

2023

# Clarington

## BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION REPORT



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# Introduction

The Clarington multi-sector Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) Project is an action-oriented community-based project using the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) BR+E tools to identify the business climate in the Municipality of Clarington. The project was executed under the leadership of the Clarington Board of Trade and several volunteers, with support provided by OMAFRA and the Municipality of Clarington. BR+E projects are designed to open a two-way channel of communication with local businesses. Through the business visitation process, BR+E teams connect with business owners in the community to identify issues, concerns, and opportunities. The goal of the BR+E program is to enhance the business environment by identifying and reducing challenges to economic growth and job retention.

For years, the BR+E program has been implemented in numerous communities across Ontario. The program collects information from local businesses using sector-specific surveys to collect data reflecting business climate and level of satisfaction of doing business in the Municipality. The BR+E program relies on information gathered by trained volunteers who conduct confidential interviews with local business owners, managers, and organization leaders. By gathering information directly from businesses and stakeholders, key challenges and opportunities for growth are identified and used to build recommendations and goals that will inform an action plan to support the needs of the business community. The action plan will assist the Municipality of Clarington and Clarington Board of Trade to work together to support and strengthen the economic well-being in Clarington.

## Why is a BR+E Project Important?

Understanding and responding to the needs of established local businesses is one of the most cost-effective ways to promote local economic growth. According to OMAFRA, existing businesses create more jobs, accounting for 70-90% of new jobs in a community. By understanding the data collected from a BR+E program, this can help keep current businesses healthy and happy, encouraging them to stay, grow and become more competitive in the community. BR+E projects are also an early warning system that allows communities to notice red flags within existing local business climates and be proactive. BR+E projects help communities focus their priorities, develop concrete action plans and implement solutions.

# Executive Summary

The Clarington Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) survey was conducted between May and August 2023. The results presented in this report summarize key findings from the survey and offers recommendations and actions to help support the needs of the business community, creating a stronger economy in Clarington.

The BR+E project was well received in the local business community with 52 businesses participating in the survey out of the 140 businesses to whom the invitation was extended, representing a 37% participation rate. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs states that 20% is a healthy participation rate.

The retail and service sector represented the majority of respondents with under 10 businesses participating from each the agriculture, tourism and manufacturing sectors. Businesses surveyed have both notable longevity in the community and are involved in the day-to-day operations. Most businesses in this survey also employ less than 20 people at their location.

Regardless of the disruption caused by the pandemic, businesses in the last three years have remained positive mainly due to population growth and community supporting buying local. Some businesses have plans to expand and the majority of manufacturers continue to invest in their growth. While businesses continue to face challenges surrounding employee recruitment and retention, during the last three years, many businesses experienced employee growth. This report identifies the opportunity for businesses to further explore attracting talent through co-op and internships, as well as external training to support skills development.

The Clarington BR+E project identified four key priority areas, each with associated goals and related actions surrounding: supporting business growth, encouraging implementation of technology and innovation, workforce development and keeping businesses informed and connected to effective local infrastructure.

We thank all businesses owners who participated in sector survey focus groups, and the BR+E project interviews. We also extend a thank you to the BR+E Leadership Team who coordinated sector focus groups, survey revisions, community outreach, conducted confidential interviews, entered and analyzed the data, and creation of this final report and recommendations.

## Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Business Retention and Expansion Project:

Bonnie Wrightman  
Sheila Hall  
Rhonda Armour  
Erika Mask  
Alyssa Crittenden  
Reon Kent

Paul Halliday  
Ron Hooper  
Kevin Ferguson  
Peter Hobb  
Brittany Ewasyn  
Carloyn Puterbough

Anuraj Gill  
Sarah Parish  
Ron Collis  
Adam Jeronimo

# Clarington Economy



With a population of over **108,000** and a community of over **8,000** businesses and growing, Clarington offers what businesses and employees desire: unique quality of life, affordability, proximity to market and amenities, business support and a progressive, engaged community. Clarington's economic strength stems from the foundation of a diverse business community.

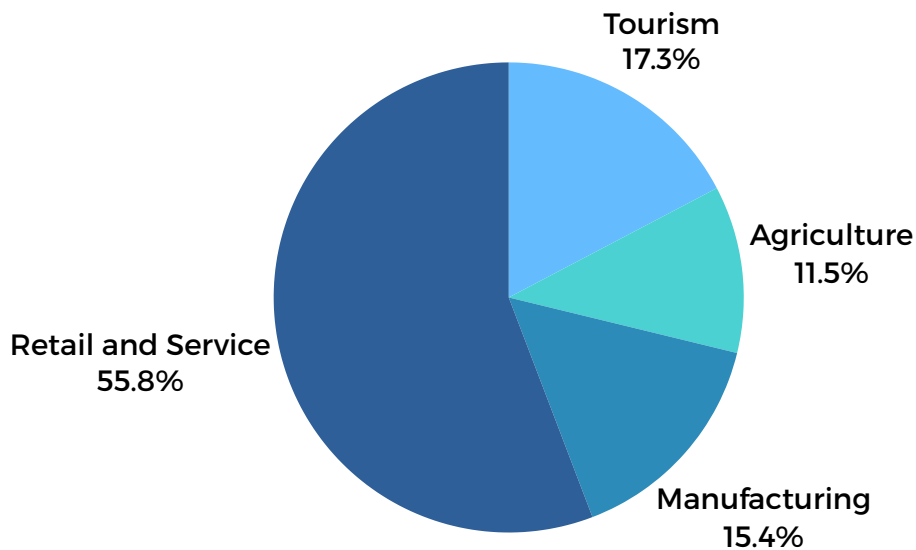
The municipality has more than: **100 manufacturers**, over **200 working farms**, over **20 tourist attractions** and several **hundred** businesses in the retail and service industries. While the main economic drivers are the energy and agriculture sector, **97%** of businesses have under 20 employees and **72%** are sole proprietors, reflective of an entrepreneurial community (Data sourced from Stats Canada & OMAFRA).

# Summary of Results: Clarington Overall

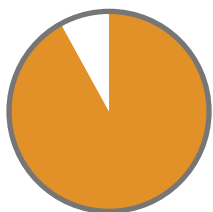
## A SNAPSHOT OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

A total of 52 businesses took part in 2023 BR & E survey. They represent a broad range of businesses reflecting multiple sectors from communities across Clarington. The majority of participants are from retail/service sectors operating in Bowmanville.

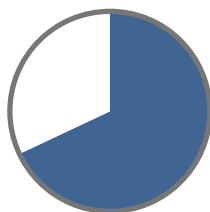
### Participating Business Sectors:



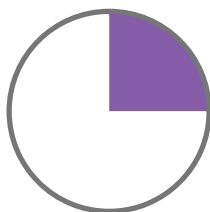
### Local with Hands-On Ownership:



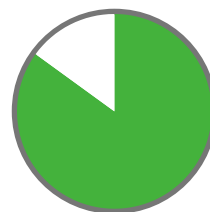
92% locally owned



68% operate a single location



25% operate multiple locations



85% owners involved in day-to-day operations

### Business Locations of Participants:

**44%**  
Bowmanville

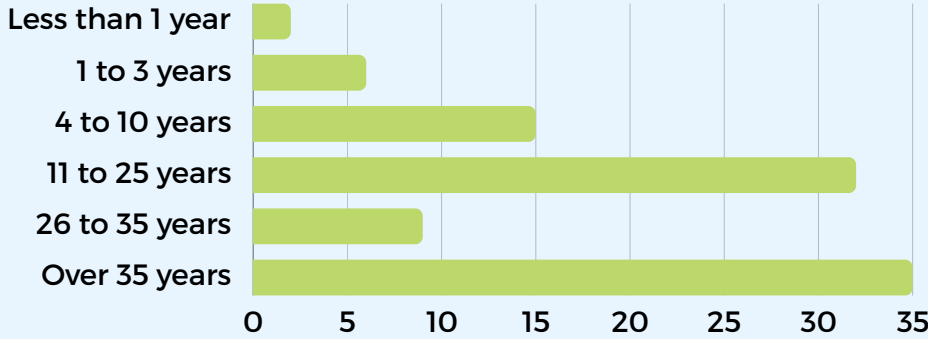
**17%**  
Courtice

**11%**  
Newcastle

**10%**  
Orono

**17%**  
Rural

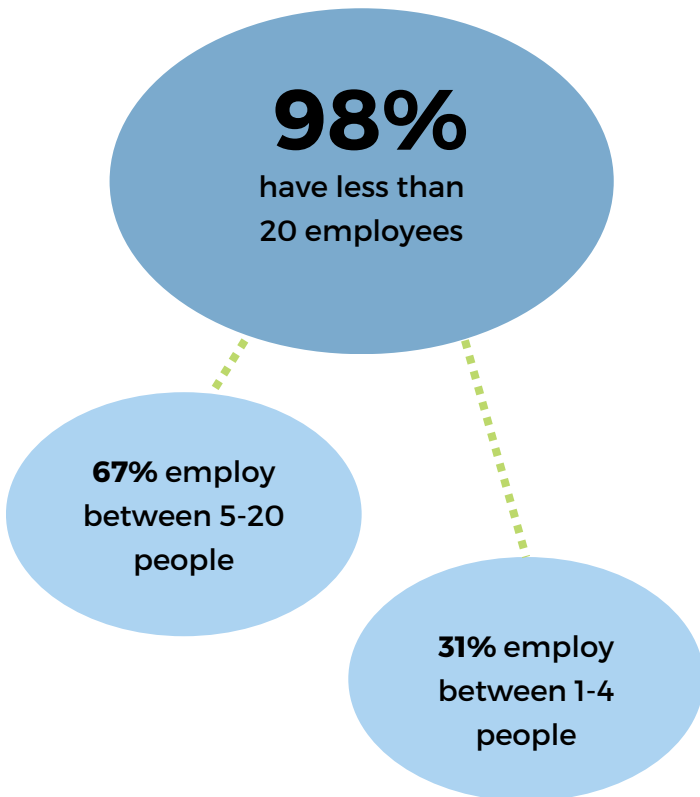
**Long-Term Established Businesses:**



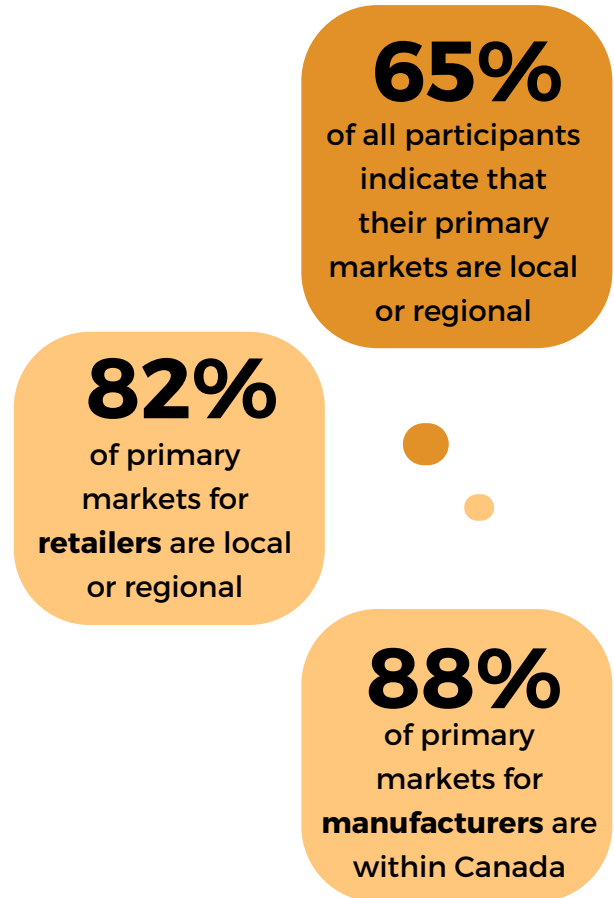
**77%**  
have been in Clarington  
for 10+ years

**61%**  
of the current owners  
have been in operation for  
10+ years

**A Community Powered by  
Small Business**



**Primary Markets**



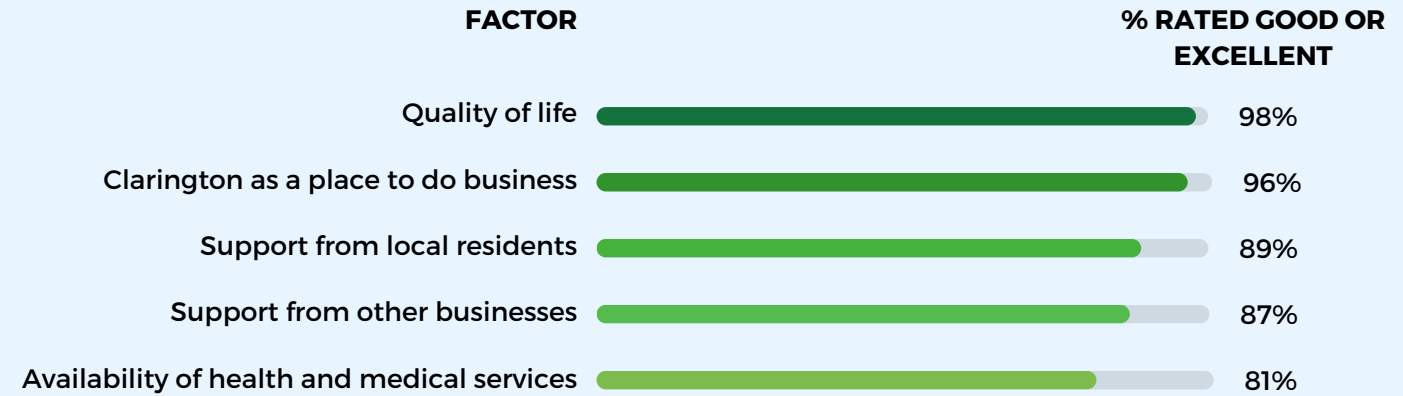
## BUSINESS CLIMATE

Of the 52 businesses surveyed in the BR+E project, many had positive messages to share about their attitude toward business in Clarington. They identified quality of life, support from residents and businesses, healthcare and medical services as some of the top advantages to operating a business in Clarington. 27% of participants shared their view of doing business in Clarington has grown more positive in the past three years. This positive view is mostly due to population growth and the community supporting buying local. 61% of businesses indicated their view of doing business over three years has not changed.

