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City of St. Albert

Triage BR&E Report

June 2024

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This report was provided to inform and assist the City of St. Albert with the 2024 Triage BR+E Survey.

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Overview

Background

- The City of St. Albert completed a business satisfaction survey to understand how to best support local businesses. Business retention and expansion (BR+E) activities are highly important to ensure business community needs are monitored and addressed; however, engagement can be time consuming and complex.

- A Triage BR&E 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.

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Overview

Methodology

- A random sample telephone and email survey was conducted with 384 businesses. The total response rate for the phone surveys was 9.76% which is very high in the market research industry. The average phone interview length was 13 minutes.

- This scientific approach ensures that the results have a high level of accuracy (with a margin of error of +/- 5.0% at a 95% confidence level) and statistically represents the business community in the region.

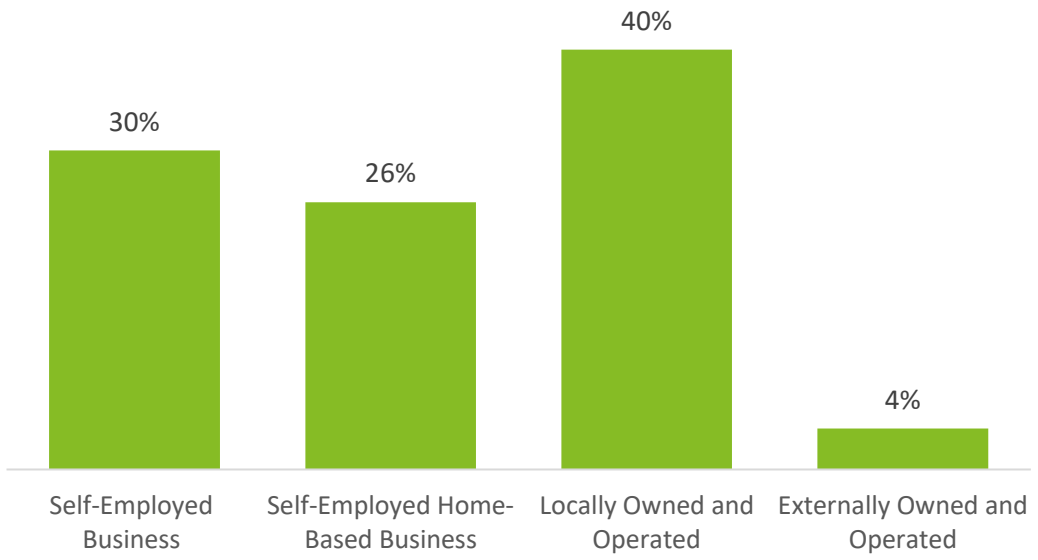
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Business Community Firmographics

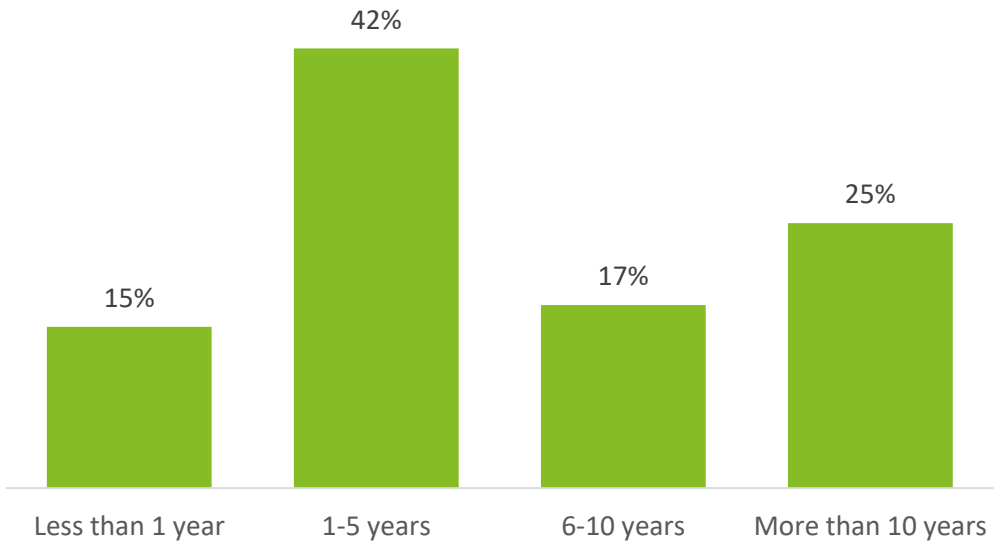
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Firmographics

Business Ownership (n=384)



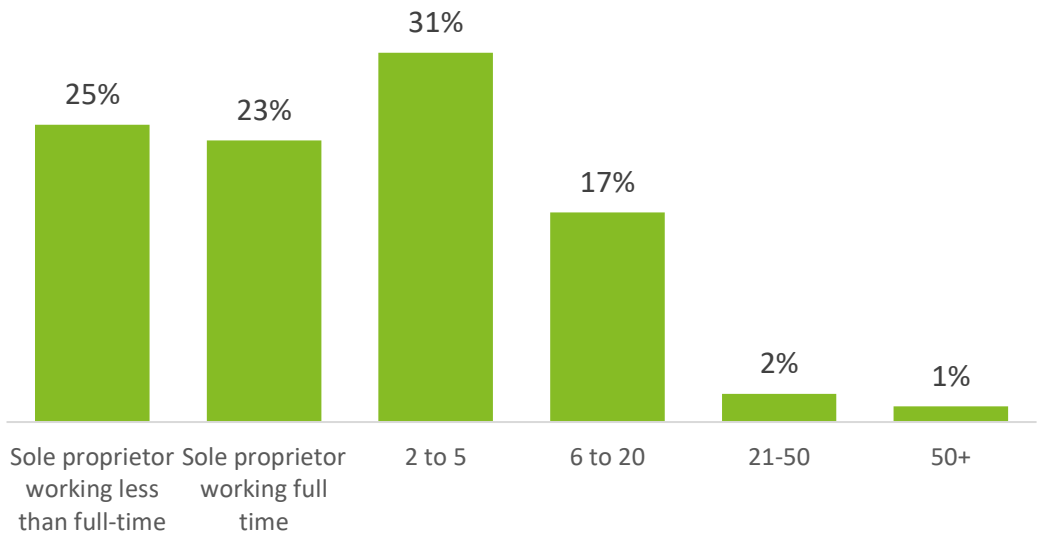
Years Operating in the Community (n=384)



