



Town of Minto | 2025

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION REPORT





Introduction

The Town of Minto and the Minto Chamber of Commerce partnered together in 2007 to conduct our first formal Business Retention + Expansion (BR+E) project. It has been updated several times since this date.

In 2024

The Town of Minto undertook updates to the Corporate Strategic Plan, Economic & Community Development Plan (ECDP) and the Cultural Plan (CP).

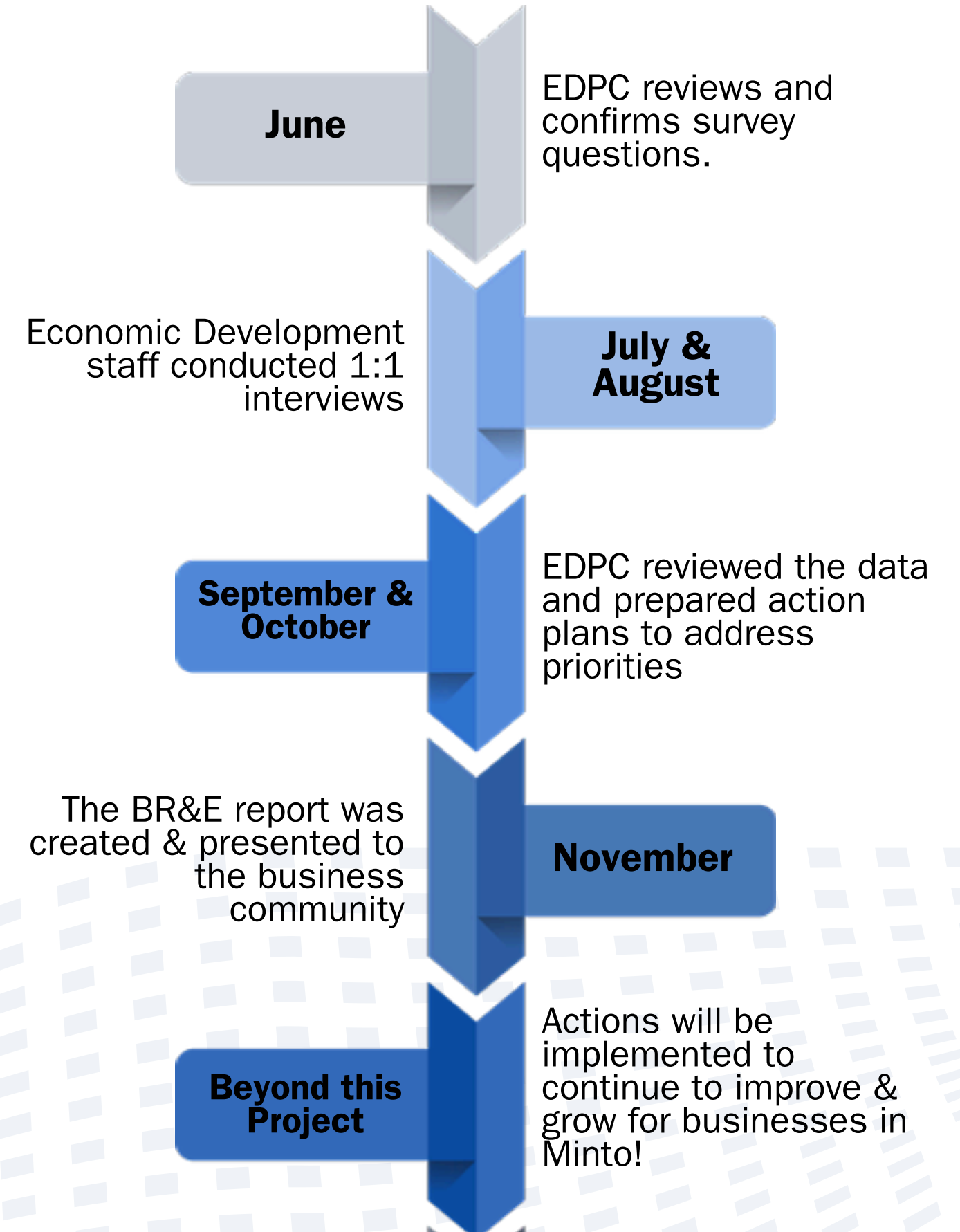
BR+E was identified as a main pillar of the EDPC and resulted in the form BR+E Surveys completed this year in 2025.



Why is BR+E Important

- **Strengthens relationships** between local government and business owners.
- **Collects real data** on how businesses view the current business environment.
- **Helps keep businesses happy and healthy**, encouraging them to stay, grow, and stay competitive.
- **Identifies red flags early** so the Town can act proactively.
- **Highlights local priorities** and guides the development of actionable plans and solutions.

Timeline



Meet the BR+E Leadership Team

Amy Heinmiller

Realtor, EXP Realty

Belinda Wick-Graham

Director of Economic & Community
Development, Town of Minto

Brian Currie

Owner, Acheson Pharmasave

Cameron Green

Vice President, Customer Acquisition,
Wightman

Charlene Hofbauer

Executive Director, Waterloo, Wellington,
Dufferin Workforce Planning Board

Christina Mann

Manager of Economic Development,
County of Wellington

Crystal Ellis

Rural Business Advisor, Ministry
of Rural Affairs

Erin Raftis

Marketing & Community Development
Coordinator, Town of Minto

Geoff Gunson

Councillor, Town of Minto

George Bridge

Resident

Glen Hall

Owner, OSIM Interactive

Gordon Duff

Treasurer, Town of Minto

Jamie Doherty

Business Community Counsellor,
Saugeen Economic Development Corporation

Judy Dirksen

Councillor, Town of Minto

Katherine Noble

Administrator,
Wellington Federation of Agriculture

Kristel Maines

Executive Director,
Business Centre Guelph Wellington

Mary Lou Colwell

Resident

Mike Hallam

Vice President, TG Minto

Raisa Abraham

Business Development Coordinator, Minto Chamber
of Commerce & Launchit Business Exploration
Centre