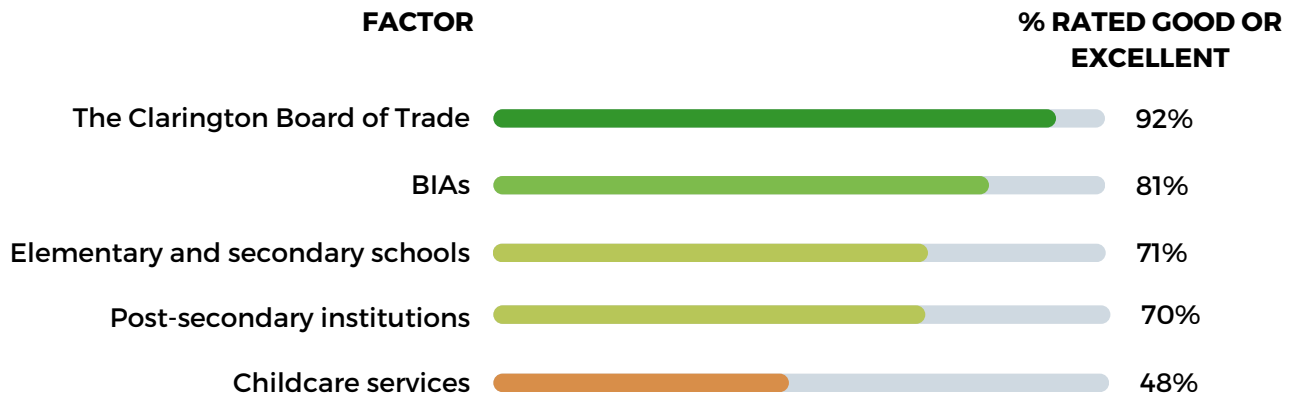
The BR+E Project also identified a number of key challenging areas to focus economic development efforts: the availability of qualified workers, recruitment and employee retention, adequate housing, availability of serviced land and public transportation. A number of businesses experience barriers due to the limited availability of amenities such as high speed internet, cell service, and availability of space for lease and availability of child care services. The key priorities and action plans outlined in this report respond directly to these areas for improvement and provide a roadmap for keeping Clarington's local economy healthy and prosperous.



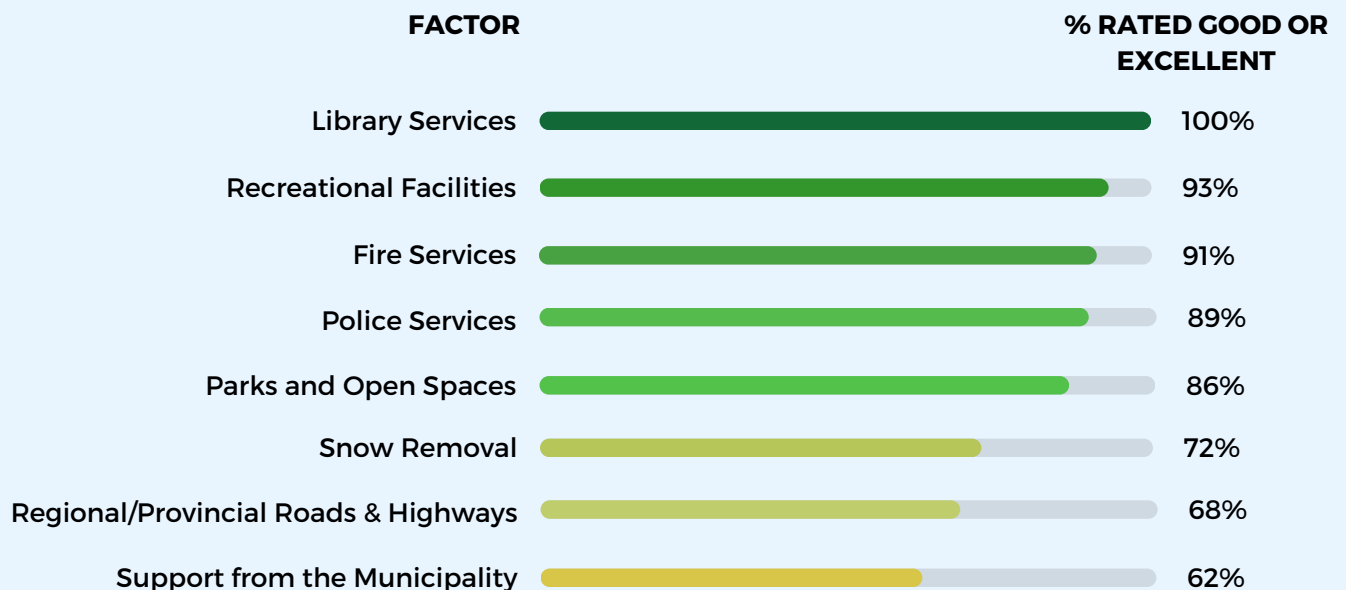
**Overall:**



**Community Services:**



**Government Services:**



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce is one of the most notable areas of discussion. While general trends in reported employment do not represent any significant red flags, it should be noted that many local businesses state that they have a challenging time attracting and then retaining qualified and committed team members.

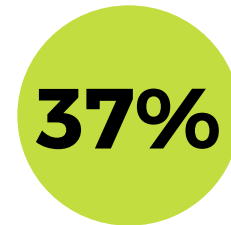
### Highlighted Challenges:



indicated that stability of the workforce was poor or fair.



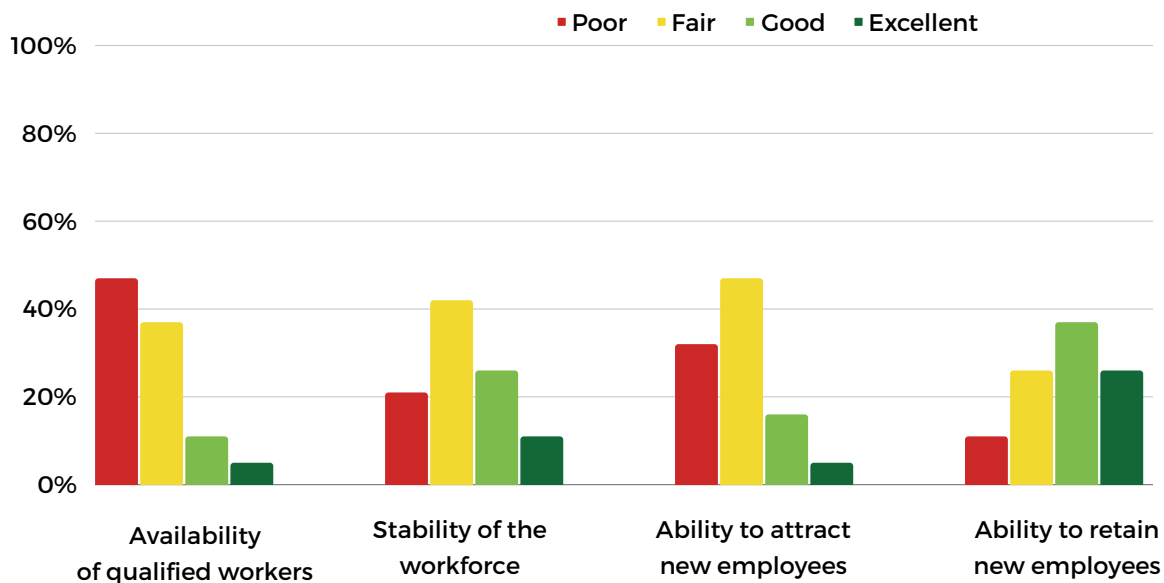
indicated that ability to attract new employees was poor or fair.



indicated that the ability to retain new employees was poor or fair.

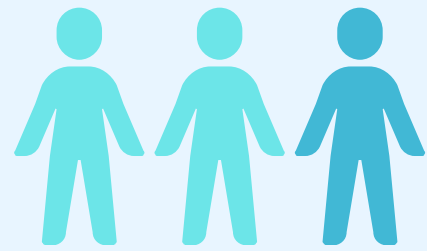
Further exploration of these concerning issues is warranted to establish what are underlying issues are, what has been done to resolve this, and what might have a positive impact.