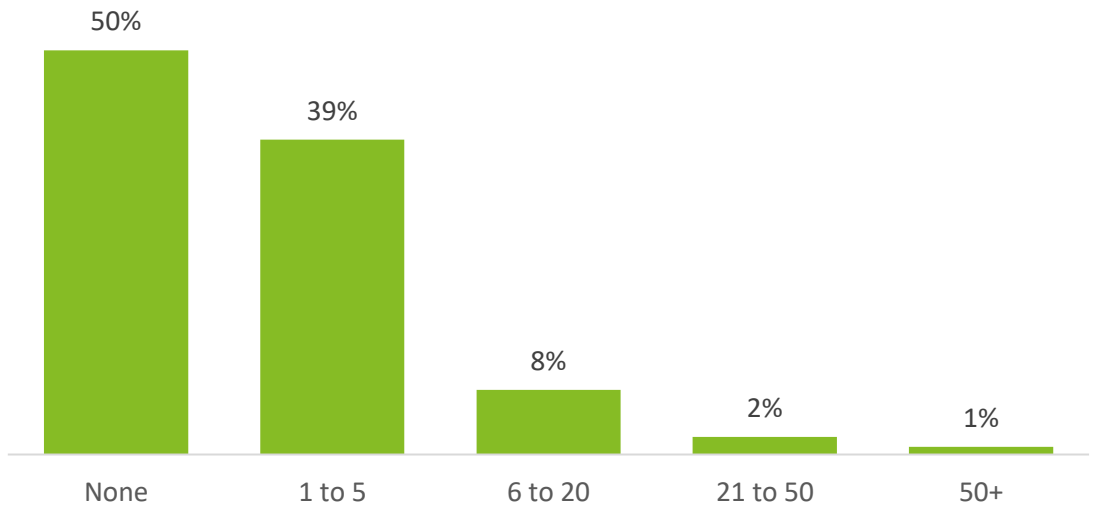
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Firmographics

Full-time Employees (n=384)



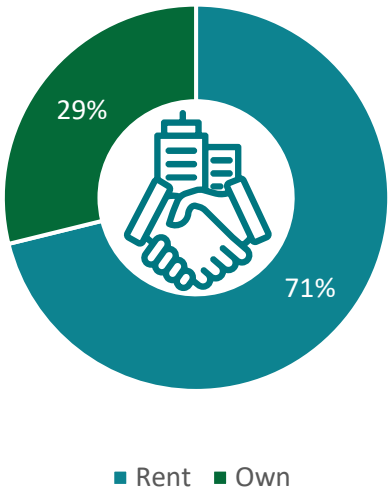
Part-time Employees (n=326)



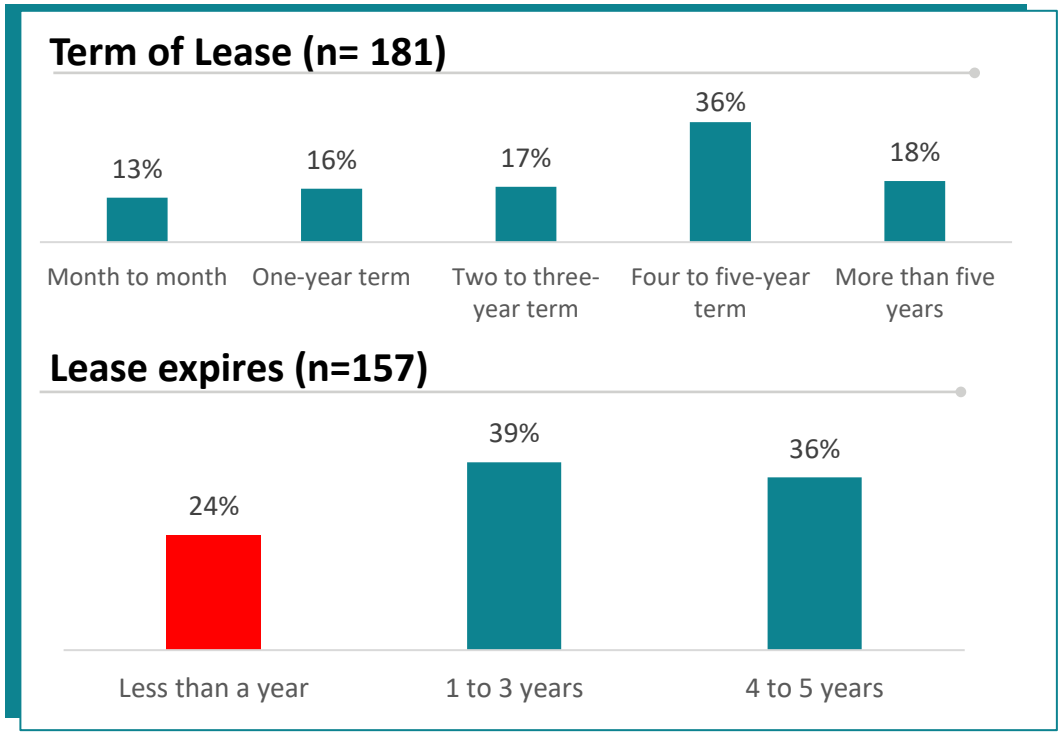
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Firmographics

Own or Rent Business Property? (n=267)



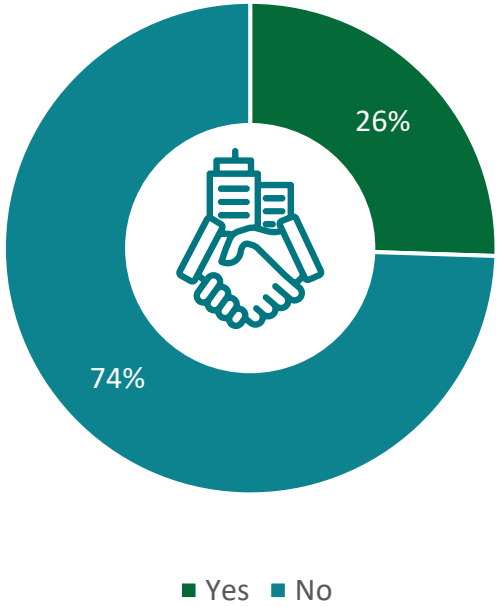




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Firmographics

Desire for Expanding Home-based Business? (n=98)

