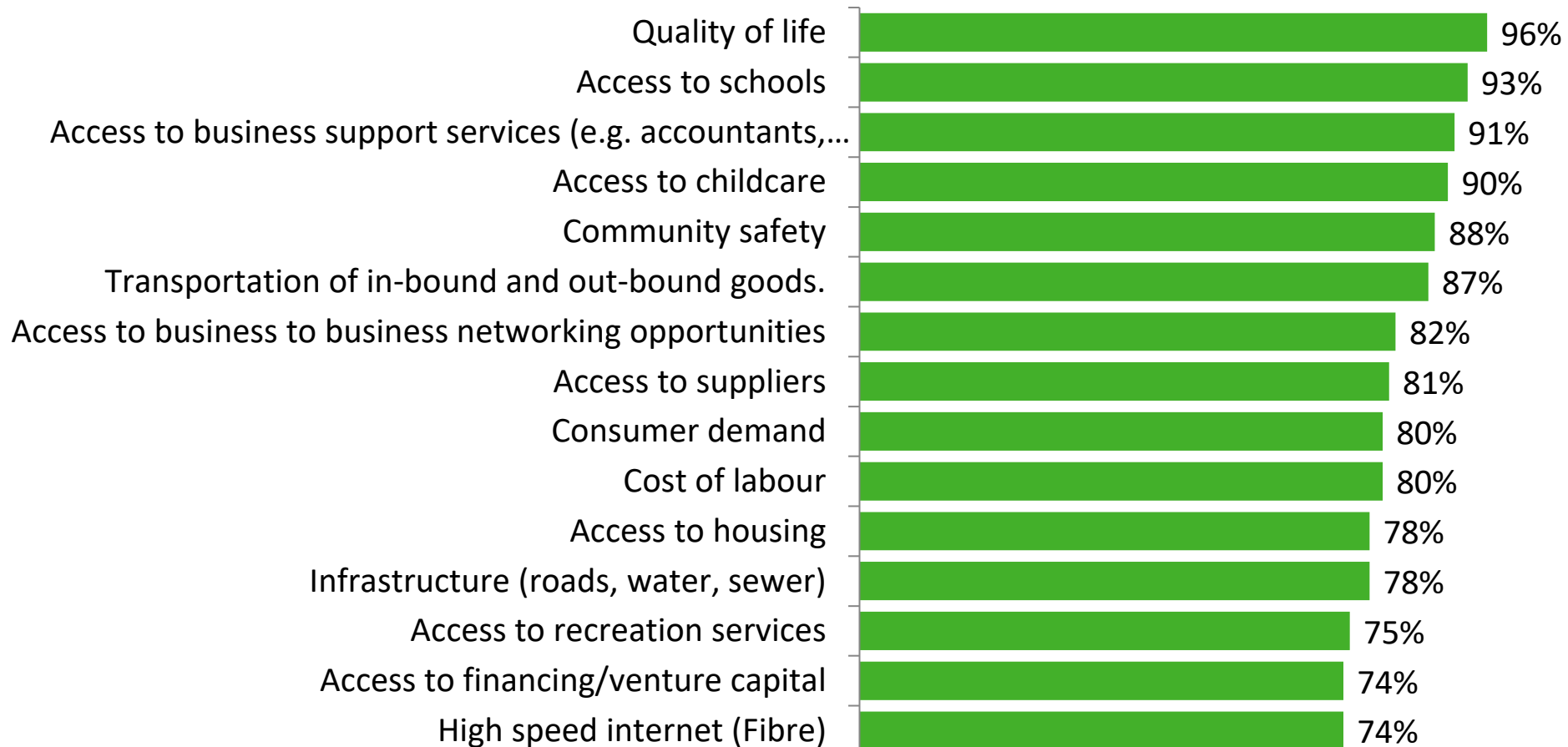


Satisfaction Levels

Satisfaction Levels – Higher-ranked factors



How satisfied you are with each of the following factors of doing business in the City of Airdrie?



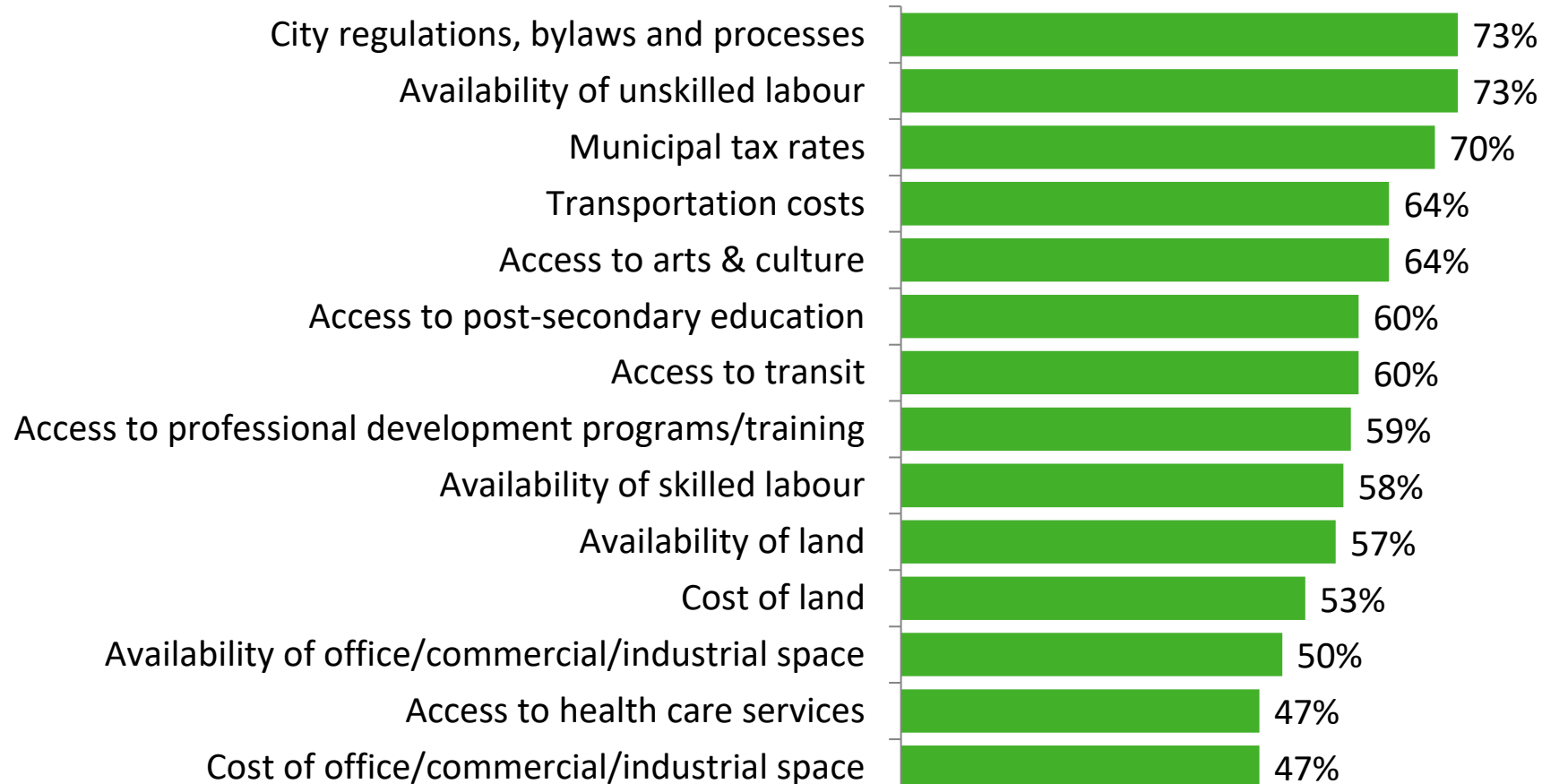
Top two box:
*Very Satisfied &
Satisfied combined.*



Satisfaction Levels – Lower-ranked services



How satisfied you are with each of the following factors of doing business in the City of Airdrie?



