

Business Retention and Expansion Survey Report 2025

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie



Survey Questions

Business Information

- What is your business structure?
- Is your business locally owned/operated?
- Do you primarily sell to consumers or other businesses?
- Is your business facility/property owned, leased, or home-based?
- How many current employees do you have, and what is their employment status?
- What year did the business begin operations in the community?
- Why did you decide to operate your business in this community?
- Do you have a company website?
- Do you use social media for your business?
- Where are your customers located geographically?
- Where is your corporate headquarters located?
- How many business locations do you operate?

Finances

- In terms of revenue, is your business doing better or worse than your last fiscal year?
- When did you last/when do you plan on making major capital investments or introducing a new product/service?

Planning

- Do you plan or expect growth, remaining the same, or downsizing of your business in the future?
- Do you plan on transitioning out of the business within the next five years?
- Do you have a plan for your business transition?
- Do you rely on any specific data sources to make business decisions? If so, what are they?

Employees and Hiring

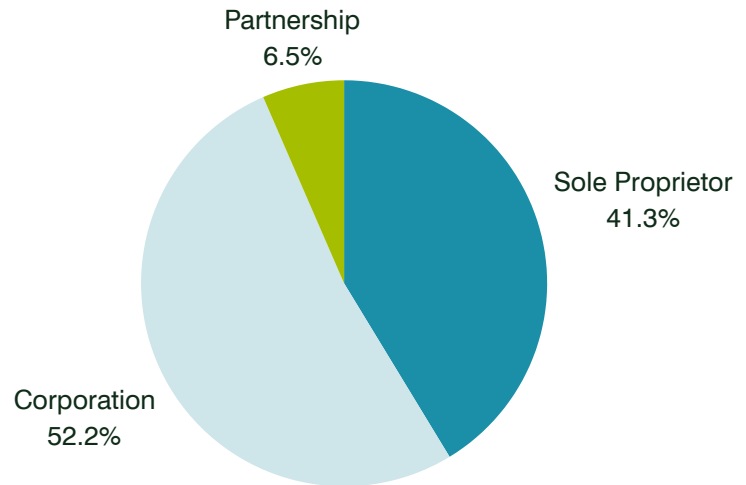
- How many current job vacancies exist for your business?
- What is the ideal number of employees for your business?
- What positions are currently vacant or are you having difficulty filling?
- What challenges are you having with hiring and/or retention?
- How are you attracting employees to your business?
- Does your business currently offer co-op or volunteer opportunities for students?
- Are there any programs you use for workforce/hiring/retention?

Challenges and Supports

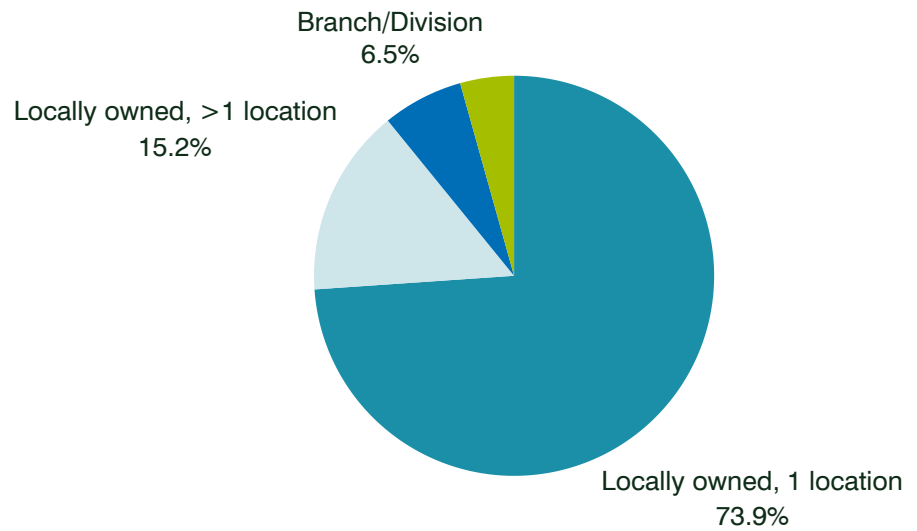
- What are some of the challenges you are experiencing doing business in this community?
- Are there any organizations you work with/are a member of that are doing a great job supporting your business?
- What can we do/what do you need from us to help you and your business succeed?
- Are you a member of a Chamber of Commerce or Business Improvement Area association?
- If not, what are your main reasons you haven't joined?
- What types of benefits or support would you value most from a chamber or business association?