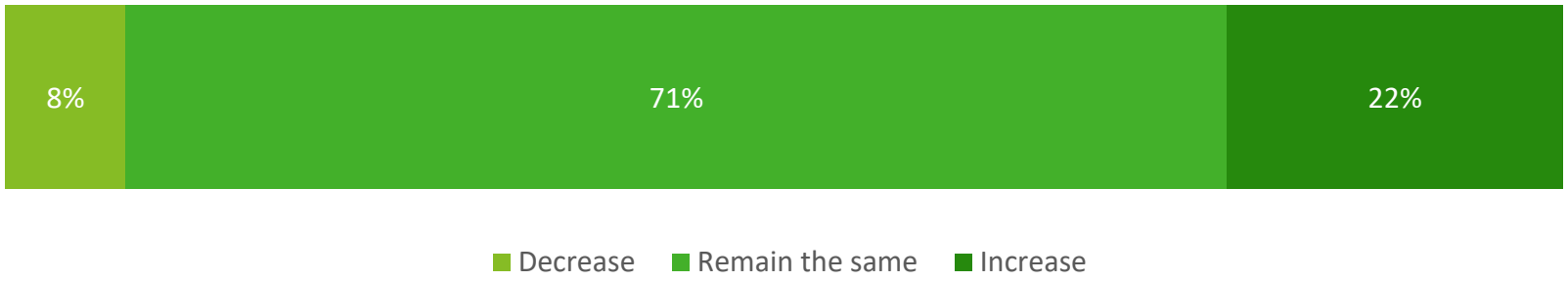


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Business Performance

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Business Performance



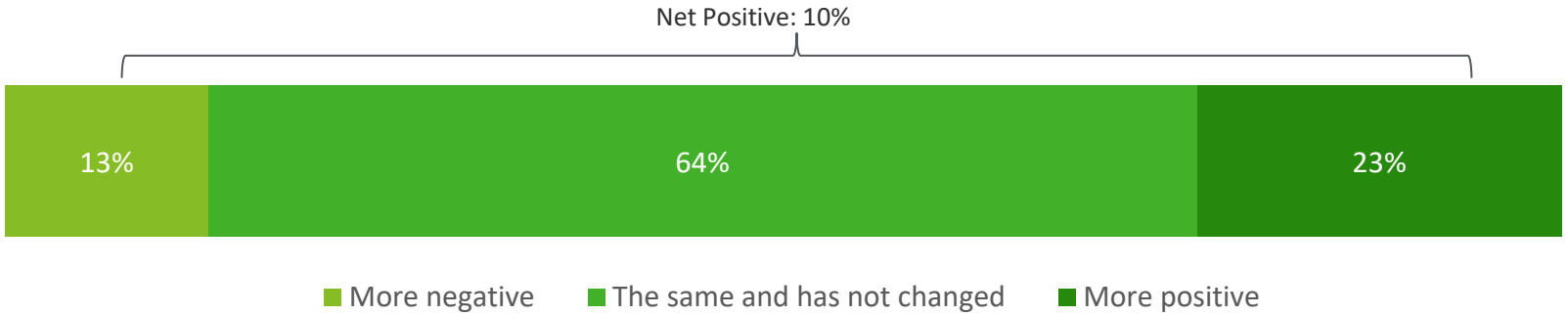
Over the past 12 months did the total number of employees in your company:
(n=375)

	2023
% Increase	22%



Thinking about the next 12 months, do you expect the total number of employees in your company to:
(n=348)

	2021	2023
% Increase	31%	32%



Over the past 12 months would you say your attitude about doing business in the City is…
(n=384)

	2020	2021	2023
Net Positive	-55%	+12%	+14

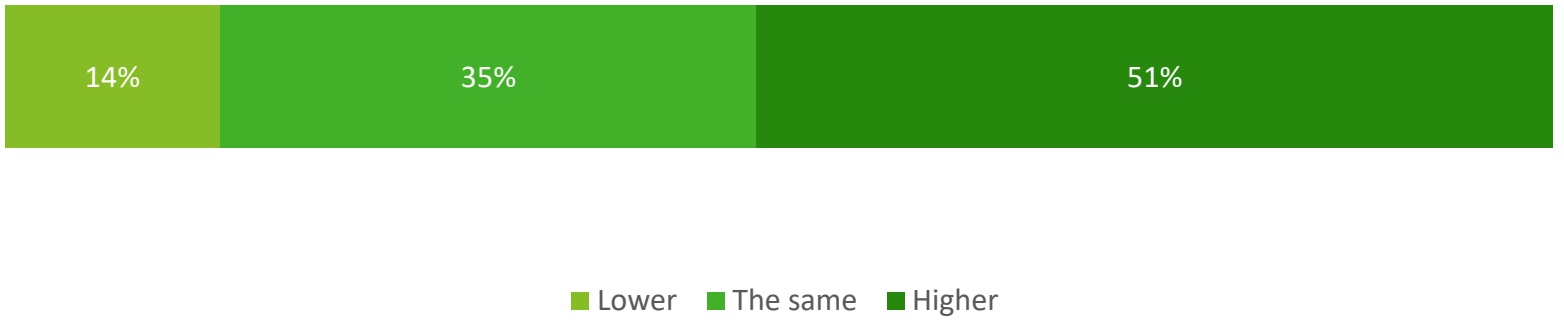
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Business Performance



Over the past 12 months have revenues at your business… (n=360)

	2020	2021	2023
% Increased	38%	45%	44%



And what are your expectations for the next 12 months in total revenues compared to last 12 months? (n=346)

