

## City of St. Albert Triage BR&E Report

June 2025

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## Background and Methodology | Overview

The objectives of the 2025 St. Albert Triage BR&E Survey are to...



**Understand St. Albert's current business environment and how operators find the city as a place to do business**



**Identify any challenges faced with operating a business in the City, and how the City can support local businesses**



**Identifying potential expansion and retention opportunities**

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### Survey Methodology

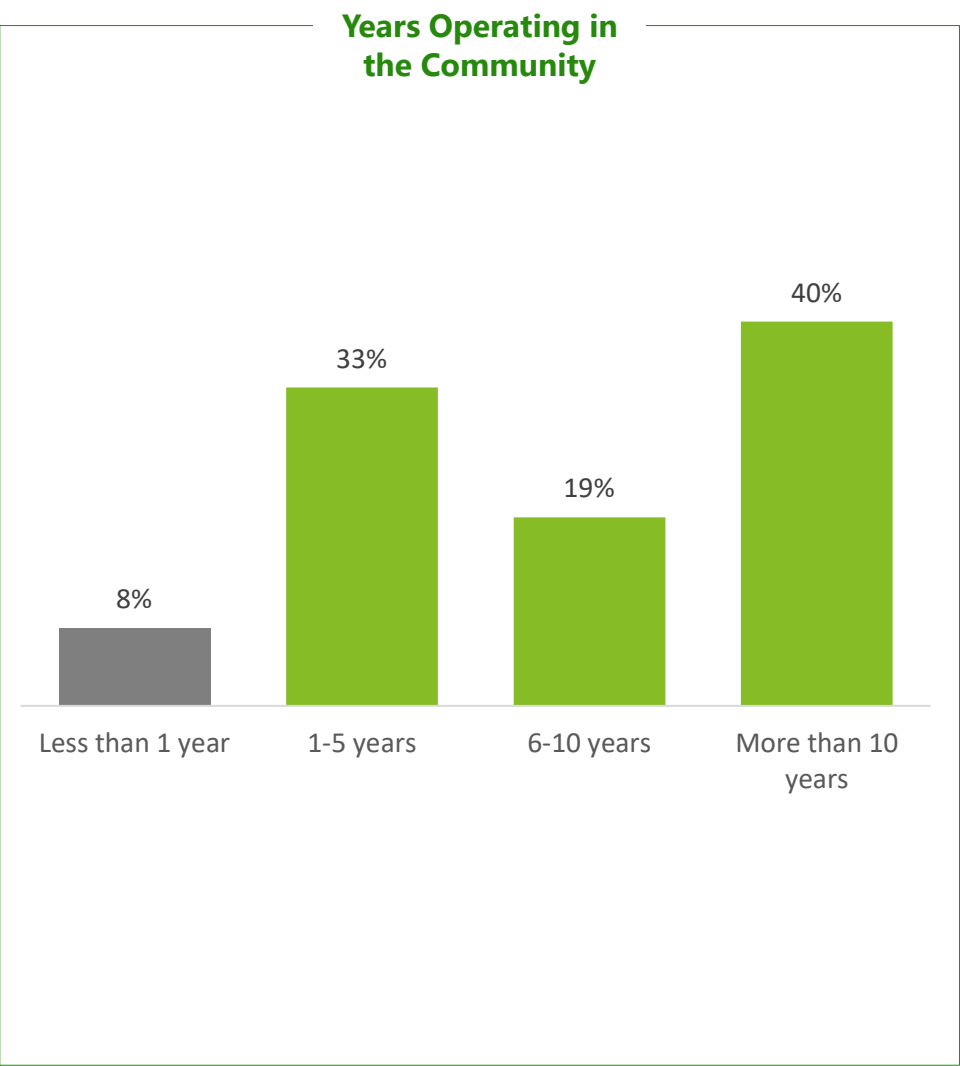
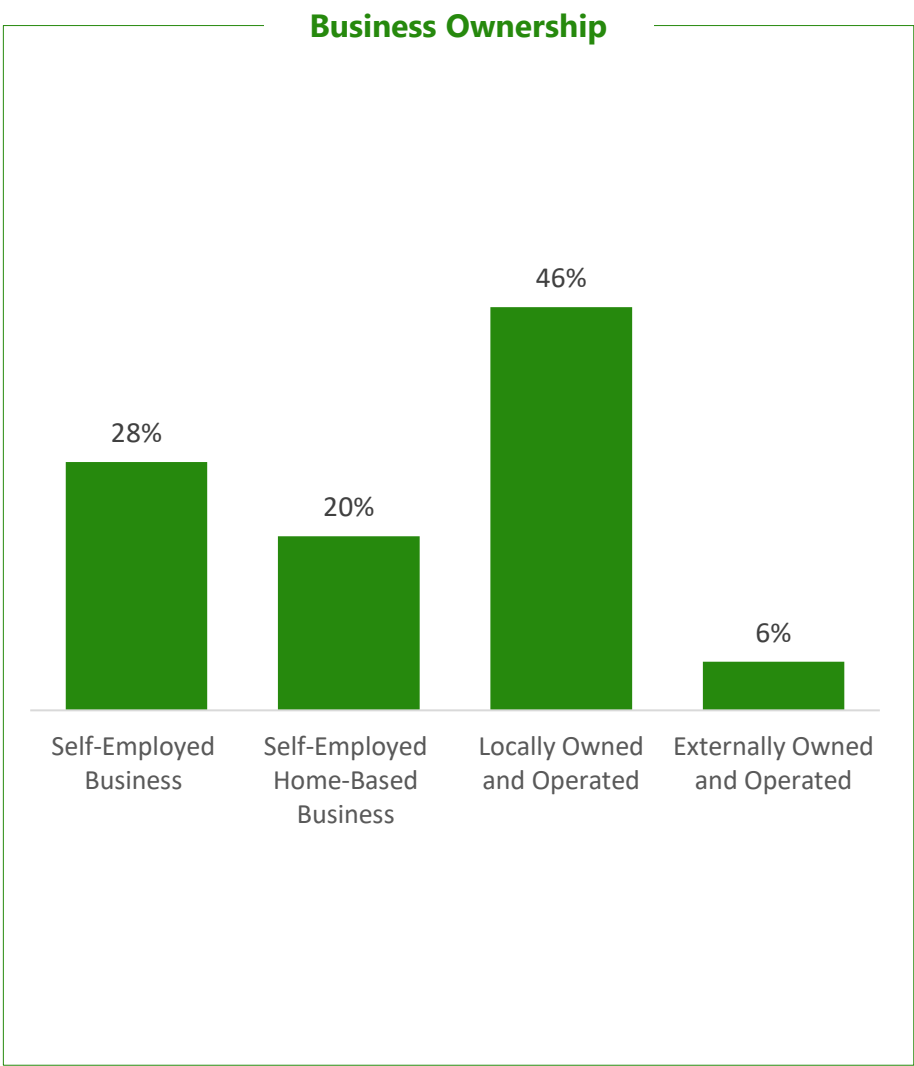
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- The 2025 St. Albert Business Retention and Expansion Survey was distributed using a mixed mode methodology of email invitations and telephone interviewing.
- The survey was open between **April 21<sup>st</sup> and May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025**, and resulted in **412 completed surveys**.
- The 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 the results have a high level of accuracy (with a margin of error of +/- 4.8% at a 95% confidence level) and statistically represents the business community in the region.
- This survey report summarizes the responses from an aggregated view, while also showcasing **benchmarking metrics** across previous years.



