

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

REGIONAL PILOT PROJECT BRIEF



Preliminary Business Needs & Opportunities Research Findings

A total of 795 businesses were interviewed in the Basin-Boundary region between 2012 and 2015. Highlights from the data are presented below. A final report outlining methodology, key findings and recommendations will be released in the Fall 2015.

Survey Module	Finding
Company Information	The highest number of respondents' businesses are classified as 'Retail Trade', 'Accommodation and Food Services' and 'Professional, Scientific and Technical Services' under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Manufacturing follows closely.
	Market opportunities and proximity to family are the most frequently cited reasons for locating in the region.
	Over 37% of companies have been in business for more than 20 years.
	Nearly half of the companies are 'growing'.
Local Workforce	Survey participants provide roughly 16,000 jobs for the region's workforce.
	Roughly 11,800 of these jobs are full-time
	Safety/First Aid/Food Safe, Sales & Marketing, Business Management, and Customer Service were most commonly listed as key training areas.
Sales	36% of businesses expect that their sales will grow by between 1 and 9% over the next year; 28% expect between 10% and 24% growth in sales.
	Roughly 50% of businesses have the majority (over 50%) of their sales generated by their top 3 customers. <i>(This question had a low response rate)</i>
	Most (over 70%) sales are to customers within the community or region.
	Computers and Office Supplies, Food, and Construction Materials are the top supplies for which business would like to find regional suppliers.
Facilities and Equipment	60% of businesses own the facility in which they operate.
	Nearly half of businesses plan to expand within 3 years, with 88% of those indicating that expansion will occur within the community.
	Top barriers to expansion are financing options, lack of skilled staff, accessing new markets and lack of suitable premises.
Government Services	Top rated government services include water and sewage supply, telecommunications, recycling and access to highways/roadways. The lowest ratings include access to airport facilities and availability of appropriately zoned land.
	Access to airports, telecommunications, and availability of employment lands (appropriately zoned lands and buildings for lease/purchase) are the areas identified for municipal/regional government to improve.
Business Climate	Businesses rated the overall business climate as: Excellent (4%), Good (38%), Fair (43%), or Poor (15%). 67% of businesses believe that the business climate will improve over the next five years.
	Business climate factors that received the highest ratings include Cultural and Recreational Amenities, Education (K-12 and post-secondary) Access, and Quality of Local Government.
	Businesses most commonly listed Location, Lifestyle, and Sense of Community as strengths as a place to do business.
	The business competitiveness factors that are most important to respondents include availability of telecommunications, improvement of customer service, workplace health & safety, transportation, and workforce skill development.
Assessment and Plans	The overall health of their company was rated as excellent by 23%, and good by 58% of respondents.
	Roughly 85% of businesses rate the risk of closing or downsizing as low .