Shirley Borges

Executive Director, Minto-Mapleton
Family Health Team



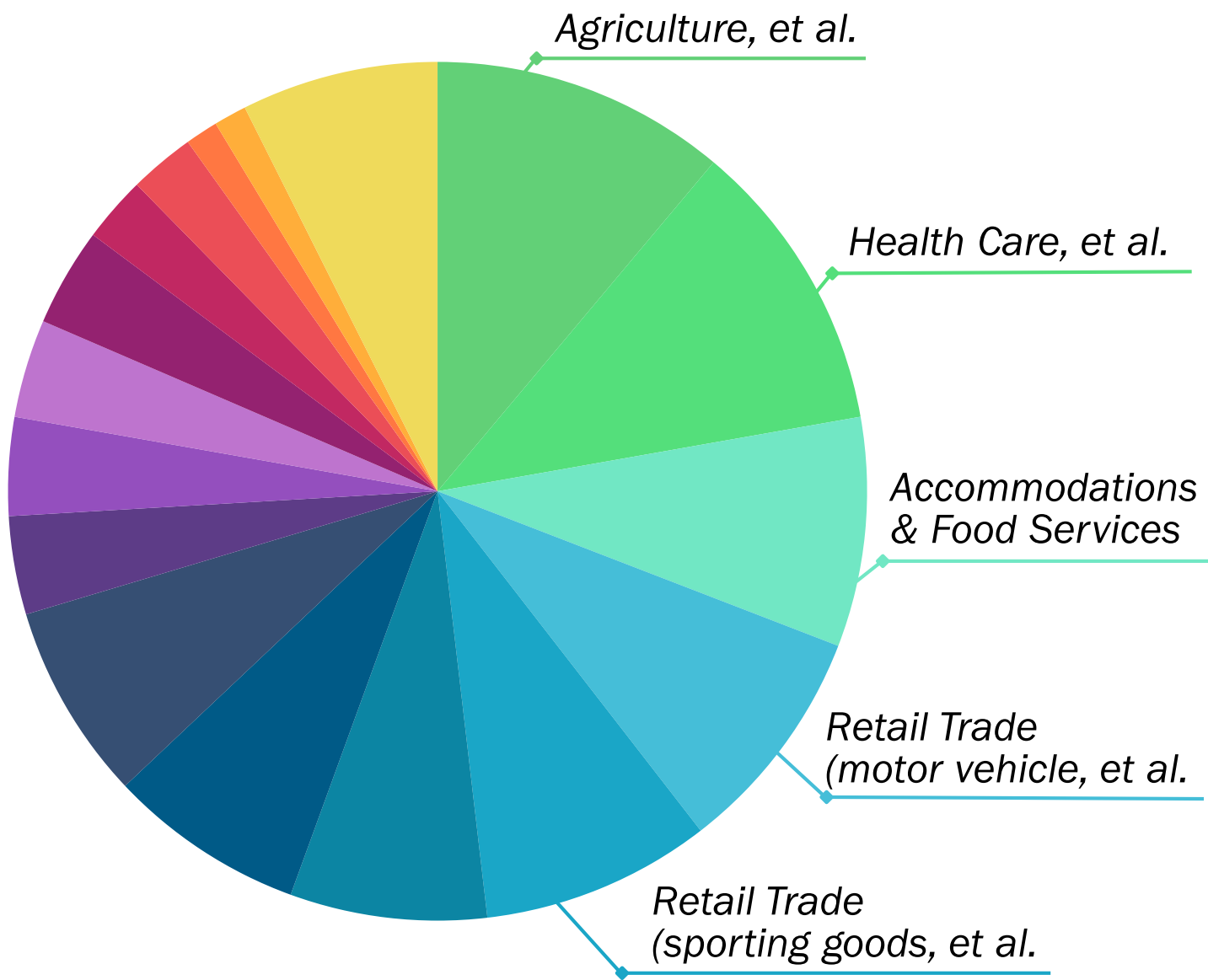
Summary of Overall Results

**82 Surveys
Completed**

Surpassed the goal of 75 surveys

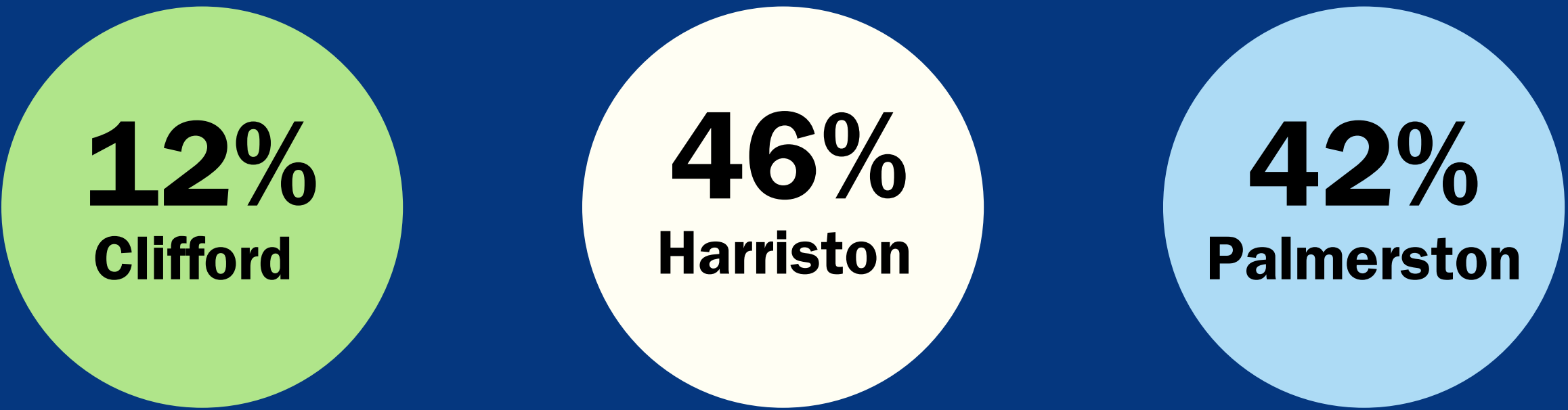
BUSINESS INFORMATION

A total of 82 businesses took part in the 2025 BR+E survey. They represent a broad range of businesses reflecting multiple sectors from communities across Minto.



- 11.1% Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting
- 11.1% Health Care & Social Assistance
- 8.6% Accommodation & Food Services
- 8.6% Retail Trade (motor vehicle, furniture)
- 8.6% Retail Trade (sporting goods, books, music, etc.)
- 7.4% Construction
- 7.4% Manufacturing (primary & fabricated metal)
- 7.4% Wholesale Trade
- 3.7% Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- 3.7% Finance & Insurance
- 3.7% Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services
- 3.7% Real Estate
- 2.5% Manufacturing (food & beverage)
- 2.5% Manufacturing (wood, paper, etc.)
- 1.2% Management of Companies & Enterprises
- 1.2% Utilities
- 7.4% Other Services

LOCATIONS OF PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES:



Note: Rural Businesses were categorized based on their addresses.

96%

of businesses have at least **one owner** involved in **day-to-day operations.**

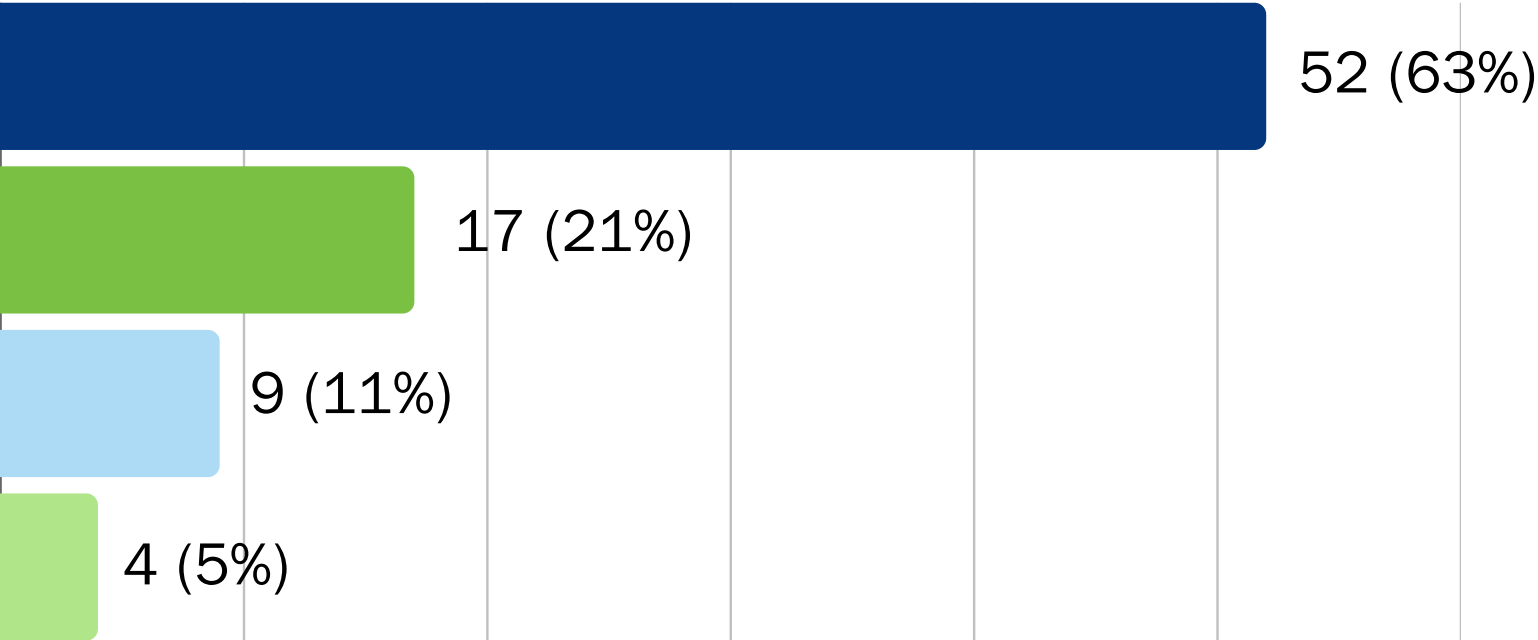
OWNERSHIP & OPERATIONS

Locally Owned & Operated
with one location

Locally Owned & Operated
with more than one location

Franchise

Branch or division of a regional,
national, or international company



74%

of businesses have at least **one owner** who is a **resident of the community.**

