

Business Retention + Expansion



East Ferris

Communicate.
Learn.
Connect.

Let's get involved.



BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

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INTRODUCTION

The Municipality of East Ferris retained Karen Jones Consulting Inc. to implement a Business Retention + Expansion (BR+E) Program. The project was initiated as a result of business support service recommendations highlighted in the East Ferris Economic Development Strategy and Facilities 2013 Master Plan.

The objective of the Business Retention + Expansion (BR+E) Program was to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and priorities regarding businesses located in East Ferris. As part of this process, business owners were surveyed and asked to provide feedback on labour market issues, business development, operations, future growth, potential issues/concerns and the existing business climate within East Ferris.

Based on the feedback collected during the BR+E program, strategies were identified to stimulate growth and provide direction on how to develop a well-balanced mix of lifestyle and business opportunities for residents, businesses and tourists.

This report highlights the findings of the BR+E program and presents recommendations to address the identified "red flag" issues.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Municipality of East Ferris would like to thank the Ministry of Rural Affairs Rural Economic Development Program, as well as The Labour Market Group for their financial support of this project. This initiative would not have been possible without the time and dedication of those who participated on the Leadership Team. A special thank you to the survey participants who dedicated their time to complete the survey and provide honest input. The survey process is ongoing and continuous feedback is encouraged to stimulate new ideas.



PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Business Retention + Expansion Overview

The Business Retention + Expansion Program (BR+E) is a formalized process that focuses on the growth and retention of local business. Providing support to existing firms to assist them through retention and expansion opportunities is a key economic driver for the local economy. The BR+E program offers a grassroots method of engaging with the business sector.

Profile of The Municipality of East Ferris

The Municipality of East Ferris is a rural, residential community located 20 kilometers east of the City of North Bay. The Municipality has experienced steady growth over the past five decades and currently has a population of over 4,800 full-time residents. This growth has contributed to the evolution of the municipality from a small township with a rural setting, to what is now a semi-urban community with the Hamlets of Astorville, Corbeil and Derland as centres.

The Municipality of East Ferris continues to develop the community's economic foundation through new projects such as the BR+E Program that support the continued growth and development of the community.

Municipal staff are committed to supporting and providing assistance to the establishment and growth of local businesses. This is a priority that has been identified by Municipal Council.

Businesses that choose to operate in East Ferris take advantage of lower tax rates and reduced cost of land and real estate, while still being located within 20 kilometers of the larger urban market of North Bay. Situated between two large bodies of water (Trout Lake and Lake Nosbonsing) and with its pristine environment, East Ferris offers amenities needed for both work and play.

East Ferris Commercial Mix

East Ferris has a diverse mix of businesses that include a variety of sectors ranging from tourism, manufacturing, construction, healthcare, professional services, retail, transportation, agriculture, and recreation. Businesses within East Ferris are typically classified as small businesses (under 50 employees.)

METHODOLOGY

The East Ferris Business Retention + Expansion Program was developed based on the methodology used in the Ontario BR+E Program model. The objectives of the East Ferris BR+E program include:

- 1 Identify the needs, concerns, and opportunities of existing local businesses in order that, where appropriate, take action to respond to the businesses' needs or development opportunities.
- 2 Gather information on the future plans of East Ferris local businesses with respect to expansion, relocation, and/or retention and assess where assistance can be provided.
- 3 Demonstrate the Municipality's pro-business attitude and develop an effective means of communication with local businesses.
- 4 Have the community actively involved in economic development.

The information collected through the BR+E process outlined the advantages and challenges of doing business in East Ferris, while allowing the business community to also identify opportunities and threats that relate to the business climate. The process served as a method to identify "red flag" issues and key priorities over the next five years.

The overall goal of the program was to understand business needs and identify opportunities to help businesses grow and prosper. High importance was placed on taking a grassroots approach to maximize results and ensure the opinions and challenges faced by local businesses were considered throughout the process.

The project included a confidential survey that was completed either through one-on-one interviews or completed independently and returned by businesses.

Completed business surveys were entered into the Ontario BR+E database. Businesses with immediate concerns or issues were identified as "Red Flags." The municipality followed up with these concerns. Additional requests for information were made by approximately three-quarters of the businesses surveyed. The information requested ranged from business expansion assistance to accessing business support services and resources.