Top two box:
*Very Satisfied &
Satisfied combined.*





Derived Importance & Priority Matrix

Derived Importance & Priority Matrix



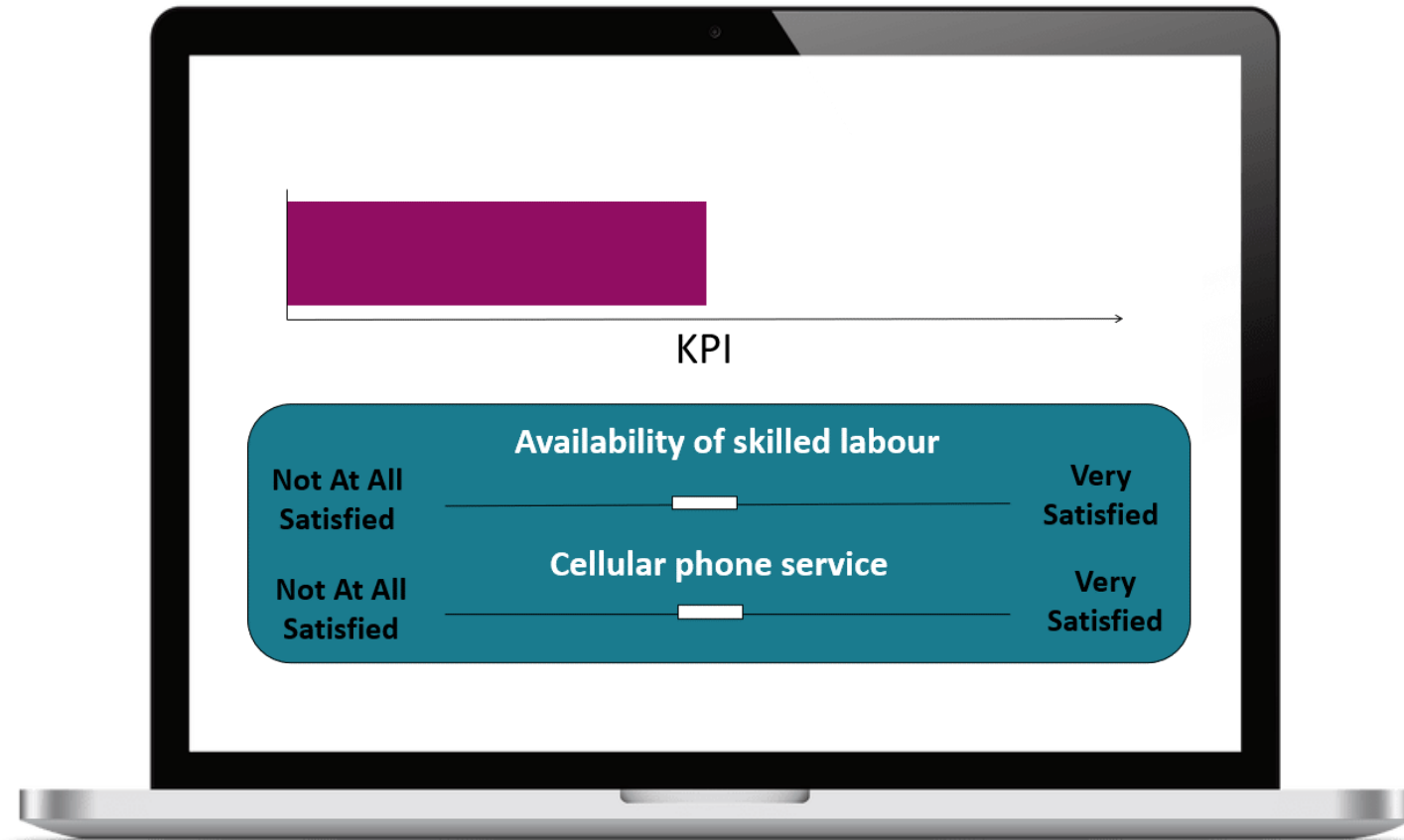
Derived Importance

- A statistical calculation of importance
- Far more accurate relative to asking importance
- Calculates the correlation coefficient of business factors with the KPI
- Factors with a high derived importance will have the greatest impact on the KPI



Priority Matrix

- A list of business factors to focus efforts
- Each priority is calculated using the level of satisfaction and the importance of each item (Derived Importance)
- Factors with lower satisfaction scores and higher importance become the top priorities
- Making improvements to the top priorities will have the greatest impact on improving the overall KPI



Priority Matrix – Top priorities

Community Factors	Performance	Importance	Priority
Cost of office/commercial/industrial space	47%	6.5	1
Access to health care services	47%	6.1	2
Availability of office/commercial/industrial space	50%	6.3	3
Availability of skilled labour	58%	6.5	4
Cost of land	53%	5.6	5
Access to transit	60%	6.5	6
Transportation costs	64%	7.2	7
Access to professional development programs/training	59%	6.1	8
City regulations, bylaws and processes	73%	8.9	9
Availability of land	57%	5.3	10
Access to post-secondary education	60%	5.8	11
Access to arts & culture	64%	6.3	12
Municipal tax rates	70%	6.5	13
Access to financing/venture capital	74%	6.5	14
High speed internet (Fibre)	74%	6.3	15



Higher Priority

Priority Matrix – Lower priorities/key strengths

Community Factors	Performance	Importance	Priority
Access to recreation services	75%	6.3	16
Infrastructure (roads, water, sewer)	78%	6.8	17
Access to business to business networking opportunities	82%	8.2	18
Consumer demand	80%	7.5	19
Availability of unskilled labour	73%	5.3	20
Cost of labour	80%	6.8	21
Access to housing	78%	5.8	22
Access to suppliers	81%	6.1	23
Community safety	88%	7.0	24
Transportation of in-bound and out-bound goods.	87%	5.3	25
Access to business support services (e.g. accountants, legal, professionals)	91%	6.3	26
Access to childcare	90%	5.1	27
Quality of life	96%	9.4	28
Access to schools	93%	5.6	29

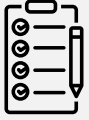


Lower Priority



Business Community Health Index

Community Business Health Index



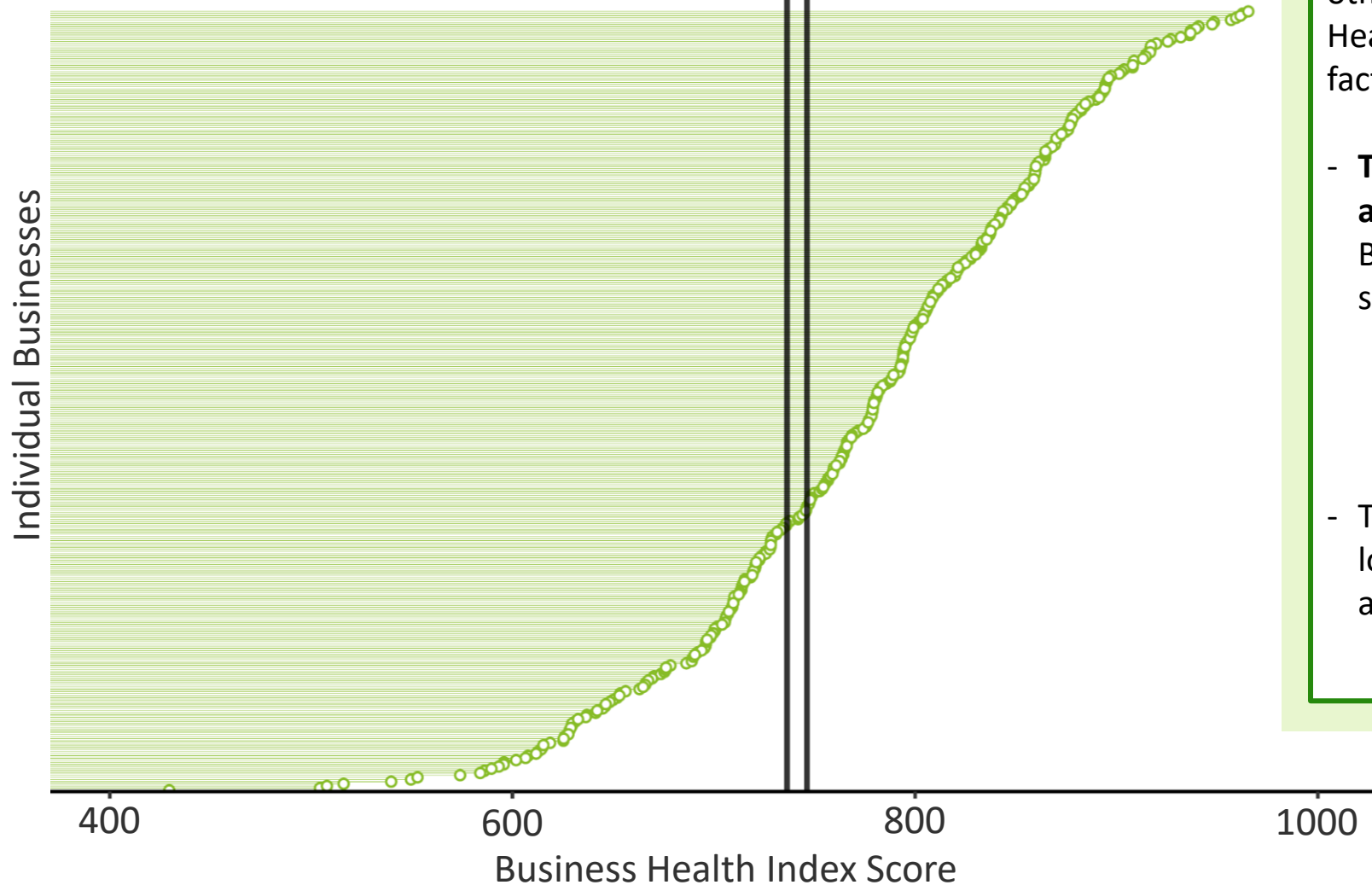
Using the results of this business survey, Deloitte combines the questions into a proprietary Community Business Health Index which is the combination of the following eight sub-scores:



Community Business Health Index

National 5-Year average = 746

Airdrie = 774



The City of Airdrie scored very well compared to other communities on the Community Business Health Index. This index is based on several factors:

- **The City of Airdrie outperformed the national average** on businesses' ratings of **almost all** the Business Health Index sub-scores. The City scored **particularly high** on:
 - **business revenue outlooks,**
 - **historical revenue, and**
 - **satisfaction with business supports.**
- The only indicator that was rated relatively lower in Airdrie compared to the national average was **satisfaction with infrastructure.**

Future Plans – Next 24 months



Businesses with plans to expand:

- **96** businesses total
- **38** in less than 6 months
- **58** in more than 6 months

Plans to downsize:

- **9** businesses total
- **4** in less than 6 months
- **5** in more than 6 months

Plans to relocate:

- **13** businesses total
- **5** in less than 6 months
- **8** in more than 6 months

Plans to close:

- **7** businesses total
- **5** in less than 6 months
- **2** in more than 6 months

Plans to sell:

- **4** businesses total
- **2** in less than 6 months
- **2** in more than 6 months

Expansion Plans



How do you intend to expand?