Overview of Respondents' Businesses

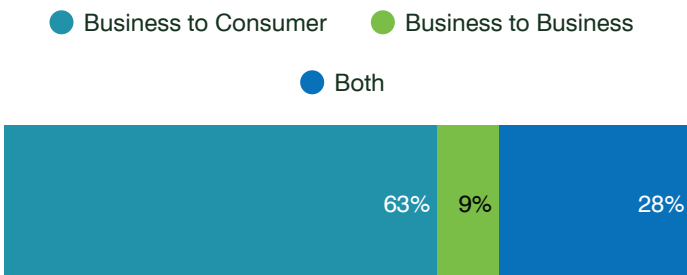
Business structure



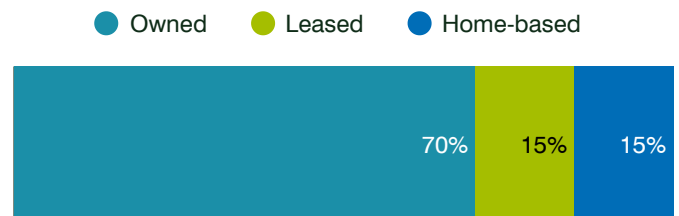
Business ownership



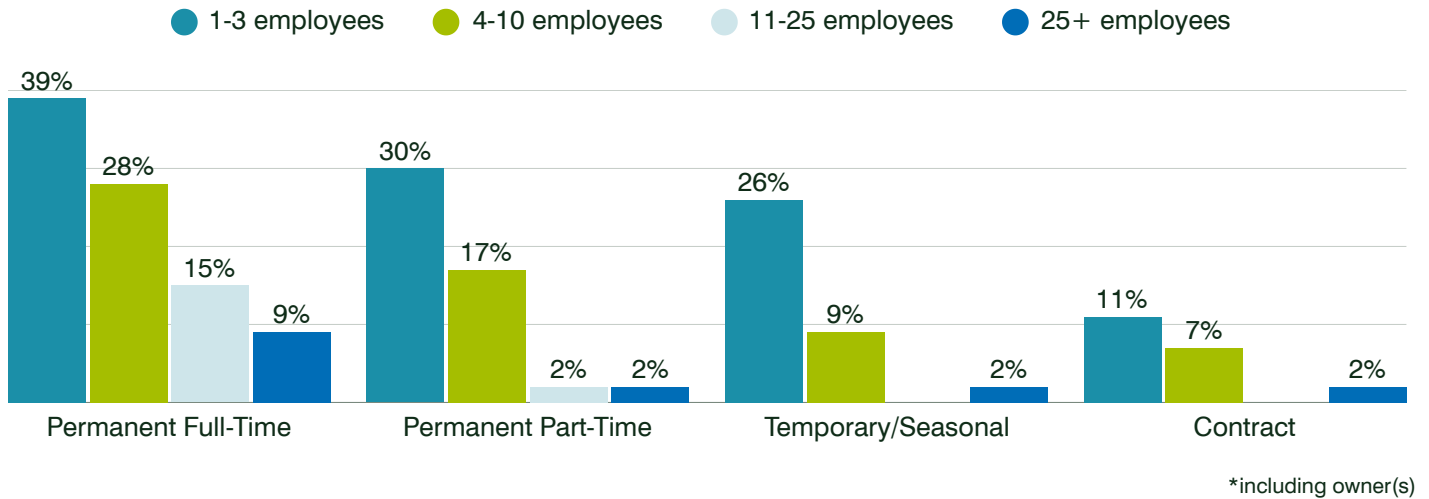
Primary customer base



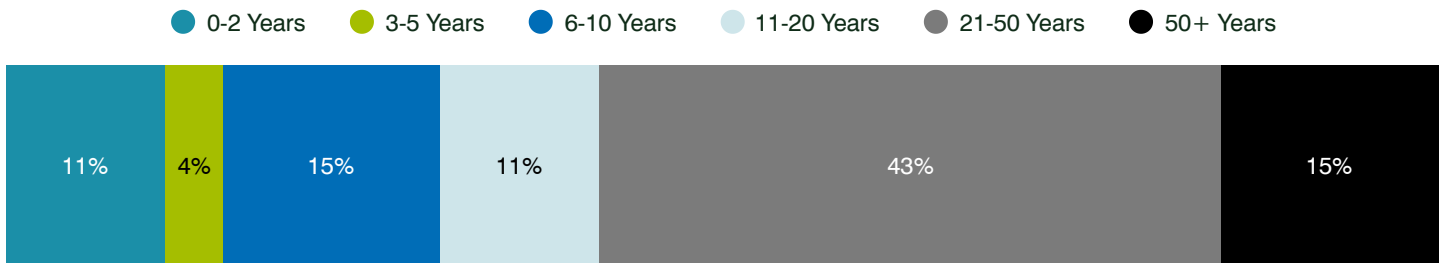
Status of business facility/property



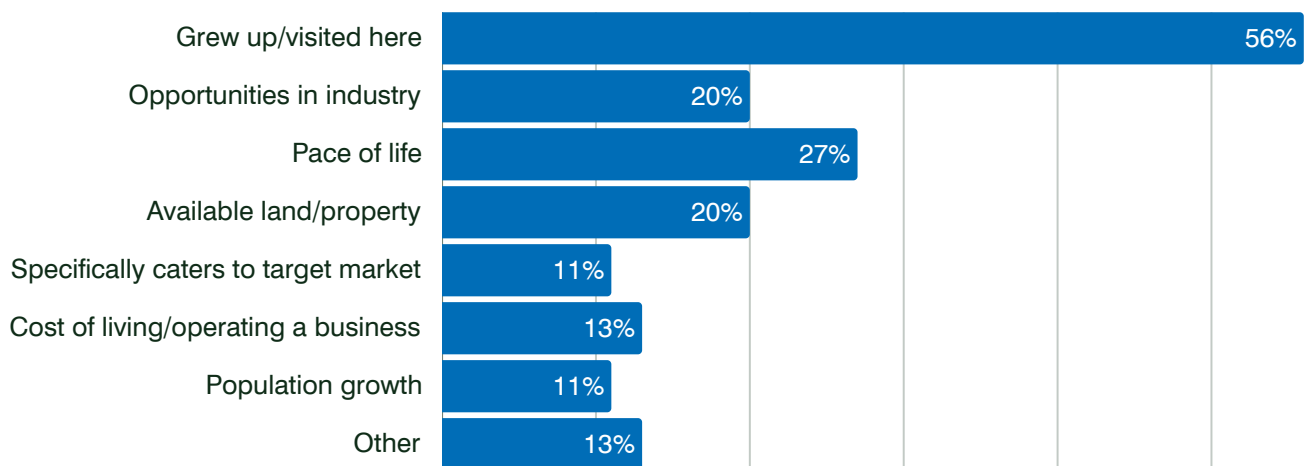
Number and status of current employees*



How long businesses have operated in the community

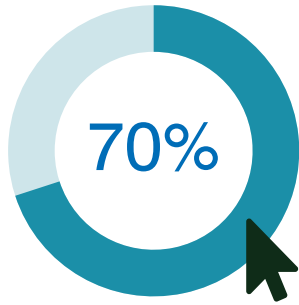


Top reasons owners decided to operate in this community

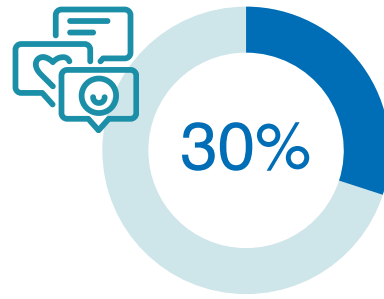


Other reasons cited:

- Supports and resources available
- Centrally located in the County
- Took over a family business