### Key Employment Factors:

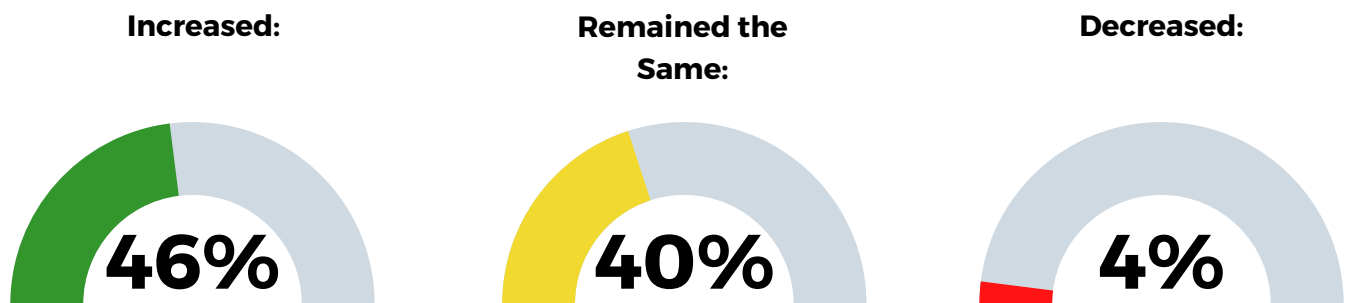


## Employee Growth Status and Hiring

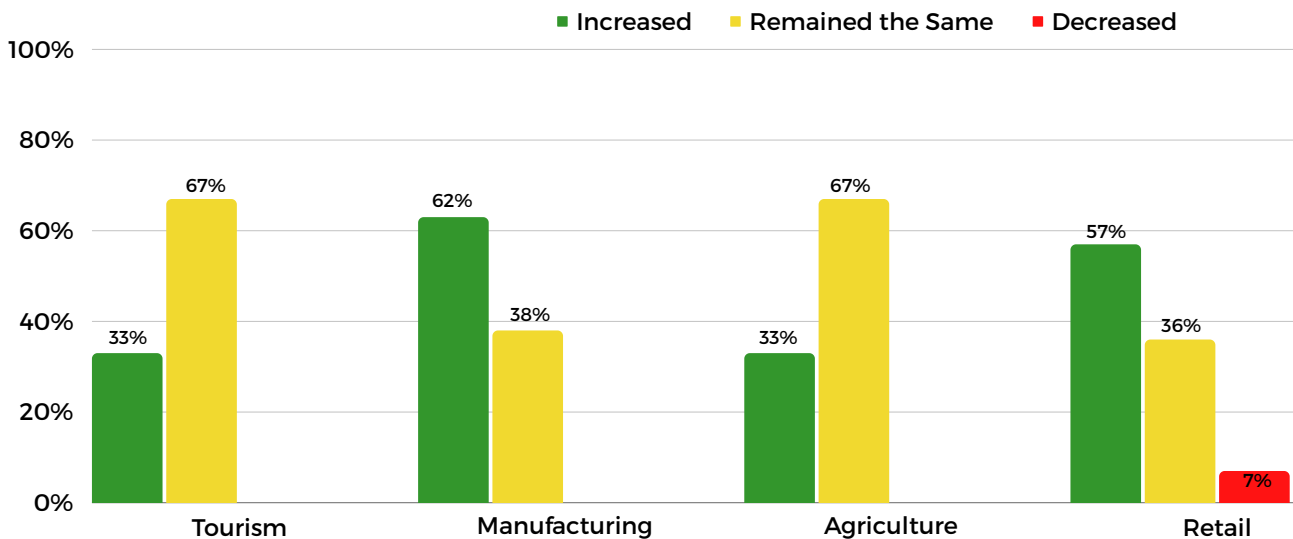
Most businesses state their employment numbers increased or stayed the same over the past three years. Only two businesses reported a decrease in the past three years. Manufacturing and Retail sector respondents reported a higher proportion of employment increases. The common factors that attributed to this employment increase was growth, increased demand/more customers, rebound from COVID, and business development. Tourism and Agriculture respondents reported a higher proportion of stable employment.



### Overall Change in Number of Employees:

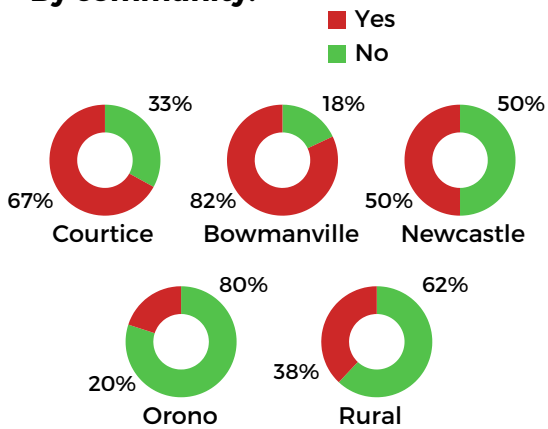


### Change in Number of Employees by Sector:

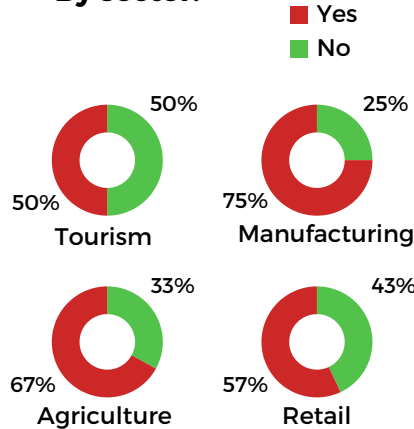


## Question: Does your business currently have difficulties hiring?

### By community:



### By sector:



## Top 3 Methods of Recruiting:

44%

Personal networks / referrals

33%

Social media

23%

Employment centres

60%

have hiring difficulties

82%

of Bowmanville businesses have hiring challenges

75%

of manufacturers face hiring challenges

### Top 2 Reasons for Hiring Challenges:

1. Too few applicants
2. Lack of appropriate skills, training, or experience

## Employee Retention

Pertaining to retention of workers, Tourism and Manufacturing sectors have the highest proportion of respondents indicating that they have retention difficulties. No specific common reason for retention issues were raised. Some suggested it had to do with wages offered, the nature of the work (i.e., difficult physical demands), attitude of workers, and the desire of young people to move away from the area.



## Closing the Workforce Gap: Co-op, Internships, and Apprenticeship Programs

38% of businesses indicated that they currently participate in a co-op, internship, or apprenticeship program. The highest percentage of participating respondents come from the Manufacturing sector (50%) while the lowest was from the Tourism sector (11%).

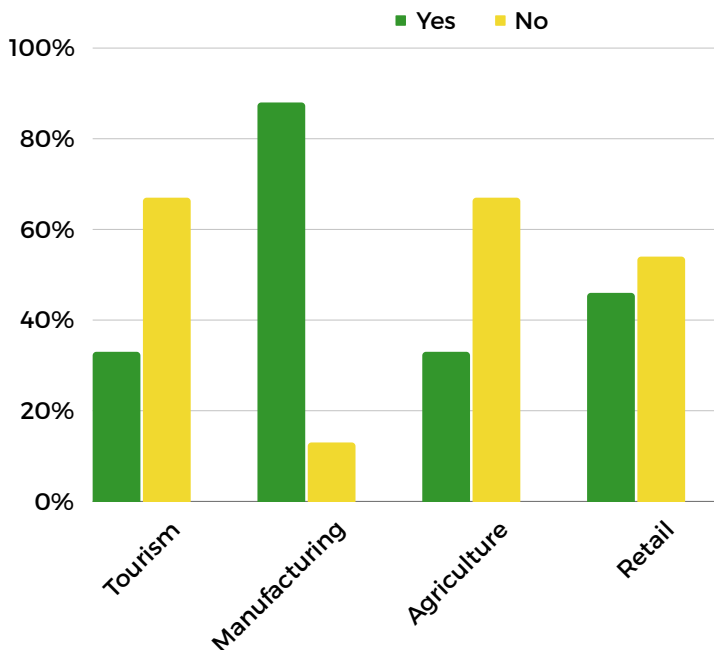
Respondents are participating in a wide range of programs including Canada Summer Jobs, high school, college and university co-ops, and college trade apprenticeships.