# Business Community Firmographics

# Firmographics



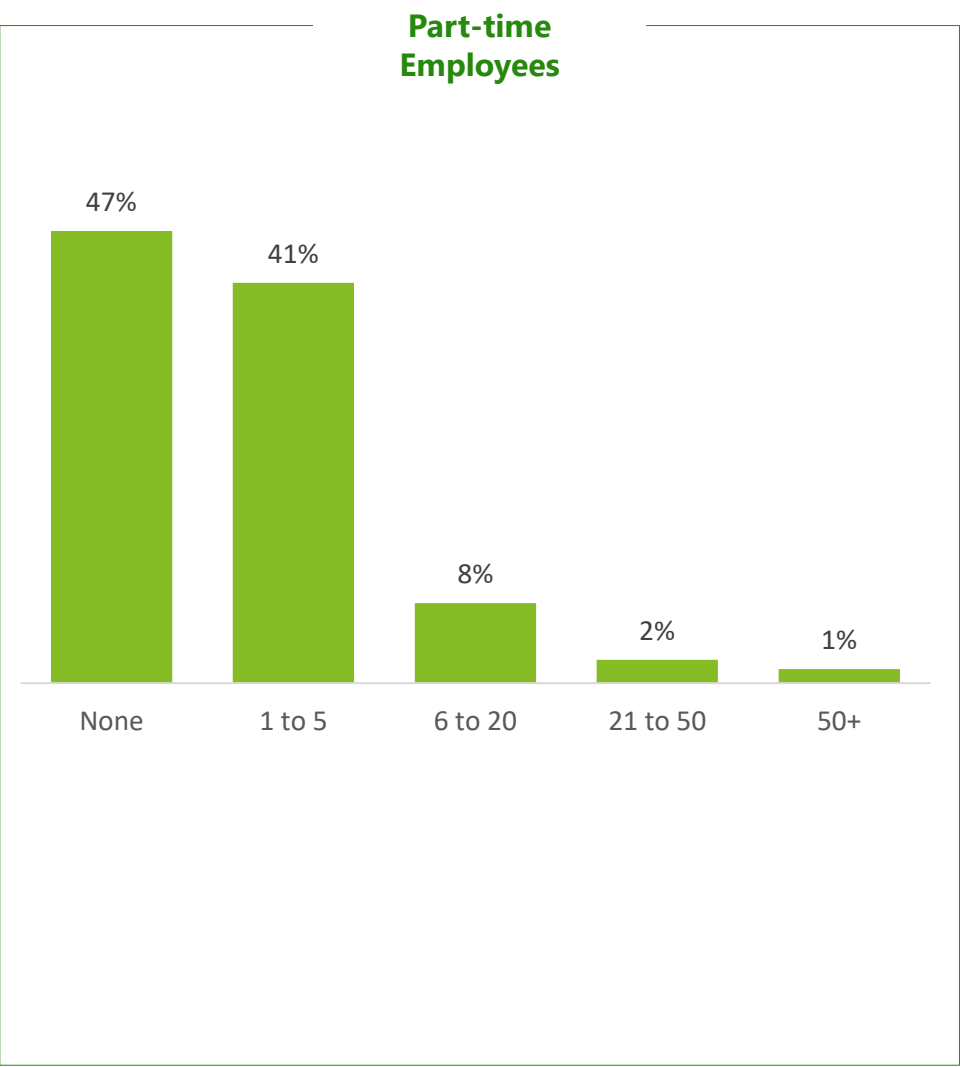
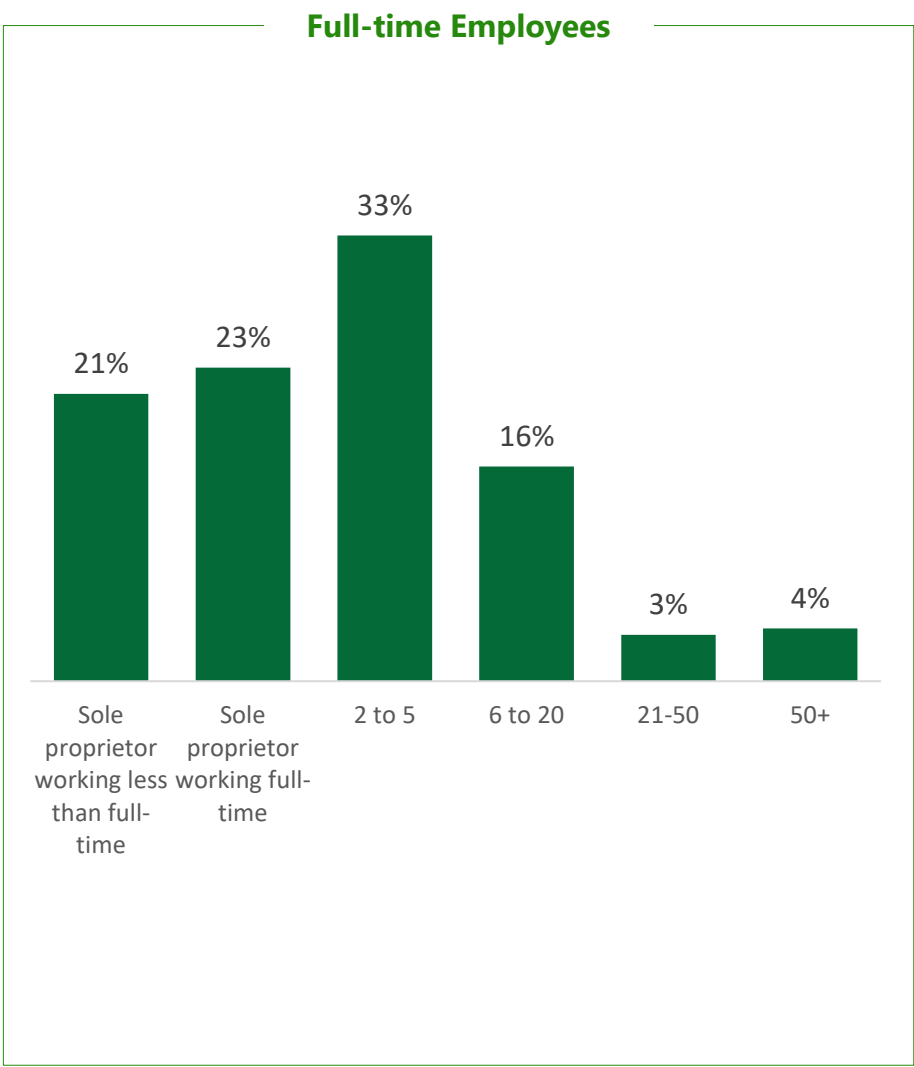
Q2: Which of the following best describes your business? (n=412)  
Q2: How many years, as the current owner/operator, have you been operating this business in St. Albert? (n=412)

## Key Insights

**46%** of all respondents **locally owned and operated** their business, followed by **28%** being **self-employed businesses**.

**40%** of all respondents had been operating their business in the City of Albert for **more than 10 years**, with only **8%** being **less than 1 year**.

# Firmographics



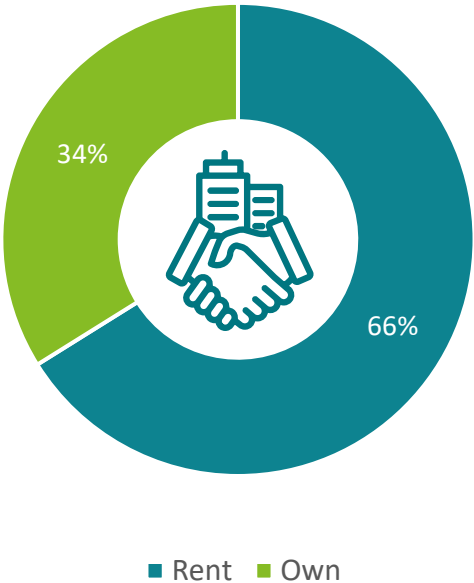
## Key Insights

**33%** of all respondents had about **2 to 5 full-time employees**, followed by **23%** being **sole proprietors working full-time**, and **21%** being **sole proprietors working less than full-time**.