	2020	2021	2023
% Higher	49%	52%	52%

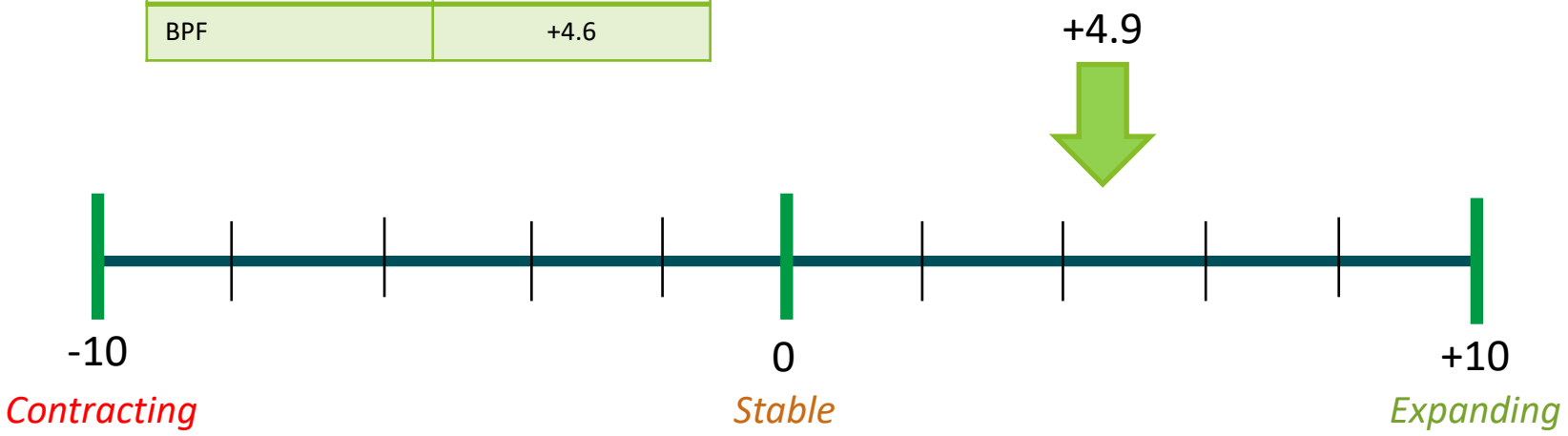
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Business Performance

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 City for an overall directional picture of the business climate in the area.

The City of St. Albert scored +4.9 indicating an overall increasing trend in business performance.

	2023
BPF	+4.6



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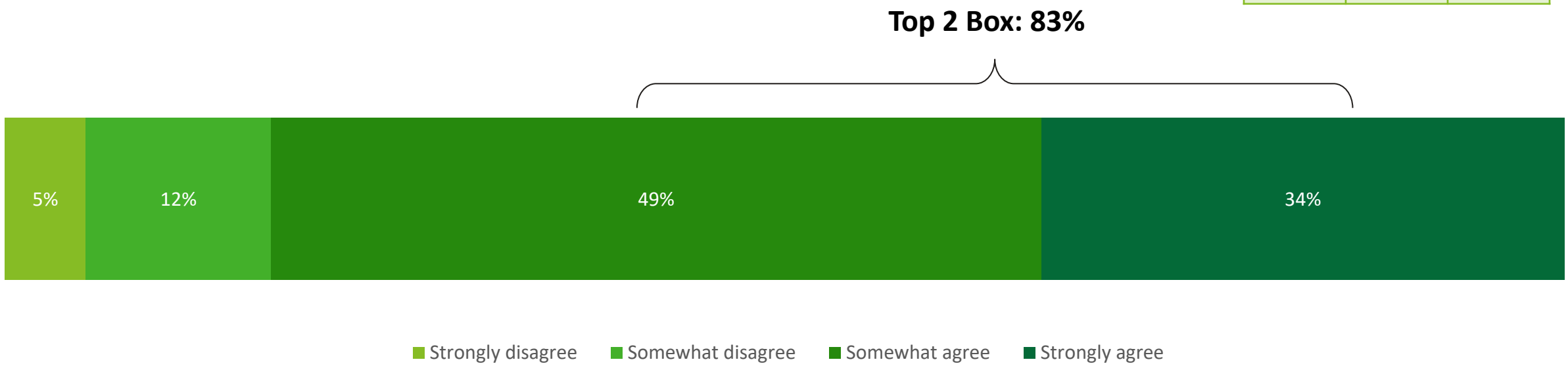


Net Promoter Score

Community Recommendation

Please rate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I would recommend the City of St. Albert to another business looking to expand or relocate.” (n=328)

	2021	2023
Top 2 %	93%	84%



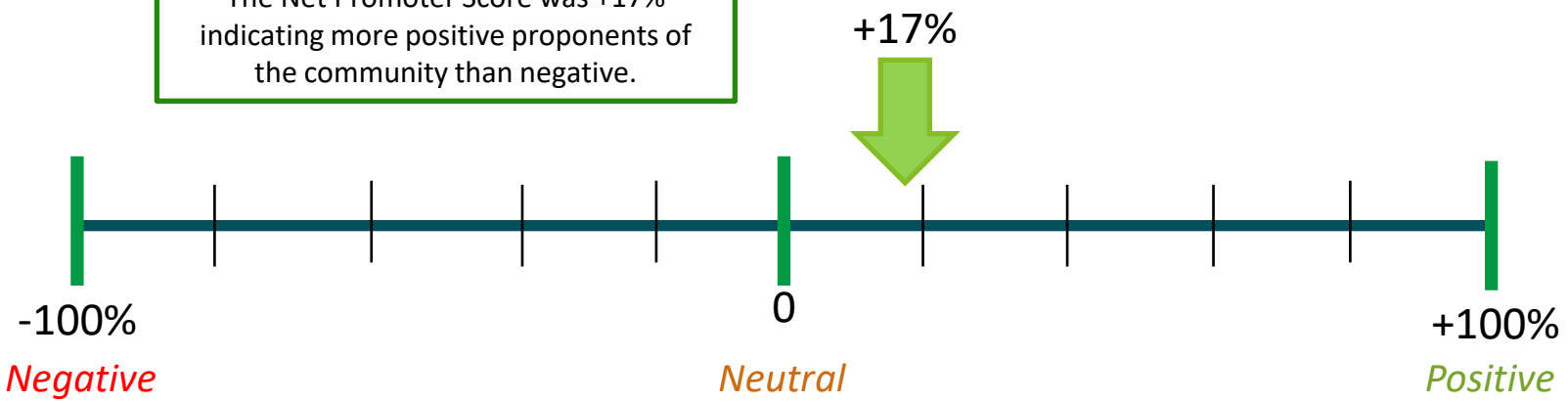
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Net Promoter Score

Net Promoter Score: Based on response to the following statement – "I would recommend the City of St. Albert to another business looking to expand or relocate."