(Businesses planning to expand: n=96)

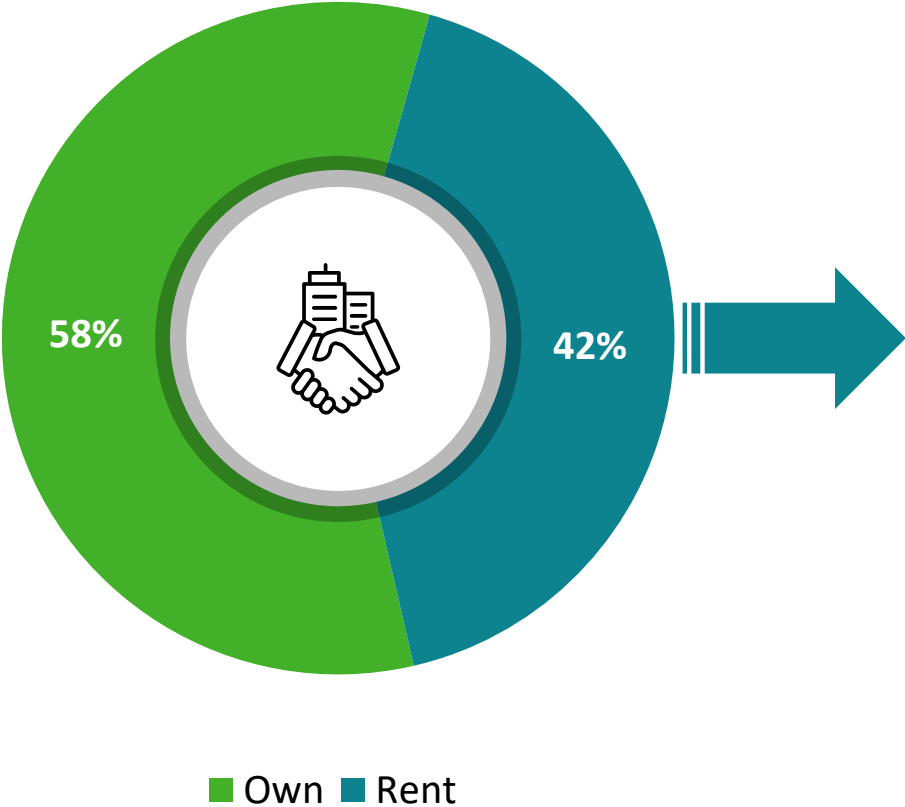


*Other responses included: Moving into new locations, expanding spaces, moving into new industries, staff training, business collaboration, returning to in-person events.

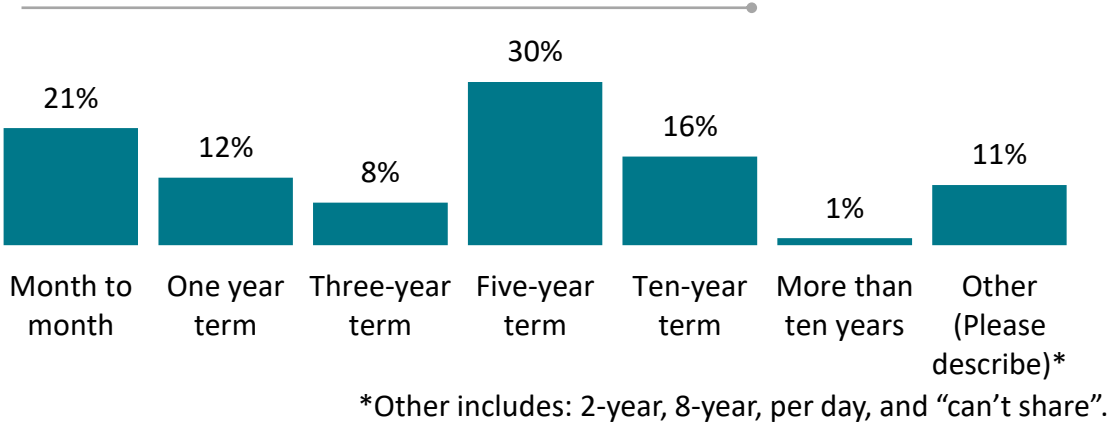
Business Properties



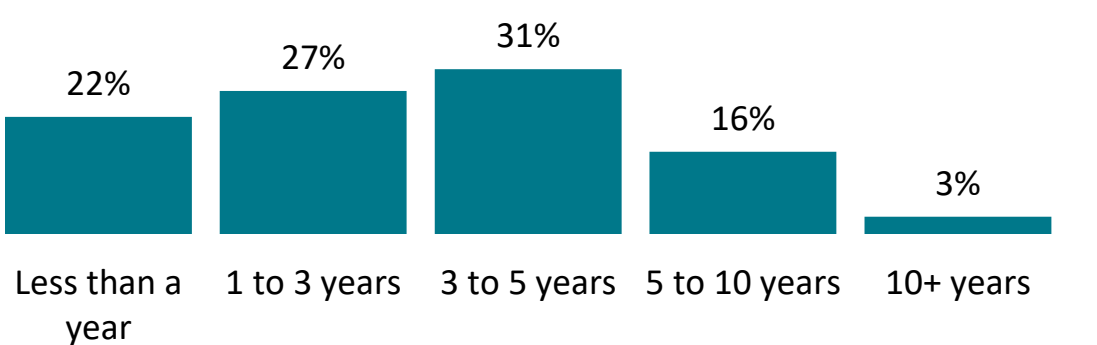
Own or Rent Business Property?



Term of Lease (n=154):



Lease expires (n=121):



Triage Flag Results

Throughout the survey process Triage cases that represented green or red flags were tracked. Out of the 363 businesses surveyed, 216 businesses presented an opportunity for intervention.



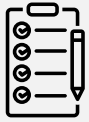
= Businesses considering expanding and home-based businesses interested in store front locations in the next 2 years. = 114 businesses.



= Businesses with a month-to-month lease or those that expire in the next year. Businesses considering relocating, downsizing, selling, or closing. Also includes businesses who are not feeling confident in their level of resiliency. = 102 businesses