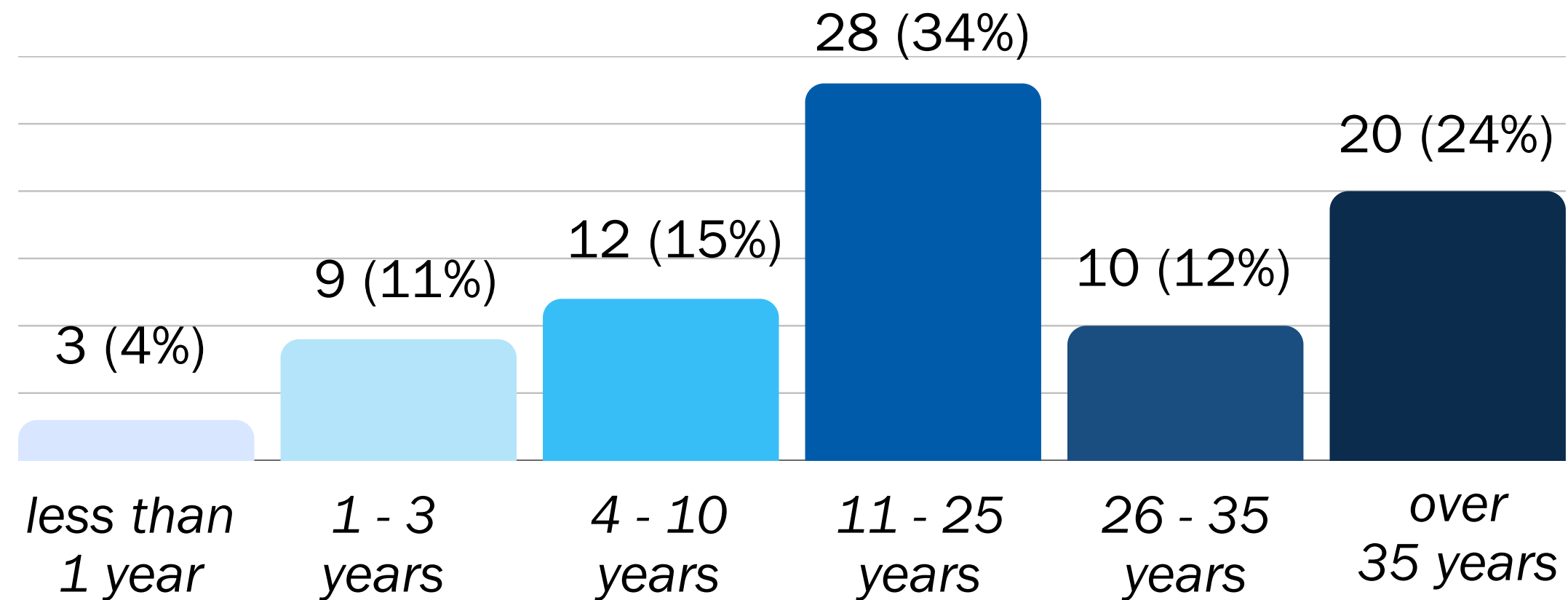
71%

of businesses have been **in Minto** for **over 10+ years.**

62%

of the **current owners** have been in operation for **over 10+ years.**

Years of Operation in Minto



BUSINESS PLANNING

51% **do not** have a business plan.

49% **do** have a business plan.



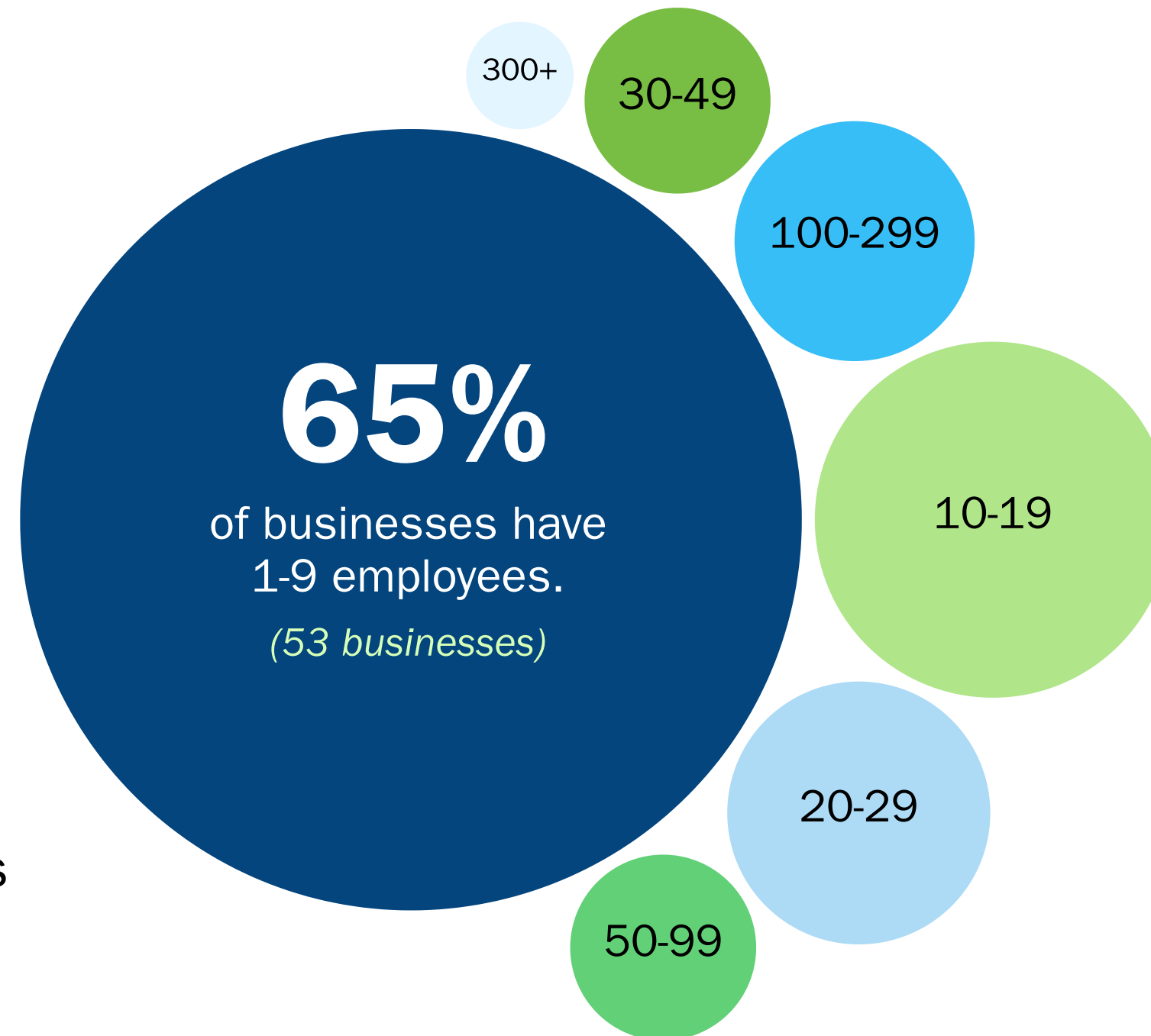
60%

of businesses with a plan have updated in the last year.

EMPLOYEES

The majority of Minto's businesses are small, with **less than 10 employees**.

- 65% 1-9 employees
- 13% 10-19 employees
- 7% 20-29 employees
- 4% 30-49 employees
- 4% 50-99 employees
- 6% 100-299 employees
- 1% 300+ employees



MARKETS

37 participants state that their primary market is **local**.

33 participants state that their primary market is **regional**.

8 are **national**.

4 are **international**.

85% of businesses service local/regional markets, with limited national and international reach.

EQUITY GROUPS

Most business owners **do not** identify as part of an equity-seeking group.



Breakdown of business owners who **do** identify as part of an equity-seeking group(s).

- 50% Women (14)
- 11% LGBTQ2+ (3)
- 11% Persons with Disabilities (3)
- 11% Visible Minorities (3)
- 7% Newcomers to Canada (2)
- 4% French Language Community (1)
- 4% Indigenous Peoples (1)
- 4% Youth (15-29 years old) (1)

OVERALL IMPRESSION



84% of business owners rated Minto as a **GOOD or EXCELLENT** place to do business.

22% noted a **POSITIVE** change in attitude over the past three years.

↪ **10%** noted a **NEGATIVE** change in attitude.

↪ **68%** noted **NO CHANGE** change in attitude.

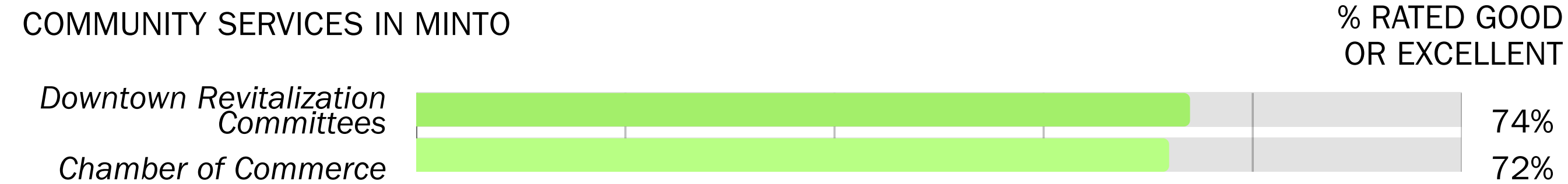
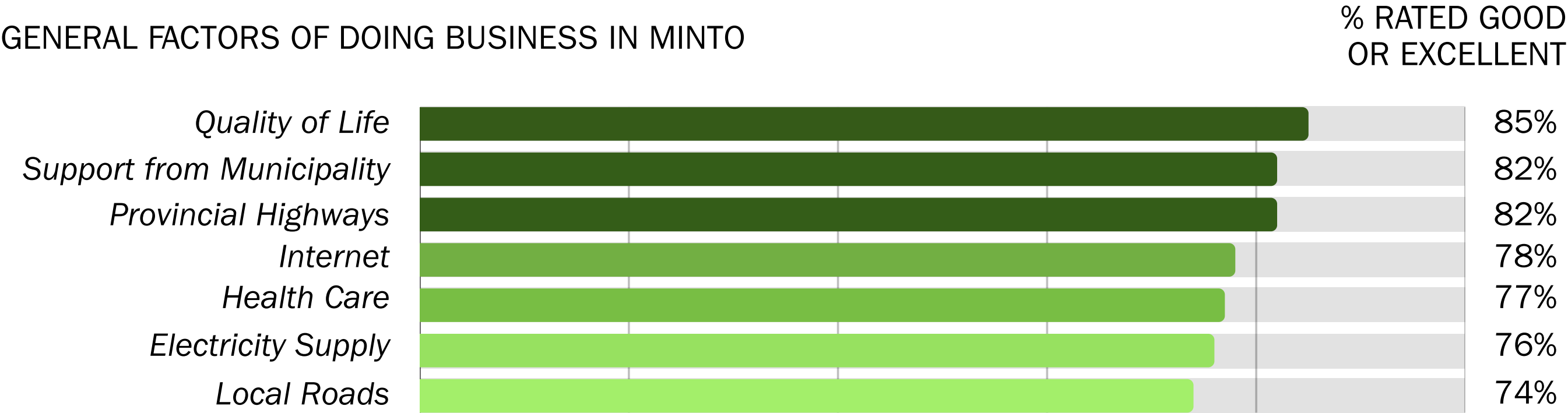
Positive Comments are related to:

- Growth
- Grants
- Community Development

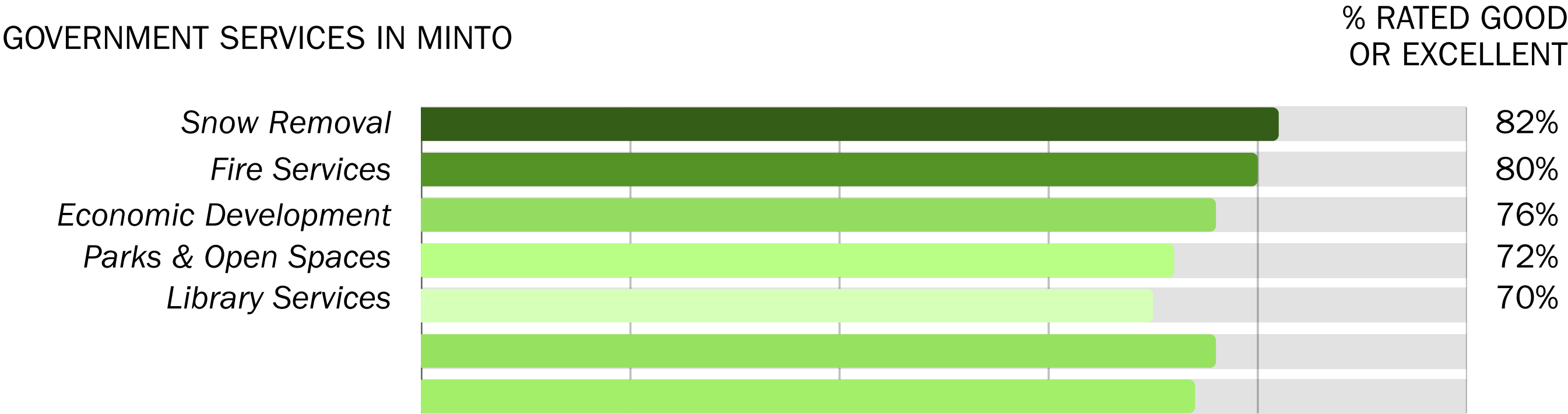
Negative Comments are related to:

- Online competition
- Development costs
- Lack of local support



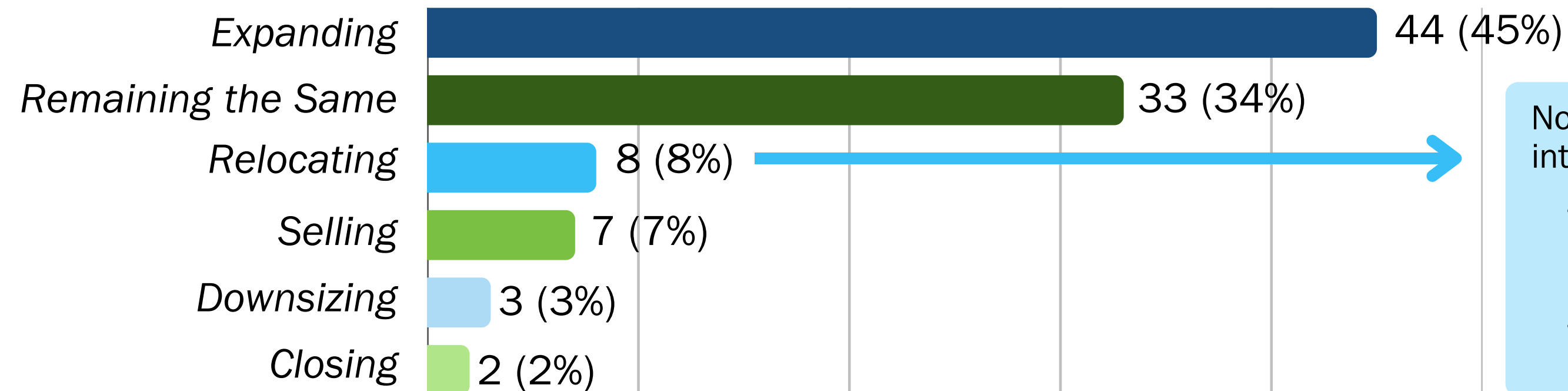


**Note: Many business owners reported “no contact” to many community services.*



FUTURE PLANS

The business community shows strong confidence in Minto's future, provided that growth constraints, especially workforce and property availability, are addressed.



Note: Of those who are interested in relocating:

- 4 would like to relocate **within the community**
- 3 were **exploring options**

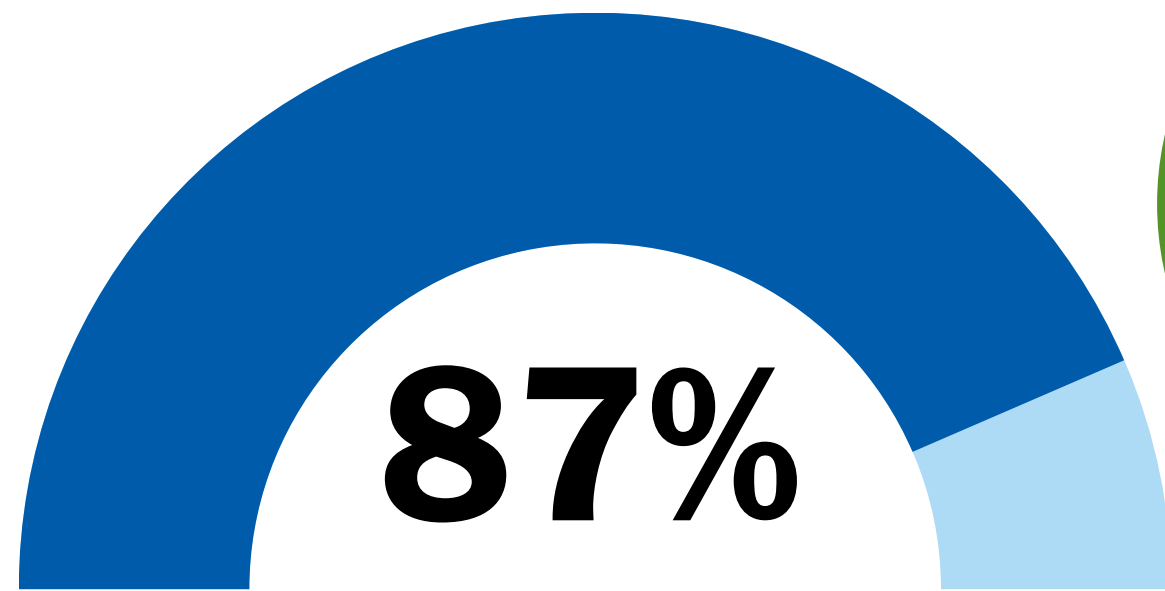
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Overall, businesses are optimistic about Minto's growth potential but highlight the need for continued innovation support, workforce development, and infrastructure improvements to sustain momentum.

OUTLOOK

79% of business owners stated their industry is **stable or growing**.

TECHNOLOGY



of business owners have a **moderate to high** adoption of technology.

Barriers
Internet Cost
Internet Speed
Software Costs
Training



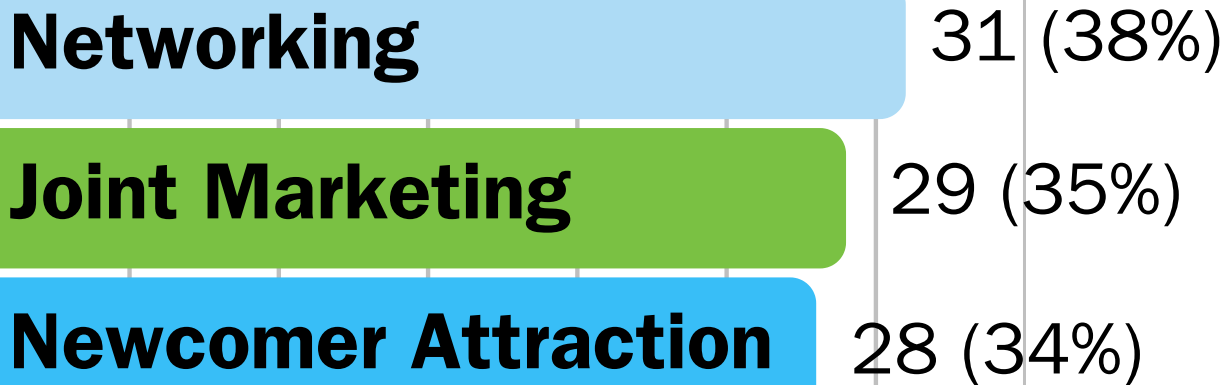
54% of businesses reported **no barriers** to the use of technology.