Group	Definition	Response to question	Percentage
Promoters	Active proponents of the community	Strongly Agree	34%
Passives	Neutral businesses	Somewhat Agree	49%
Detractors	Businesses with a negative opinion that may harm branding efforts	Somewhat Disagree or Strongly Disagree	17%

The Net Promoter Score was +17% indicating more positive proponents of the community than negative.



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Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

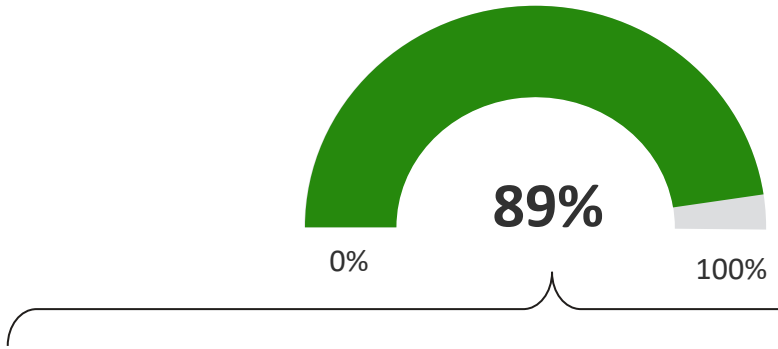
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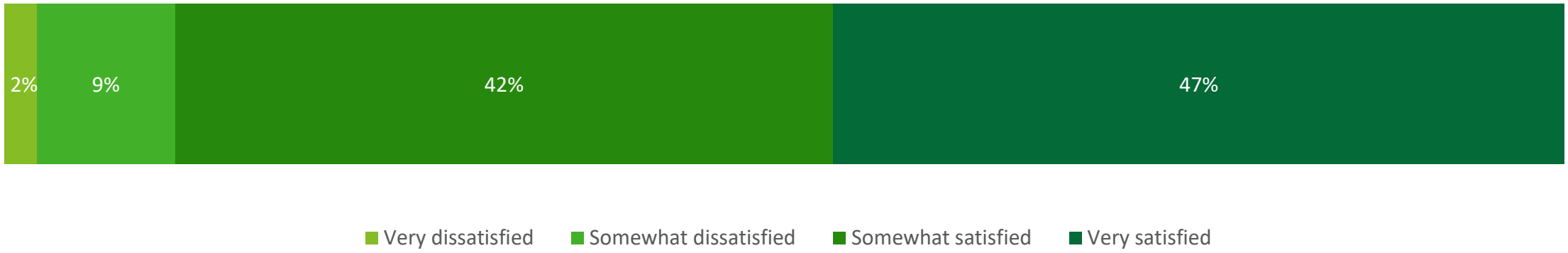
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Overall, how satisfied are you with the City of St. Albert as a place to own and operate a business? (n=384)

KPI:

	2021	2023
Top 2 %	97%	90%





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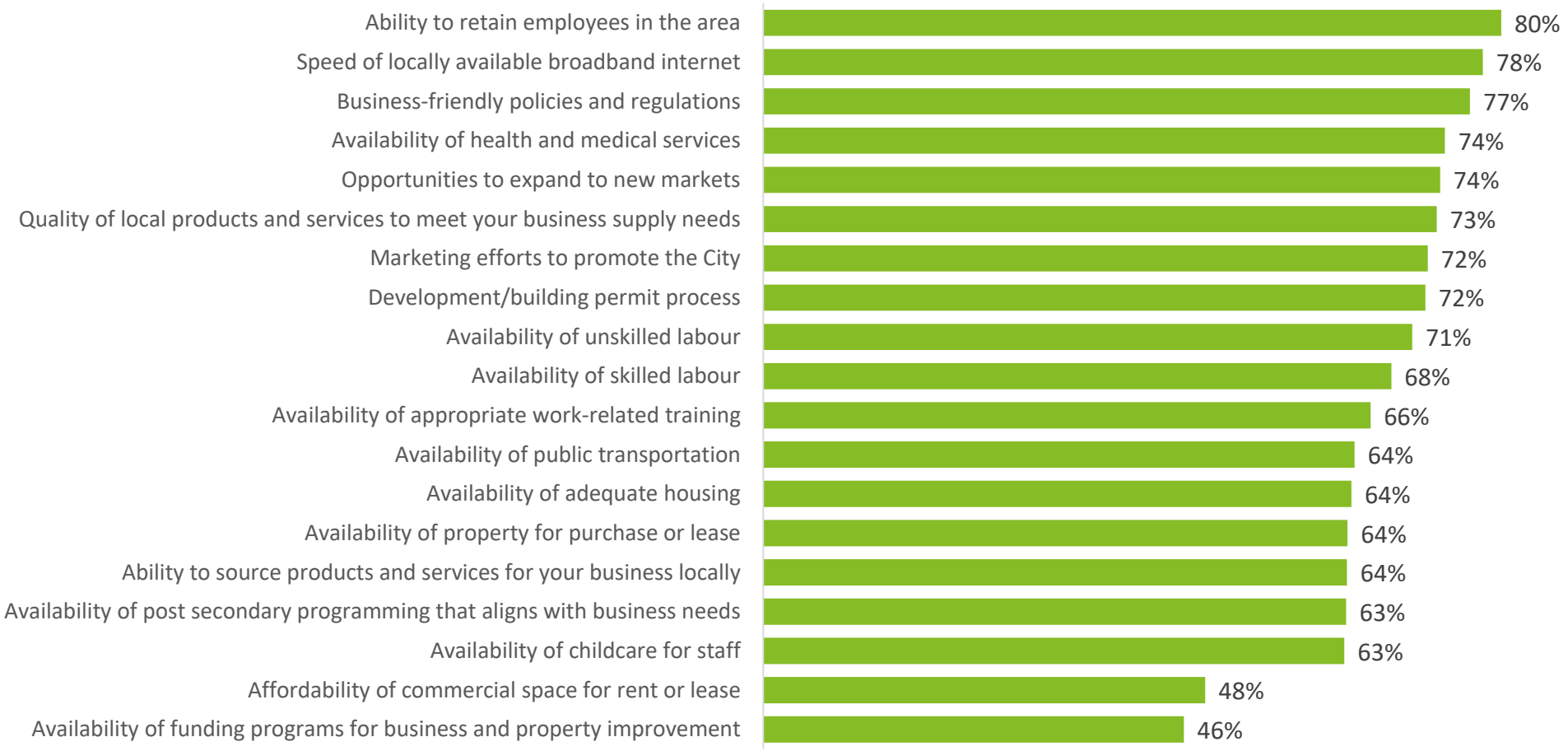


Satisfaction Levels

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Satisfaction Levels

How satisfied you are with each of the following factors of doing business in the City of St. Albert: (N=384)



Top two box:
Very Satisfied & Somewhat Satisfied combined.