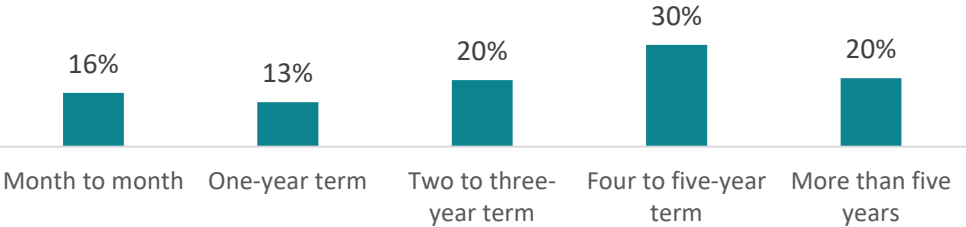
**47%** of all respondents had **no part-time employees**, with **41%** having **1 to 5**.

Q3: Including yourself, how many full-time employees currently work at this location? (n=412)  
Q4: How many part-time employees currently work at this location? (n=412)

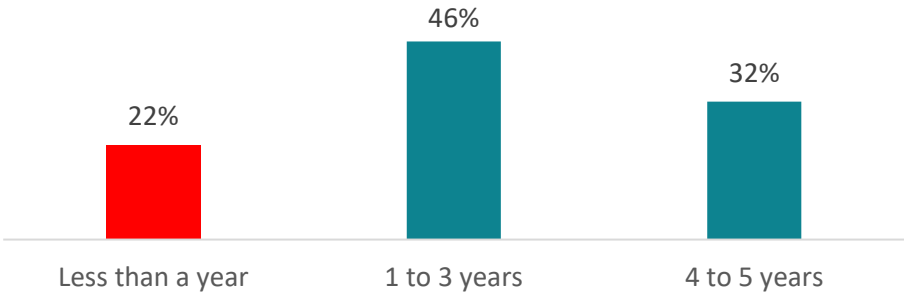
# Firmographics



Term of Lease (n= 181)



Lease expires (n=150)



## Key Insights

Out of the **66%** of respondents **who rent their business property**, **30%** have a **lease term of 4 to 5 years**.

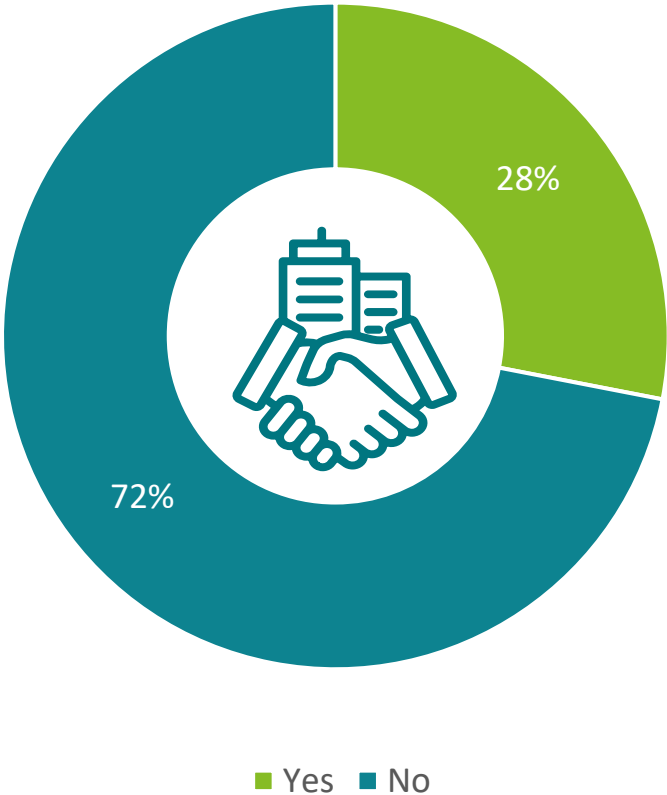
**22%** of respondents who **rented their business property** indicated their **lease to expire in less than a year**.

Q6: Do you currently rent or own your business property? (n=228)  
Q7: What is the term of the lease? (n=181)  
Q8: To the best of your knowledge when will your lease expire? (n=150)  
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# Firmographics

Desire for Expanding Home-based Business? (n=82)



## Key Insights

When asked the respondents who indicated they operate their business from their home if they have any desire to expand their business beyond their home, only **28%** agreed to do so, with **72%** did **not wish** to expand beyond their home operations.

Q9: Do you have any desire to expand your business beyond your home and conduct at least part of your business in a commercial/ retail location? (n=82)



# Business Performance

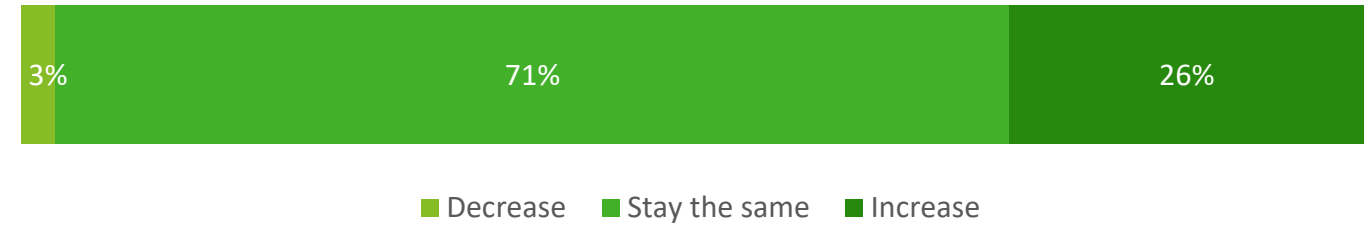
# Business Performance

Total number of employees over past 12 months



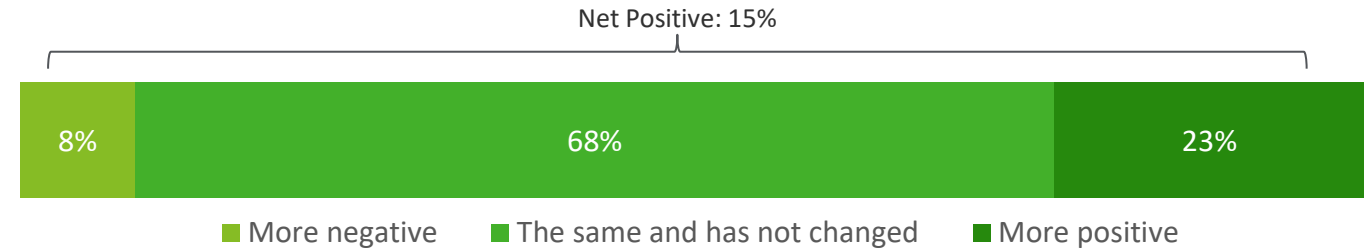
	2023	2024
% Increase	22%	22%

Expectation of total employees over next 12 months



	2021	2023	2024
% Increase	31%	32%	28%

Attitude of doing business over past 12 months



	2020	2021	2023	2024
Net Positive	-55%	+12%	+14	+10

## Key Insights

94% of all respondents indicated the **total number of their employees to remain the same or increase**, with a **1 percentage-point increase in from the previous 2 years.**

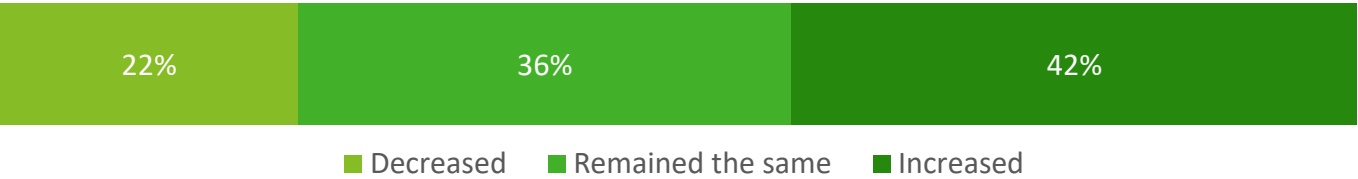
When asked what their **expectations are for the total number of employees over the next 12 months**, 26% expected an increase – which is a **2 percentage-point decrease from 2024.**