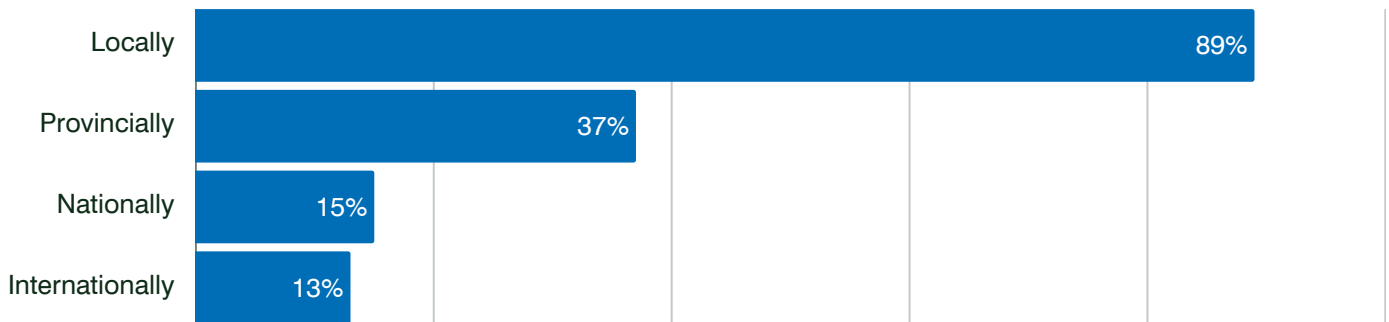


Businesses with a website

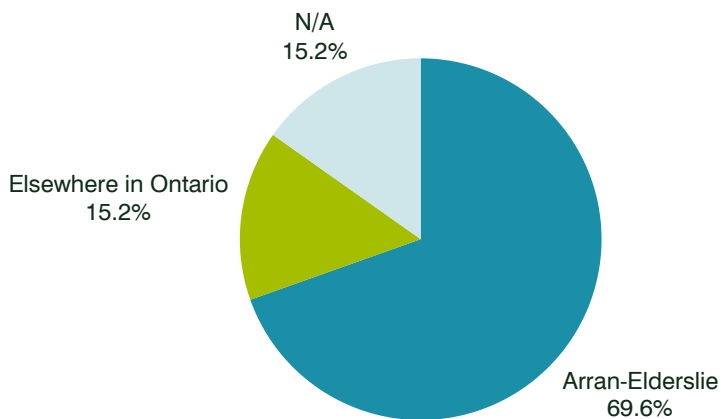


Businesses using social media

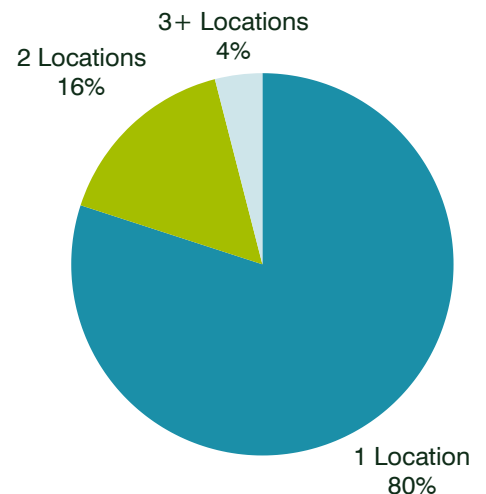
Where customers are located



Location of corporate headquarters

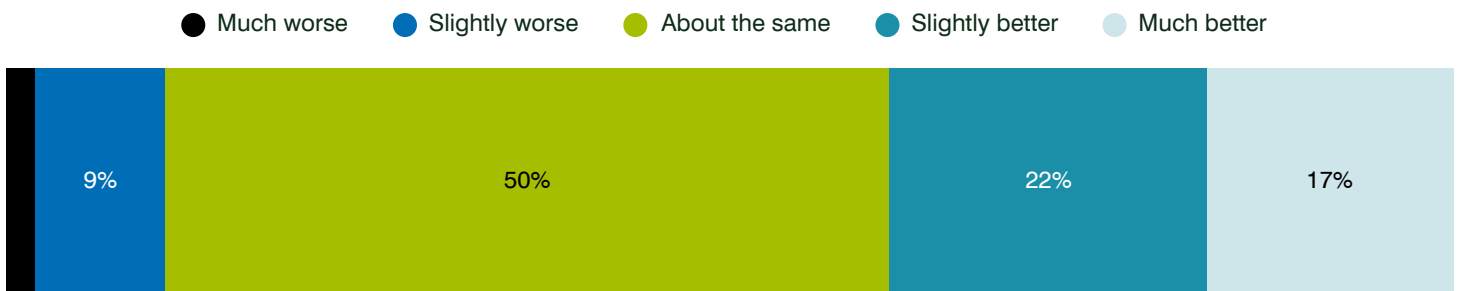


Number of business locations operated

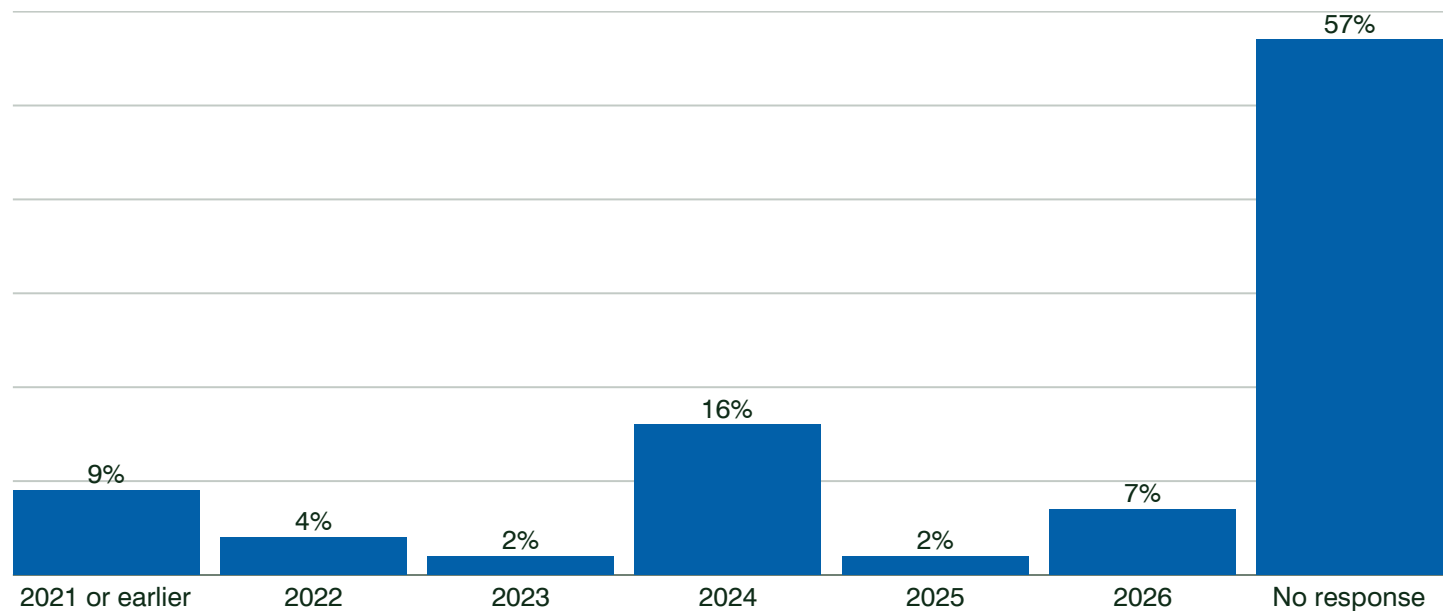


Finances

How businesses felt they were doing financially, compared to the previous fiscal year