Leadership Team

The Leadership Team was responsible for championing the program and promoting the survey opportunity to local businesses. Several of the Leadership Team members handled the administrative components associated with the program such as developing and distributing the survey, entering the results of the survey into the database, visiting businesses to encourage completion of the survey, conducting one-on-one interviews to review the survey and identifying "red flag" issues based on survey results.

The Leadership Team involved the municipality's economic development committee that consisted of representation from the following organizations:

- Municipality of East Ferris
- Local businesses
- The Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor)
- Karen Jones Consulting Inc.

EAST FERRIS BUSINESS RETENTION + EXPANSION FINDINGS OVERVIEW



The BR+E Survey was mailed to 130 businesses located in East Ferris. Out of these 130 businesses, a total of 31 completed the survey during personal on-site visits, representing a 24% sample size of all businesses in East Ferris.

Survey Participant Profile

Of the 31 firms that participated in the interview, 87% were "*locally owned and operated with one location*", 9.7% were "*locally owned with more than one location*", and 3.2% were a "*part of a branch or division of a regional, national or international company.*"

Data indicates that out of the 31 businesses surveyed:

- 44.8% of businesses have 1-4 employees.
- 34.5% of businesses have 5-9 employees.
- 10.3% of businesses have 10-19 employees.
- 6.9% of businesses have 50-99 employees.
- 3.4% of businesses have 100-299 employees.
- 100% of businesses have owners who are involved in the day-to-day operations of the business.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

The East Ferris BR+E project demonstrates Council's commitment to strengthening the local business community and the results have reinforced that East Ferris is a desirable place to do business. Requests for information or immediate business concerns "red flags" that were identified during the confidential business interviews have been, or are in the process of being responded to.

The results of the BR+E survey identified the following trends within each of the categories listed below.

Business Overview

- 93.5% of participants own their facility.
- Those leasing their facility do not foresee any difficulty renewing the lease with their current location.
- 41.9% of businesses are planning to expand their operations in the next three years, leading to an increase in their workforce, an increase in floor space, additional product lines and services, and additional investment in equipment and technology.
- 46.2% of businesses are *"currently experiencing troubles with their expansion plans"* and 84.6% asked for *"assistance from the community to support their expansion plans."*

Technological Requirements

- 28.6% of businesses experience barriers with Internet costs.
- 22.4% of businesses experience barriers with Internet speed.
- 18.4% of businesses experience no barriers related to information technology in their place of business.
- 14.3% of businesses experience barriers with Internet access.
- 8.2% of businesses experience barriers with knowledge and training regarding information technology in their business.
- 6.1% of businesses experience barriers with hardware/software support.

When asked to rate their business *"related to the use of technology"* 12.9% rated between very low and low, 45.2% rated moderate, and 42% rated between high and very high.



Human Resources

- 38.7% of businesses note difficulty recruiting qualified employees for their business.
- 35.5% of East Ferris businesses are *"currently experiencing difficulties hiring,"* and 66.7% of the businesses *"feel that the hiring challenges are related to the community."*
- Most businesses do not have a problem with employee retention, with only 19.4% of businesses stating they have difficulty keeping employees.
- Only 29% of businesses *"currently participate in any co-op, internship or apprenticeship programs."* However, 59.1% expressed that they *"would like to receive information on these programs."*
- The majority of respondents indicated an increase (25.8%) or no change (54.8%) in number of employees that they had hired in the past three years.
- 48.4% of East Ferris businesses currently use external training and 41.9% of businesses are *"currently experiencing barriers such as cost, awareness of existing training programs, availability of training locally and/or are unable to release employees from their duties in order to attend training programs."*

Local Community

- 48.4% of businesses expressed a *"good general impression of East Ferris as a place to do business"* with 32.3% of businesses rating it as *"excellent."*
- When asked if their *"general impression has changed over the past three years,"* 35.5% of businesses stated it was *"more positive,"* 3.2% stated it was *"more negative,"* and the majority of businesses (61.3%) stated *"no change."*
- 77.4% of businesses rated the quality of life in East Ferris as *"excellent."*
- 22.6% of businesses rated *"support from other businesses"* as *"excellent,"* 54.8% stated *"good,"* 6.5% stated *"fair,"* 3.2% stated *"poor"* and 12.9% had *"no response."*
- 29% of businesses rated *"support from local residents"* as *"excellent,"* 51.6% stated *"good,"* 9.7% stated *"fair,"* 3.2% stated *"poor"* and 6.5% had *"no response."*
- 25.8% of businesses rated *"support from the municipality"* as *"excellent,"* 54.8% stated *"good,"* 6.5% stated *"fair"* and 12.9% had *"no response."*
-