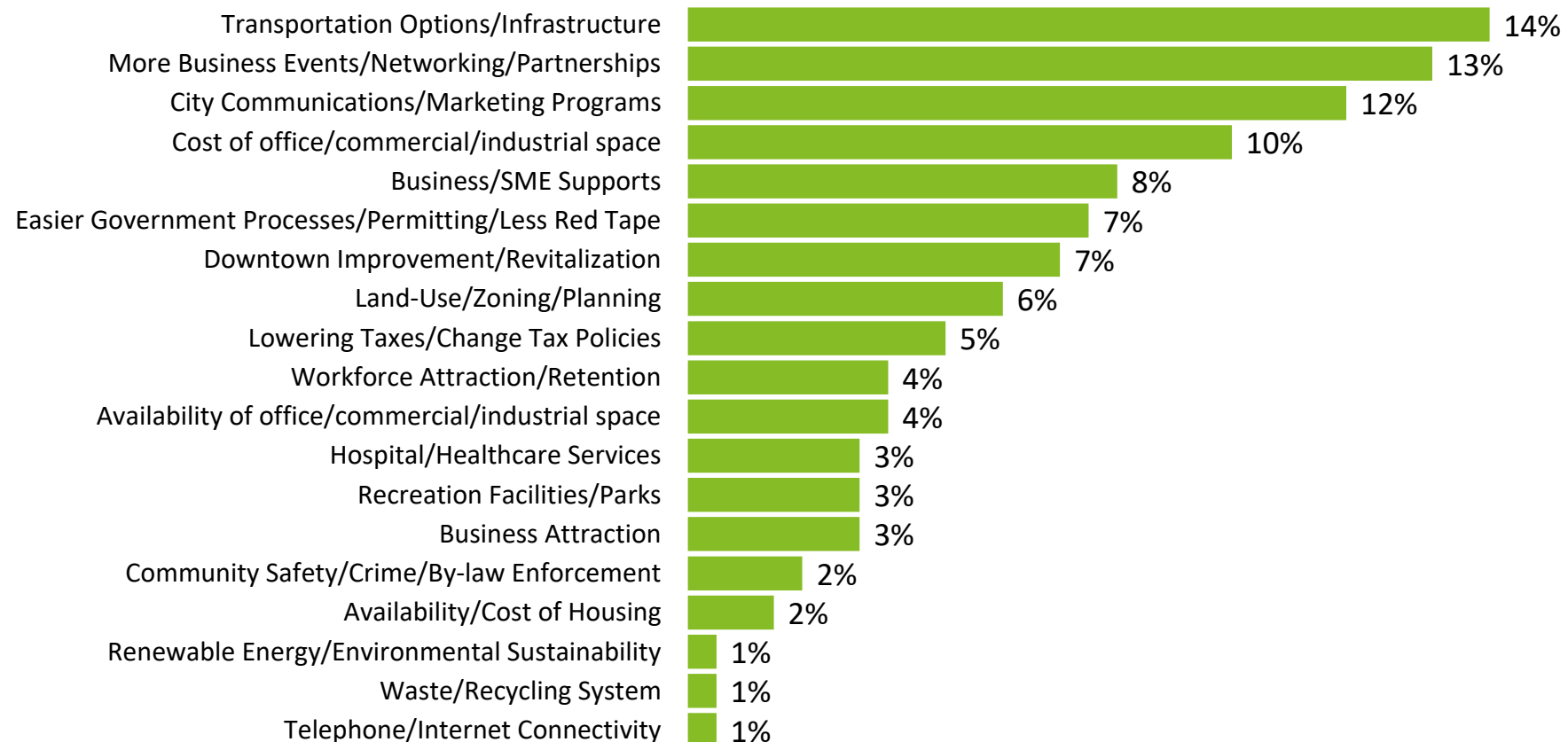


Top-of-Mind Improvements



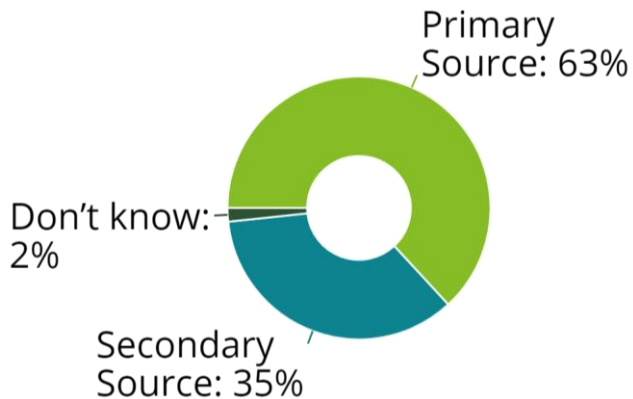
What one improvement would you make to create a better business environment in Airdrie?

(Open-ended, Answers Coded)



Home Businesses (n=179)

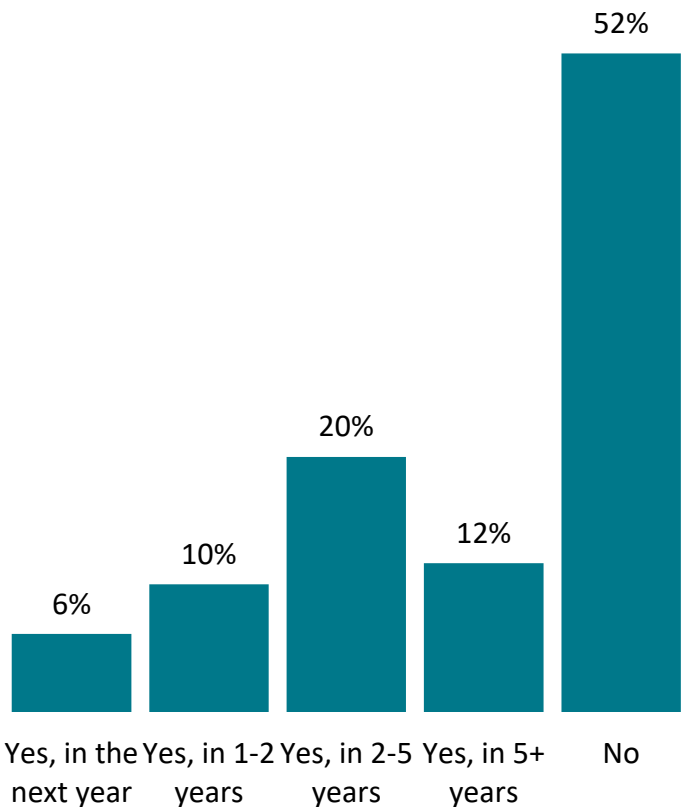
Income Source



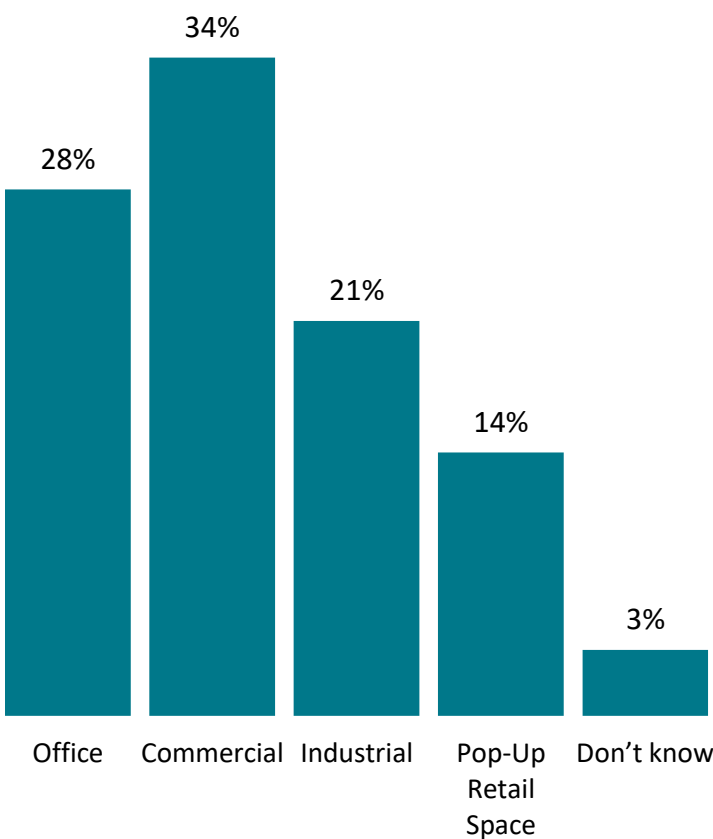
Time Trend:

42% of home-based businesses were a primary source of income in 2018.

Interest in Moving to Store Front



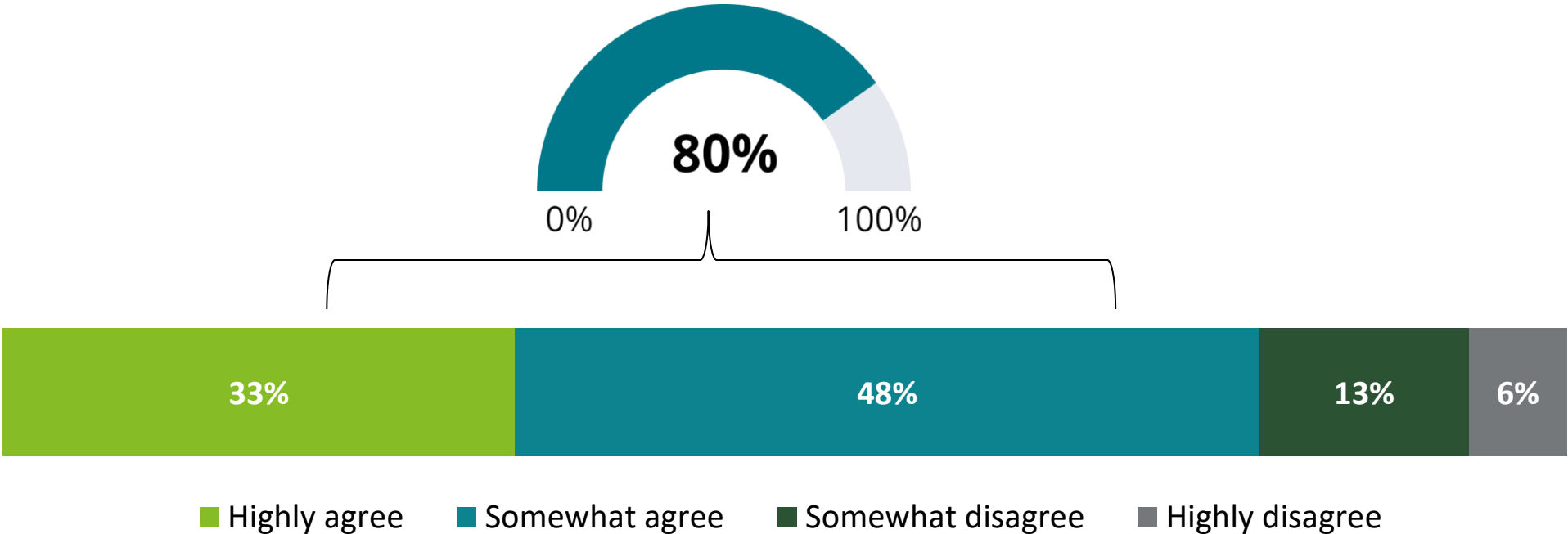
Potential Type of Location of Interest (n=29)