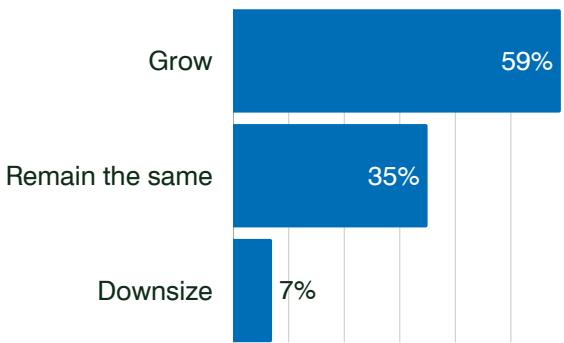


The last time businesses made (or plan to make) major capital investments or introduce a new product/service

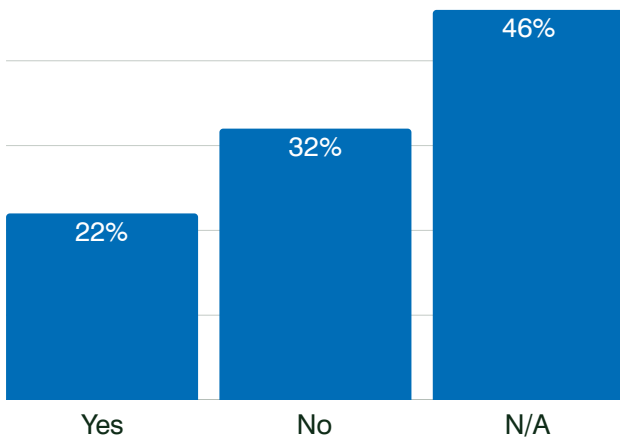


Planning

Do you plan/expect your business will grow, remain the same, or downsize in the future?



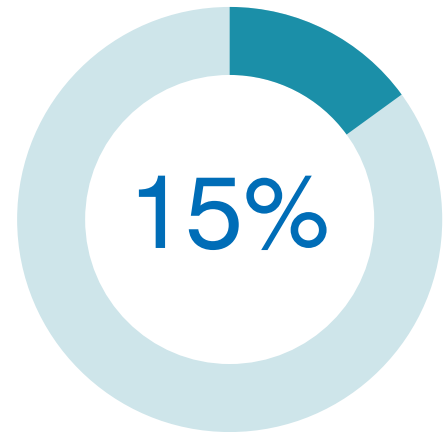
Are resources used to make business decisions?