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YoY Tracking

Service

	2024 (Top Two Box)	Change from 2023	Change from 2021	Change from 2020
Ability to retain employees in the area	80%	+5 PP	-8 PP	-
Speed of locally available broadband internet	78%	+1 PP	+3 PP	-
Business-friendly policies and regulations	77%	0 PP	-	-
Availability of health and medical services	74%	-3 PP	-21 PP	+11 PP
Opportunities to expand to new markets	74%	+1 PP	-8 PP	-
Quality of local products and services to meet your business supply needs	73%	-2 PP	-9 PP	0 PP
Marketing efforts to promote the City	72%	-	-	-
Development/building permit process	72%	-	-	-
Availability of unskilled labour	71%	+3 PP	-5 PP	+9 PP
Availability of skilled labour	68%	+4 PP	-1 PP	+18 PP
Availability of appropriate work-related training	66%	-6 PP	-10 PP	-19 PP
Availability of public transportation	64%	+3 PP	-11 PP	0 PP
Availability of adequate housing	64%	-3 PP	-14 PP	-15 PP
Availability of property for purchase or lease	64%	-1 PP	-12 PP	-18 PP
Ability to source products and services for your business locally	64%	-4 PP	-7 PP	0 PP
Availability of post secondary programming that aligns with business needs	63%	+1 PP	-4 PP	-11 PP
Availability of childcare for staff	63%	-	-	-
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	48%	-4 PP	-11 PP	-7 PP
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	46%	+3 PP	-10 PP	-10 PP

Notes:
1. PP is the percentage point change (e.g. an increase from 10% to 15% is +5 PP).
2. A '-' is used where the factor was not asked in a previous year.

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Derived Importance & Priority Matrix

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Priority Matrix

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	48%	9.1	1
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	46%	7.6	2
Availability of appropriate work-related training	66%	9.4	3
Availability of property for purchase or lease	64%	7.6	4
Availability of post secondary programming that aligns with business needs	63%	7.4	5
Availability of adequate housing	64%	7.2	6
Development/building permit process	72%	9.2	7
Marketing efforts to promote the City	72%	9.2	8
Availability of childcare for staff	63%	6.7	9
Availability of public transportation	64%	6.9	10
Opportunities to expand to new markets	74%	9.1	11
Ability to source products and services for your business locally	64%	6.4	12
Availability of skilled labour	68%	6.4	13
Availability of unskilled labour	71%	6.5	14
Availability of health and medical services	74%	7.2	15
Business-friendly policies and regulations	77%	7.9	16
Quality of local products and services to meet your business supply needs	73%	6.7	17
Ability to retain employees in the area	80%	8.6	18
Speed of locally available broadband internet	78%	6.9	19



Higher Priority

Lower Priority

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Priority Matrix - Tracking

2024

Factor	Priority Rank
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	1
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	2
Availability of appropriate work-related training	3
Availability of property for purchase or lease	4
Availability of post secondary programming that aligns with business needs	5

2023

Factor	Priority Rank
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	1
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	2
Availability of property for purchase or lease	3
Availability of public transportation	4
Availability of adequate housing	5

2021

Factor	Priority Rank
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	1
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	2
Availability of skilled labour	3
Ability to source products and services for your business locally	4
Availability of property for purchase or lease	5

2020

Factor	Priority Rank
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	1
Availability of post-secondary programming that aligns with business needs	2
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	3
Availability of property for purchase or lease	4
Ability to source products and services for your business locally	5

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Business Community Health Index

