

Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Triage Report Results

Priorities Committee
April 8, 2025

Why do a BRE triage survey?

The BRE survey is a crucial tool to help foster a supportive environment. There are several key reasons the survey is done.

Identify Business Needs
Prevent Closures
Strengthening Community Ties
Develop Targeted Strategies

Overview



Background

- EDT completed a business satisfaction 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.
- The 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 mixed-methodology survey was conducted via phone and email using Strathcona County's business directory. A total of 401 businesses were reached and the survey response rate was 14%.
- This scientific approach ensures that the results have a high level of accuracy (with a $\pm 4.9\%$ margin of error at a 95% confidence level) and statistically represents the business community in the region.

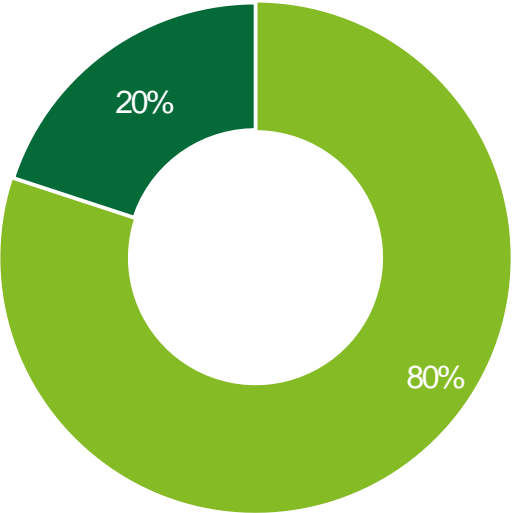


Business Community Firmographics

Firmographics



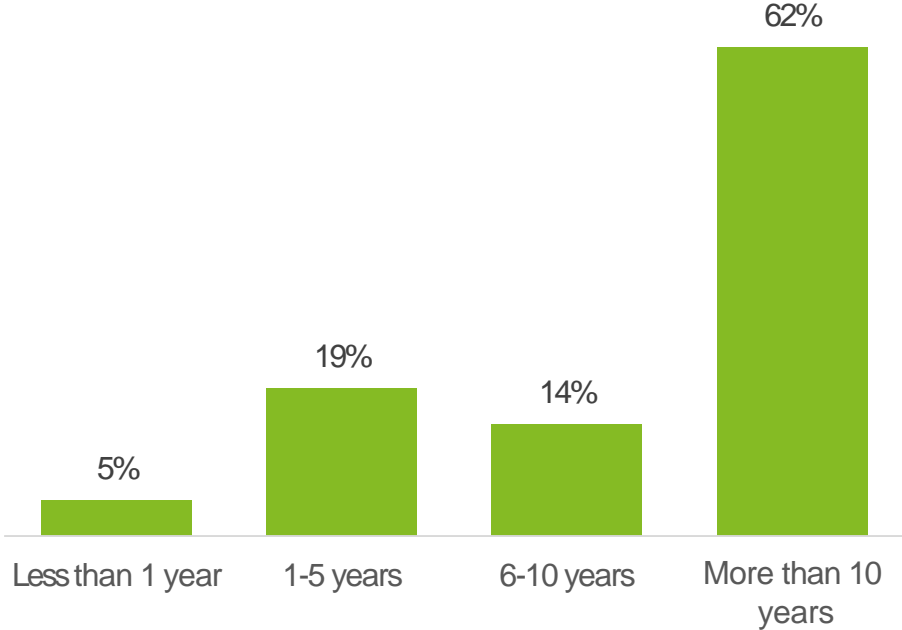
Business Type (n=401)



- Locally Owned and Operated
- Externally Owned and Operated



Years Operating in the Community (n=401)