Business Resiliency



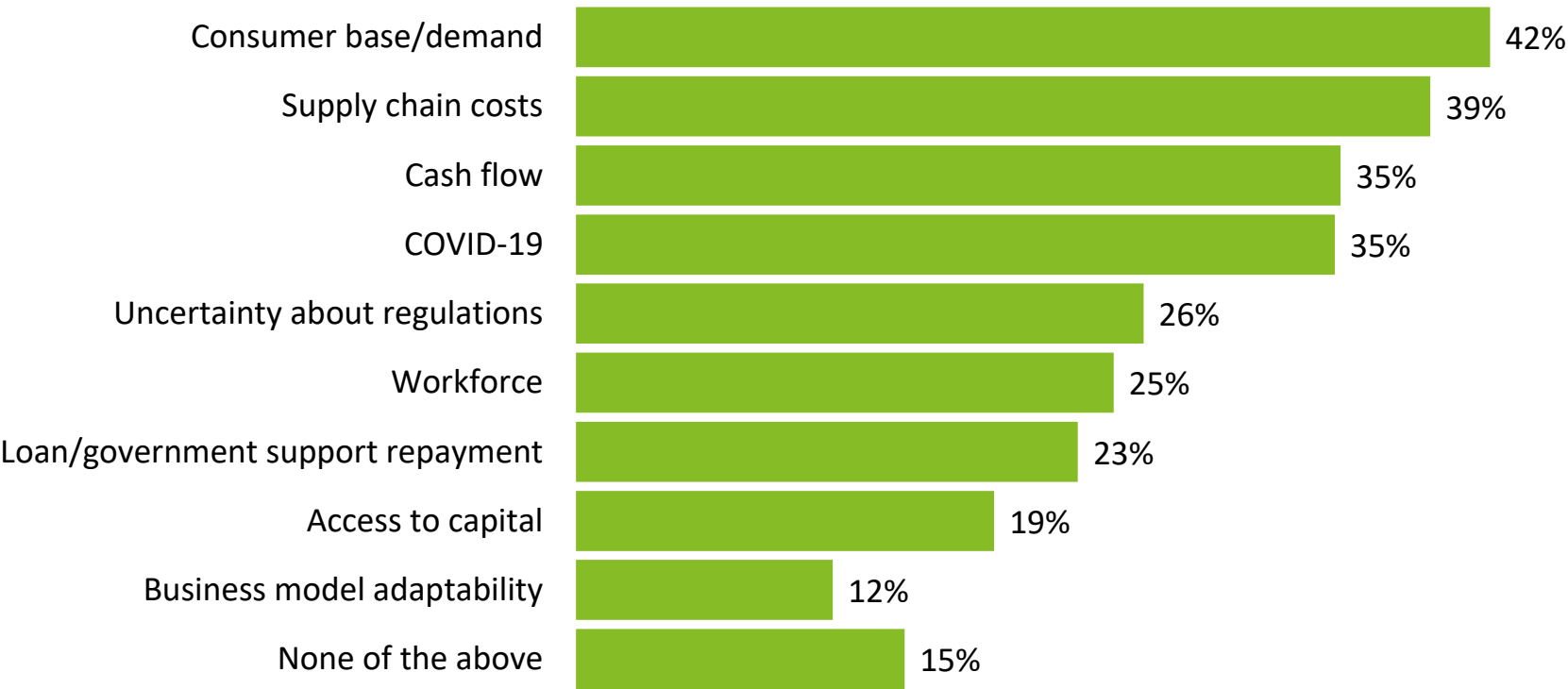
Overall, I feel confident in my business’ level of resiliency to operate and survive through any short-term crises or economic downturns that may arise over the next 2-5 years.



Business Resiliency



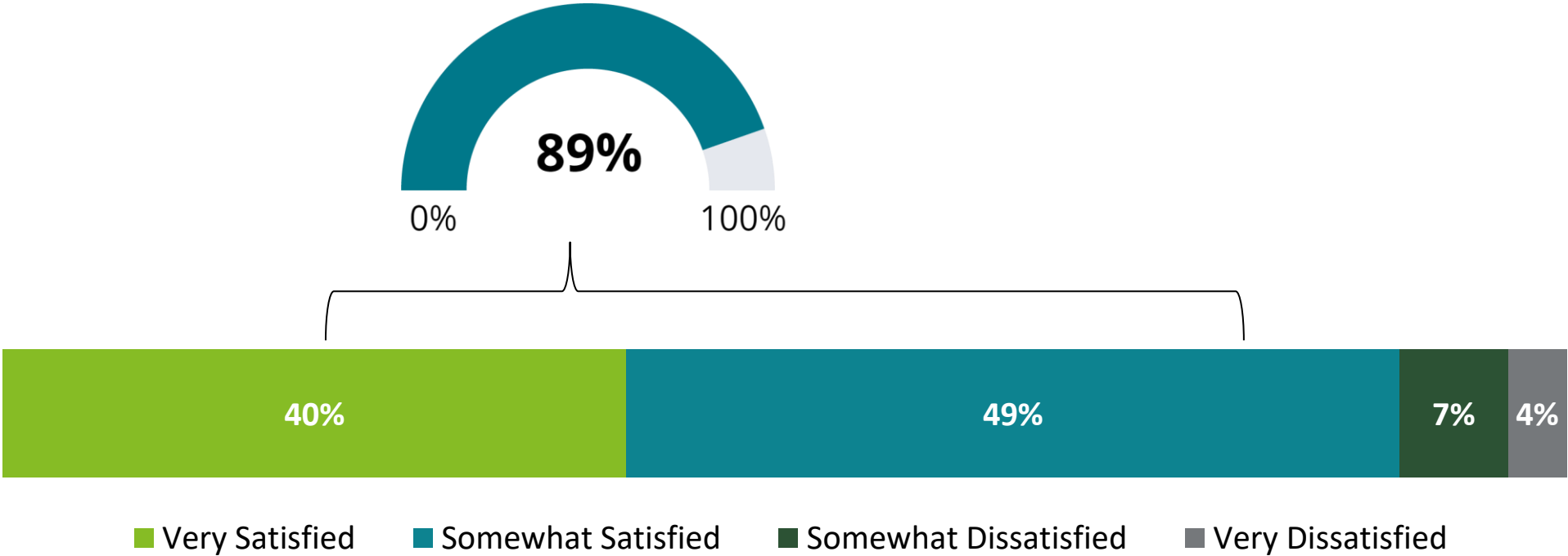
Which of the following factors are preventing you from feeling confident in your business resiliency?



Working with the City



Please rate your level of satisfaction working with the City of Airdrie for matters that pertain to your business.



Contact

Chris Bandak

Managing Director, Economic and Policy Advisory

cbandak@deloitte.ca

+1 (416) 607-6747

Schaun Goodeve

Manager, Economic and Policy Advisory

sgoodeve@deloitte.ca

+1 (403) 390-9775

Simon Webb

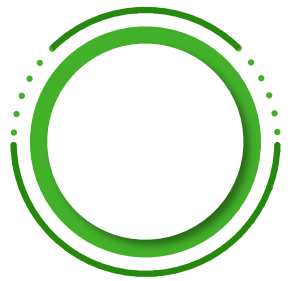
Senior Associate, Economic and Policy Advisory

swebb@deloitte.ca

+1 (613)-299-3776

Deloitte.