Overall attitudes of doing business in the City over past 12 months indicated a **net positive of 15%**, a **10 percentage-point increase from 2024.**

Q4: Over the past 12 months did the total number of employees in your company: (n=409)  
Q5: Thinking about the next 12 months do you expect the total number of employees at your business to: (n=386)  
Q12: Over the past 12 months would you say your attitude about doing business in St. Albert is (n=412)

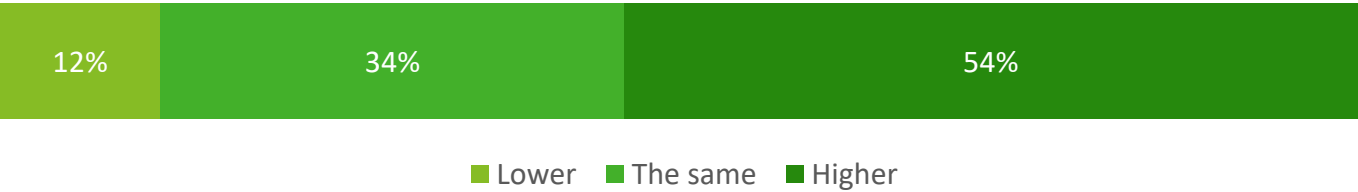
# Business Performance

## Revenues over the past 12 months



	2020	2021	2023	2024
% Increased	38%	45%	44%	44%

## Expectation of revenues over next 12 months



	2020	2021	2023	2024
% Higher	49%	52%	52%	51%

Q10: Compared to the past 12 months, have the revenues at your business this fiscal year (n=391)  
Q11: What are your expectations for the next 12 months in total revenues compared to the last year? (n=363)

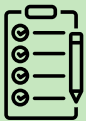
# Key Insights

78% of all respondents indicated the **total over the past 12 months to remain the same or increase**, with a **2 percentage-point decrease from the previous 2 years.**

When asked what their **expectations are for the total revenue over the next 12 months**, **54% expected an increase** – which is a **3 percentage-point increase from 2024.**

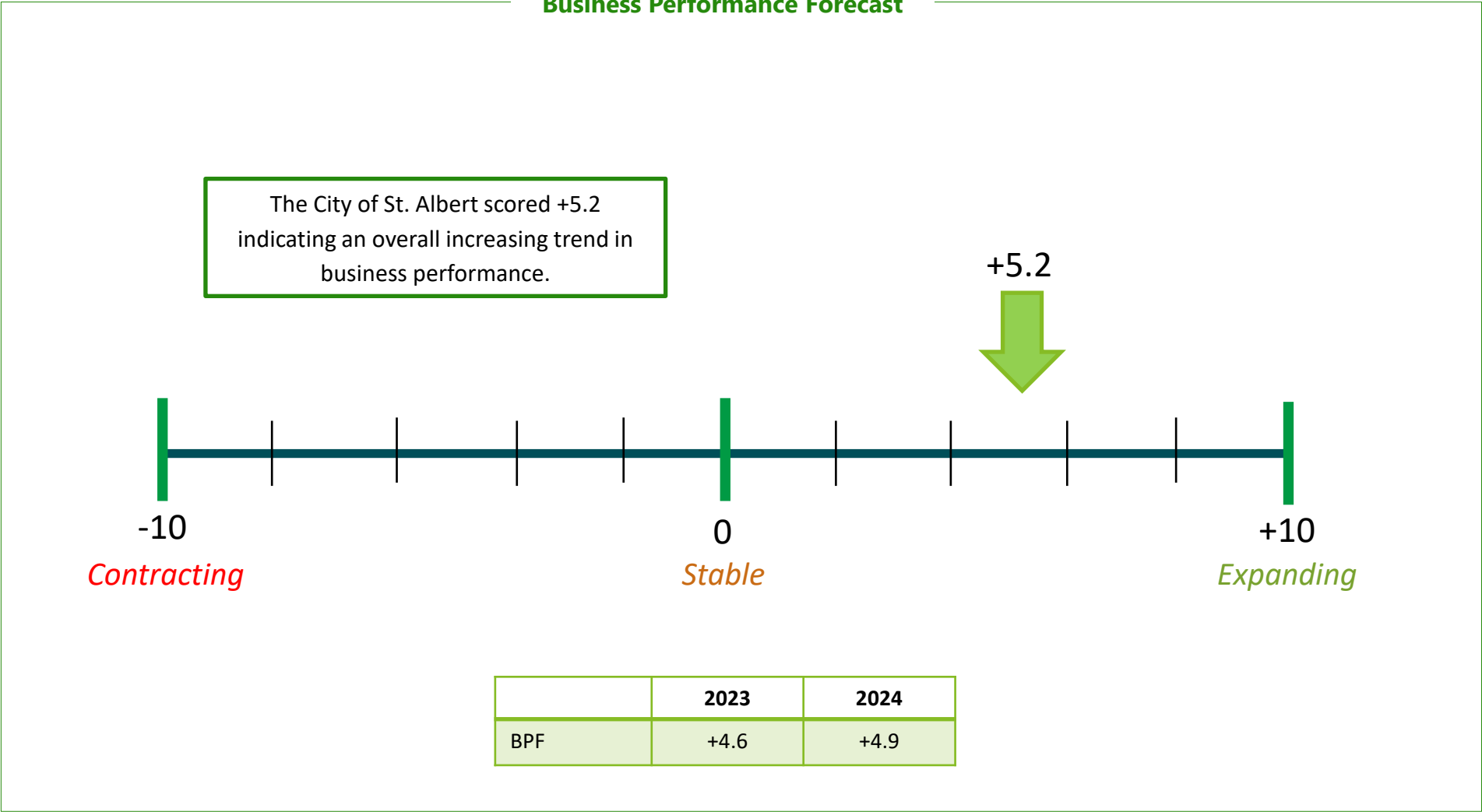
# Business Performance

## Key Insights



**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.

Business Performance Forecast





# Net Promoter Score

# Community Recommendation

“I would recommend the City of St. Albert to another business looking to expand or relocate.”

Top 2 Box: 87%



Strongly disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Strongly agree

	2021	2023	2024
Top 2 %	93%	84%	83%

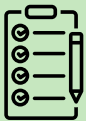
Q13: Please rate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would recommend this City to another business looking to expand or relocate. (n=365)

## Key Insights

When asked if they would recommend the City to another business looking to expand or relocate, a total of **87% of respondents indicated a strong level of agreement** – displaying a **4-percentage point increase from 2024.**