Businesses were asked, *"In terms of overall impact on this community as a place to do business what is the most significant change you would like to see in the next 5 years?"* The following answers were most common:

- More awareness of local businesses and community organizations
- Creation of downtown or business hub
- Comprehensive business directory
- Increase in commercial and industrial development
- A place to socialize such as a restaurant
- High speed Internet at a reasonable rate

SWOT ANALYSIS



Strengths

- Support from local business and residents
- Low property taxes
- Small community spirit
- Safe and friendly community
- Quality of life
- Easy access to municipal staff
- Great access to North Bay via highways
- Beautiful community
- Honesty and trust among residents
- Proximity to Lake Nosbonsing
- Longstanding business owners



Weaknesses

- Limited services available
- Cost of services
- No public transit
- Lack of recognition of local businesses
- No downtown
- Lack of marketing/signage
- Costs of transporting employees
- Lack of knowledge of local businesses and services
- High cost of delivery and freight expenses



Opportunities

- Tourism development regarding Lake Nosbonsing
- Co-operative marketing partnerships and program development
- Joint training hosted in community
- Municipality to offer services in French
- Hosting more business development seminars
- Promotion and acknowledgement of local businesses



Threats

- Size of local market
- Customer base is declining with age of population
- Access to market/customers
- Current economic climate
- Lack of succession planning
- Cost and availability of services to do business

RED FLAGS

The survey process identified "red flags" associated with the business climate within East Ferris. Based on the frequency of responses, participants identified the top 5 issues faced by businesses as:

- 1 Access, cost and speed of Internet/Broadband services
- 2 Hiring challenges
- 3 Cost of electricity
- 4 Availability of natural gas
- 5 Limited awareness of programs, services and resources

NEXT STEPS

The Business Retention + Expansion program will continue to move forward and businesses will be encouraged to complete the survey on the municipal website at www.eastferris.ca. This process will serve as a tool to encourage communication, to ensure ongoing dialogue, and to continue identifying and addressing needs as they develop. To ensure that identified opportunities and action-items are acted upon the following recommendations should be implemented over the short-term:

- Post Business Retention & Expansion survey on the municipal website to encourage ongoing feedback and maintain open communication lines with local businesses;
- Provide ongoing support and continue to work with those businesses that indicated the potential for expansion within the next three years;
- Provide information sessions and access to resources on identified topics of interest such as marketing, E-Marketing, and technology tools;
- Encourage business networking within the community by hosting an annual tradeshow, and engaging the North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce to facilitate networking sessions within the area; and
- Create awareness of economic development services and upcoming initiatives within the area for local businesses and residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The information listed below provides recommendations for consideration to address "Red Flags" identified during the Business Retention + Expansion Program.

Internet/Broadband Services Challenges

Action	Organization
Continue to work with Blue Sky Net and other government agencies to solve issues such as internet access, speed and cost, highlighted throughout the BR+E process.	Municipality of East Ferris
Promote the new "Connect North Portal" available through Blue Sky Net by utilizing the municipal website, mail-outs, social media, and ongoing presentations to residents and local businesses.	Municipality of East Ferris Blue Sky Net
Encourage ongoing speed tests on the "Connect North Portal" to provide up to date information.	Municipality of East Ferris Blue Sky Net
Encourage communication with local residents and business owners to express concerns regarding information technology.	Municipality of East Ferris

Hiring Challenges

Action	Organization
Establish a task force to identify and discuss issues from the survey results.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team The Labour Market Group Local Businesses
Identify potential solutions to address hiring needs and challenges.	The Leadership Team Task Force
Promote programs and training incentives that are currently available for businesses.	Municipality of East Ferris Task Force
Provide hands-on assistance to businesses to complete applications for funding and/or training applications.	Municipality of East Ferris
Encourage joint training sessions to be hosted in East Ferris for local small businesses.	Municipality of East Ferris Task Force Post-Secondary institutions Employment Ontario Service Providers Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities

Electricity Costs

Action	Organization
Develop a mechanism to communicate information acquired from Hydro One and encourage the development of a partnership to assist in addressing and resolving issues related to costs and electrical outages.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team Hydro One
Promote programs and funding opportunities available to small businesses to assist in lowering usage and cost.	The Leadership Team Hydro One
Continue to communicate with local businesses regarding electricity issues to ensure resolution at the local level.	Municipality of East Ferris

Natural Gas Availability

Action	Organization
Develop an action plan to position East Ferris to Union Gas for future capital infrastructure investment.	Municipality of East Ferris Union Gas
Determine if there is funding available through government programming to reduce costs of implementation of natural gas.	The Leadership Team
Develop funding applications to help offset costs associated with the installation of natural gas.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team
Educate local business owners and residents about the availability of natural gas, the implementation timeline and any changes that may affect them.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team Union Gas

Programs, Services and Resources Awareness

Action	Organization
Strengthen the current relationship with The Business Centre Nipissing Parry Sound Inc. to continue offering small business seminars and workshops to local businesses, share program information, assist with business planning and succession planning along with any other relevant topics.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team The Business Centre Nipissing Parry Sound
Strengthen the current relationship with the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce to offer business networking sessions within the community and ensure that East Ferris businesses have a voice regarding small business issues.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team The North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce
Continue to support the “East Ferris Community Business Networking Tradeshow” to highlight local businesses and foster working relationships within the community.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team
Promote the economic development services available to local businesses such as funding information and expansion support.	Municipality of East Ferris The Leadership Team

SURVEY RESULTS

The following provides an overview of the quantitative survey results generated during the 2015 Municipality of East Ferris Business Retention & Expansion Program.

BI1. Which of the following best describes your business?

Locally owned and operated, with one location	27	87.1%
Locally owned and operated, with more than one location (Specify number)	3	9.7%
Branch or division of a regional, national or international company, please indicate where the corporate headquarters is located (City + Country)	1	3.2%

BI2. Is at least one of the owners involved in the day-to-day operation of the business?

Yes	31	100.0%
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BI3. Is at least one of the owners a resident of the community?

Yes	31	100.0%
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BI4. Does your business have a business plan?

Yes	8	25.8%
No (go to BI5)	23	74.2%

BI4. Does your business have a business plan? - When was it last updated?

Less than 1 year	2	25.0%
1 to 3 years	4	50.0%
Greater than 5 years	2	25.0%

BI5. How many years has your business been in operation in this community?

Less than 1 year	2	6.7%
1 to 3 years	2	6.7%
4 to 10 years	4	13.3%
11 to 25 years	7	23.3%
26 to 35 years	6	20.0%
Over 35 years	9	30.0%

BI6. How many years have the current owner/owners been operating this business?

Less than 1 year	1	3.3%
1 to 3 years	2	6.7%
4 to 10 years	5	16.7%
11 to 25 years	12	40.0%
26 to 35 years	4	13.3%
Over 35 years	6	20.0%

BI7. Including owner/owners, how many employees work at this location?

1 - 4	13	44.8%
5 - 9	10	34.5%
10 - 19	3	10.3%
50 - 99	2	6.9%
100 - 299	1	3.4%

BI9. The primary market of your business is

Local	15	48.4%
Regional	14	45.2%
International	2	6.5%

BC1. What is your general impression of this community as a place to do business?

Fair	6	19.4%
Good	15	48.4%
Excellent	10	32.3%

BC2. In the past 3 years has your attitude about doing business in this community changed?

Yes, more positive (Go to question BC2b.)	11	35.5%
Yes, more negative (Go to question BC2c.)	1	3.2%
No change (Go to question BC3)	19	61.3%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Workforce

No response	6	19.4%
Poor	6	19.4%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	12	38.7%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Availability of serviced land

No response	17	54.8%
Poor	4	12.9%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	7	22.6%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Land costs

No response	15	48.4%
Fair	5	16.1%
Good	6	19.4%
Excellent	5	16.1%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Availability of space for rent or lease

No response	19	61.3%
Poor	7	22.6%
Fair	3	9.7%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Development/building permit process