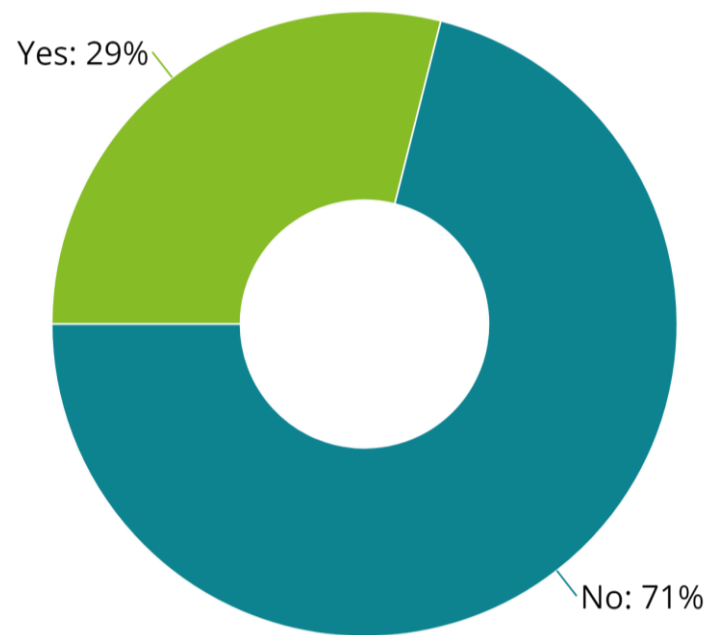


Appendix: Supplementary Questions

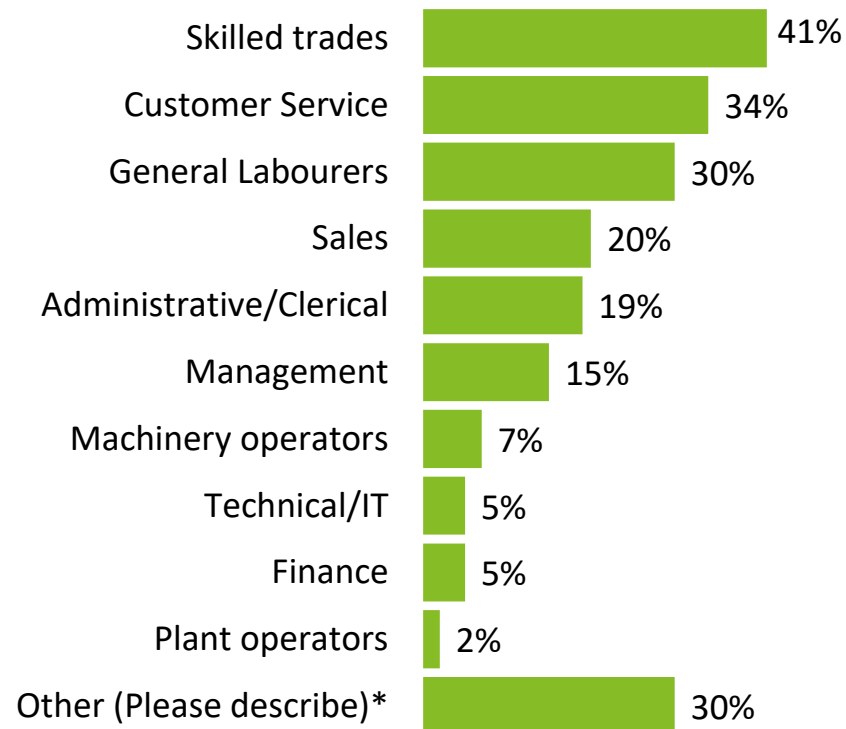
Staffing



Difficulty Finding/Retaining Staff



Types of Hires Needed (n=99)



*Other responses included: Drivers, health workers, recreation instructors, mechanics, project managers/coordinators.

Exports



Which of the following options describes your businesses current exports?

	Percentage
We don't currently export and have no plans to begin	50%
We don't currently export because the business has no need	37%
We are currently exporting	7%
We don't currently export but we would like to	6%



Where do you currently export to? (n=25)

	Percentage
US	64%
Within Canada	28%
Worldwide	16%
Asia	12%
Middle East	12%
Europe	12%
South America	4%
Oceania	4%

Exports



Do you have plans to expand your exports?

Yes (Please
describe where:):
46%



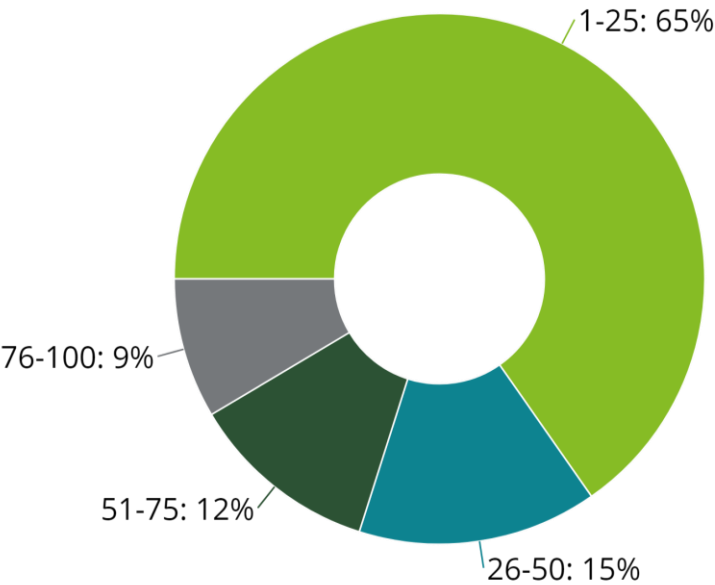
Where would you like to begin exporting to? (n=16)

	Percentage
US	56%
Within Canada	38%
Asia	6%
South America	6%
Africa	6%
Europe	6%
Worldwide	6%

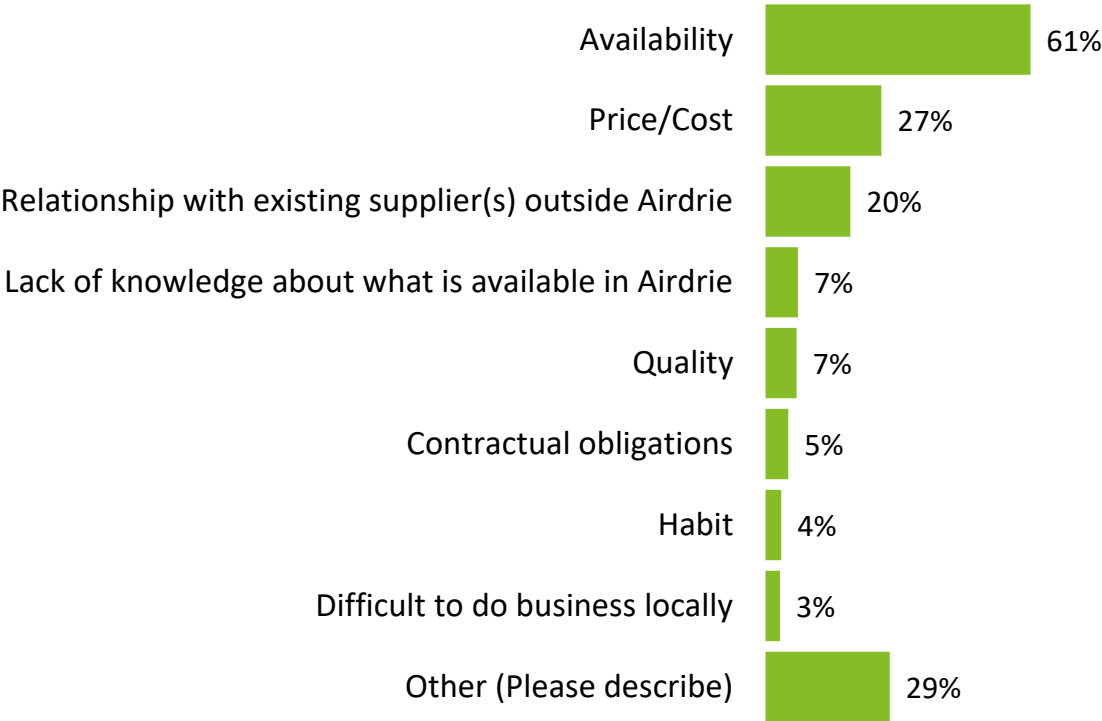
Local Suppliers



What percentage of inputs - raw materials, supplies/goods and services – does your business purchase in Airdrie?



What are the barriers that prevent you from purchasing more of your raw materials, supplies/goods and services in Airdrie?

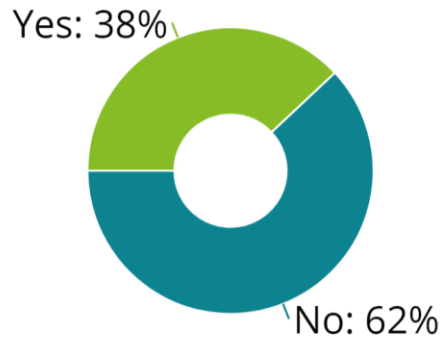


*Other responses included: No local suppliers exist for inputs, franchise rules, service-based businesses, affordability, red tape.

Online Sales



Does your business have an online sales component?