**38%**  
Participate in co-op, internship or apprenticeship programs

Just under half of the businesses that are currently not participating, would be interested in finding out more information about these programs.



### Question: Does your business currently do any external training?



Nearly half of the respondents (49%) indicated that they participate in external training. The highest percentage of participating respondents come from the manufacturing sector at 88%. The external training received includes first aid, health and safety and industry specific training.

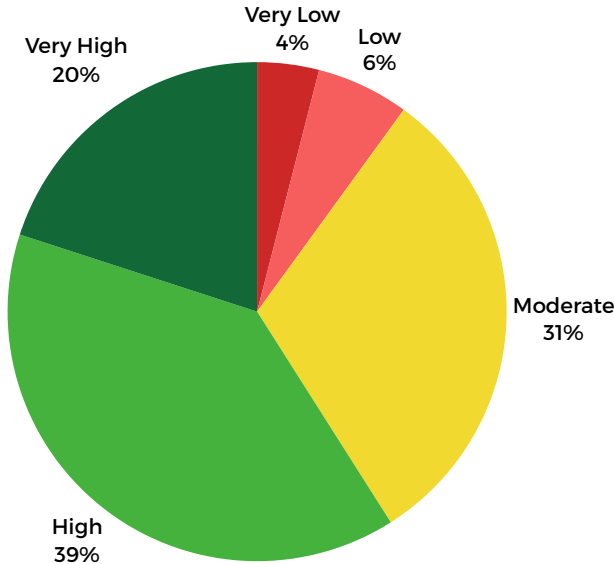
Nearly half of those that are currently not participating in external training indicate that there are barriers that prevent participation. The most frequent barriers identified include costs and availability of the precise training that is needed.

# Use of Technology

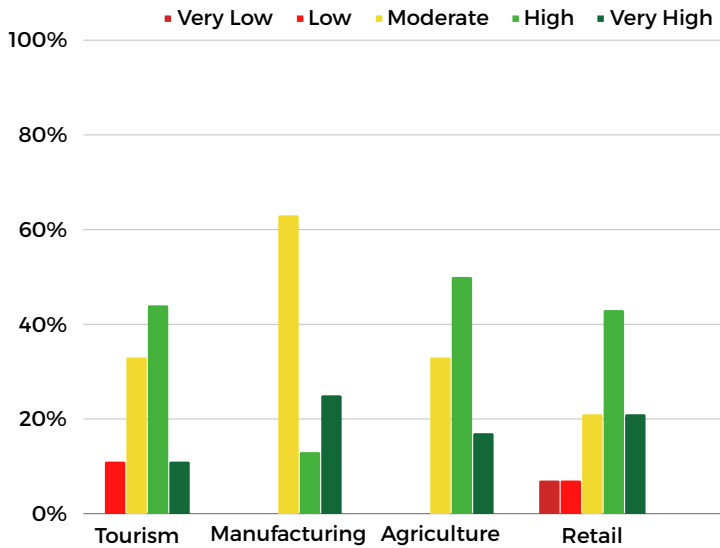
The use of technology is paramount for businesses in today's dynamic and competitive landscape. Technological advancements offer countless benefits, enhancing efficiency, productivity, and overall operational effectiveness. 59% of respondents indicated that their business-related use of technology was high or very high. 31% suggested it was moderate. Similar patterns were observed across sectors, except for manufacturing, where 63% indicated their business-related use of technology was moderate, and 37% indicated their use of technology was high or very high. An opportunity can be explored to provide manufacturers with information about cost-effective and scalable technology solutions, as well as offering training programs to enhance digital literacy to help ease the transition to more technologically advanced processes such as the adoption of AI.

## Question: How would you rate your business related to the use of technology?

Overall:



By Sector:



## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Businesses were asked to share thoughts about their plans for the future, addressing expansion, relocation, and selling or closing their business. Questions related to future plans provide an insight into the short-term and long-term goals. Businesses from all sectors and communities in Clarington have indicated they are either planning to expand or remain the same. 60% of respondents stated that over the next 18 months they expect to remain stable pertaining to sales strategy and growth. The common reasons for this is that businesses are comfortable with their current operations, workforce, location restraints, market conditions, or age of the business would not be conducive to growth. 34% of businesses indicated they expect to expand their business within the next 18 months. The main reason given for expansion was market growth for the future potential of growth, especially in and around Durham Region.

**What are your plans for your business over the next 18 months?**

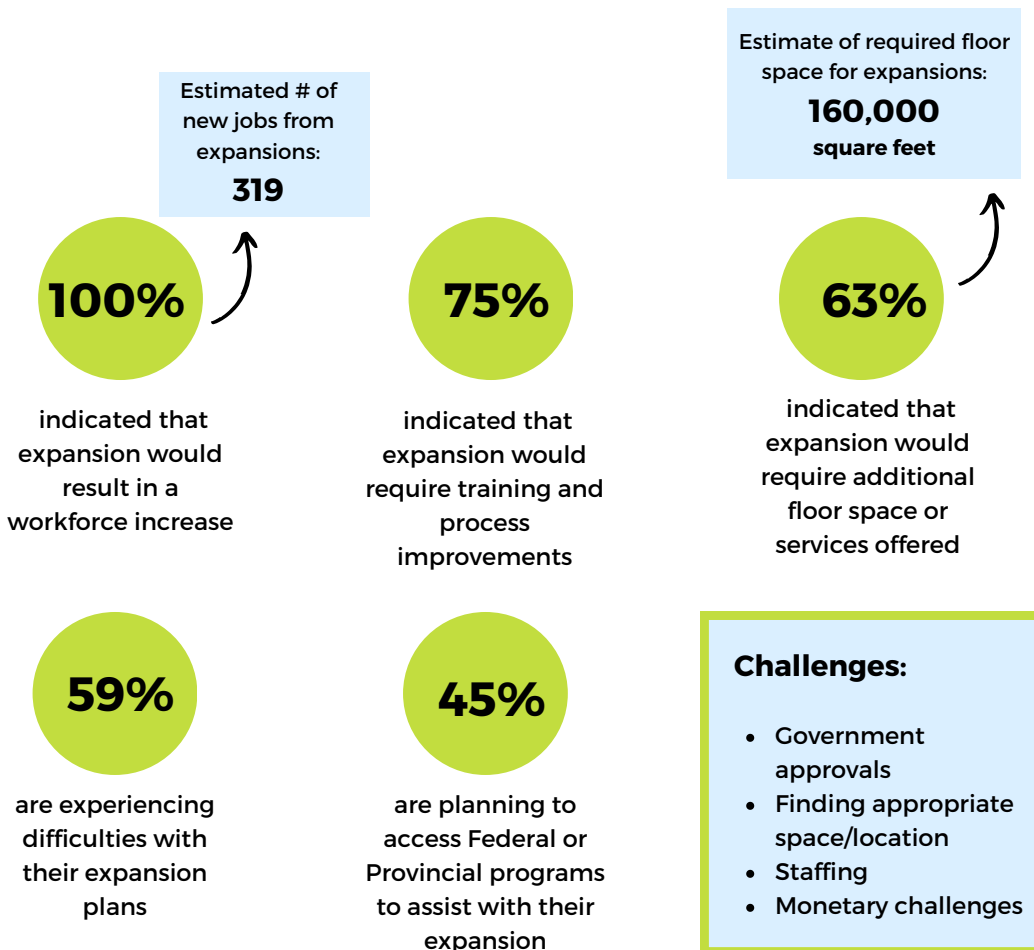
**60%**  
stable

**34%**  
expanding

**6%**  
selling

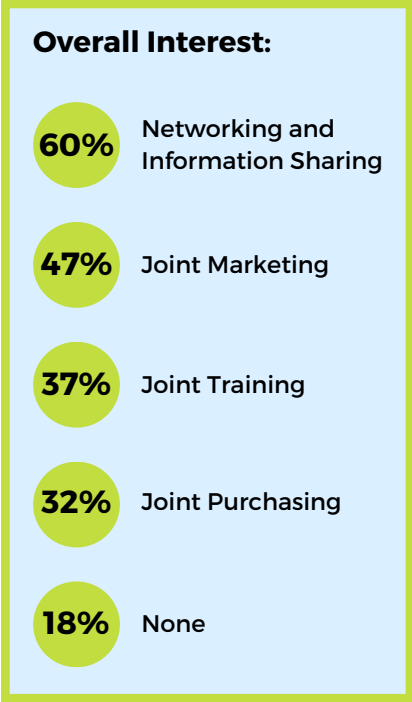
**0%**  
downsizing,  
relocating,  
or closing

### Insight into Desire for Businesses to Expand:

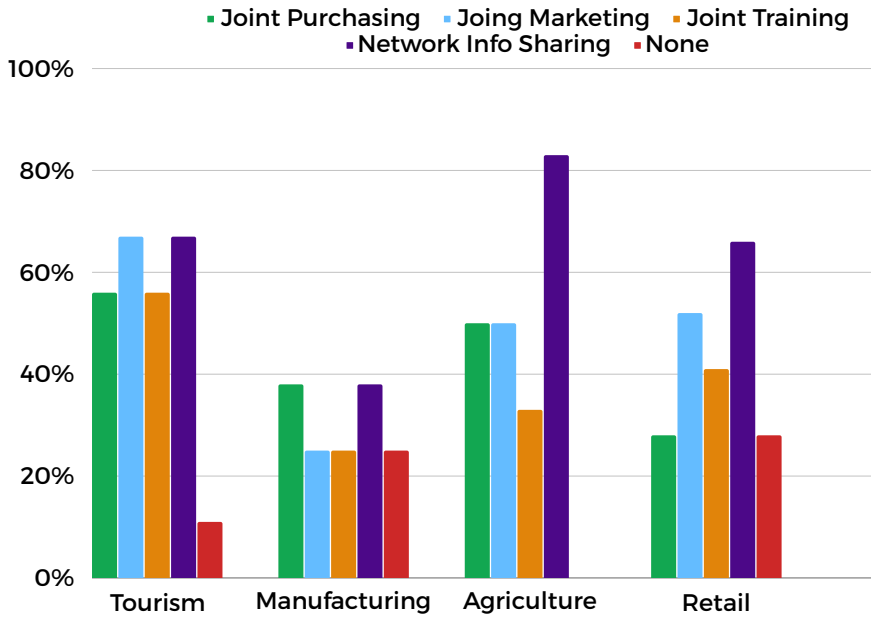


# Working Co-operatively With Other Businesses in the Community: Business to Business Initiative

89% of businesses indicated they are interested in working co-operatively with other businesses in the community. Respondents from the tourism sector were most inclined to seek ways to cooperate. Respondents from the manufacturing sector were the least inclined. Feedback creates an opportunity to explore the value of hosting a Business to Business local purchasing initiative.



**By Sector:**







## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Businesses were asked to share their thoughts on their perspective of what their industry looks like in the next one or two years. Factors impacting growth may be due to changes in the market, supply chain, and consumer spending. They will need to address their strategic direction and preparedness for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Looking at Clarington as a whole, inclusive of all sectors, 61% of respondents indicated that the outlook for their industry is one of growth.

From an industry perspective, 78% of tourism businesses expected their industry to grow, compared to 50% of manufacturers, signalling optimism, vitality and a sense of forward momentum. No members of the agriculture community expect to experience a decline, while 18% of retail businesses see a possible future decline, potentially due to an anticipated recession, e-commerce competition, and the public not having extra income to spend. Other members of the retail community see opportunities for growth by continuing to adapt to changing conditions and responding effectively to market challenges.

### What is the outlook for your industry?

#### Outlook of Industry

 Growing	61%
 Stable	22%
 Declining	14%
 Not sure	4%

#### THE MAIN REASONS FOR GROWTH:

- 1 Positive market conditions
- 2 Population growth in the community
- 3 Increased consumer awareness of products and services.

#### THE MAIN REASONS FOR DECLINE:

- 1 Difficult global economic conditions (ie. inflation, interest rates)
- 2 Increased competition from large multi-national companies and online companies

## Areas for Improvement: Key Issues Businesses Face

While many of the businesses surveyed had many positive messages to share about their attitude towards doing business in Clarington, the BR+E project identified some key areas to focus attention on improving. Challenging areas identified relate to workforce attraction and retention, concern for adequate housing to support growth, and barriers to growth due to lack of serviced land and building inventory, as well as barriers resulting from inadequate high speed internet, especially in rural communities.

### Current Challenges:



Difficulty finding and retaining employees including challenges with public transit relating to employee attraction



Lack of adequate housing to support community growth and growing workforce



Lack of inventory of serviced land and space for lease to support new business growth

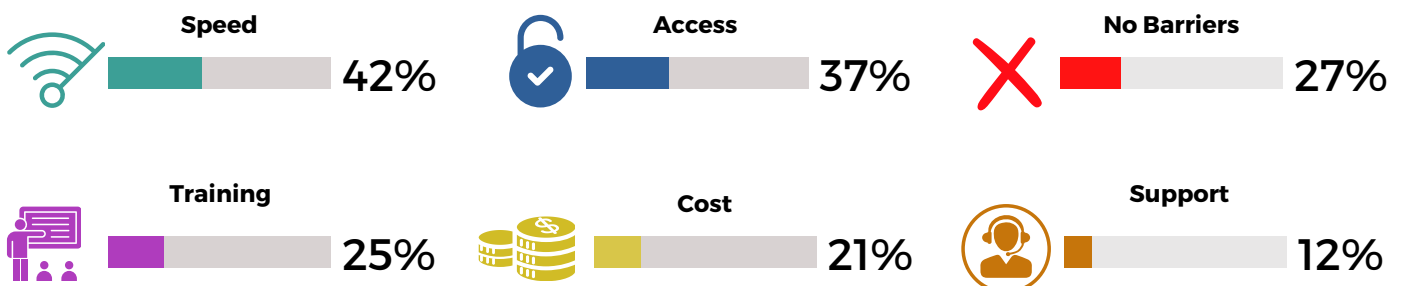


Challenge with adequate high speed internet and cell service, not just in rural areas

### Internet Speed

Effective high-speed internet service is the backbone for supporting effective operations. Internet speed and access have been identified as the two most frequently identified barriers of doing business in Clarington. The majority of Tourism, Agriculture and Retail/Service businesses indicated internet speed is a barrier, while 25% of Manufacturers stated speed is a barrier. 78% of businesses from rural communities identified speed to be a challenge. The five businesses surveyed in Orono shared they had no barriers, but noted a desire for more support and training.

### IT Barriers:



### Concerns Looking Forward

Consumer confidence/decreased spending and the possibility of a recession are the two top concerns of businesses. These economic issues were the top concerns of Retail and Tourism respondents. A recession and supply chain disruption were the top concerns of Manufacturing respondents. The top concerns among Agriculture sector respondents were production costs, fuel costs and employee stress/health.

**88%**  
of  
manufacturers  
are concerned  
about an  
upcoming  
recession

**50%**  
of agriculture  
businesses are  
concerned  
about  
employee  
health & stress

**69%**  
of retail businesses  
have concerns  
with consumer  
confidence &  
decreased  
spending

**56%**  
of tourism  
businesses have  
concerns with  
consumer  
confidence &  
decreased spending



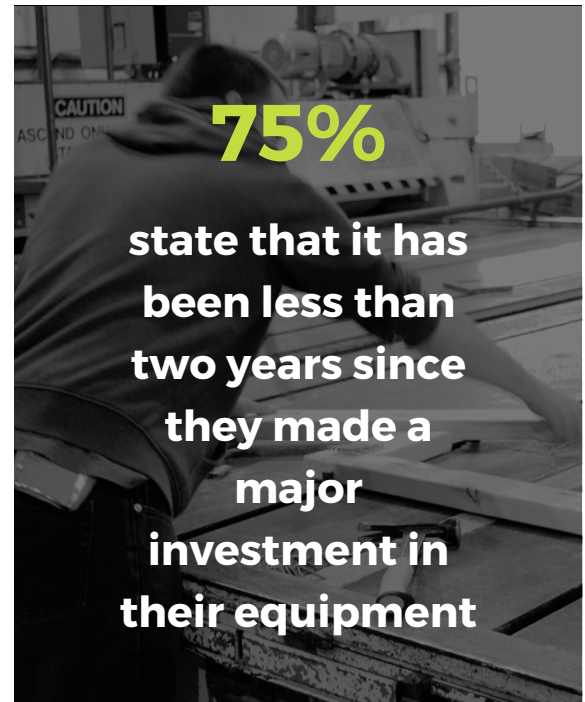
# Summary of Results by Sector

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## MANUFACTURING

Eight businesses representing the manufacturing sector completed the survey, representing 15% of the total survey respondents. While the outlook for the manufacturing sector continues to be clouded by ongoing supply chain, workforce, and rising cost pressures, over the past few years businesses in Clarington have positioned themselves to maximize opportunities to grow including investing in equipment, recently introducing new products to the market and actively working on delivering new products in the near future. A common challenge businesses face when bringing new products to market is competition and transition from old to new product. Several manufacturers are also undergoing process improvements, which are crucial for enhancing efficiencies, reducing costs, and elevating product quality.



### Top 3 Process Improvements Manufacturers are Undertaking:

- 1 Productivity
- 2 Energy Efficiency
- 3 Health & Safety

### Exporting

Half of respondents are either a single or multi-market exporter, the majority being shipped to the USA. 51% of those who export goods indicate 10-49% of their sales is related to exports. There is an even split on manufacturers wanting to learn more information related to exporting programs and services ranging from interest in processes to funding opportunities.

### Research and Development

The majority of manufacturers invest their R&D budget on process improvements. Other focusses are new product development or improvement. Half of businesses take advantage of the Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SRED) tax credit program which is offered by the federal government.

**38%**

have indicated that new technology will influence their primary product or how it is produced, mainly impacting efficiencies such as 3D printing.

# TOURISM

Nine businesses representing the tourism sector completed the survey, majority reflecting accommodation, attractions or agri-tourism. 67% indicated they were open year-round while 33% closed during the winter. One of the three businesses closed during winter, a recreational business, wishes to explore the potential of expanding their services throughout the winter.



The majority of tourism businesses indicated their customers are local. Two businesses welcome local residents, as well as visitors from neighbouring communities in Ontario, while two other businesses welcome both Canadian and International visitors.



Businesses in the tourism sector were most inclined to seek ways to cooperate with other local businesses in helping to raise the profile of their business while showcasing the strength and assets of the tourism industry in Clarington. All respondents in the tourism sector have shared they collaborate with community partners on different levels, but there is a desire to explore more opportunities to network. Pertaining to promotion of their business, all businesses have an on-line presence and majority promote their services or experiences on social media, mainly on Facebook and Instagram.

## Top 5 Activities That Attract Visitors to Clarington

- 1 Motor Sports
- 2 Outdoor Activities
- 3 Agri-Tourism Experiences
- 4 Craft Breweries & Wineries
- 5 Culinary Experiences

## Ratings of Community Assets by Tourism Businesses:

	% Rated Good or Excellent
Retail establishments in Clarington	78%
Accommodations	44%
Community wayfinding signage	44%
Availability of public washrooms	11%

## RETAIL

The retail and service sector is the largest representation of respondents in this BR+E project with 29 businesses. Businesses completing the surveys range from retail, automotive, wellness, professional services, and food services. 79% represent businesses in Downtown or urban areas, 21% represent rural areas. 70% of businesses in downtown areas state accessibility for people with mobility challenges in the immediate area is poor or fair, with a focus on accessibility to businesses in downtown. This feedback is valuable for helping shape support and solutions to facilitate accessibility. All downtown businesses stated that downtown festivals or events increased their sales, or at minimum generated awareness of their business, especially if they participated.

**76%**

shared that they are open all the hours they need to be

**24%**

stated that they would be open more if they were certain of sales

**14%**

would open more hours if their staff was more available

### Top 3 Products or Services that Separate Your Business from the Competition:

1

Excellent customer service

2

Knowledge

3

Unique products or services

**85%**

of customers are within Durham Region

**57%**

engage with customers through foot traffic or referrals

**22%**

engage with customers through the internet or social media

When asked what additional businesses or services they would most like to see available in the community, many stated businesses that could provide parts or services and businesses that draw potential customers to the area, such as entertainment venues. With half of respondents, majority downtown, expressing concern with not having enough parking, there is an overwhelming majority of businesses who stated their local area is an excellent place to have a business and the existing economic diversity compliments their business. Over half of the respondents expressed concern over the support they currently receive from the Municipality. Feedback received also reflected a desire of retail businesses to encourage their customers to visit other local businesses.

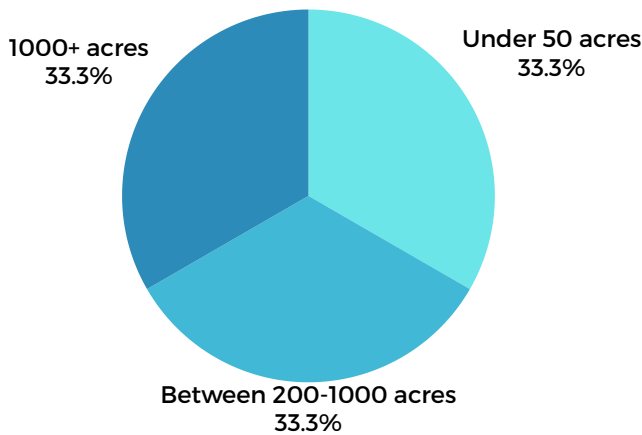
**17%**

indicated that 90% of customers are walk-ins

# AGRICULTURE

Six businesses in the agriculture sector participated, representing 12% of total respondents. With the exception of one business who sells on a wholesale platform, all agriculture businesses offer on-farm retail. The majority of farming practices fall under agricultural production with one business focused on processing. 50% focus on one or both poultry and livestock and 67% of these agriculture businesses also have field crops.

## Owned Land:



**During the next 18 months, agriculture businesses felt the following factors were important or very important:**

**83%** Overall cost of doing business

**80%** Land use issues

**67%** Public awareness of farming industry

**50%** Securing financing for operations or expansion

**50%** Technological or innovative changes



# Recommended Goals and Action Plan

The Clarington BR+E Project identified four key priority areas, each with associated goals and related actions. Within each of these priority areas, there are immediate and future actions. Note: the survey results represented feedback on doing business in Clarington from 52 businesses, from four sectors, the most responses originating from the retail and service sector. To obtain further insight on the challenges and opportunities within each sector, the suggestion is to engage in sector specific outreach to explore broader and larger sampling with a targeted approach. This approach will identify opportunities to create more focussed solution driven initiatives to support economic growth in Clarington, complementing and building onto the recommendations below generated from this BR+E Survey.