No response	14	45.2%
Poor	1	3.2%
Good	10	32.3%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Development charges

No response	25	80.6%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	4	12.9%
Excellent	1	3.2%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Municipal property taxes

No response	2	6.5%
Poor	3	9.7%
Fair	8	25.8%
Good	12	38.7%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Local roads and streets

No response	1	3.2%
Poor	3	9.7%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	23	74.2%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Regional/Provincial roads and highways

No response	1	3.2%
Poor	3	9.7%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	23	74.2%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Proximity to rail and airports

No response	9	29.0%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	14	45.2%
Excellent	3	9.7%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Availability of health and medical services

No response	3	9.7%
Poor	6	19.4%
Fair	5	16.1%
Good	11	35.5%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Quality of life

No response	1	3.2%
Good	6	19.4%
Excellent	24	77.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Availability of adequate housing

No response	8	25.8%
Poor	3	9.7%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	9	29.0%
Excellent	9	29.0%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Support from municipality

No response	4	12.9%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	17	54.8%
Excellent	8	25.8%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Support from other businesses

No response	4	12.9%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	17	54.8%
Excellent	7	22.6%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Support from local residents

No response	2	6.5%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	16	51.6%
Excellent	9	29.0%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Cellular phone service

No response	2	6.5%
Poor	4	12.9%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	15	48.4%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Internet service

No response	4	12.9%
Poor	8	25.8%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	11	35.5%
Excellent	5	16.1%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Water/wastewater capacity

No response	26	83.9%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	2	6.5%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Water/wastewater fees

No response	29	93.5%
Fair	1	3.2%
Excellent	1	3.2%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Availability of adequate electricity

No response	2	6.5%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	19	61.3%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Cost of electricity

No response	2	6.5%
Poor	21	67.7%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	3	9.7%
Excellent	1	3.2%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Availability of natural gas

No response	24	77.4%
Poor	7	22.6%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Cost of natural gas

No response	30	96.8%
Poor	1	3.2%

BC3. How would you rate the following factors of doing business in this community? - Other

No response	30	96.8%
Good	1	3.2%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Child care services

No response	22	71.0%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	5	16.1%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Schools (elementary and secondary)

No response	11	35.5%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	7	22.6%
Excellent	11	35.5%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Post-secondary education (college, university, and private college)

No response	11	35.5%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	9	29.0%
Excellent	8	25.8%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Workforce planning/development board

No response	25	80.6%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	1	3.2%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Chamber of Commerce/Board of Trade

No response	17	54.8%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	7	22.6%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Business Improvement Area (BIA)

No response	19	61.3%
Fair	5	16.1%
Good	7	22.6%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC)

No response	24	77.4%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	1	3.2%
Excellent	4	12.9%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Small Business Enterprise Centre

No response	18	58.1%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	6	19.4%
Excellent	4	12.9%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Other

No response	29	93.5%
Good	1	3.2%
Excellent	1	3.2%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Other

No response	30	96.8%
Excellent	1	3.2%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Planning, engineering, zoning, and building permits

No response	6	19.4%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	19	61.3%
Excellent	5	16.1%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Health department/health unit approvals

No response	14	45.2%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	12	38.7%
Excellent	2	6.5%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Police services

No response	5	16.1%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	15	48.4%
Excellent	7	22.6%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Fire services

No response	2	6.5%
Good	14	45.2%
Excellent	15	48.4%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Library services

No response	9	29.0%
Good	9	29.0%
Excellent	13	41.9%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Recreation facilities

No response	6	19.4%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	13	41.9%
Excellent	10	32.3%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Cultural facilities

No response	9	29.0%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	15	48.4%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Parks and open spaces

No response	3	9.7%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	1	3.2%
Good	18	58.1%
Excellent	8	25.8%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Street/road repair

No response	1	3.2%
Poor	3	9.7%
Fair	7	22.6%
Good	15	48.4%
Excellent	5	16.1%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Snow removal

No response	1	3.2%
Poor	2	6.5%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	18	58.1%
Excellent	6	19.4%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Garbage/recycling

No response	3	9.7%
Poor	1	3.2%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	12	38.7%
Excellent	11	35.5%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Economic development services

No response	12	38.7%
Poor	2	6.5%
Fair	5	16.1%
Good	7	22.6%
Excellent	5	16.1%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Public transit

No response	28	90.3%
Poor	3	9.7%

BC4. From the perspective of your business, rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following community services. - Other

No response	31	100.0%
Total	31	100.0%

FP1. Within the next 18 months, which do you plan on

Remain the same	17	54.8%
Expanding(Go to question FP11)	13	41.9%
Downsizing (Go to question FP2)	1	3.2%

FP3. Will your downsizing lead to a decrease in?