Resources cited:

- Industry-specific publications
- Industry Trends
- Digital marketing trends
- Competitor data
- Tariff-related info
- Market conditions

Respondents that plan to transition out of their business within the next 5 years



Of those that are transitioning out:

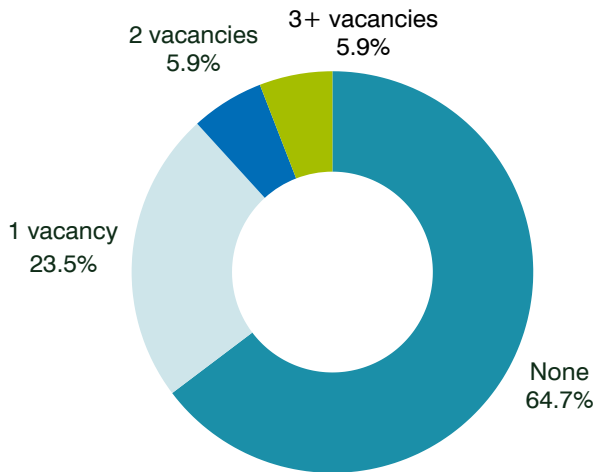
- 1 plans to close
- 4 plan to sell
- 2 plan to have family/employees carry on the business

Do they have a transition plan?

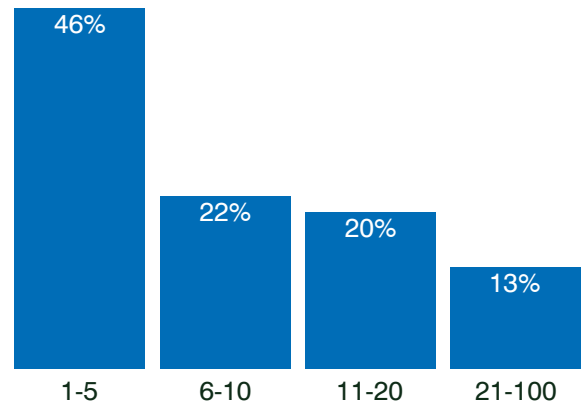


Employees and Hiring

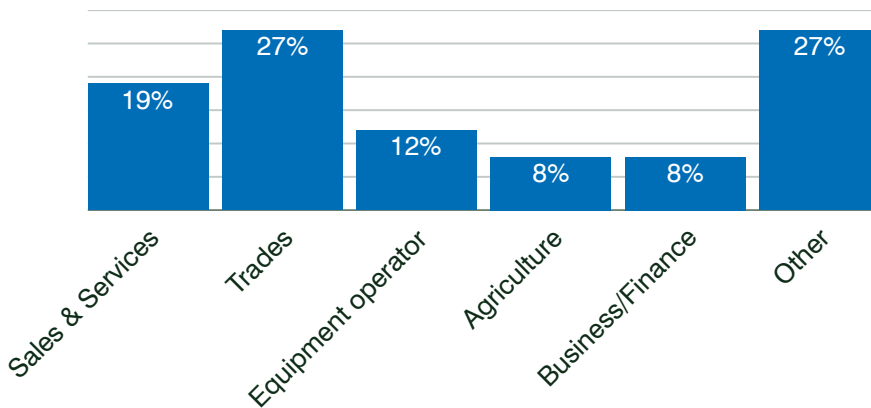
Number of job vacancies at the time of the survey



Ideal number of employees



Positions that have been difficult to fill



Other positions cited:

- Community Services
- Education
- Law and social
- Management
- Administrative
- Manufacturing
- Transportation

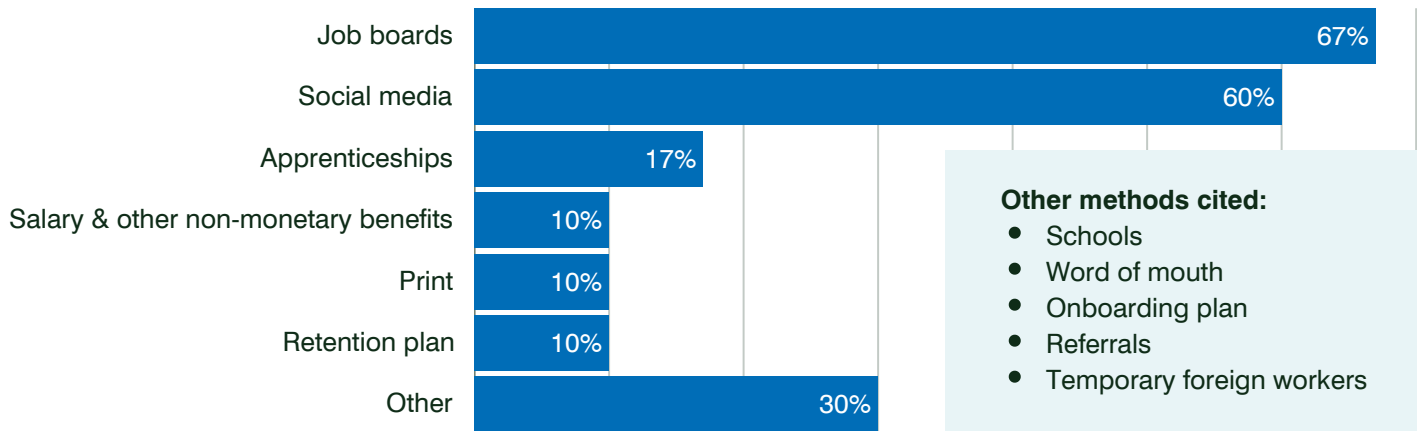
Most common hiring and retention challenges