# Net Promoter Score

## Key Insights

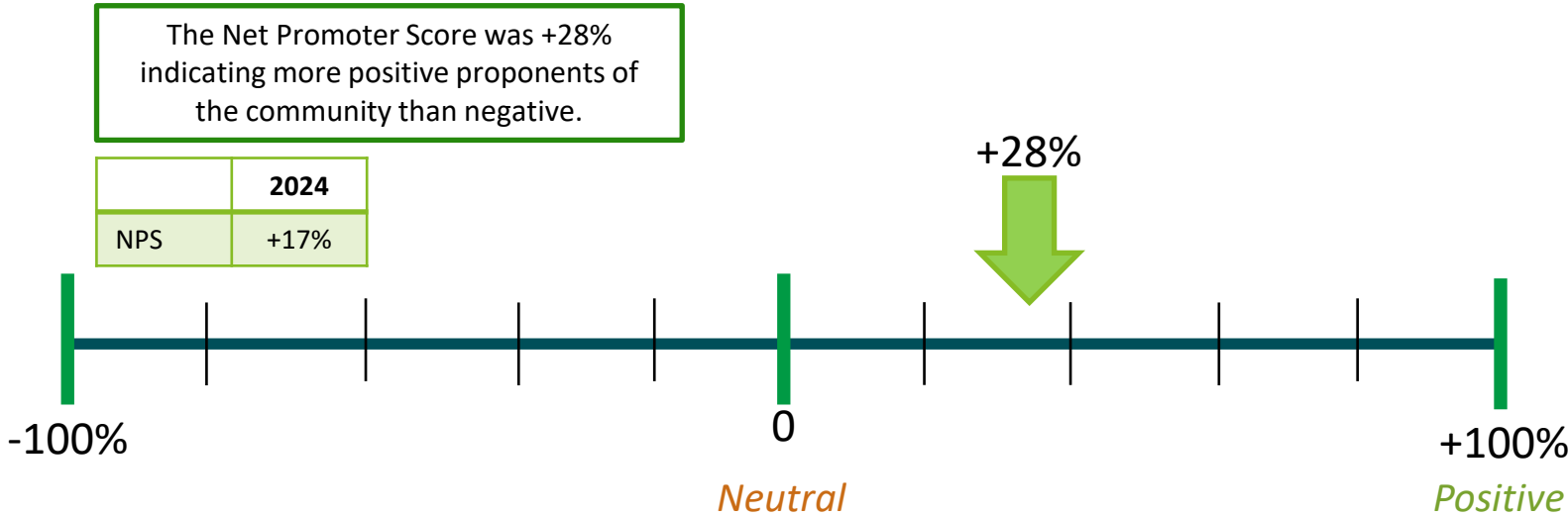


**Net Promoter Score:** Based on response to the following statement:

*"I would recommend the City of St. Albert to another business looking to expand or relocate."*

### Net Promoter Score

Group	Definition	Response to question	Percentage
Promoters	Active proponents of the community	Strongly Agree	41%
Passives	Neutral businesses	Somewhat Agree	46%
Detractors	Businesses with a negative opinion that may harm branding efforts	Somewhat Disagree or Strongly Disagree	13%





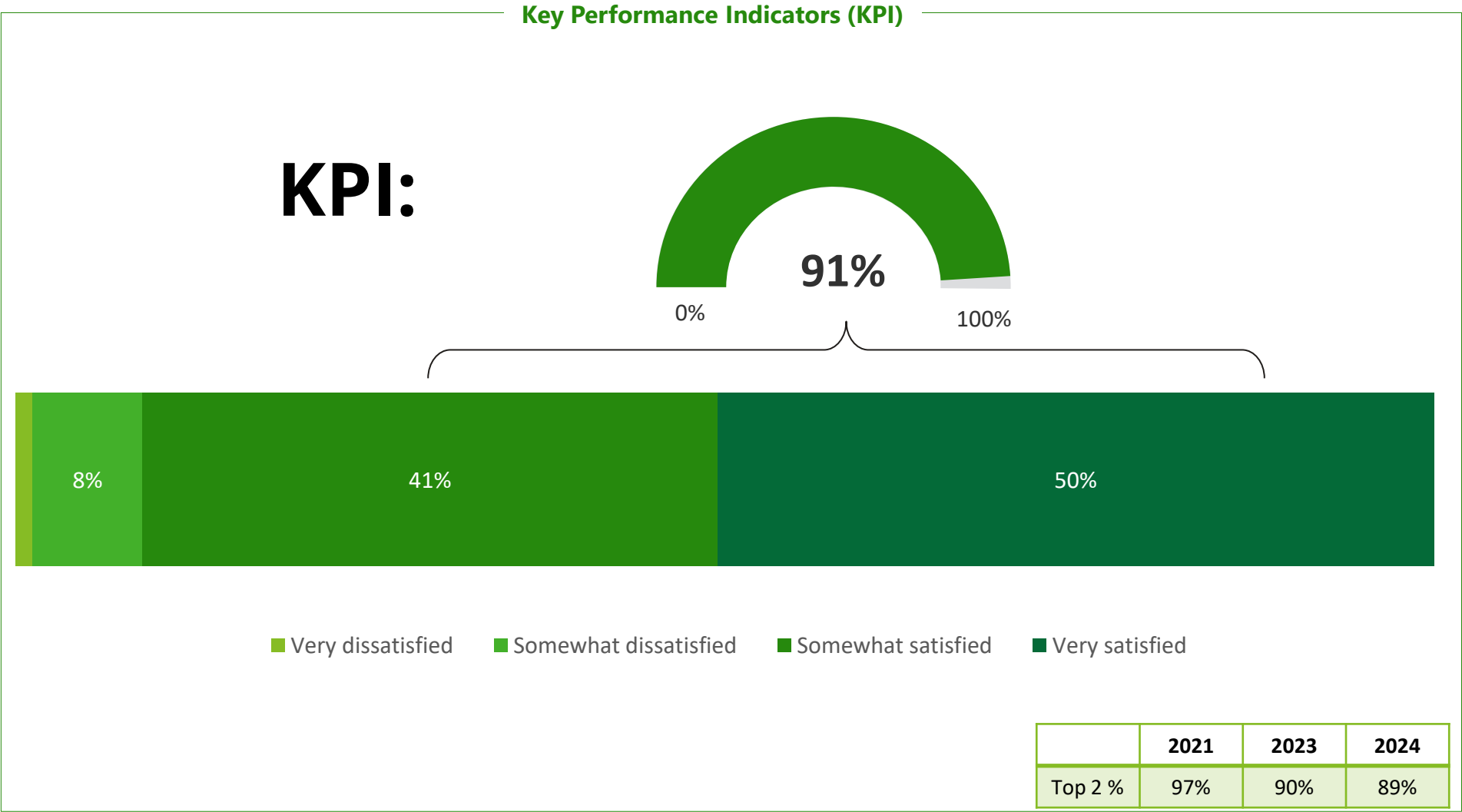


# Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

# Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

## Key Insights

When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the City as a place to own and operate a business, respondents noted an **overall 91% level of satisfaction – indicating a 2 percentage-point increase from 2024.**