Workforce(How many?)	1	100.0%
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FP3. Which would best describe your plans for your business over the next 3 years? - If Workforce, how many?

If Workforce, how many?	1	100.0%
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FP4. Is there any assistance that could be provided to prevent/limit the downsizing of your business?

No	1	100.0%
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FP12. Will your expansion require or lead to

An increase in workforce (If yes, how many?)	9	28.1%
An increase need for employee training	4	12.5%
An increase in floor space (If yes, how much?)	4	12.5%
Additional product line(s)	5	15.6%
Additional services for customers	6	18.8%
Process improvements	4	12.5%

FP12. Will your expansion require or lead to - If an increase in floor space, how much? (square feet)

If an increase in workforce, how many?	25	1.1%
If a decrease in workforce, how many?	0	0.0%
If an increase in floor space, how much? (square feet)	2,300	98.9%

FP13. Are you planning on accessing any Federal or Provincial programs/services to assist with the expansion?

Yes	9	69.2%
No	4	30.8%

FP14. Would you like to receive information on potential Federal or Provincial programs/services that might assist with your expansion?

Yes	11	84.6%
No	2	15.4%

No	2	15.4%
FP15. Is your business currently experiencing difficulties with your expansion plans?		
Yes	6	46.2%
No	7	53.8%
FP16. Could the community potentially provide some assistance to support your expansion plans?		
Yes	11	84.6%
No	2	15.4%
BD1. What is the outlook for your industry?		
Growing	14	45.2%
Declining	3	9.7%
Stable (Go to question BD2)	13	41.9%
Not sure (Go to question BD2)	1	3.2%
BD2. Please give an approximate annual sales range for your business		
\$0 - \$99,999	9	29.0%
\$100,000 - \$249,999	1	3.2%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	3	9.7%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	4	12.9%
\$1,000,000 - \$4,999,999	7	22.6%
\$5,000,000 - \$9,999,999	1	3.2%
Prefer not to answer	6	19.4%
BD3. Are your projected sales in the next year expected to		
Increase	17	54.8%
Decrease	1	3.2%
Remain the same (Go to question BD4)	9	29.0%
Not sure (Go to question BD4)	4	12.9%
BD4. How would you rate your business related to the use of technology?		
Very low	1	3.2%
Low	3	9.7%
Moderate	14	45.2%
High	6	19.4%
Very High	7	22.6%
BD5. Is your business currently experiencing any barriers related to your information technology requirements?		
No barriers currently being experienced	9	18.4%
Internet speed	11	22.4%
Internet access	7	14.3%
Internet cost	14	28.6%
Hardware/software support	3	6.1%
Knowledge and training	4	8.2%
Other (Specify)	1	2.0%
BD7. Are you interested in working co-operatively with other businesses in the community to pursue any of the following?		
Joint product purchasing	2	4.3%
Joint marketing	11	23.9%
Joint training	7	15.2%
Networking/information sharing	15	32.6%
None	9	19.6%
Other (Specify)	2	4.3%

BD8. Does your business own or lease its facility/facilities?

Own (Go to Workforce Section)	29	93.5%
Lease	2	6.5%

BD8. Does your business own or lease its facility/facilities? - When does the lease expire?

In 2 to 3 years	1	50.0%
Over 3 years from now	1	50.0%

BD8. Does your business own or lease its facility/facilities? - Do you anticipate any problems in renewing the lease?

No	2	100.0%
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WF1. During the past 3 years, has the number of people you employ in this business increased, decreased or stayed the same?

Increased	8	25.8%
Decreased	6	19.4%
Remain the same	17	54.8%

WF1. During the past 3 years, has the number of people you employ in this business increased, decreased or stayed the same? - If Decreased, by how many?