## PRIORITY: Business Growth

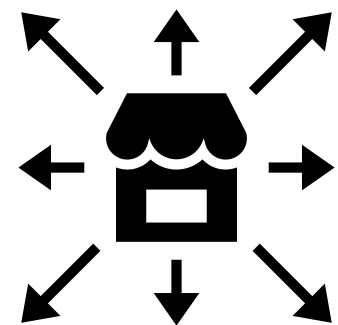
### Goal: Business Expansion Support

**Timeframe:** Start discussions within 6 months on creating support resource (ongoing)

**Lead:** Municipality of Clarington: Invest Clarington

**Support:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Performance Measures:** Engagement with businesses and successful expansions



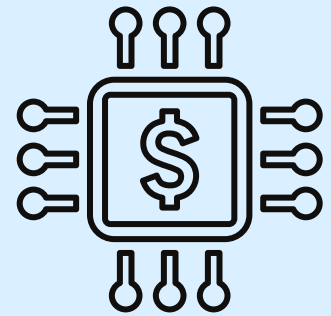
- Identify businesses exploring expansion through outreach.
- Offer support for businesses wanting to expand as 60% currently looking to expand are experiencing difficulties with activities related to municipal approvals, finding space and challenges with identifying and applying for any funding or grants that can support expansion.
- Create Tool kit for businesses looking to expand, and identify resource team to guide them through.

## Goal: Identify and Provide Connections to Funding

**Timeframe:** Start work in 2024 to host event (ongoing)

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Performance Measures:** Number of businesses attending; Evaluations of events/resources; Number of businesses receiving Funding Resource Guide



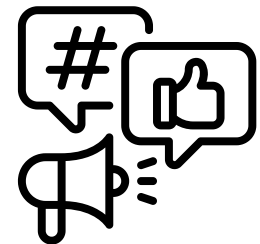
- Host information session on funding available to support business including navigating application processes; businesses to determine what they need first, then explore potential funding to support.
- Strengthen relationship with funding sources, Invite funding partners and agencies through which funding flows, and expert on funding opportunities.
- Create and maintain funding resource guide for easy reference, make available to business community and update where needed.

## Goal: Expanding Your Market Through Social Media

**Timeframe:** Start work in 2024 and host event in late Q2 2024

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Performance Measures:** Number of businesses attending; Evaluations of event/resources



- Host session for Tourism and Retail stakeholders to explore how to maximize social media tools already used like Facebook and Instagram but other avenues such as TikTok, and the power of Google Reviews

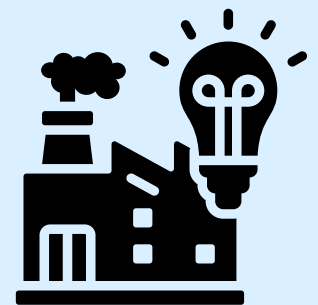
## Goal: Ongoing Industry Insight

**Timeframe:** Start to identify sectors immediately and schedule discussions throughout 2024 (ongoing)

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Support:** Municipality of Clarington

**Performance Measures:** Number of round table discussions; businesses attending; Evaluations of event; action items resulting from discussions



- Gain more insight into challenges, explore factors contributing to industry projected growth and declines, identify needs and opportunities of each sector through round table discussions and networking sessions for information sharing, supporting sector specific solutions on an industry and community level.

## PRIORITY: Promoting Technology & Local Innovation

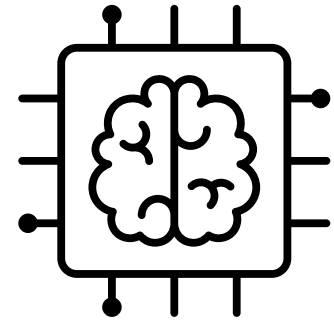
### Goal: Promote Adoption of AI

**Timeframe:** Start work immediately to host event in 2024 and 2025 (ongoing)

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Support:** Post Secondary Institutions

**Performance Measures:** Number of businesses attending; Evaluations of event; feedback on adoption of technology



- Increase awareness of how and where technology can play a role in improving efficiencies and saving time, across all sectors, but especially manufacturing where 63% indicate their use of technology is moderate.
- Host 'The Role of AI' in business in 2024 - hands-on demonstrations on applications for business.
- Promote connections with Ontario Tech University, and Durham College to enhance AI applications in business

### Goal: Building Relationships and Fostering Innovation

**Timeframe:** Start work in Q3 2024 to deliver event in 2025

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Support:** Municipality of Clarington: Invest Clarington

**Performance Measures:** Number of businesses attending; number of relationships built and collaborations explored.



- Increase awareness of how and where technology can play a role in improving efficiencies and saving time, across all sectors, but especially manufacturing where 63% indicate their use of technology is moderate.
- Host 'The Role of AI' in business in 2024 - hands-on demonstrations on applications for business.
- Promote connections with Ontario Tech University, and Durham College to enhance AI applications in business

## PRIORITY: Workforce Development

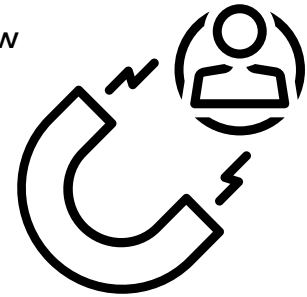
### Goal: Workforce: Retention, Attraction & Training

**Timeframe:** Start planning event schedule in Q1 2024, implement below five (5) events between 2024-2026

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Support:** Municipality of Clarington: Invest Clarington

**Performance Measures:** Number of businesses attending; use of resources post event



- 1) Host an employee attraction and retention Workshop
- 2) Host a Job Fair in partnership with Durham College Community Employment Services in March 2024 to support hiring opportunities
- 3) Invite industry leaders in trades, tourism, manufacturing and agriculture to speak to high school students about skills needed and job diversity
- 4) Host 'Tapping into Talent' event connecting secondary and post secondary co-op and internship programs to employers
- 5) Identify training needs across sectors and host 'Local Training Solutions' with Durham College Corporate Training Services

### Goal: Workforce Survey

**Timeframe:** Start working on scope in 2024 and deploy survey in late 2024 or 2025

**Lead:** Clarington Board of Trade

**Support:** Durham Workforce Authority

**Performance Measures:** Number of respondents, sector breadth, actionables



- Use 2023 Clarington BR+E Report as starting point to help inform, identify challenges and opportunities
- Build deeper dive survey in partnership with DWA
- Assess results, create report reflecting state of workforce, challenges and solutions
- Deploy initiatives in 2025 resulting from recommendations identified through the report

## PRIORITY: Keeping Business Informed & Supported Through Infrastructure

### Goal: Update Businesses on Local, Regional and Provincial Economic Development Activities

**Timeframe:** Start creating materials and plan information session in 2024

**Lead:** Municipality of Clarington

**Support:** Region of Durham

**Performance Measures:** Number of businesses attending;



- Provide an Economic Development update information session to members of the business community, learning about existing projects, developments, land use plans, GO Train, Broadband, road infrastructure, and public transit infrastructure. Community development information not only keeps businesses in the know but can guide future growth.

### Goal: Empowering Business through strong infrastructure – survey, report, actions

**Timeframe:** Start working on scope in 2024 and deploy survey by 2025

**Lead:** Municipality of Clarington

**Support:** Region of Durham, Province

**Performance Measures:** Number of respondents, actionables



- Public Transit: Explore Public Transit efficiencies and solutions to maximize retention and attraction of workers, co-op students and interns, in employment areas, assess current system, future DRT plans, On-demand and alternative transportation solutions
- Broadband: Gaps continue to exist, especially in rural areas for businesses and agriculture community,
- Support from Municipality of Clarington and Development Process: explore conducting a survey to businesses to get a better understanding of what support businesses are looking for from the Municipality as well as address development process efficiencies
- Population and employee growth: adequate housing and daycare facilities
- After survey is complete, assess results, create report with recommendations, then deploy initiatives to help address public transit, Broadband, population and business growth, growth pinch points (need for housing and daycare facilities) 2025, 2026