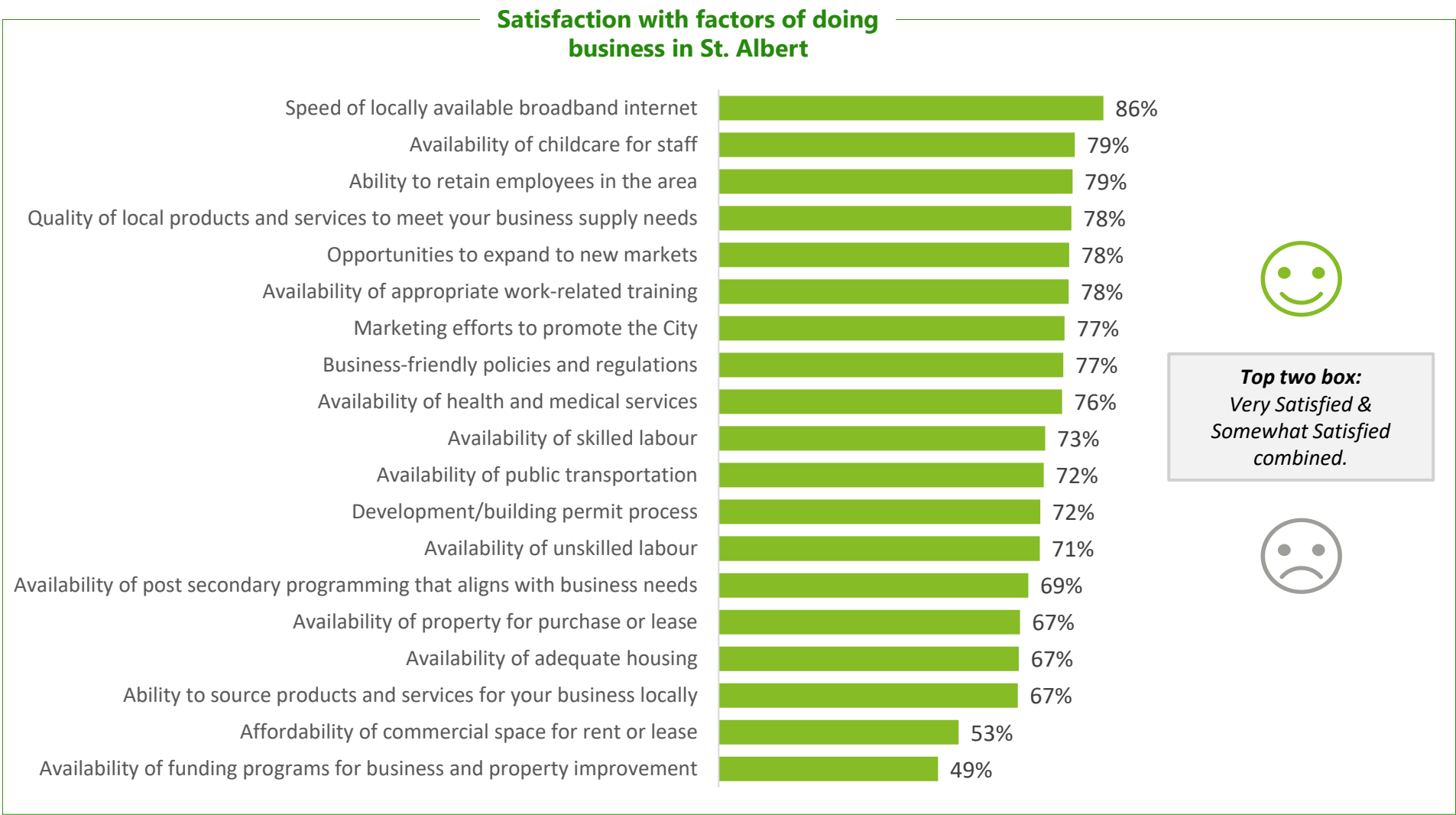


Q15: Overall, how satisfied are you with St. Albert as a place to own and operate a business? (n=412)



# Satisfaction Levels

# Satisfaction Levels



## Key Insights

When asked to rate their satisfaction across various factors with doing business in the City, respondents noted **the speed of locally available broadband internet (86%), availability of childcare for staff (79%), and the ability to retain employees in the area (79%)** to be the top factors with highest satisfaction.

Q16: How satisfied are you with each of the following factors of doing business in the city (n=412)

# Satisfaction Levels – YoY Tracking

## Satisfaction with factors of doing business in St. Albert

Service	2025 (Top Two Box)	Change from 2024	Change from 2023	Change from 2021	Change from 2020
Ability to retain employees in the area	79%	-1 PP	+5 PP	-8 PP	-
Speed of locally available broadband internet	86%	+8 PP	+1 PP	+3 PP	-
Business-friendly policies and regulations	77%	0 PP	0 PP	-	-
Availability of health and medical services	76%	+2 PP	-3 PP	-21 PP	+11 PP
Opportunities to expand to new markets	78%	+4 PP	+1 PP	-8 PP	-
Quality of local products and services to meet your business supply needs	78%	+5 PP	-2 PP	-9 PP	0 PP
Marketing efforts to promote the City	77%	+5 PP	-	-	-
Development/building permit process	72%	0 PP	-	-	-
Availability of unskilled labour	71%	0 PP	+3 PP	-5 PP	+9 PP
Availability of skilled labour	73%	+5 PP	+4 PP	-1 PP	+18 PP
Availability of appropriate work-related training	78%	+12 PP	-6 PP	-10 PP	-19 PP
Availability of public transportation	72%	+8 PP	+3 PP	-11 PP	0 PP
Availability of adequate housing	67%	+3 PP	-3 PP	-14 PP	-15 PP
Availability of property for purchase or lease	67%	+3 PP	-1 PP	-12 PP	-18 PP
Ability to source products and services for your business locally	67%	+3 PP	-4 PP	-7 PP	0 PP
Availability of post secondary programming that aligns with business needs	69%	+6 PP	+1 PP	-4 PP	-11 PP
Availability of childcare for staff	79%	+16 PP	-	-	-
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	53%	+5 PP	-4 PP	-11 PP	-7 PP
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	49%	+3 PP	+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.

## Key Insights

Year-over-year tracking indicated **the availability of childcare for staff** to display the **largest increase in satisfaction**, with a **16 percentage-point increase from 2024**, followed by the **availability of appropriate work-related training** which displayed a **12 percentage-point increase**.



# Derived Importance & Priority Matrix

# Derived Importance and Priority Matrix

Factor	Performance	Importance	Priority Rank
Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement	49%	6.6	1
Affordability of commercial space for rent or lease	53%	7.1	2
Availability of property for purchase or lease	67%	9.4	3
Availability of post secondary programming that aligns with business needs	69%	9.2	4
Availability of adequate housing	67%	7.1	5
Development/building permit process	72%	8.1	6
Availability of public transportation	72%	7.5	7
Ability to source products and services for your business locally	67%	6.0	8
Availability of unskilled labour	71%	7.0	9
Availability of skilled labour	73%	7.0	10
Business-friendly policies and regulations	77%	7.9	11
Marketing efforts to promote the City	77%	7.9	12
Availability of health and medical services	76%	7.5	13
Availability of childcare for staff	79%	7.9	14
Ability to retain employees in the area	79%	7.0	15
Opportunities to expand to new markets	78%	6.6	16
Quality of local products and services to meet your business supply needs	78%	6.4	17
Availability of appropriate work-related training	78%	6.0	18
Speed of locally available broadband internet	86%	6.6	19

## Derived Importance Methodology

**Priority Matrix:** Using respondents' satisfaction levels with various factors related to doing business in this City, a priority matrix was created using Deloitte's proprietary derived importance methodology. The Priority Matrix consists of three metrics:

**Level of Importance:** A statistical measure using a machine learning algorithm to determine the strength of the relationship between the statements and respondents' overall satisfaction with each factor related to doing business in the City. Attributes with a high importance tend to matter greatly to businesses.

**Performance:** The percentage of respondents who were very satisfied with a given attribute.

**Priority rank:** This was determined for each attribute based on high levels of importance and low levels of performance. Top priorities are factors where there is opportunity for improvement, and any improvements made would be likely to have a big impact on their overall satisfaction with the agency.

# Priority Matrix - Tracking

## 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

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

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

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

## Key Insights

Year-over –year tracking indicated **the availability of funding programs for business and property improvement increased in priority**, making the **affordability of commercial space for rent or lease** to be a **less of a priority from 2024.**





# Business Community Health Index

# Business Community Health Index

BCHI



*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

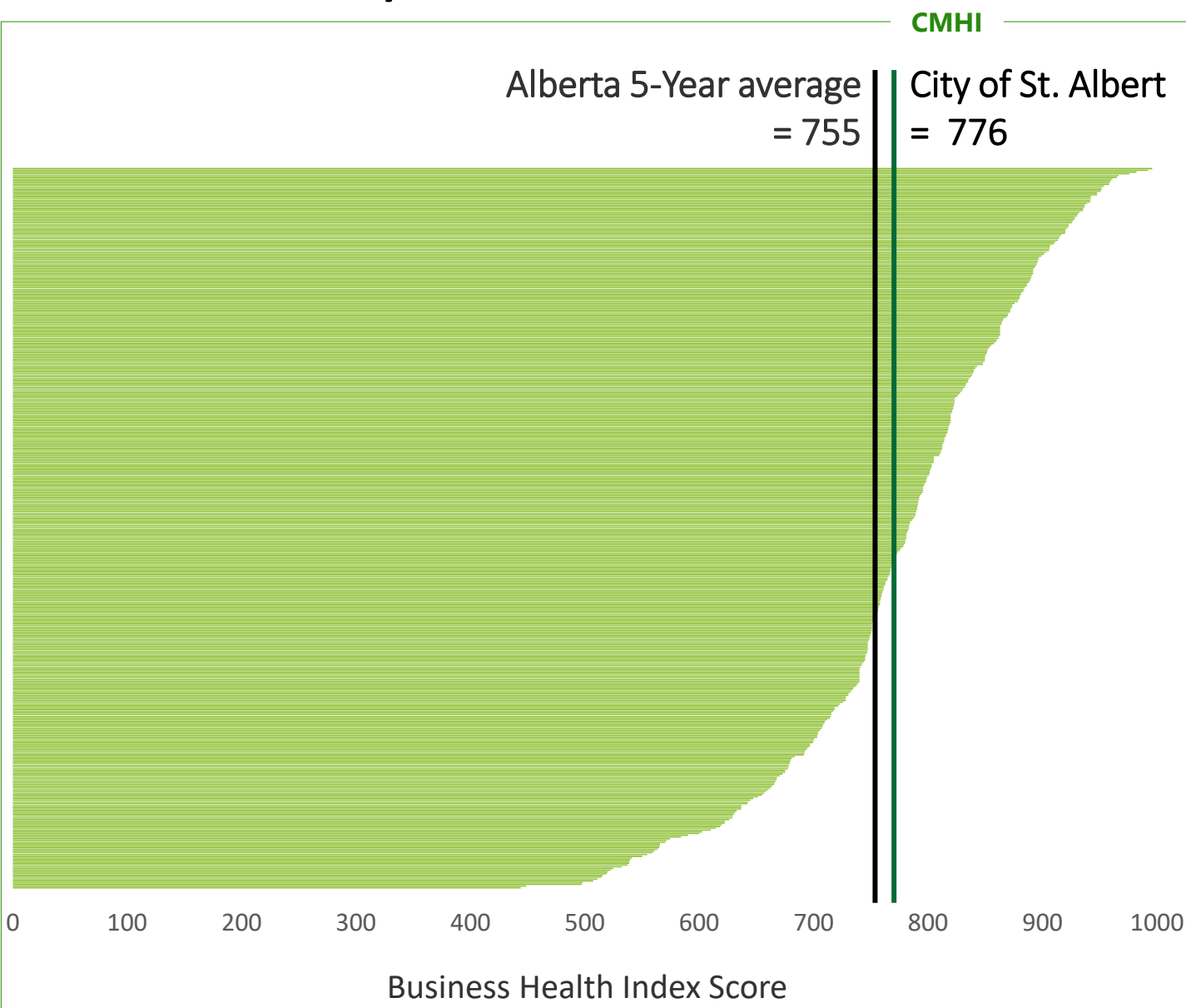
Change in Revenue

Community  
Recommendation

Infrastructure and  
Amenities

Revenue Outlook

# Business Community Health Index



St. Albert scored very well on the Business Community 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 scored slightly lower than the provincial average on overall business outlooks (representing the balance between businesses who were expanding vs. downsizing, selling, closing or relocating).

	2020	2021	2023	2024
BCHI	740	781	772	766



## Future Plans

# Future Plans – Next 24 months

## Future Plans in the next 24 Months



### Businesses with plans to expand:

- **80** businesses total
- **31** within the next 6 months
- **49** in more than 6 months

### Plans to downsize:

- **17** businesses total
- **6** within the next 6 months
- **11** in more than 6 months

### Plans to relocate:

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

### Plans to close:

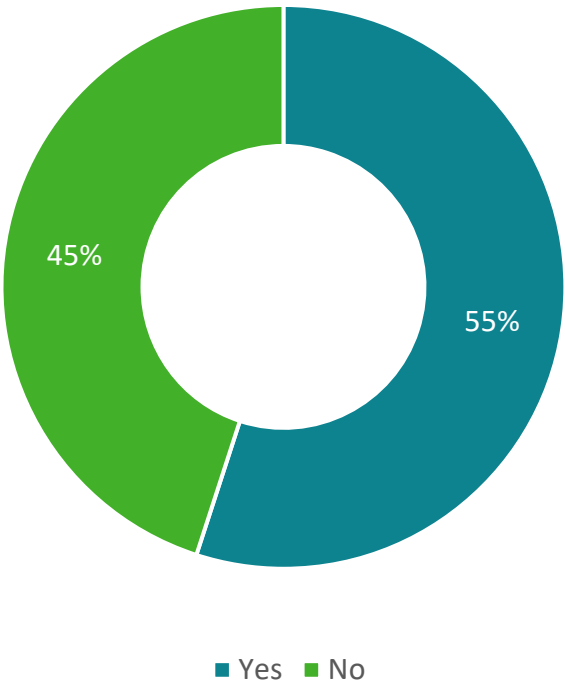
- **8** businesses total
- **2** within the next 6 months
- **6** in more than 6 months

### Plans to sell:

- **20** businesses total
- **9** within the next 6 months
- **11** in more than 6 months

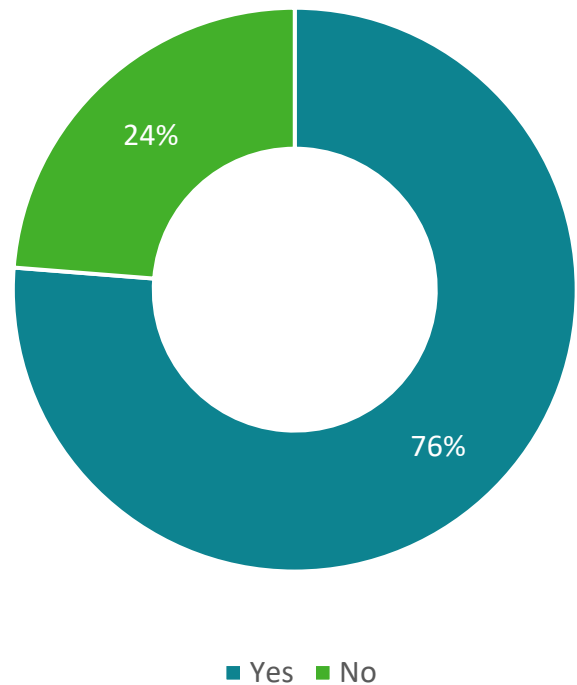
# Future Plans: Expansions

Current Site



Is your current site adequate for the proposed expansion? (n=98)  
Will your planned expansion be in St. Albert? (n=98)

Planned Expansion in St. Albert?



## Key Insights

Individuals who expressed the desire for expansion over the next 24 months were further asked if their current site was adequate for the proposed expansion, resulting in **55% of respondents indicating yes.**

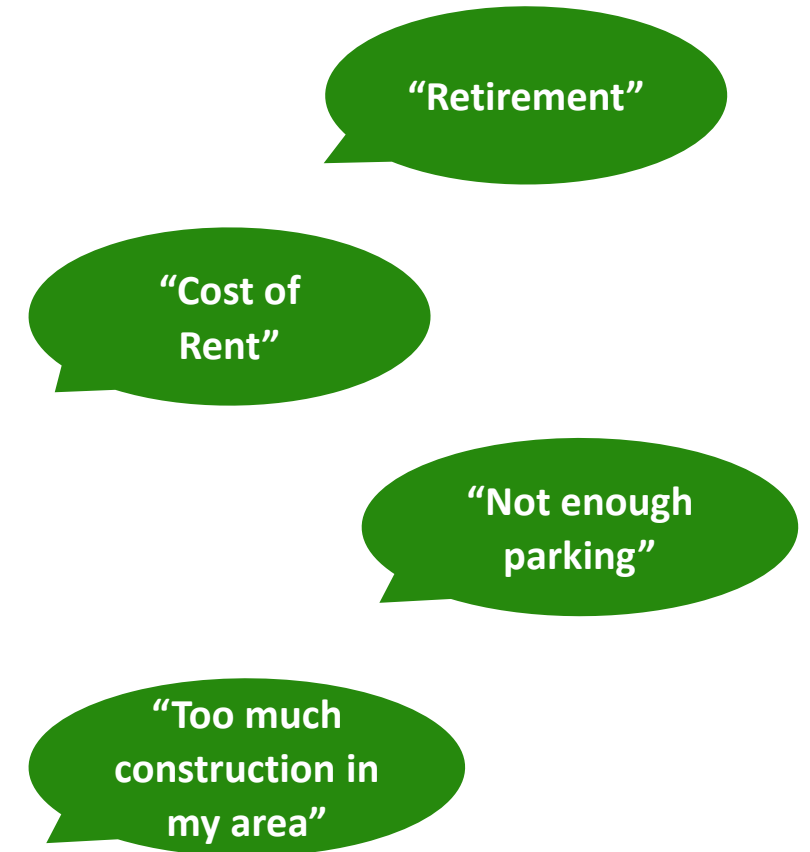
# Future Plans: Downsizing, Relocation & Closing