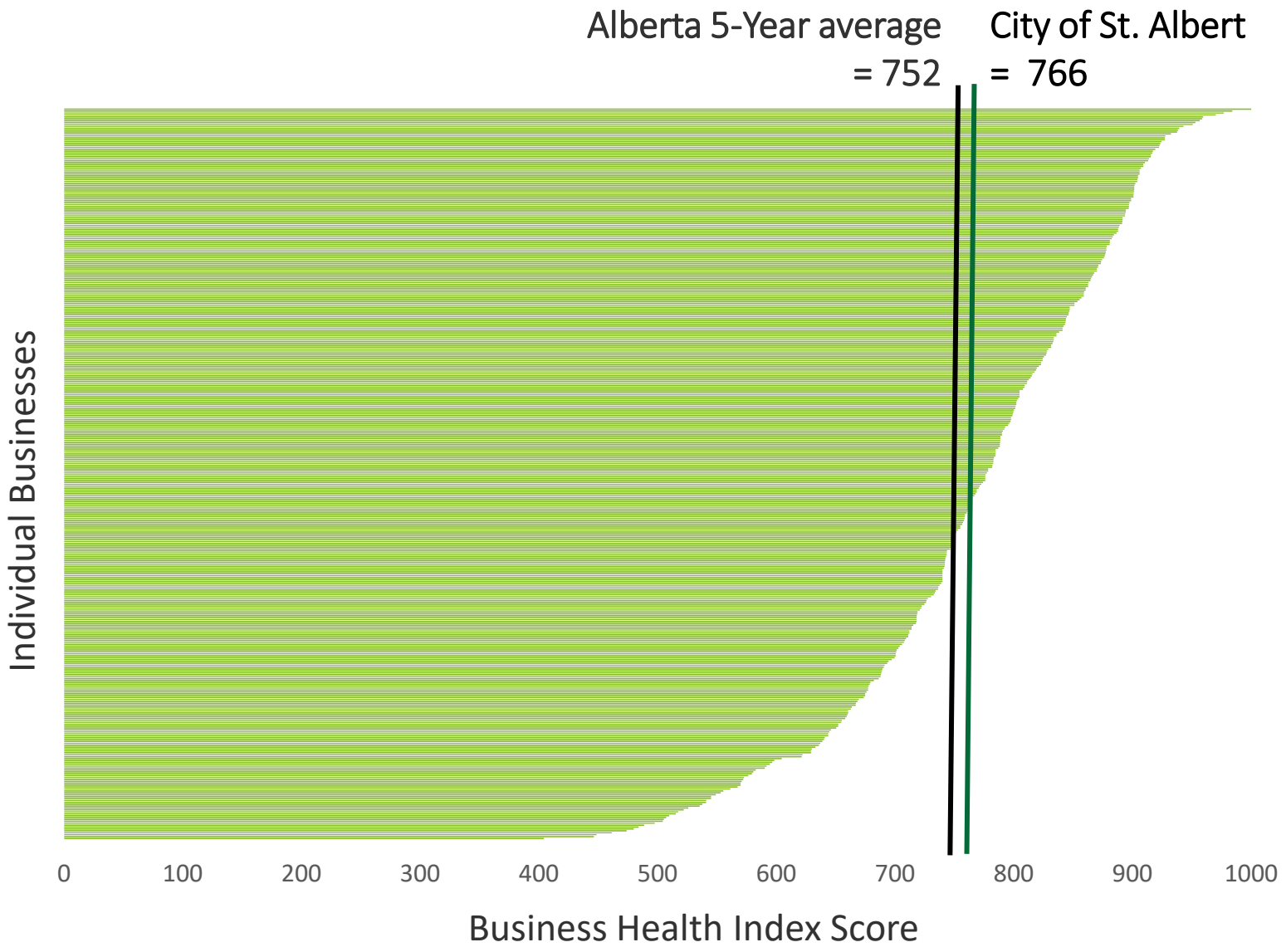
Community Business Health Index

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 nine sub-scores:

- Overall Satisfaction
- Future Plans
- Community Recommendation
- Workforce Attraction and Retention
- Business Policies, Supports and Incentives
- Infrastructure and Amenities
- Change in Attitudes
- Change in Revenue
- Revenue Outlook

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Community Business Health Index



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

- The City outperformed the provincial average with regards to businesses' historical and expected future revenues, business outlooks and on factors related to Workforce Attraction and Retention.

- The City did not score lower than the provincial average on any of the sub-scores of the CBHI. The City was comparable to the average on community recommendation and on factors related to Infrastructure and Amenities.

	2020	2021	2023
CBHI	740	781	772

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Future Plans

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Future Plans – Next 24 months



Businesses with plans to expand:

- **98** businesses total
- **33** within the next 6 months
- **65** in more than 6 months

Plans to downsize:

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

Plans to relocate:

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

Plans to close:

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

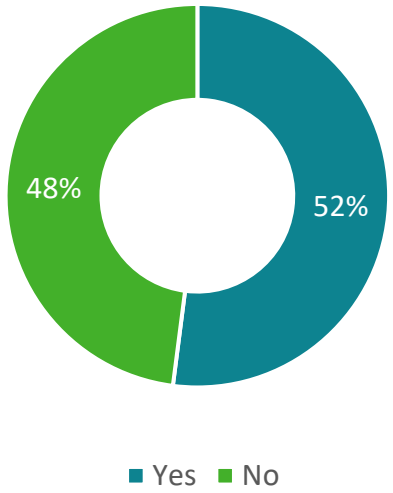
Plans to sell:

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

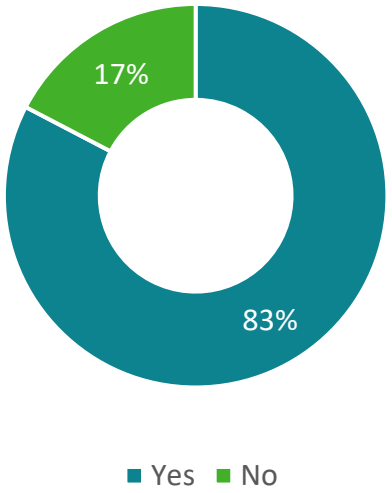
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Future Plans: Expansion

Is your current site adequate for the proposed expansion? (n=98)



Will your planned expansion be in St. Albert? (n=98)



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Future Plans: Downsizing, Relocation & Closing

Reasons for Downsizing	Reasons for Relocations	Reasons for Closing
“Increase of Expenses, decrease of revenue”	“Too many businesses in small space”	“Retirement”
“Competition”	“Moving to space with lower rent”	“Too many large firms, hard to maintain small businesses entering market”
“Moving into Retirement”	“Insufficient parking”	“Rent is too high”
“Changing market demographics”	“Cost of lease, and poor access to current location for customers”	“Lack of viable support resources”
“Cost of rent is too high”	“Expiry of lease, and lack of affordable space”	

Common Themes:



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Triage Flag Results

Throughout the survey process Triage cases that represented green or red flags were tracked. Out of the 384 businesses surveyed, 166 businesses presented an opportunity for intervention.

= Businesses considering expanding in the next 2 years.

= 98 businesses.



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

= 68 businesses



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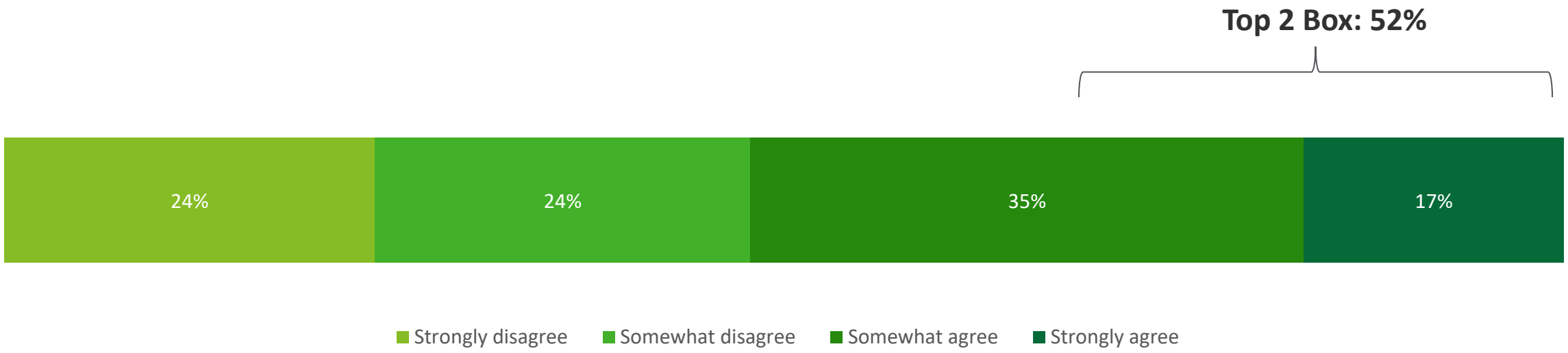