Key Barriers reported:

16% Knowledge & Training
12% Internet Speed

COOPERATION

Businesses have a strong interest in



FACILITIES

71% of businesses own their own facilities.

**Note: Renters have several years remaining in their leases and do not anticipate issues renewing.*

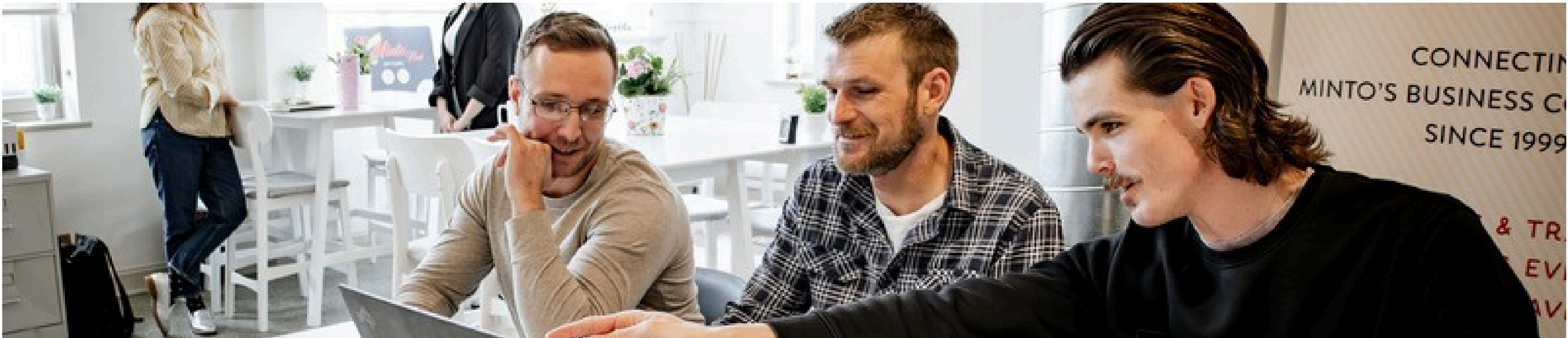
SALES

55% of businesses fall between **\$250,000 - \$5 million annually.**

46% expect sales to **GROW**

8.5% expect sales to **DECLINE**

**Note: The remainder of businesses expect to remain the same.*



Reasons for Projected Growth in Sales

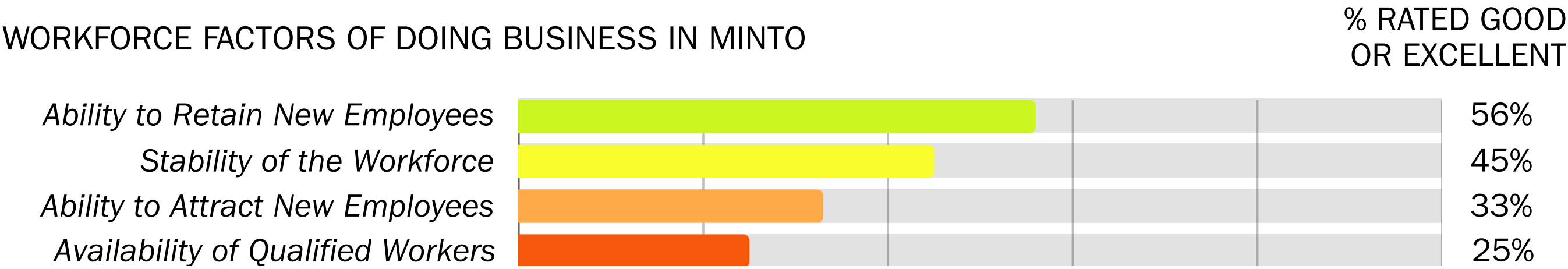
- **Business Expansion:** More businesses growing facilities, products, and services.
- **Community Growth:** Population increases expected to boost demand.
- **Customer Loyalty:** Strong repeat customers and word-of-mouth driving sales.
- **Market Demand:** Businesses well-positioned for rising needs (food, health, ag services, housing).
- **Marketing:** Better promotion and mentoring expected to increase sales.
- **External Factors:** Inflation and new partnerships contributing to higher sales numbers.

Reasons for Projected Decline in Sales

- **Economic Pressures:** Inflation, high taxes, and rising costs reducing affordability and consumer spending.
- **Housing Limits:** Lack of housing and stalled growth restricting customer base expansion.
- **Industry Challenges:** Commodity price drops, tariffs, and trade uncertainty hurting key sectors.
- **Competition & Market Shifts:** More competitors and customers moving to online/larger-centre shopping.
- **Labour Shortages:** Not enough skilled staff, limiting capacity and growth—especially for seasonal businesses.
- **Local Disruptions:** Construction projects expected to reduce foot traffic and impact sales.
- **Technology Barriers:** Adoption is moderate; internet quality, training needs, and software costs remain challenges.

WORKFORCE

Workforce attraction and retention are viewed as critical priorities for sustaining business growth and community development in Minto



38% of businesses noted **hiring challenges**

- Lack of Applicants
- Lack of Skills
- Lack of Motivation
- Specific shortages in retail, trades, and general labour


25%	Lack of Motivation, attitude, or interpersonal skills
23%	Not Enough or No Applicants
20%	Lack of Technical Skills
18%	Lack of Qualification (education level/credentials)
16%	Lack of Work Experience
11%	Company is Not Accessible by Public Transit
6%	Lack of Available Child Care
4%	Lack of Language Skills
2%	Inability to Compete with Other Employers

RECRUITMENT

Top recruitment methods:

 **62%** Word of Mouth

 **48%** Online Postings

 **37%** Social Media

77% of businesses reported they **did not have have trouble retaining employees.**

Businesses struggling with retention stated issues were linked to **seasonality, housing, recreation, and job-hopping.**

TRAINING



67% of businesses use
External Training



74% Businesses reported
No Barriers to Training

Barriers
Cost &
Time to
Participate



CO-OP, INTERNSHIPS, & APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

37%

of businesses
participate in **Co-op,
Internships, &
Apprenticeship
Programs**

HUMAN RESOURCES & DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

54% of businesses reported
having a formal HR policy



27% of those businesses requested support
in including Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion policies in their HR policies.

18% of businesses surveyed currently participate
in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Strengths

- Supportive Community & Local Government
- Location Advantages
- Small-Town Character
- Recreation & Quality of Life

Weaknesses

- Housing Supply
- Upcoming Construction
- Lack of Available Rental Space
- Weak Local Shopping Support
- Location & Small Customer Base

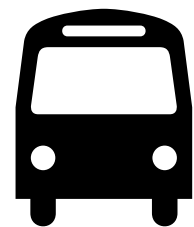


Most Significant Changes Businesses Seek in the Next Five Years



Housing & Population Growth

- Increase attainable and affordable housing (including apartments and rentals).
- Many stressed that population growth is essential to expand the customer base and workforce.



Infrastructure & Transit

- Better transportation options, including transit to larger centres and improved rural roads.
- Upgrades to reliable internet, electricity, and infrastructure to support business operations.



Business Climate & Support

- Reduce red tape, taxes, and start-up costs to make it easier to open or expand a business.
- Calls for more collaboration, originality, and mentorship among business owners instead of competition by imitation.
- Requests for continued municipal support of small and medium-sized businesses.



Downtown Revitalization

- Fill empty storefronts, clean up downtown cores, and increase variety/quality of stores.
- Create vibrant downtowns with events, food options, and improved parking/signage
- Suggestions included a vacancy tax on absentee landlords and incentives for new retail.



Retail & Service Mix

- Attract big box or larger retailers (e.g., to keep shoppers from going out of Town).
- Increase the diversity of retail and services like groceries, hardware, clothing, and medical specialists.