## Top reasons for Downsizing, Relocating and Closing

Reasons for Downsizing	Reasons for Relocations	Reasons for Closing
"Getting ready for retirement."	"Require more space."	"Difficulty promoting business in the City."
"Going back to school."	"Closer to target customers."	"Not making enough profit."
"Costs of doing business in St. Albert."	"Not enough parking in current location."	"Retirement"
"Not enough customers can afford by services."	"Too many construction areas near my location."	"Lack of viable support resources"

What is the reason for downsizing? (n=17)

## Key Themes



# Triage Flag Results

## Top reasons for Downsizing, Relocating and Closing

Throughout the survey process Triage cases that represented green or red flags were tracked. Out of the 412 businesses surveyed, 174 businesses presented an opportunity for intervention.



= Businesses considering expanding in the next 2 years.

= 80 businesses.



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

= 94 businesses







# Communications

# Communications

## Key Insights

57% of respondents displayed awareness of City supports for any business concerns they might have.

“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”

Top 2 Box: 57%



Strongly disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Strongly agree

	2023	2024
Top 2 %	55%	52%

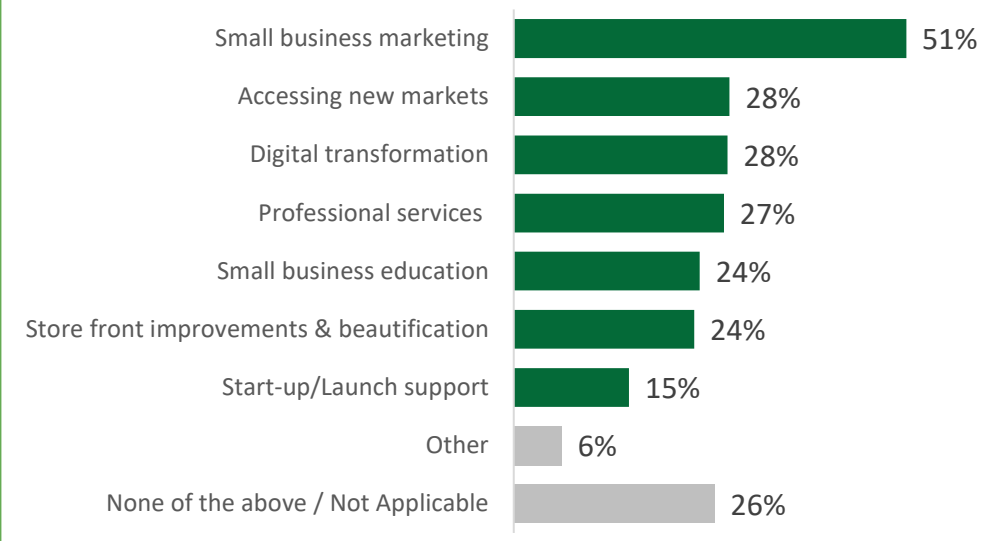
Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statement: “I know who I need to talk to at the City if I have a problem with my business or a business concern I’d like to share”. (n=338)



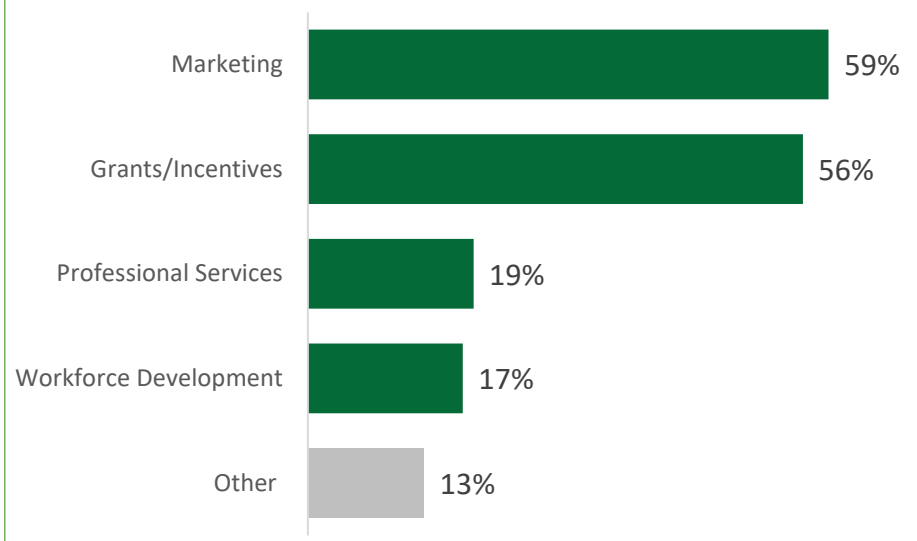
# Business Development Incentives

# Business Development Incentives

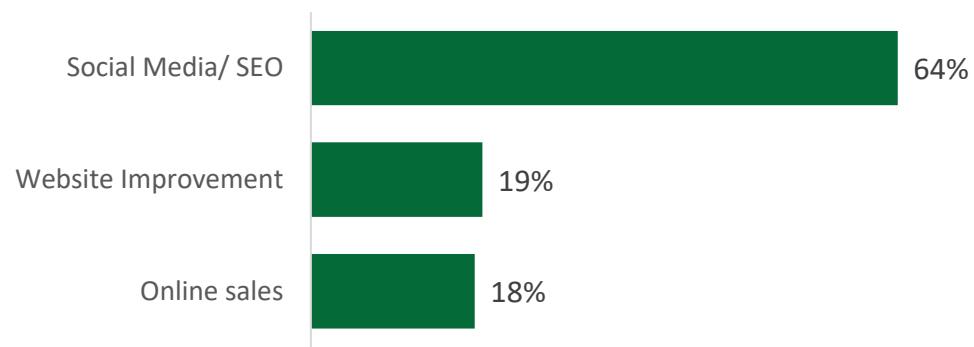
business development incentives/grants most interesting to access in next 12 months



Programs/Business services most valuable for businesses



Most Beneficial Supports



## Key Insights

When asked which business development incentives/grants would be most interesting to access for their business, **51%** of respondents indicated **small business marketing**.

**Marketing and grants/incentives** were deemed the most valuable potential programs for business services

The most beneficial support services indicated by respondents include **Social Media /SEO**, and also **website improvement**.

*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=412)*

*Which of the following potential programs or business services would be most valuable for your business? (n=412)*

*Which of the following supports would be most beneficial to your business? (n=242)*



# Conclusions

# 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 **91% satisfaction rate** (similar to the 2022 score of 90%). Businesses were especially satisfied with:

- The speed of locally available broadband internet (86%)
- The availability of childcare for staff (79%)
- The ability to retain employees in the area (79%).

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:

- Availability of funding programs for business and property improvement
- The affordability of commercial space for rent or lease
- The availability of property for purchase or lease.



**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 owners who are unsure who to reach out to at the City with their concerns

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