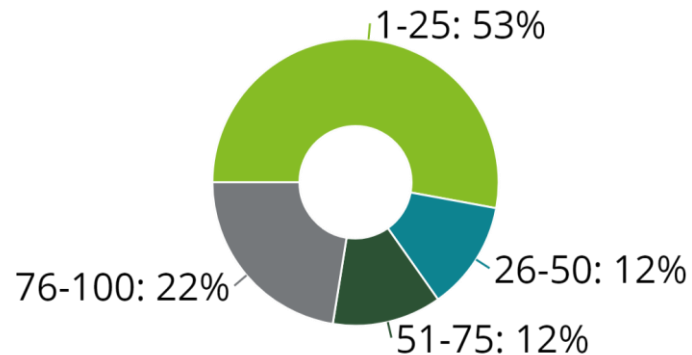


Time Trend:

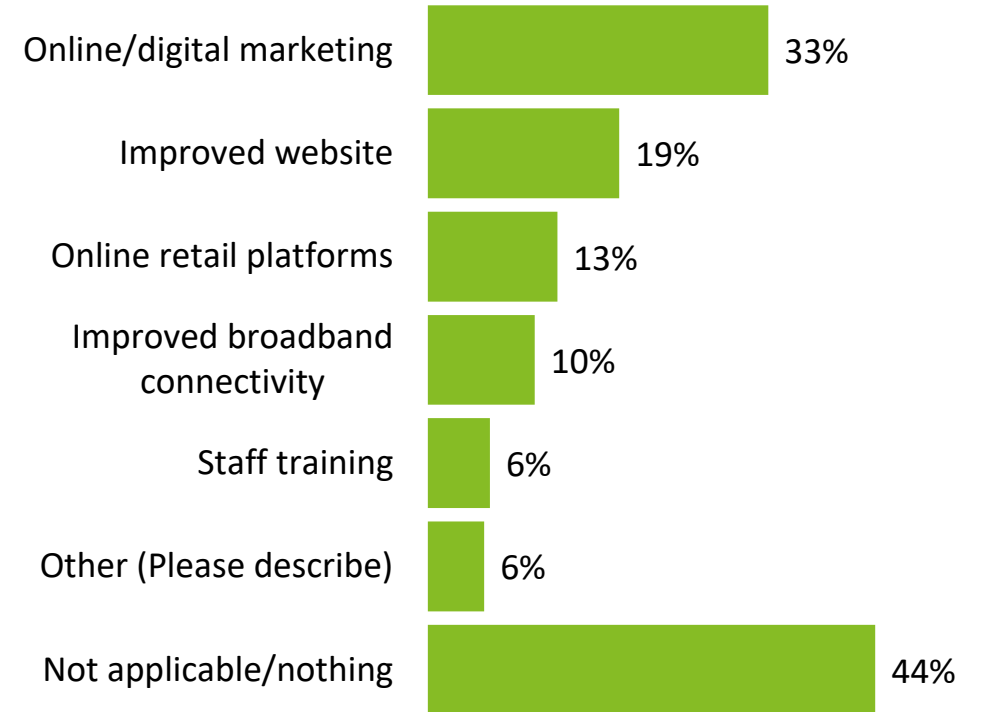
27% sold goods/ services online in 2018.



What percentage of your sales take place online? (n=138)



Which of the following factors would be the most helpful for your business to increase revenue from online components?

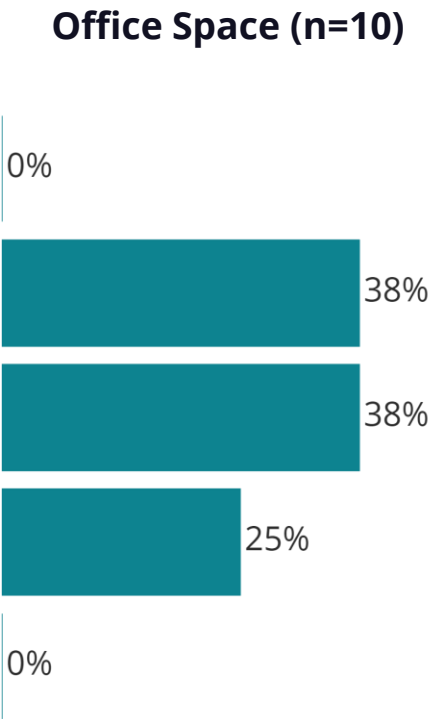
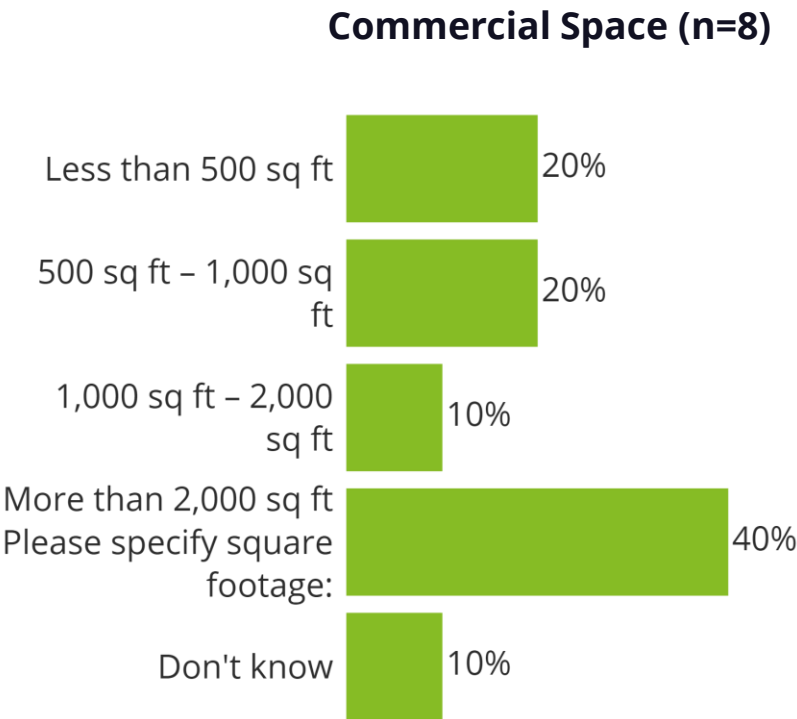


*Other responses included: Access to delivery options, staff training, advertising, access to software, business products/services don't lend themselves to online sales.

Home Businesses (n=179)



What type of location best suits the needs of your growing business?
(If interested in moving to a store front in the next 2 years)



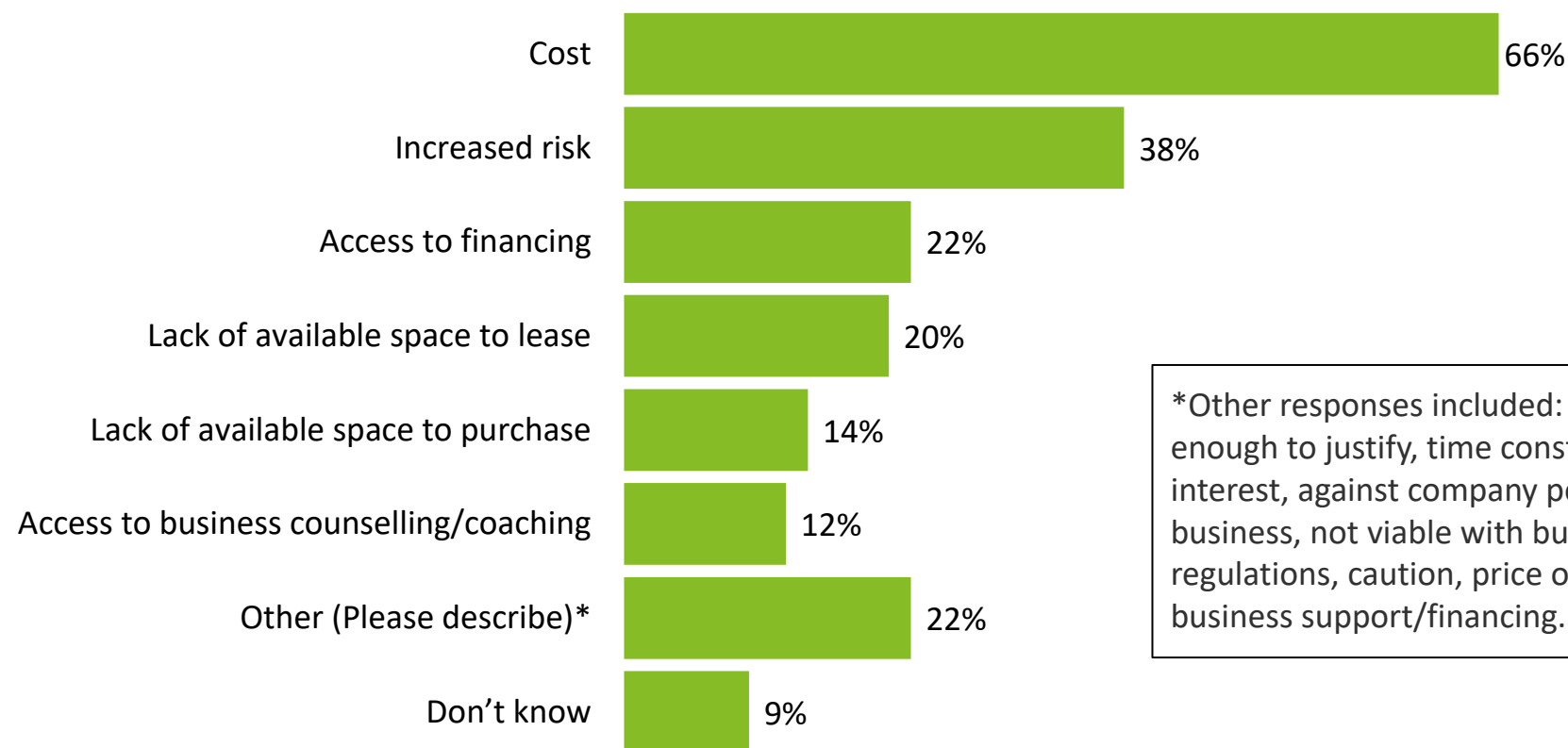
Industrial (n=4)

Sizes Mentioned (Sqft)	# Businesses
1500	1
2500	1
3000	2
6000	1

Home Businesses (n=179)



What are the greatest challenges you face in making the move to a storefront location?