Other challenges cited:

- Insurance for new drivers
- Work environment

Methods used to attract employees



Does your business offer
(or would consider offering)
co-op or volunteer opportunities
for students?

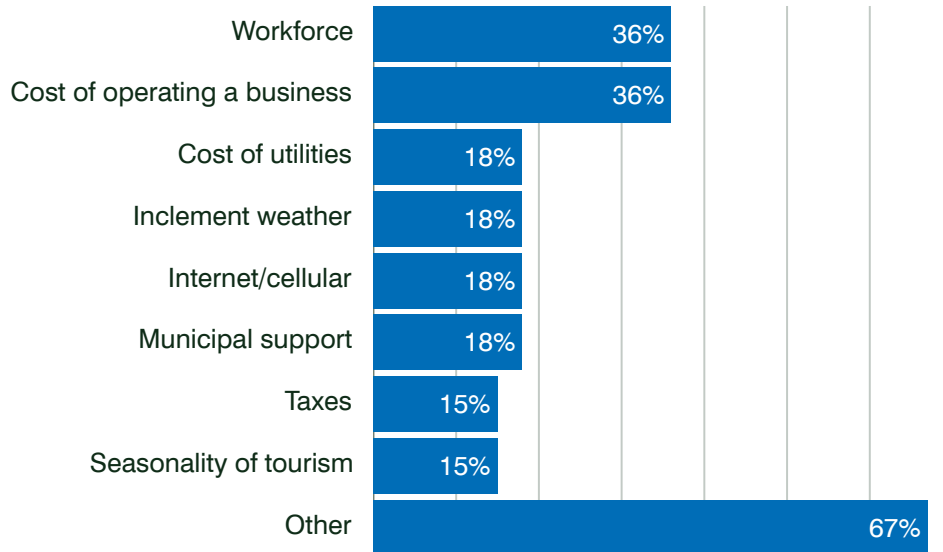


Programs used for workforce,
hiring, and retention:

- CWELCC wage enhancement grant
- Indeed
- FARMS

Challenges and Supports

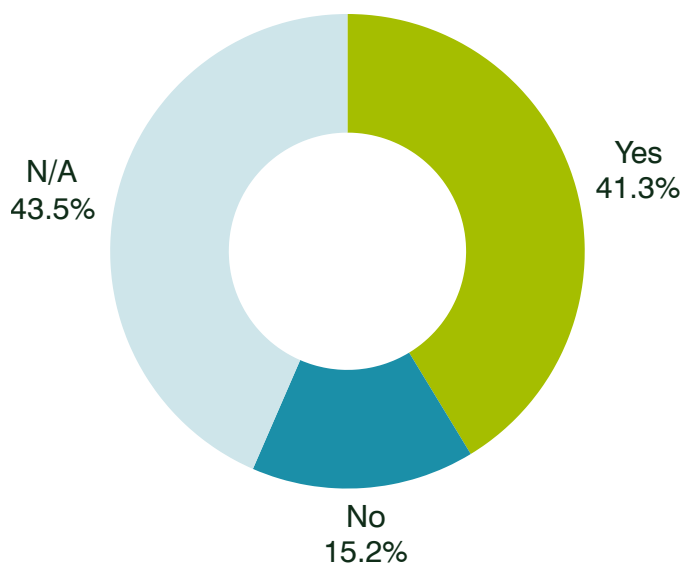
Challenges experienced while doing business in this community



Other challenges cited:

- Available land
- By-law/permits
- Land use planning
- Support from the County
- Low population
- Support from the Chamber
- Support from the BIA
- Suppliers
- Marketing

Are there organizations you work with/are a member of that are doing a great job supporting your business?



Organizations mentioned:

- Allenford Improvement Association
- Allenford United Church
- Allenford Curling Club
- Arran-Elderslie Community & Business Association
- CFIB
- Local Businesses
- Bruce County
- Ministry of Education
- CUFCA
- AECBA
- Violin Society of America
- Orchestras Canada
- Paisley Chamber
- Kinsmen
- Rotary Club
- The Legion L
- UCDA
- OMVIC
- BGCSDB

What can we do/what do you need from us to help you and your business succeed?

Support and Growth

- Investment in the village
- Grants that cover 100% of certain projects
- Better local support from the town management and council
- Support small business with group programs such as health benefits
- Grant to support emergency expenses
- Growth strategies
- Grants/offers for businesses outside of downtowns

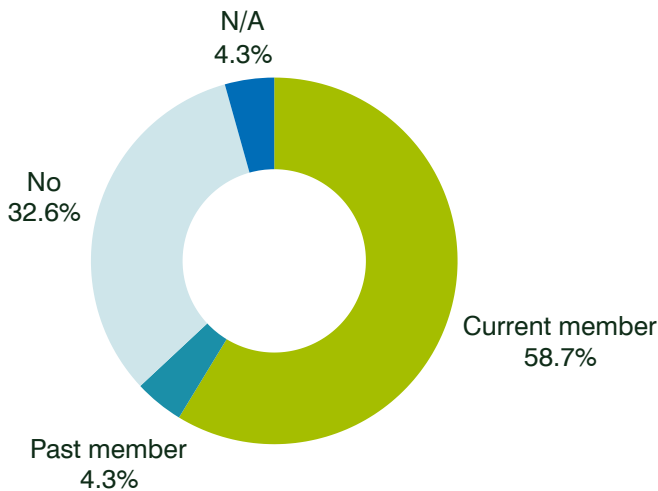
Communications and Awareness

- Marketing
- Continue workshops for marketing, networking, and business development
- Shop Local initiatives
- Rules and regulations regarding signage, including on rural properties

Networking and Collaboration

- More younger businesses and business owners to join the association
- More active Chamber

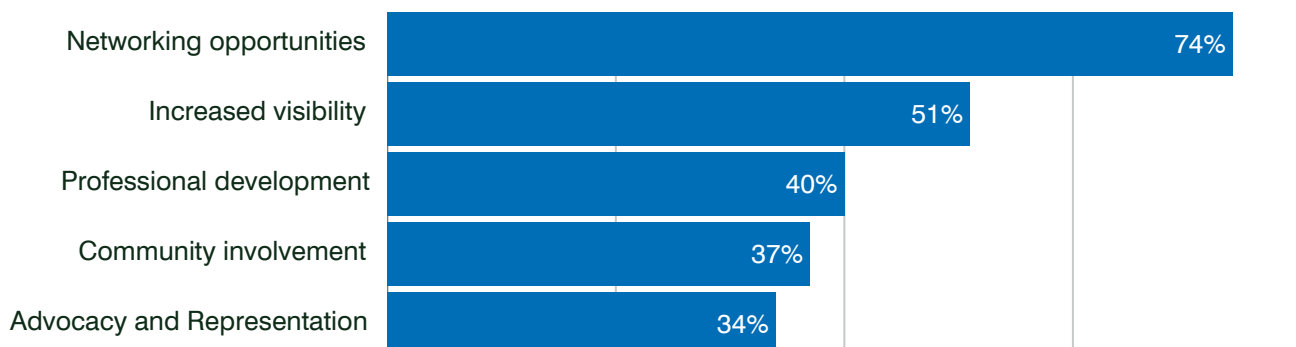
Are you a member of a Chamber of Commerce or Business Improvement Association (BIA)?



Reasons for not joining:

- Busy
- Fees
- Unsure how to join
- Not aware of the associations in their communities
- Unsure of the benefits

Types of benefits/supports that would be most valuable from a Chamber / BIA



Your Comments

Would like to see more businesses join to allow the group to expand its presence.

I appreciate the A/E Community and Business group and what they do.

I would like to see more support for development of Paisley's brand as a tourist destination.

Capitalizing on Bruce C expansion now and drawing more options to other small towns example Paisley, Tara, Chesley, Tiverton, Etc.

I really benefited from the Reel Momentum: Edit & Trend with Confidence workshops.

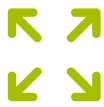
Municipality should communicate more directly using email instead of random non-direct social media communications.

As a building in two townships that both like to have taxes, services should be out of this world! Allenford remains the void of services for both. It has been a frustrating experience.

Summary of Impact

The survey engaged
46 businesses

The survey identified:



27 businesses
with hopes to expand
operations in the future



12 businesses
with 1 or more
job vacancies



5 businesses
are experiencing reduced
revenue compared to the
last fiscal year



7 businesses
with plans to transition out of the
business within 5 years



14 businesses
that do not have a website
and 32 that do not use social
media for their business