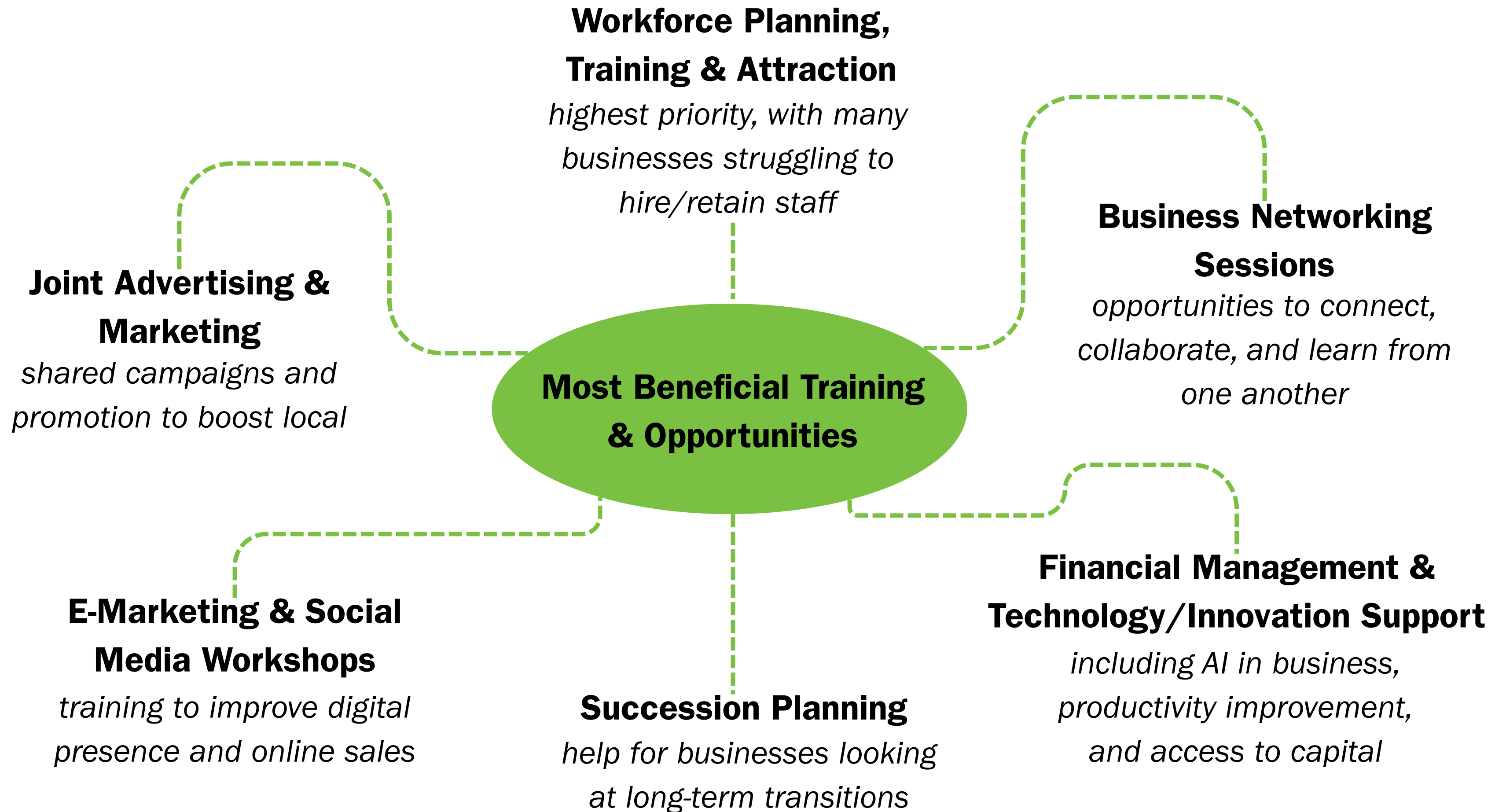
Tourism & Destination Development

- Strong desire to make Minto more of a destination stop for tourists and seasonal traffic.
- Ideas included marketing campaigns, niche tourism (e.g., fishing), and more traveler-friendly businesses.



Community & Social Needs

- More recreation, childcare, and youth programs to support families.
- Education around shopping local, DEI, and community inclusion.



How can the Town of Minto and Minto Chamber of Commerce Support Business

Many businesses are happy with current Town/Chamber efforts and say to “**keep doing what you’re doing.**”

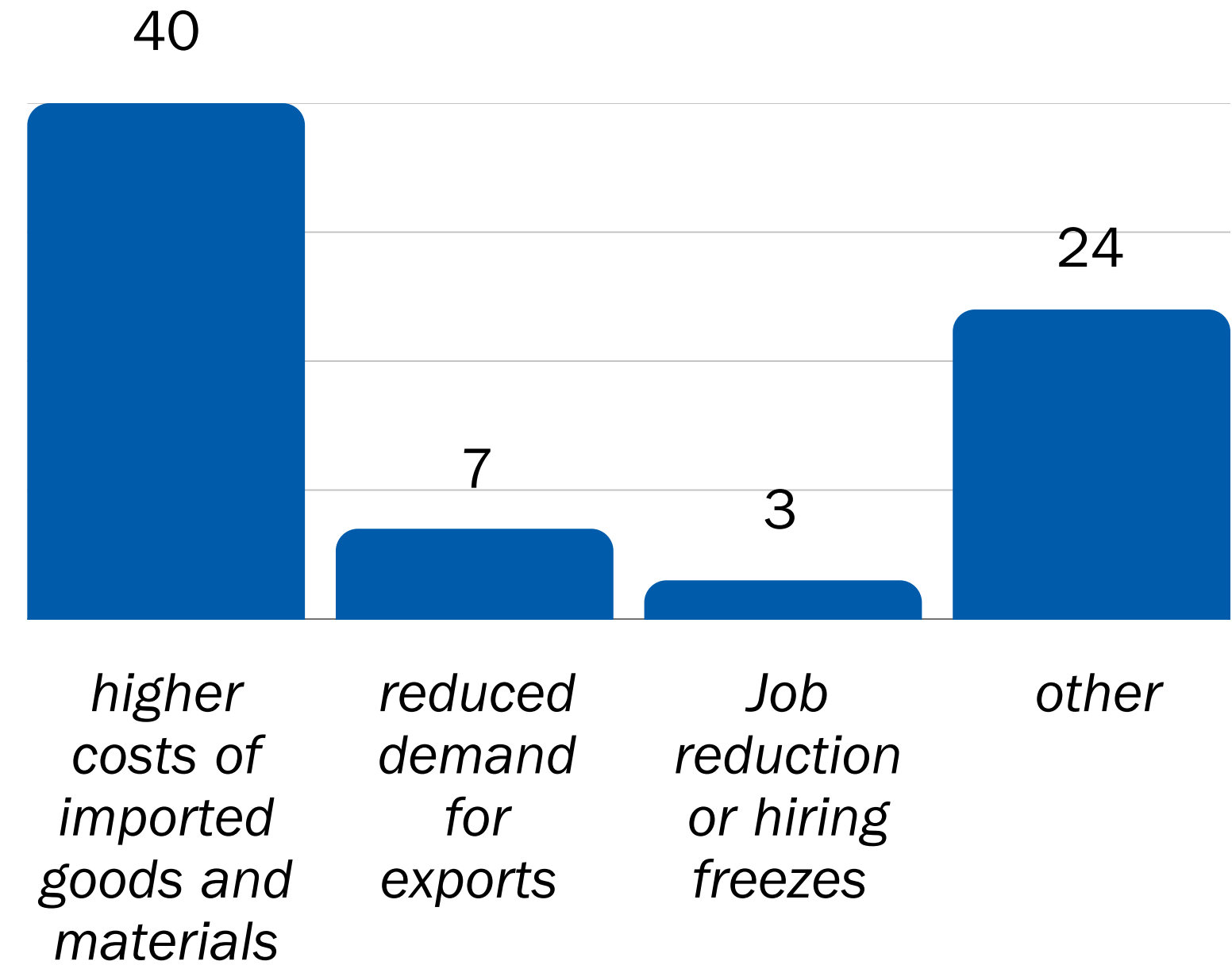
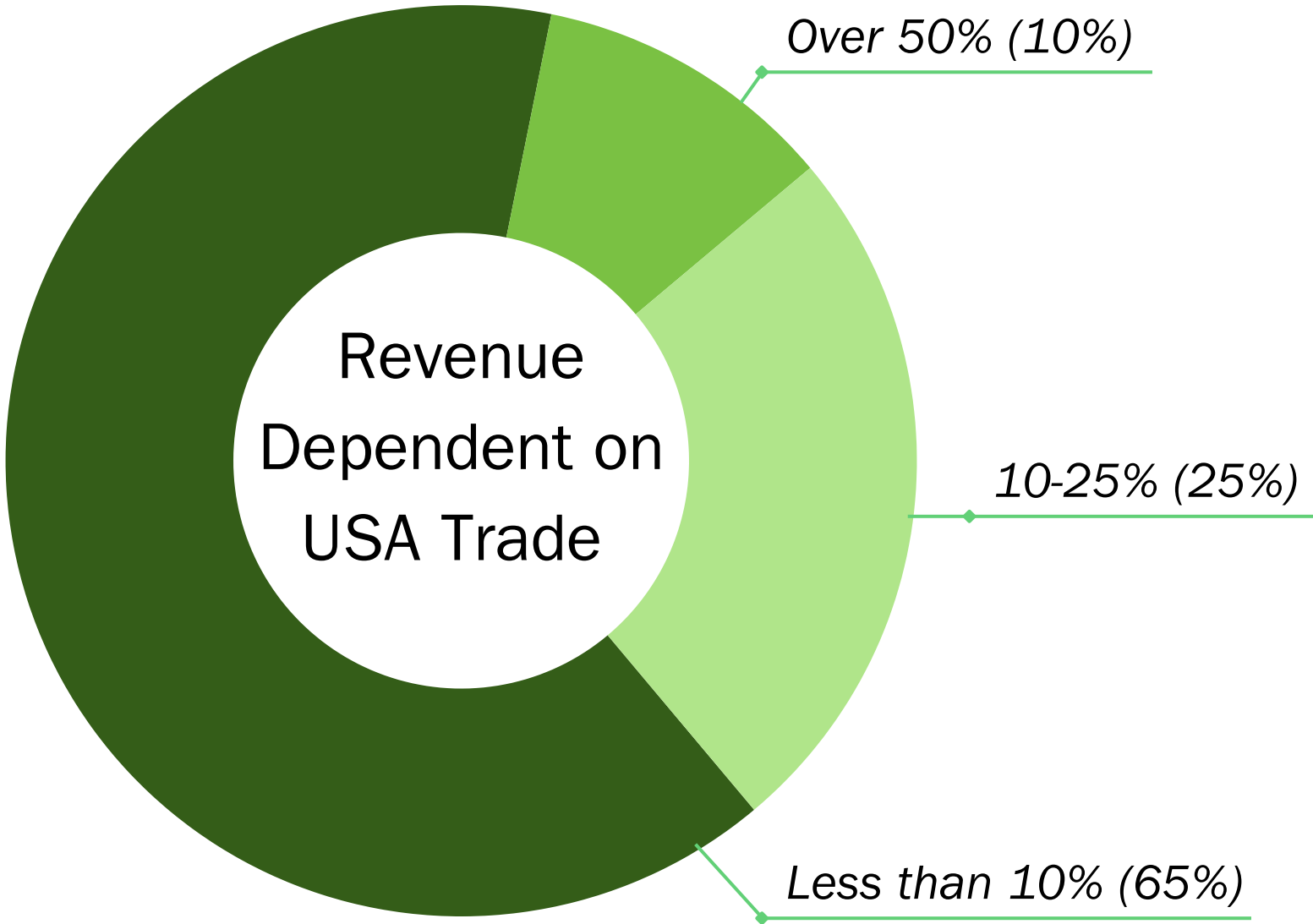
Improvements can be made in the following areas:

- **Marketing:** Requests for more promotion—shop local campaigns, bulk advertising, and regional trade shows.
- **Networking & Training:** Interest in stronger Business After 5 events, guest speakers, and an indoor trade show.
- **Advocacy:** Desire for support on infrastructure, transit, highway access, and government incentives.
- **Practical Support:** Businesses want to be included in municipal tenders and see continued support for Christmas events and community promotions.



TARIFFS

Most businesses reported low exposure to U.S. markets.

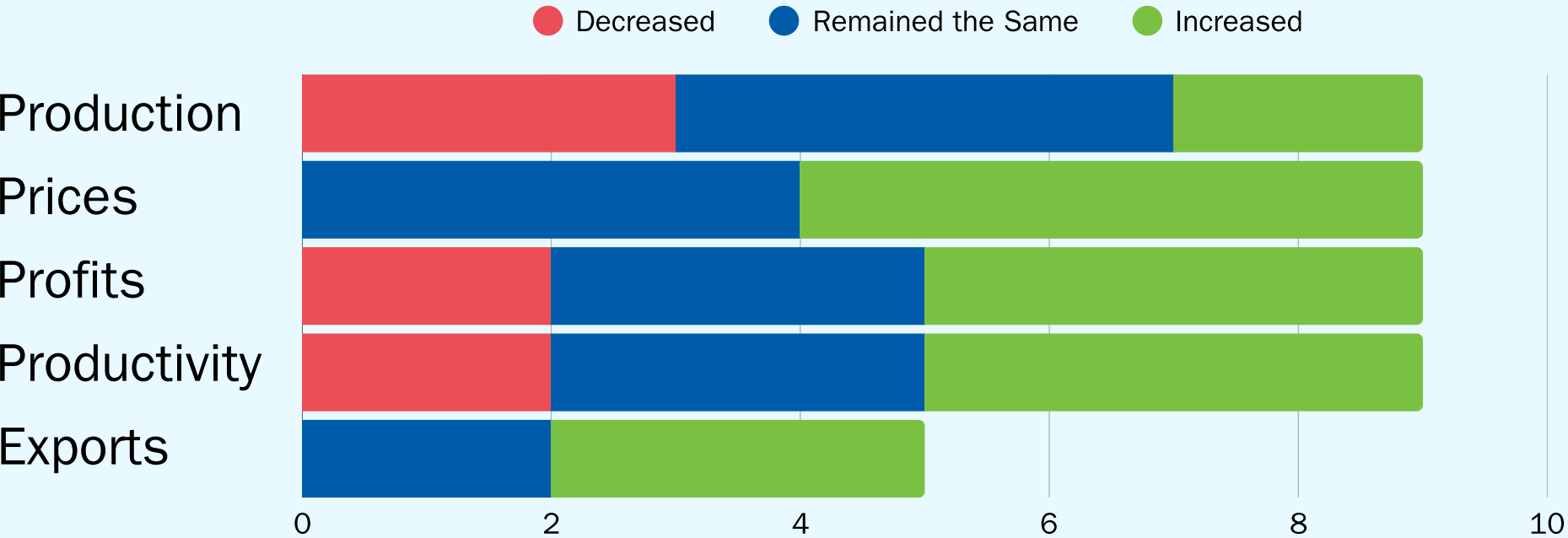


Other impacts mentioned by businesses included lost contracts, lower commodity prices, cashflow issues, client hesitation due to uncertainty, and loss of tourism from the U.S.



Manufacturing Sector Summary

Changes compared to 2 years ago:



The **Manufacturing Sector** remains a key economic driver with opportunities for innovation, export growth, and workforce support to sustain competitiveness and growth.

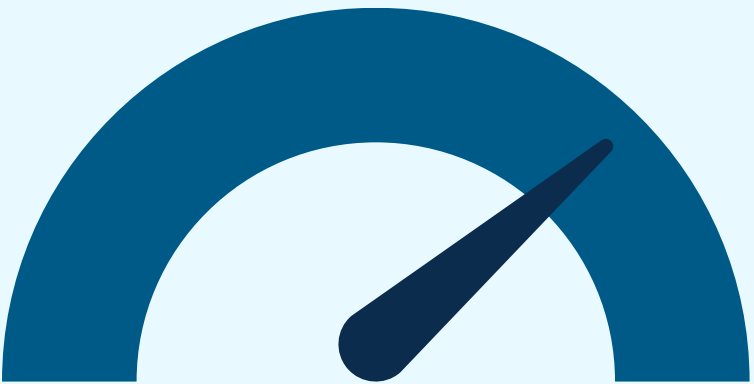
EXPORTING

33% of businesses currently export

- 1/3 stated exports are **10% - 24%** of their sales
- 1/3 stated exports are **25% - 49%** of their sales
- 1/3 stated exports are **over 50%** of their sales

- Countries exported to:
- USA
 - Central/South America

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT



businesses spend 3% - 6% on Research & Development

Note: the remainder spend under 3%

New Product Development

Businesses who added a new product:

- 22%** this year
- 44%** in the past 1-3 years
- 11%** in the past 3+ years

Anticipated Process Improvements

- 67% Health & Safety Improvements
- 67% Productivity Improvements
- 44% Six Sigma & Quality
- 44% Waste Product Recovery
- 33% Energy Efficiency
- 33% Vendor/Supplier Network for Continuous Product Improvement
- 22% Administrative Support towards ISO Certification
- 11% Other



Retail Downtown Sector Summary

The **Downtown and Retail Sectors** are energetic and community-focused, with clear opportunities to strengthen diversity, amenities, and marketing coordination to make Minto's downtown cores more dynamic and sustainable.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS

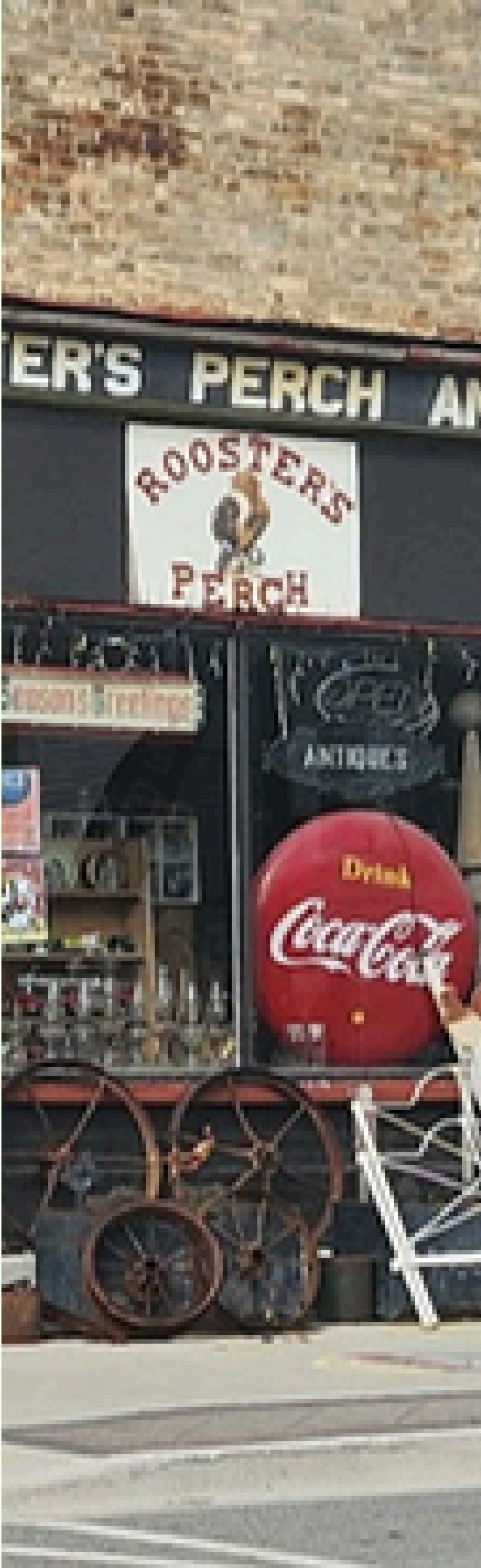
87%

of businesses advertise

Top Methods:

- 71% Social Media
- 58% Print (Flyers, Newspaper)
- 58% Website
- 55% Word of Mouth

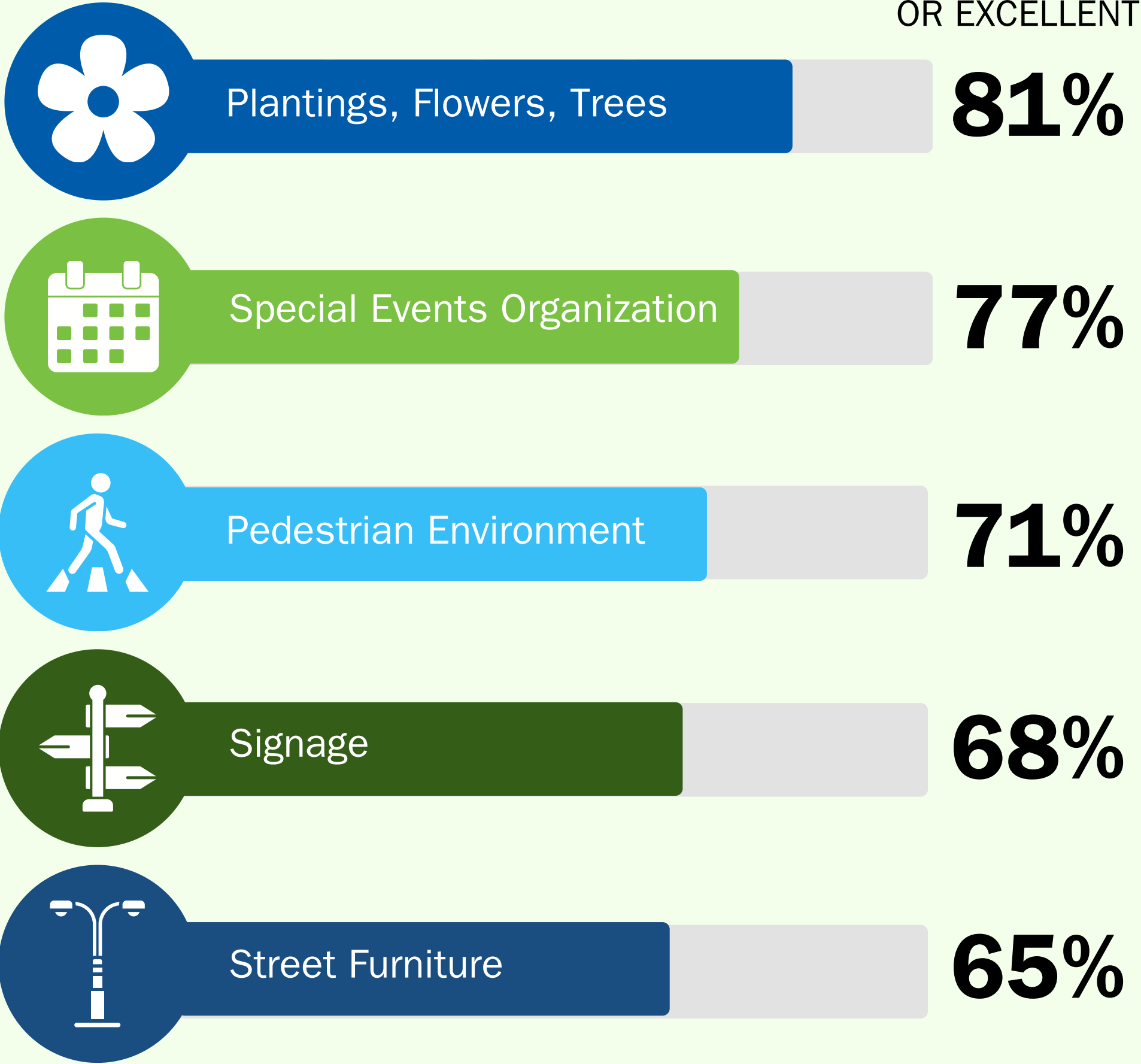
SUPPORTS & ASSISTANCE



CONDITION OF THE BUSINESS AREA



% RATED GOOD
OR EXCELLENT



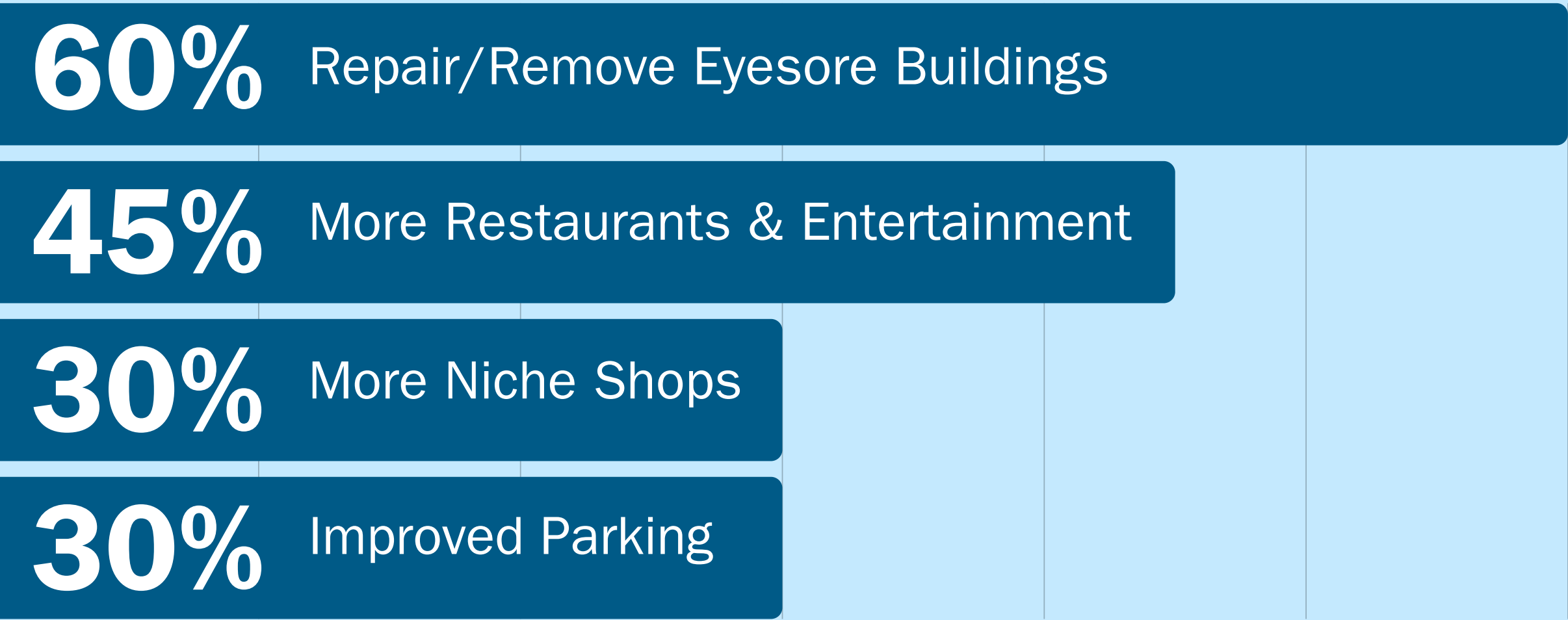
Strengths

- Public Safety Services
- Signage
- Window Displays
- Street Furnitutre
- Plantings, trees, flower boxes

Weaknesses

- Public Amenities (washrooms, fountains, parks)
- Highway Signage & Wayfinding
- Graffiti & Litter/Vandalism
- Parking (spots, signage, fees)
- Vagrancy/Homelessness

Top Suggestions for Improving the Business Area





Summary of Overall Results

ACTION PLAN



Priority 1: Workforce / Resident Attraction, Retention & Training



Priority 2: Housing



Priority 3: Downtown Revitalization/Destination Development



Priority 4: Support Entrepreneurship



Priority 5: Investment Readiness & Land Development



Priority 6: Encourage Business Expansion/Growth/Attraction

Any
Questions?



Minto means
Business
*Business Retention &
Expansion Program*

www.town.minto.on.ca



Contact Us

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