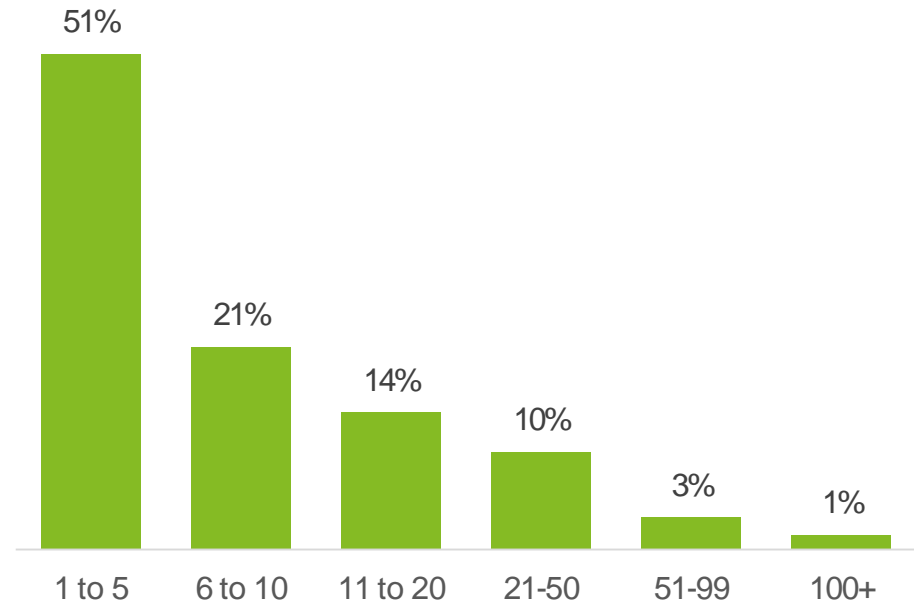
Firmographics



Sector (n=401)



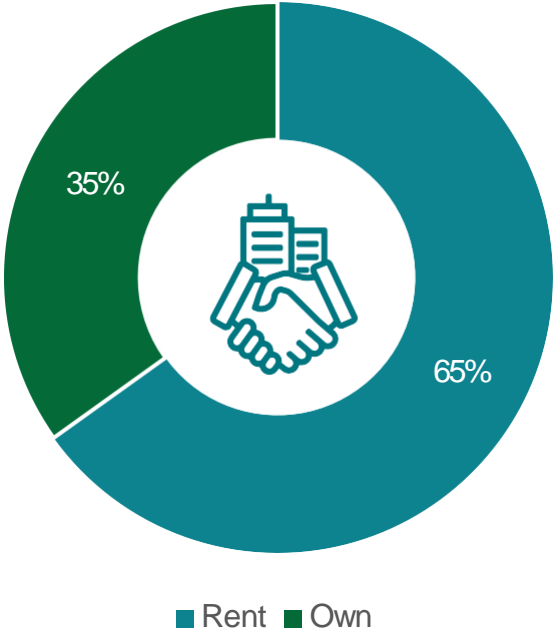
Number of Employees (n=401)



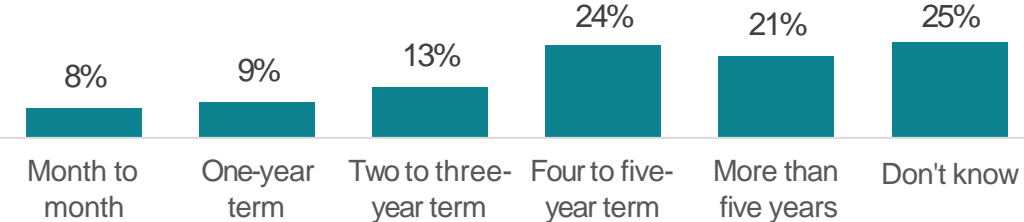
Firmographics



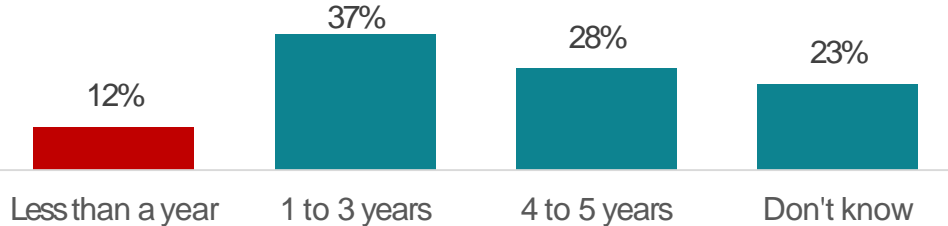
Own or Rent Business Property? (n=384)



Term of Lease (n=250)



Lease expires (n=231)

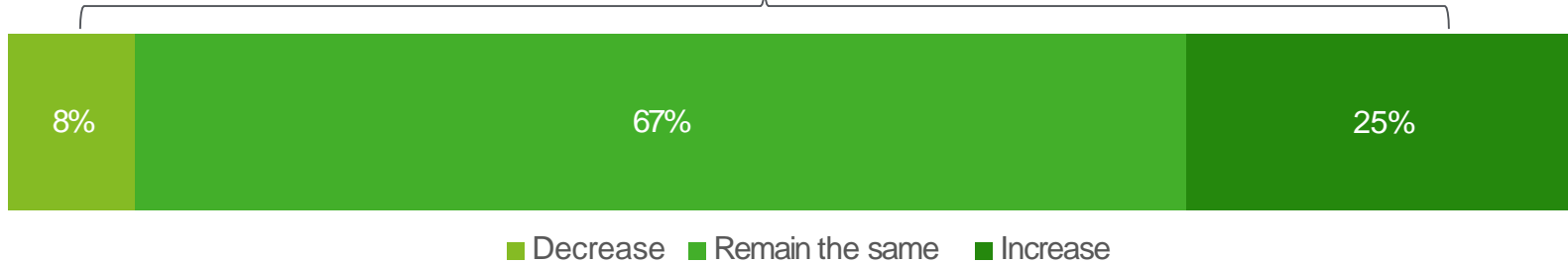




Business Performance

Business Performance

Net Increase: +17%



Over the past 12 months did the total number of employees in your company:
(n=397)

	2021
Net Decrease	-4%

Net Increase: +27%



Thinking about the next 12 months, do you expect the total number of employees in your company to:
(n=394)

	2021
Net Increase	+30%

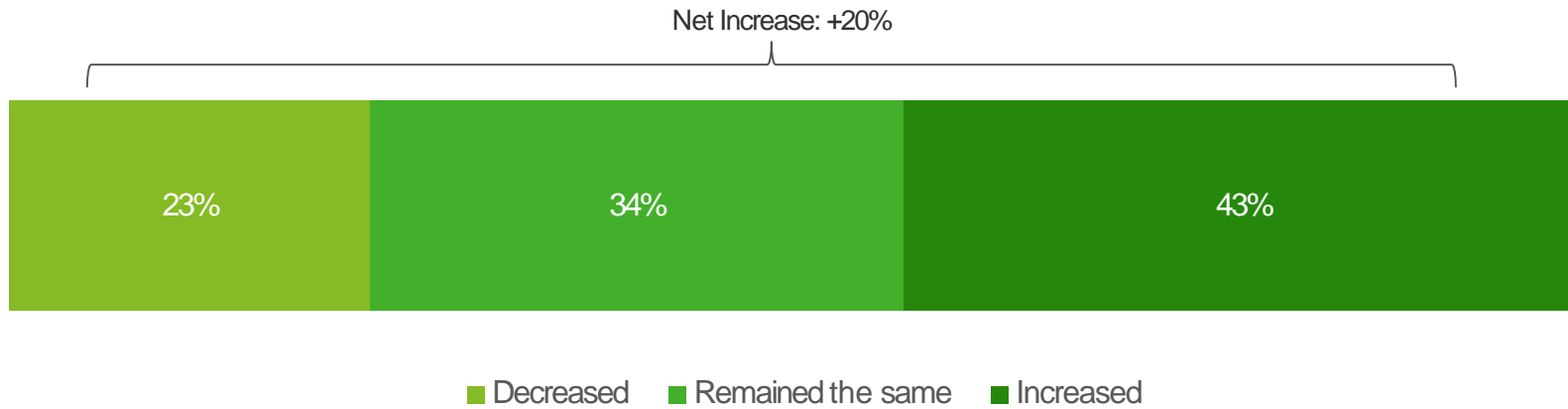
Net Positive: +12%



Over the past 12 months would you say your attitude about doing business in the County is:
(n=401)

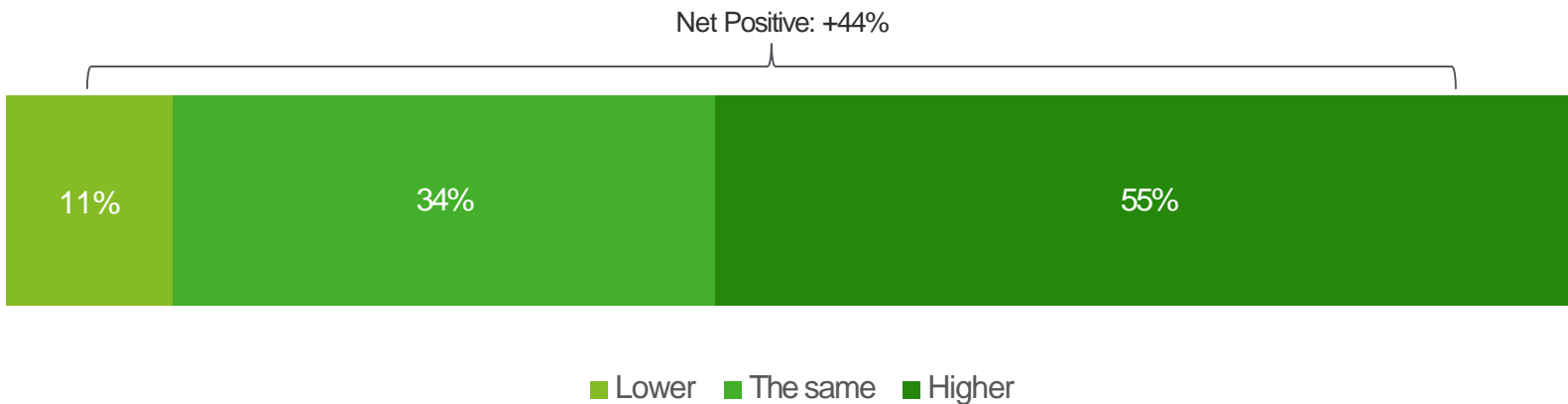
	2021
Net Positive	+3%

Business Performance



Compared to the past 12 months, have the revenues at your business this fiscal year: (n=375)

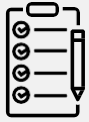
	2021
Net Decrease	-11%



And what are your expectations for the next 12 months in total revenues compared to last 12 months? (n=380)

	2021
Net Positive	+45%

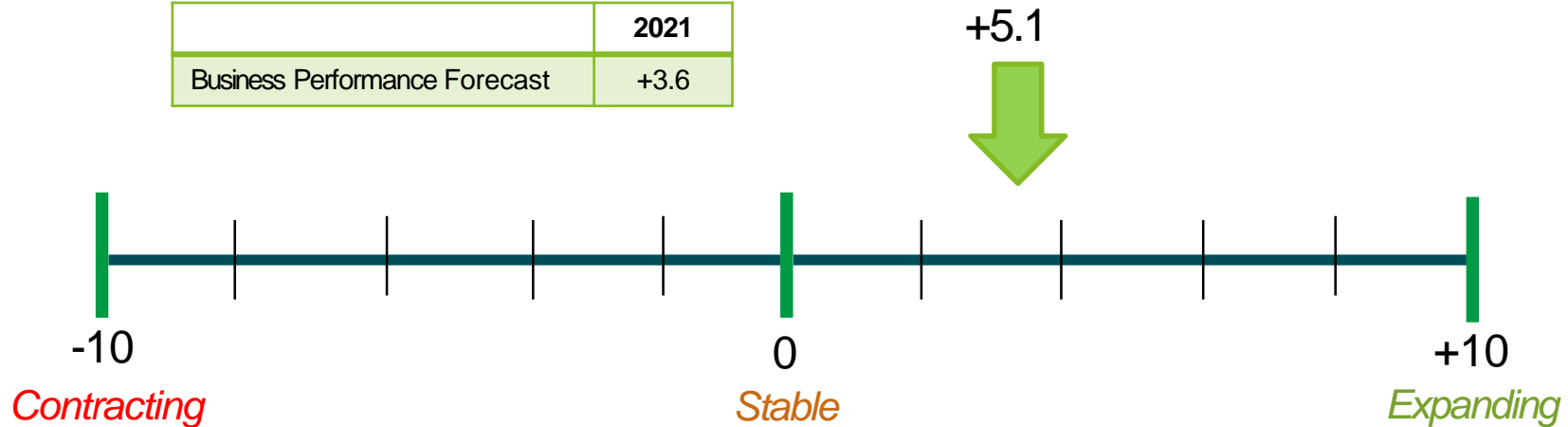
Business Performance



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.

Strathcona County scored +5.1 indicating an overall increasing trend in business performance.

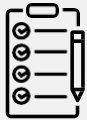
	2021
Business Performance Forecast	+3.6



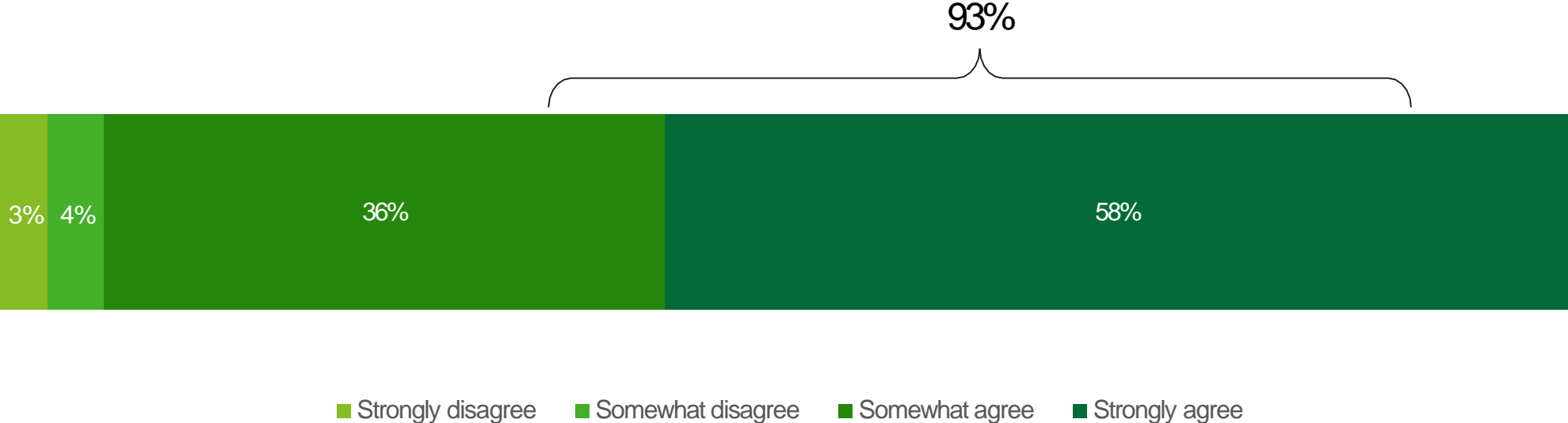


Net Promoter Score

Net Promotor Score



Please rate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would recommend this County to another business looking to expand or relocate. (n=394)

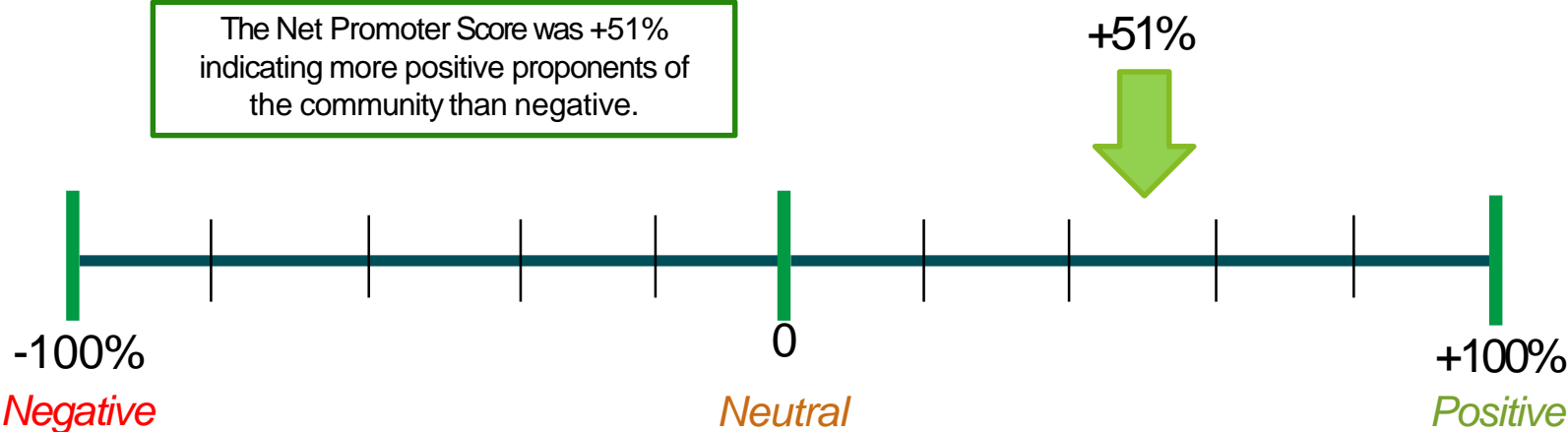


Net Promotor Score



Net Promoter Score: Based on response to the following statement – “I would recommend this County to another business looking to expand or relocate.”

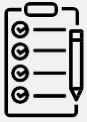
Group	Definition	Response to question	Percentage
Promoters	Active proponents of the community	Strongly Agree	58%
Passives	Neutral businesses	Somewhat Agree	36%
Detractors	Businesses with a negative opinion that may harm branding efforts	Somewhat Disagree or Strongly Disagree	7%





Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

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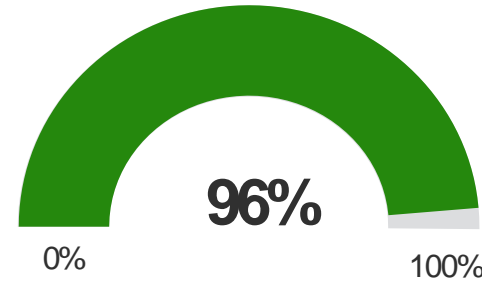


Overall, how satisfied are you with Strathcona County as a place to own and operate a business? (n=401)

KPI

■

	2021
Top 2	91%

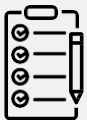


■ Very dissatisfied ■ Somewhat dissatisfied ■ Somewhat satisfied ■ Very satisfied



Satisfaction Levels

Satisfaction Levels



How satisfied you are with each of the following factors of doing business in Strathcona County (n=401)



Top two box:
Very Satisfied & Somewhat Satisfied combined.



Satisfaction Levels – Time Tracking

Factor	2024	2021	Percentage Point Change
Availability of professional services to support your business operations	96%	94%	2%
Support from other businesses	96%	91%	5%
Support from residents	95%	92%	3%
Street events and community gathering spaces	93%	89%	4%
Local roads and streets	92%	86%	6%
Availability of professional and work-related training	89%	82%	7%
Strathcona County support and assistance	89%	79%	10%
Availability of public garbage/recycling receptacles	88%	81%	7%
Zoning	88%	76%	12%
Availability of space for rent or lease	86%	84%	2%
Availability of a diverse workforce	86%	N/A	N/A
Development charges and other planning fees	83%	74%	9%
Development/building permit process	82%	74%	8%
Municipal property taxes	81%	75%	6%
Availability of unskilled labour	81%	71%	10%
Availability of adequate housing for your staff	80%	85%	-5%
Cellular phone service	79%	83%	-4%
Availability of property for purchase	79%	77%	2%
Availability of skilled labour	77%	65%	12%
Public transportation	77%	75%	2%
Active/non-car transportation connectivity	76%	69%	7%
The availability of internet service to support business needs	72%	72%	-
Overall cost of housing	54%	N/A	N/A



Derived Importance & Priority Matrix

Priority Matrix

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Overall cost of housing	54%	6.8	1
The availability of internet service to support business needs	72%	7.3	2
Development/building permit process	82%	9.4	3
Active/non-car transportation connectivity	76%	6.8	4
Availability of skilled labour	77%	6.6	5
Public transportation	77%	6.4	6
Availability of property for purchase	79%	6.6	7
Cellular phone service	79%	6.4	8
Municipal property taxes	81%	6.8	9
Development charges and other planning fees	83%	7.3	10
Availability of adequate housing for your staff	80%	6.0	11
Availability of unskilled labour	81%	6.2	12
Availability of public garbage/recycling receptacles	88%	9.0	13
Zoning	88%	8.8	14
Strathcona County support and assistance	89%	8.3	15
Availability of space for rent or lease	86%	6.2	16
Availability of a diverse workforce	86%	5.6	17
Availability of professional and work-related training	89%	6.0	18
Local roads and streets	92%	5.6	19
Support from residents	95%	7.5	20
Street events and community gathering spaces	93%	6.0	21
Support from other businesses	96%	8.1	22
Availability of professional services to support your business operations	96%	6.4	23



Higher Priority



Lower Priority

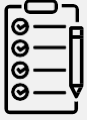
Priority Matrix – Time Tracking

Factor	2024 Priority Rank	2021 Priority Rank
Overall cost of housing	1	N/A
The availability of internet service to support business needs	2	2
Development/building permit process	3	3
Active/non-car transportation connectivity	4	7
Availability of skilled labour	5	1
Public transportation	6	9
Availability of property for purchase	7	15
Cellular phone service	8	13
Municipal property taxes	9	6
Development charges and other planning fees	10	5
Availability of adequate housing for your staff	11	17
Availability of unskilled labour	12	8
Availability of public garbage/recycling receptacles	13	11
Zoning	14	10
Strathcona County support and assistance	15	4
Availability of space for rent or lease	16	12
Availability of a diverse workforce	17	N/A
Availability of professional and work-related training	18	14
Local roads and streets	19	16
Support from residents	20	20
Street events and community gathering spaces	21	18
Support from other businesses	22	19
Availability of professional services to support your business operations	23	21



Business Community Health Index

Business Community Health Index



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

Overall Satisfaction

Workforce Attraction and Retention

Change in Attitudes

Future Plans

Business Policies, Supports and Incentives

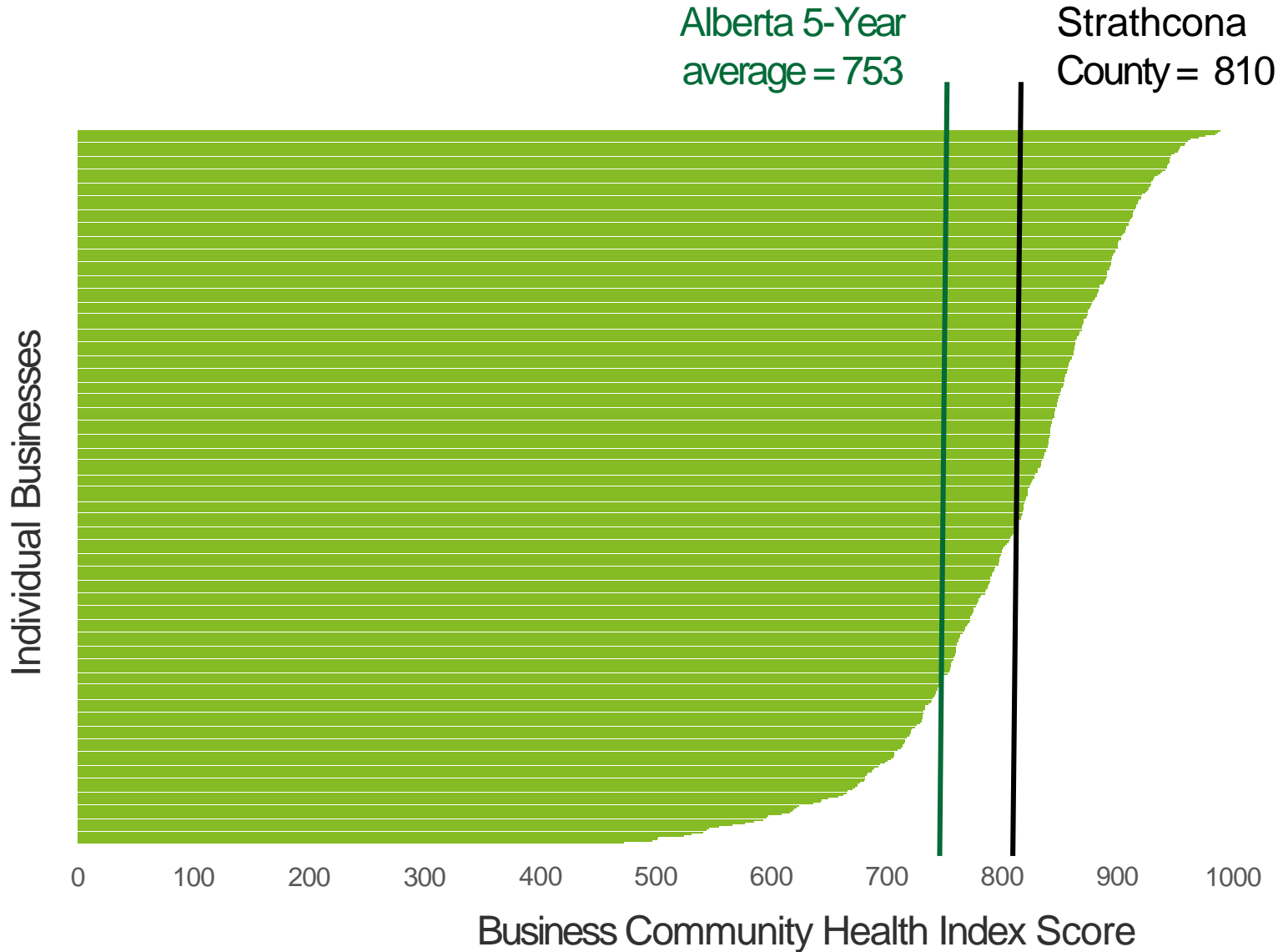
Change in Revenue

Community Recommendation

Infrastructure and Amenities

Revenue Outlook

Business Community Health Index



Strathcona County scored very well on the Business Community Health Index. This index is based on several factors:

- The County outperformed the provincial average on businesses' ratings of Business Policies, Supports & Incentives, Workforce Attraction & Retention measures, and Infrastructure & Amenities.
- The County did not score lower than the provincial average on any BCHI sub-scores.
- The overall BCHI increased from 710 in 2021 to 810.

Future Plans – Next 24 months



Businesses with plans to expand:

- **82** businesses total
- **19** within the next 6 months
- **63** in more than 6 months

Plans to downsize:

- **11** businesses total
- **11** in more than 6 months

Plans to relocate:

- **10** businesses total
- **2** within the next 6 months
- **8** in more than 6 months

Plans to close:

- **6** businesses total
- **1** within the next 6 months
- **5** in more than 6 months

Plans to sell:

- **13** businesses total
- **8** within the next 6 months
- **5** in more than 6 months

Triage Flag Results

Throughout the survey process Triage cases that represented green or red flags were tracked. Out of the 401 businesses surveyed, 146 businesses presented an opportunity for intervention.



= Businesses considering expanding in the next 2 years.

= 82 businesses



= Businesses considering relocating, downsizing, selling, or closing as well as businesses whose lease expires in less than a year.

= 64 businesses





Future Plans

Action Items for EDT

FOLLOW UP

- With red and green flagged businesses, prioritizing those in the highest need.

SHARE

- Feedback with relevant departments for their awareness and action.

CONTINUE

- To provide programming relevant to the business community, including workshops, business visits, and our annual conference.
- To work with partner organizations and create awareness of EDT services.
- Collaborate regionally to address mutual concerns, such as, the continued skilled labor shortage by hosting events like the Industrial Heartland Career Forum.

Conclusions

1. Highly satisfied and thriving business community.
2. Since the 2021 Business Triage, most scores have increased, indicating businesses needs are being met.
3. Emerging priorities directly mirror national and provincial trends.

Questions?