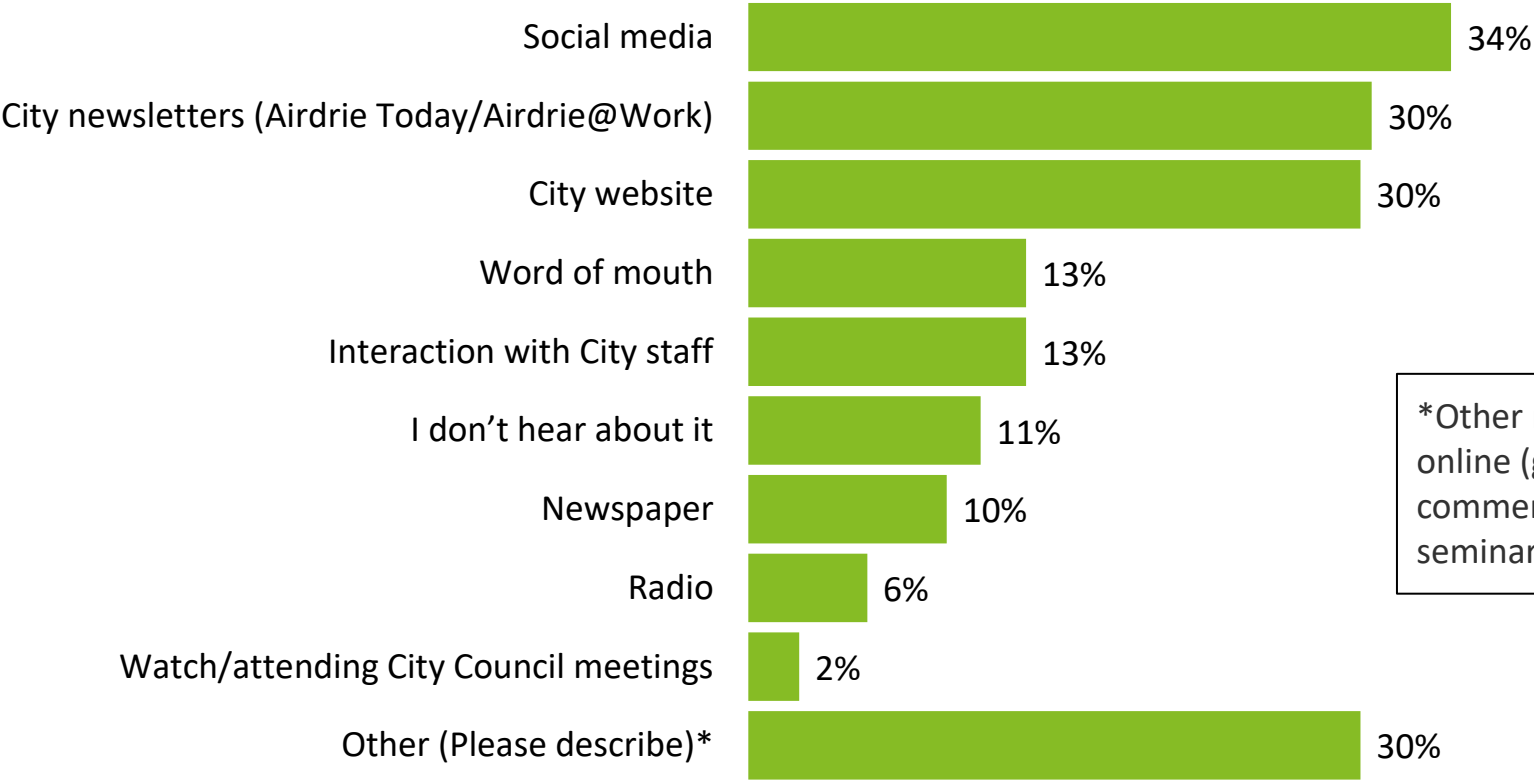


*Other responses included: Not big enough to justify, time constraints, no interest, against company policy, travelling business, not viable with business model, regulations, caution, price of rent, lack of business support/financing.

Sources of Information



Where do you prefer to learn about Economic Development matters that pertain to your business?

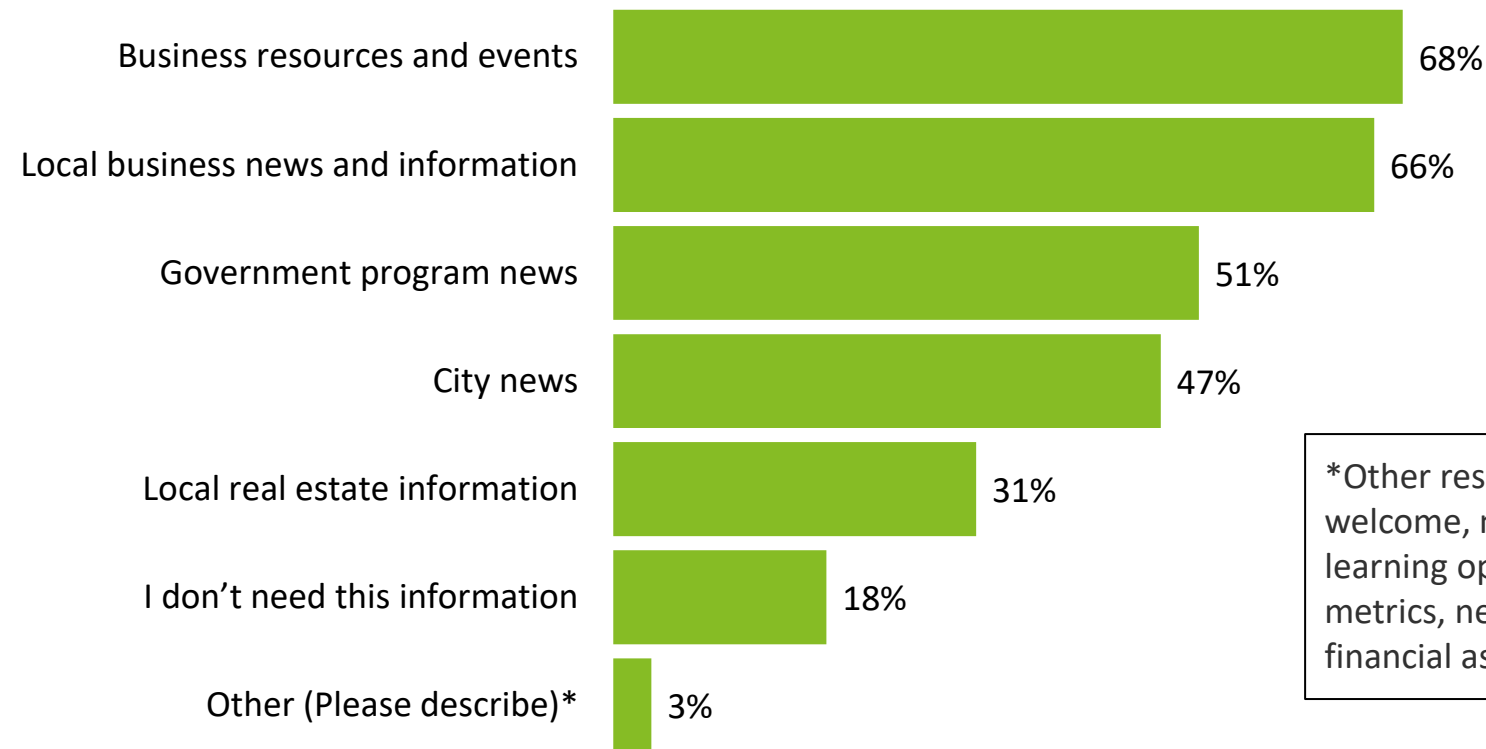


*Other responses included: Email, online (general), chamber of commerce, town hall info sessions, seminars, courses, virtual meetings.

Sources of Information



What information would you like to receive from Economic Development?



*Other responses included: All information welcome, networking opportunities, learning opportunities, consumer-based metrics, new business openings/permits, financial assistance programs.



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