Communications

Communications

Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I know who I need to talk to at the City if I have a problem with my business or a business concern I’d like to share”. (n=324)

	2023
Top 2 %	55%



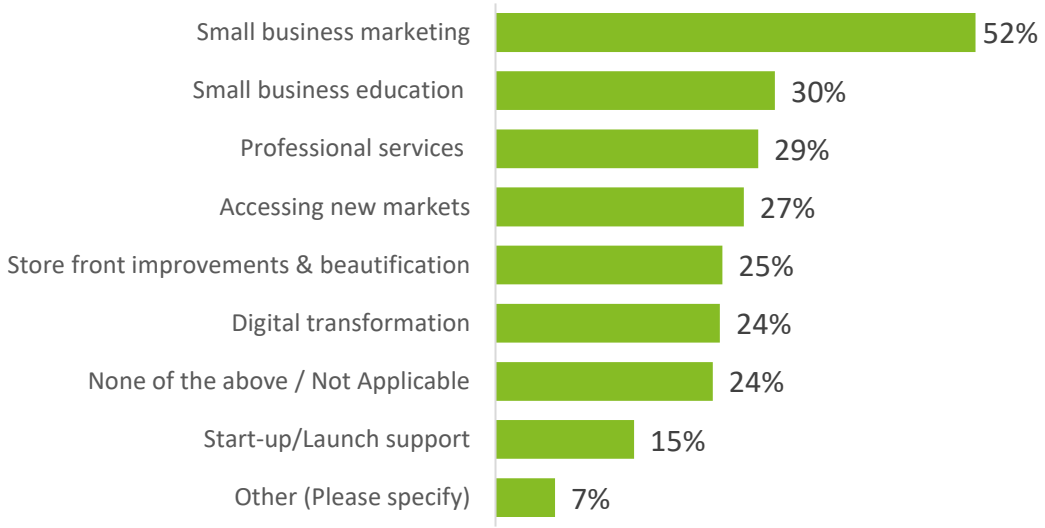
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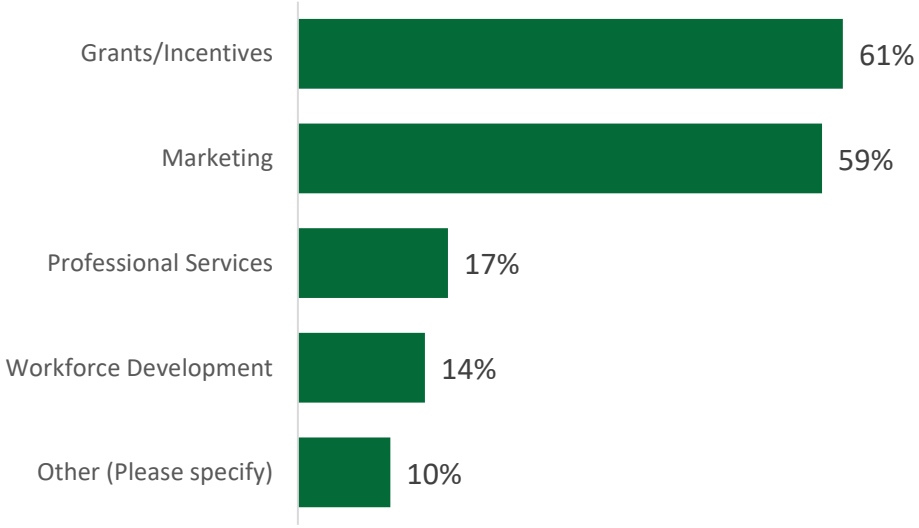
Business Development Incentives

Business Development Incentives

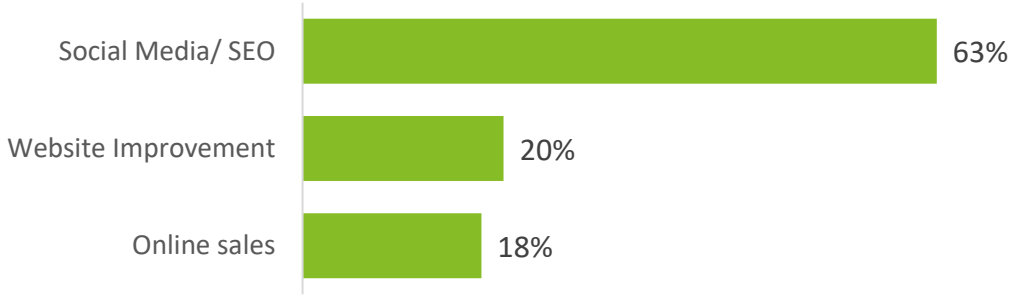
Which of the following types of business development incentives/grants would you be interested in accessing for your business in the next 12 months? (n=384)



Which of the following potential programs or business services would be most valuable for your business? (n=384)



Which of the following supports would be most beneficial to your business? (n=227)



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Conclusions

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Conclusions

Highly Satisfied Business Community: Despite experiencing a slight decline from 2021, businesses operating within the City of St. Albert remain highly content with the area as a place to conduct their operations, with an 89% satisfaction rate (similar to the 2022 score of 90%). Businesses were especially satisfied with the ability to retain employees in the area (80%), the speed of locally available broadband internet (78%), and the business-friendly policies and regulations (77%). High scores in these metrics have a strong impact on the overall satisfaction scores of the local business community and are excellent indicators of a healthy community economy.

Top Business Priorities in the City: Using Deloitte's proprietary derived importance methodology, it was found that the top priority factors for the business community include the affordability of commercial space for rent or lease, availability of funding programs for business and property improvement, and the availability of appropriate work-related training.

At the business community-level, Deloitte recommends that the City examine the top items in the Priority Matrix and assesses where improvements can be made. If the City is able to make improvements in these areas for the business community, this would be expected to improve overall satisfaction looking forward.

At the individual business-level, Deloitte recommends following up with the businesses who have opted to share their individual responses, to connect and offer any supports available that may benefit them. Some items that are well-suited to prioritize which businesses to follow-up with include:

- Green or red triage flags
- High or low Community Business Health Index scores
- Businesses who are unsure who to reach out to with business concerns in the City

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