If Increased, by how many?	50	78.1%
If Decreased, by how many?	14	21.9%

WF2. How would you rate the following factors in this community for your business needs? - Availability of qualified workers

No response	5	16.1%
Poor	9	29.0%
Fair	3	9.7%
Good	10	32.3%
Excellent	4	12.9%

WF2. How would you rate the following factors in this community for your business needs? - Stability of the workforce

No response	5	16.1%
Poor	5	16.1%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	10	32.3%
Excellent	7	22.6%

WF2. How would you rate the following factors in this community for your business needs? - Ability to attract new employees

No response	5	16.1%
Poor	7	22.6%
Fair	2	6.5%
Good	13	41.9%
Excellent	4	12.9%

WF2. How would you rate the following factors in this community for your business needs? - Ability to retain new employees

No response	4	12.9%
Poor	4	12.9%
Fair	4	12.9%
Good	14	45.2%
Excellent	5	16.1%

WF3. Does your business currently have difficulty hiring?

Yes	11	35.5%
No (Go to question WF4)	20	64.5%

WF3. Does your business currently have difficulty hiring? - How would you describe your company's hiring challenges?

Too few applicants	3	15.0%
Lack of appropriate skills or training	8	40.0%
Lack of relevant experience	3	15.0%
Other	6	30.0%

WF3. Does your business currently have difficulty hiring? - Are the hiring challenges specifically related to the community or industry?

Community	8	66.7%
Industry	4	33.3%

WF4. How do you currently recruit new employees?

Through your personal network	18	28.1%
Employment centres and websites (job boards)	13	20.3%
"Hiring" sign on your premises	2	3.1%
Local media advertising	2	3.1%
Your own website	3	4.7%
Referrals from friends or current employees	13	20.3%
Social Media applications such as LinkedIn or Facebook	4	6.3%
Unsolicited resumes	6	9.4%
Other (Specify)	3	4.7%

WF5. Does your business have difficulty retaining employees?

Yes	6	19.4%
No (Go to question WF6)	25	80.6%

WF5. Does your business have difficulty retaining employees? - What are the reasons for these difficulties in retaining employees?

Wages	3	30.0%
Competition	2	20.0%
Seasonal	1	10.0%
Work environment (Specify)	2	20.0%
Other (Specify)	2	20.0%

WF6. Does your business currently participate in any co-op, internship or apprenticeship programs?

Yes	9	29.0%
No	22	71.0%

WF6. Does your business currently participate in any co-op, internship or apprenticeship programs? - If No, are you interested in information?

Yes	13	59.1%
No	9	40.9%

WF7. Does your business currently use any external training?

Yes	15	48.4%
No	16	51.6%

WF8. Are there currently any barriers for you and/or your employees receiving the necessary training?

Yes	13	41.9%
No	18	58.1%

WF8. Are there currently any barriers for you and/or your employees receiving the necessary training? - If Yes, please specify

Cost	6	46.0%
Awareness of existing training programs	2	15.0%
Availability of training locally	5	39.0%
Unable to release employees	3	23.0%
Other	0	0.0%
No	18	58.1%

WF9. Are there any training programs/topics that would be beneficial to you and your employees?

Yes	12	38.7%
No	19	61.3%

CD1. Do you know of a business that may have an interest in locating in this community?

Yes	2	6.5%
No (Go to question CD2)	29	93.5%

1. Would you be willing to provide the contact information for the business in support of a community business attraction strategy? - Contact business directly

Yes	2	100.0%
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1. Would you be willing to contact this company on behalf of our community as part of a business attraction strategy? - Provide the contact information for this business

Yes	1	50.0%
No	1	50.0%

CD5. What assistance or opportunities would be beneficial to support your business?

Updating business plan	6	5.9%
Succession planning	6	5.9%
Marketing seminars	11	10.9%
Access to capital seminars	6	5.9%
Trade shows	15	14.9%
Business networking sessions	10	9.9%
Export development programs and services	4	4.0%
Joint advertising and marketing	13	12.9%
Attraction of related supply & services businesses	3	3.0%
Workforce planning, employee training and attraction	5	5.0%
Productivity improvement workshops	4	4.0%
E-marketing, social media and online content workshops	15	14.9%
Other (Specify)	3	3.0%

CS1. Would you like to be kept informed of the Business Retention and Expansion project as it moves forward?

Yes	28	90.3%
No	3	9.7%



BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION