

2024



Stratford

BUSINESS
PARK

**Town of
Stratford
Annual
Business
Survey
Results Report**



Imagine that!

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Stratford (the “Town”) was established in 1995 through the *Charlottetown Area Municipalities Act*. The Town provides a wide range of services to a growing population of approximately 11,000 people and has a growing commercial base of over 200 businesses. The Town’s goal is to build the best community possible. Accomplishing this goal starts with the Town’s vision of a more sustainable future where:

- Residents’ social, physical and spiritual needs are met;
- Our culture is rich and diverse, and our heritage is protected and celebrated;
- Our natural environment is protected and respected;
- There is a thriving local economy; and
- There is an open, accountable and collaborative governance system.

The Town regularly utilizes surveys as a method of receiving feedback from residents and stakeholders to note changes over time. The annual Town of Stratford Business Survey aims to help the Town better understand the needs of the local business community and deliver creative solutions to support those needs. The first annual Town of Stratford Business Survey was launched in 2021, making 2024 the third Business Survey to be administered (note that the 2022 business survey was deferred one year due to post-tropical storm Fiona which occurred in September 2022).

The Town of Stratford Business Survey is an annual survey targeted towards the local business community with similar questions asked each year, allowing the Town to monitor changes or trends within the business community. Where applicable, this report makes interpretations of data and compares year-over-year changes in survey responses from 2023 to 2024, highlighting noteworthy differences.

This report provides a detailed and summarized analysis of information collected from the members of the business community that responded to the 2024 Stratford Business Survey. This report is available for reading, printing, and distribution at www.townofstratford.ca.

Each section of this report contains a summary of the results at the beginning of the section to enhance readability. Some question results have been calculated using a weighted average formula, which is described in the [methodology section](#) of this report. The percentages in this report have been calculated by dividing the number of respondents who answered a question in a particular way by the total number of survey respondents (fourteen) and then multiplying the quotient by 100. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or respondents skipping questions.

The Town of Stratford engaged MRSB Consulting Services Inc. to assist with the planning, development, implementation, analysis, and reporting of the 2024 Town of Stratford Business Survey.

2.0 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

2.1 SUMMARY PROFILE

Of the fourteen (14) substantially complete responses received:

- 86% of respondents are owners/operators.
- 79% of respondents operate their business year-round.
- 93% of respondents are for-profit businesses.
- 46% of respondents are home-based businesses.
- An equal number of respondents own and lease their brick-and-mortar location.
- 64% of respondents have been operating their business for more than five years and 57% of respondents have been operating in the Town for over five years.
- 86% of respondents have a primary location within the Town.
- 64% of respondents identify as being self-employed with no employees.
- The majority of respondents operate in the finance and professional services, fitness, health, and wellness, and retail and services sectors.

2.2 DETAILED PROFILE

Figure 1: Relationship to the business

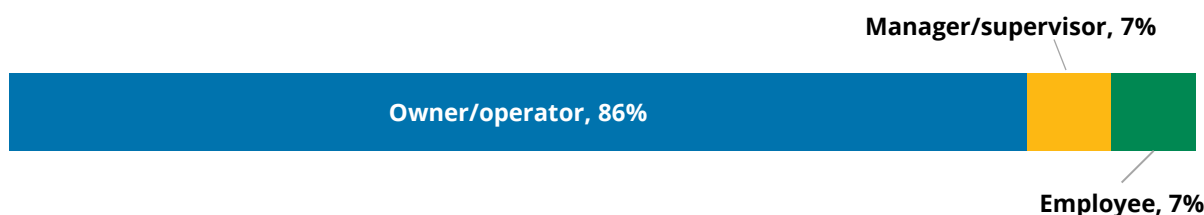


Figure 2: Operations timeframe



Figure 3: Type of business

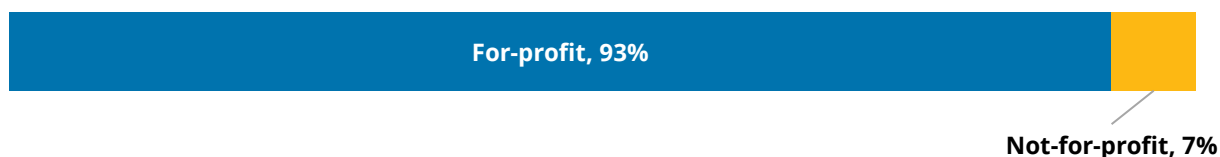


Figure 4: Home-based businesses



Figure 5: Bricks-and-mortar location ownership



Figure 6: Years in operation



Figure 7: Primary business location

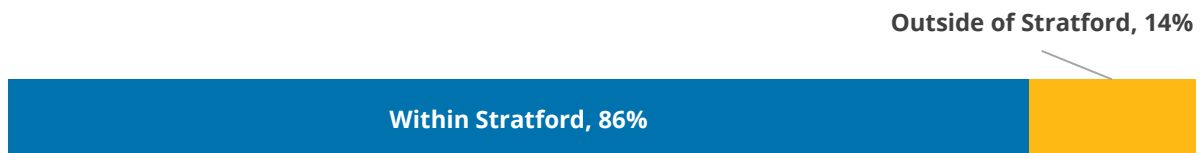


Figure 8: Years of operation within the Town

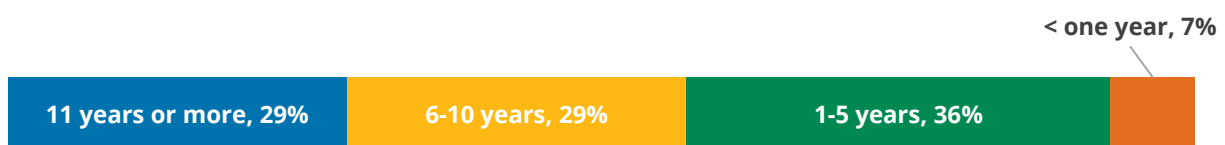


Figure 9: Number of employees within the Town

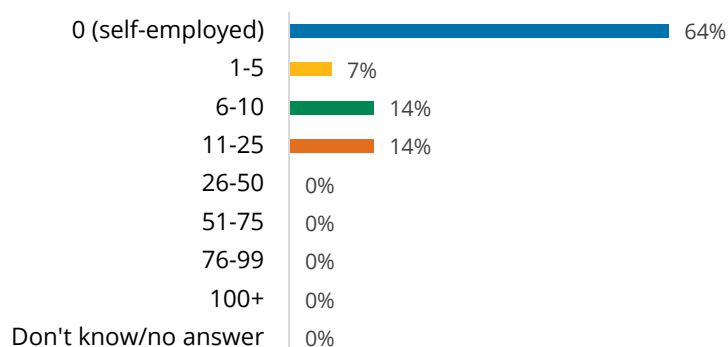
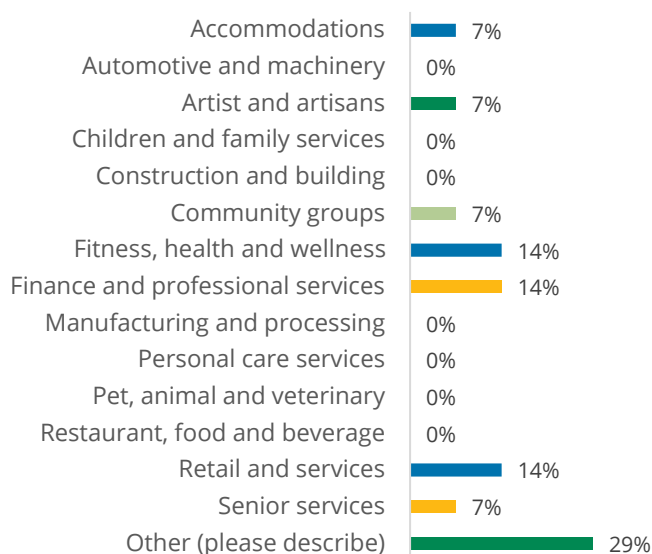


Figure 10: Primary sector



Survey respondents were asked to identify which sector their business *primarily* operates in. The sector categories listed as answer choices for this question are the categories utilized by the Town in the Town of Stratford Business Directory. 29% of respondents selected “other” as their response to this question. Respondents who selected “other” list their sectors as sport and recreation, computer system design, media and communications, and janitorial services.

For more information on the Town of Stratford Business Directory, visit the Town’s website at https://www.townofstratford.ca/business/business_directory.

The demographics of the 2024 survey respondents are very comparable to the 2023 respondents, although notable variances include:

- More 2024 survey respondents identified being self-employed than in 2023 (64% in 2024 versus 30% in 2023).
- More 2024 survey respondents indicated they operate a home-based business than in 2023 (46% in 2024 versus 17% in 2023).

3.0 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

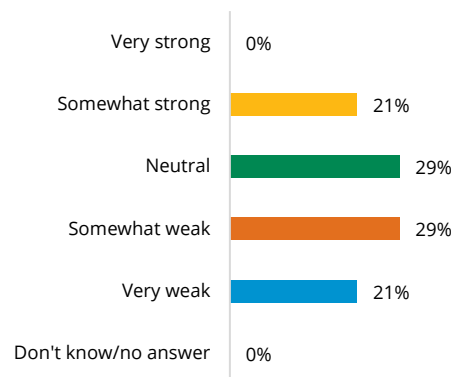
Survey respondents were asked a series of questions about the Town's business environment. The following list contains the key highlights of the survey questions on the Town's business environment.

- Half of all respondents reported a very weak or somewhat weak sense of belonging to the Stratford business community.
- Most respondents (86%) rated the health of the local economy as fair or good.
- 71% of respondents believe the local economy's health has improved or stayed the same over the past year.
- Half of all respondents rated the Town as either an excellent or good place to do business.
- The highest-rated Town assets among survey respondents are the Town's growth, Town infrastructure and access to public transportation.

3.1 PERCEPTIONS OF THE TOWN'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Survey respondents were asked to rate their sense of belonging to the Town's business community. 21% of respondents report a somewhat strong sense of belonging to the Town's business community. 58% of respondents indicate either a neutral connection or a somewhat weak connection and 21% of respondents indicate a very weak connection to the Town's business community.

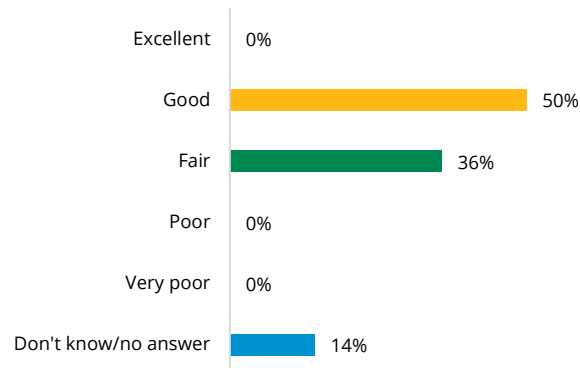
Figure 11: "Sense of belonging" to the Town's business community



There was a much stronger sense of belonging reported in the 2023 survey, with over half of respondents (52%) indicating a somewhat strong or very strong sense of belonging to the Town's business community, compared to 21% this year.

Survey respondents were asked to rate the health of the local economy. 86% of respondents rate the local economy's health as fair or good, and fourteen percent (14%) of respondents are unsure about the local economy's health.

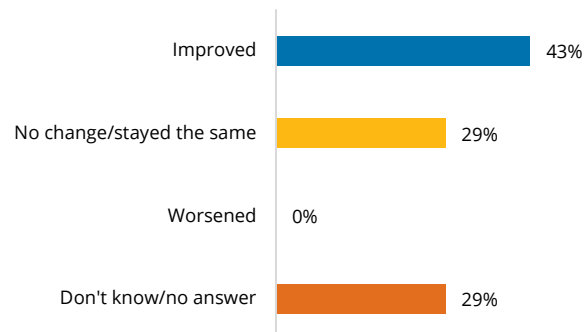
Figure 12: Rating the health of the local economy



In 2023, perceptions of the health of the Town's economy were stronger with 96% of respondents rating the local economy's health as either excellent or good.

Survey respondents were asked if they think the local economy's health has changed over the past year. 43% of respondents believe the local economy's health has improved over the past year while 29% of respondents believe the local economy's health has stayed the same. 29% of respondents did not know how the health of Stratford's local economy has changed over the past year.

Figure 13: Perceived changes to the health of the local economy



The 2024 responses to this question yielded similar results to the 2023 responses, where 87% of respondents thought the health of the local economy either improved or experienced no change/stayed the same.

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question on why they think the health of the Town's economy has changed over the past year. Five (5) respondents provided an answer to this question. Respondents who believe Stratford's economy has **improved** over the past year think this is due to:

- Growth within the Town;
- New businesses drawing larger population from outside of the Town.

One respondent that believes there has been no change to the health of the local economy in the past year commented that there are no major or minor factors that are different from this time last year.

3.2 DOING BUSINESS IN STRATFORD

Survey respondents were asked to rate the Town overall as a place to do business. 50% of respondents rate the Town as an excellent or good place to do business. 29% rate the Town as a fair place to do business and seven percent (7%) rate the Town as a poor place to do business.

Figure 14: Rating the Town as a place to do business overall



2024 survey respondents gave the Town a lower rating as a place to do business compared to the 2023 survey. In 2023, 91% of survey respondents rated the Town as an excellent or good place to do business.

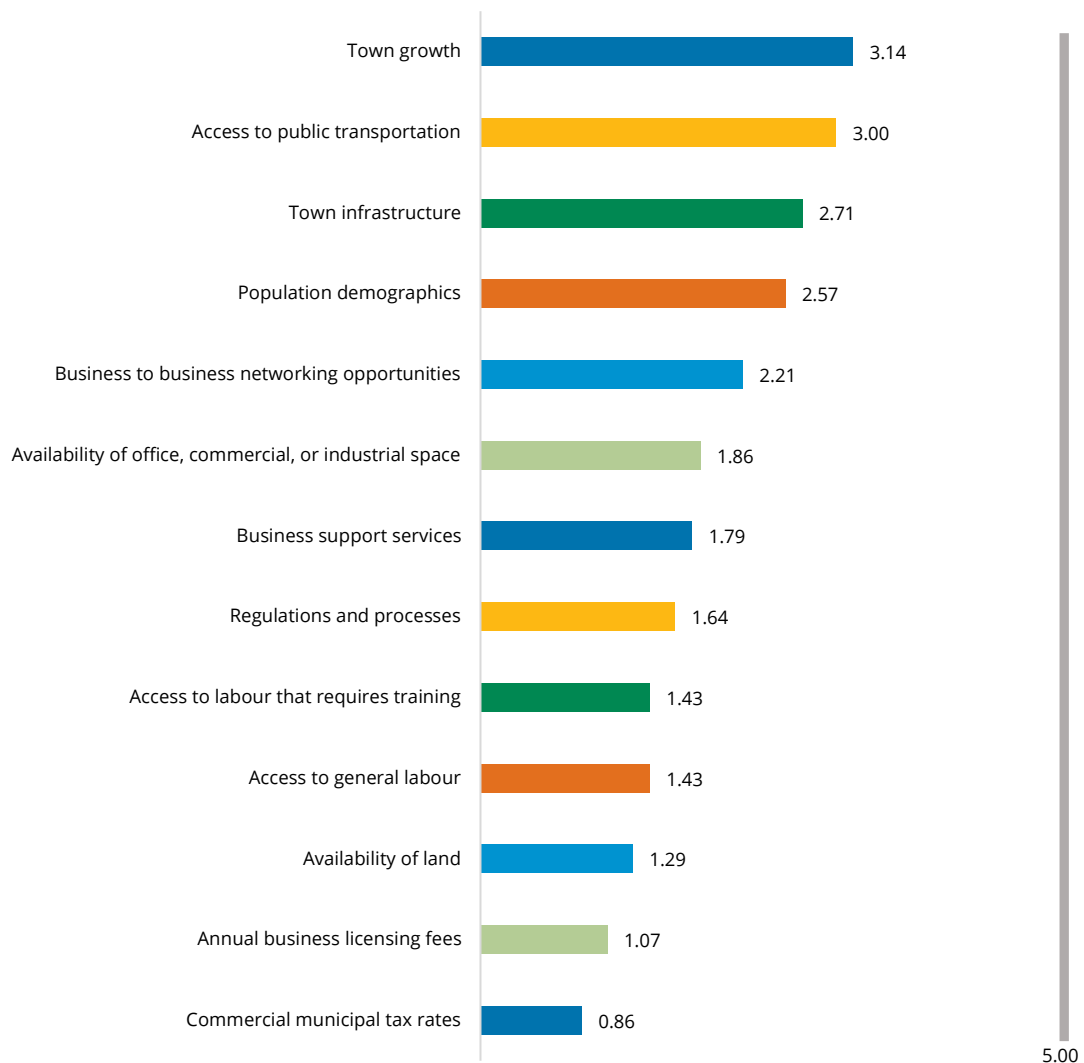
Survey respondents were asked to rate Stratford as a place to do business the following areas:

- Access to public transportation
- Access to labour that requires training
- Access to general labour
- Annual business licensing fees
- Availability of land
- Availability of office, commercial, or industrial space
- Business support services
- Business-to-business networking opportunities
- Commercial municipal tax rates
- Population demographics
- Regulations and processes
- Town growth
- Town infrastructure

The highest-rated areas are 1) Town growth (3.14), 2) access to public transportation (3), and 3) Town infrastructure (2.71). The lowest-rated areas are 1) commercial municipal tax rates (0.86), 2) annual business licensing fees (1.07), and 3) availability of land (1.29).

This question used a rating scale and the answers provided were calculated using a weighted average formula. An explanation of the weighted average calculation can be found in the [methodology section](#) of this report. The weighted averages for each option, and a maximum possible value demonstrated by a grey vertical line, are shown in the chart below.

Figure 15: Rating the Town as a place to do business, in the following areas



From these responses, it can be deduced that municipal fees associated with operating a business within the Town (e.g., business licensing fees and commercial municipal tax rate) are the largest perceived negative of operating a business within the Town.

Survey respondents were asked if they had any suggestions to help the Town become a better place to do business and/or encourage more businesses to locate within Stratford. Six (6) respondents provided an answer to this question. The main themes of the responses were:

- Continue improvements to traffic flow on the Hillsborough Bridge;
- More Town support to help promote businesses;
- Ensure access to public and active transportation grows with the Town; and
- Refrain from implementing policies that could negatively impact business operations.

4.0 TOWN SERVICES, SUPPORTS, AND PROGRAMS

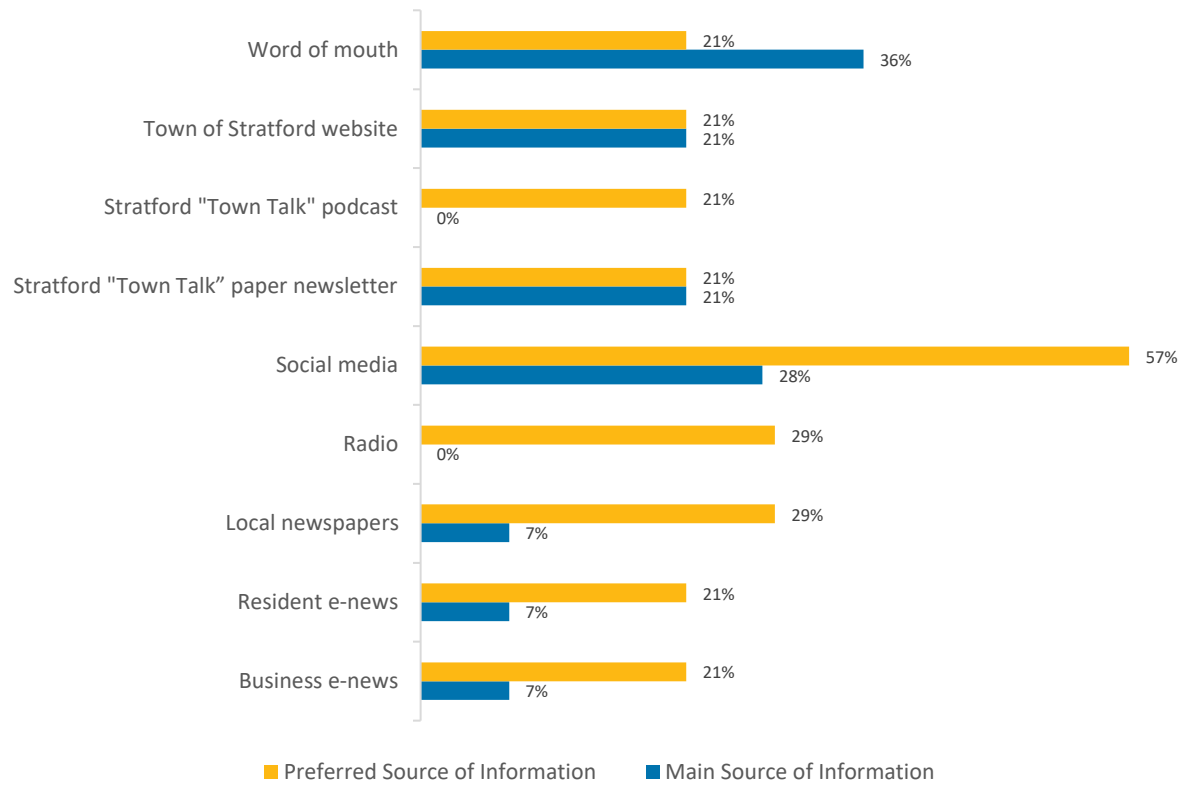
Survey respondents were asked a series of questions about the Town's business services, supports, and programs. The following list contains the key highlights from the survey questions on the Town's services, supports, and programs.

- Over half of all respondents (57%) prefer to get information from the Town's social media accounts, such as Facebook, X, and Instagram). 35% of respondents mainly obtain information by word of mouth.
- 25% of respondents report utilizing the Town's finance and technology services in the past year.
- Of all Town services, supports, and infrastructure, respondents are most satisfied with Town emergency services, communications, and online services and website.
- The most utilized Town business supports among respondents are the Town's resident and business e-newsletter, as well as the Town of Stratford Business Facebook Group. Many respondents are not aware of the Town's business support offerings but will now consider using.
- 60% of respondents are aware of the Town's THINK! Stratford campaign.
- Respondents would like to see the Town develop a business assistance program.

4.1 TOWN COMMUNICATIONS

Survey respondents were asked to identify both their main and preferred sources of information relating to the Town of Stratford. Over half of respondents (57%) prefer using the Town's social media platforms to obtain information. The remaining survey options are relatively equally preferred, ranging from 21%-29%. 36% of respondents identify word of mouth as their current main source of information while 29% identify social media as their main source for obtaining information. Fewer respondents indicated main sources of information compared to preferred sources of information.

Figure 16: Main and preferred sources of information



Although the most preferred source of information among respondents in both 2023 and 2024, a higher percentage of 2024 respondents identified social media as their preferred source of information compared to last year (57% in 2024 versus 26% in 2023).

4.2 UTILIZATION OF TOWN SERVICES

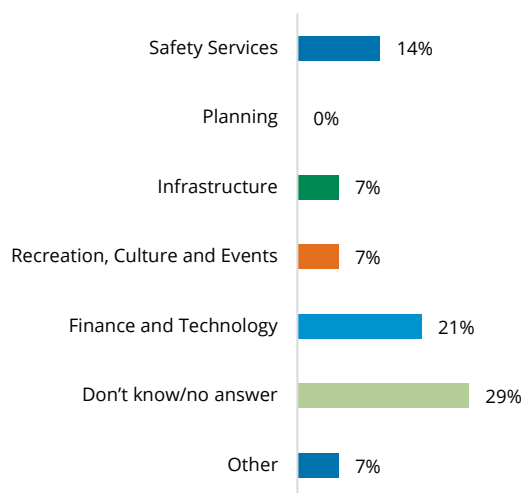
Survey respondents were asked if they utilized any of the following Town services over the past year:

- Safety Services (e.g., animal control, police, fire, noise and nuisance, unsightly premises or general complaints)
- Planning (e.g., building permits, plans or development)
- Infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, trails, buildings, properties, sewer and water)
- Recreation, Culture and Events (e.g., schedules, bookings, special events, program registrations)
- Finance and Technology (utility bills, statements, payables and receivables)

29% of respondents did not know or had not utilized any of the services from the preselected list of options over the past year. The most utilized Town service among respondents is finance and technology services, such as utility bills, statements, payables and receivables, with 21% of respondents selecting this option. No respondents have utilized the Town's planning services in the past year.

One respondent selected "other" and indicated they claim home-based usage as a percentage of their residence - this comment may be in reference to corporate and/or person tax filings and not related to any services that the Town provides.

Figure 17: Utilization of Town services



Compared to 2023, a higher percentage of 2024 survey respondents report using the Town's safety services (e.g., fire) and finance and technology services (e.g., utility bills) and a lower percentage of respondents utilized the Town's recreation, culture and events, planning, and infrastructure services over the past year.

4.3 SATISFACTION WITH TOWN SERVICES, SUPPORTS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

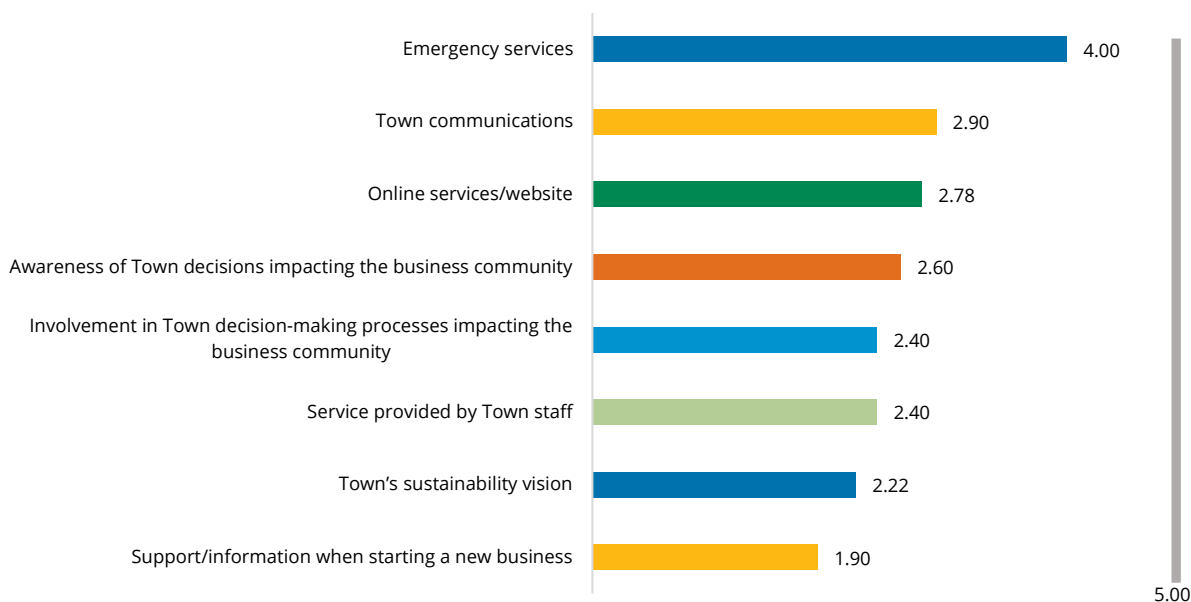
Survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the following business services, supports, and infrastructure provided by the Town:

- Awareness of Town decisions impacting the business community
- Emergency services (e.g. police, fire, and ambulance)
- Involvement in Town decision-making processes impacting the business community
- Online services/website
- Service provided by Town staff
- Support/information when starting a new business
- Town communications
- Town's sustainability vision

Respondents are most satisfied with the Town's emergency services (4/5), communications (2.90/5), and online services/website (2.78/5). Respondents are least satisfied with the Town's support or information available for new business startups (1.90/5).

The answers to this rating scale question were calculated using a weighted average formula. An explanation of the weighted average calculation can be found in the [methodology section](#) of this report. The weighted averages for each option, and a maximum possible value demonstrated by a grey vertical line, are shown in the chart below.

Figure 18: Satisfaction with the following Town services, supports and infrastructure.



In both 2023 and 2024, respondents were least satisfied with the support or information given by the Town when starting a new business.

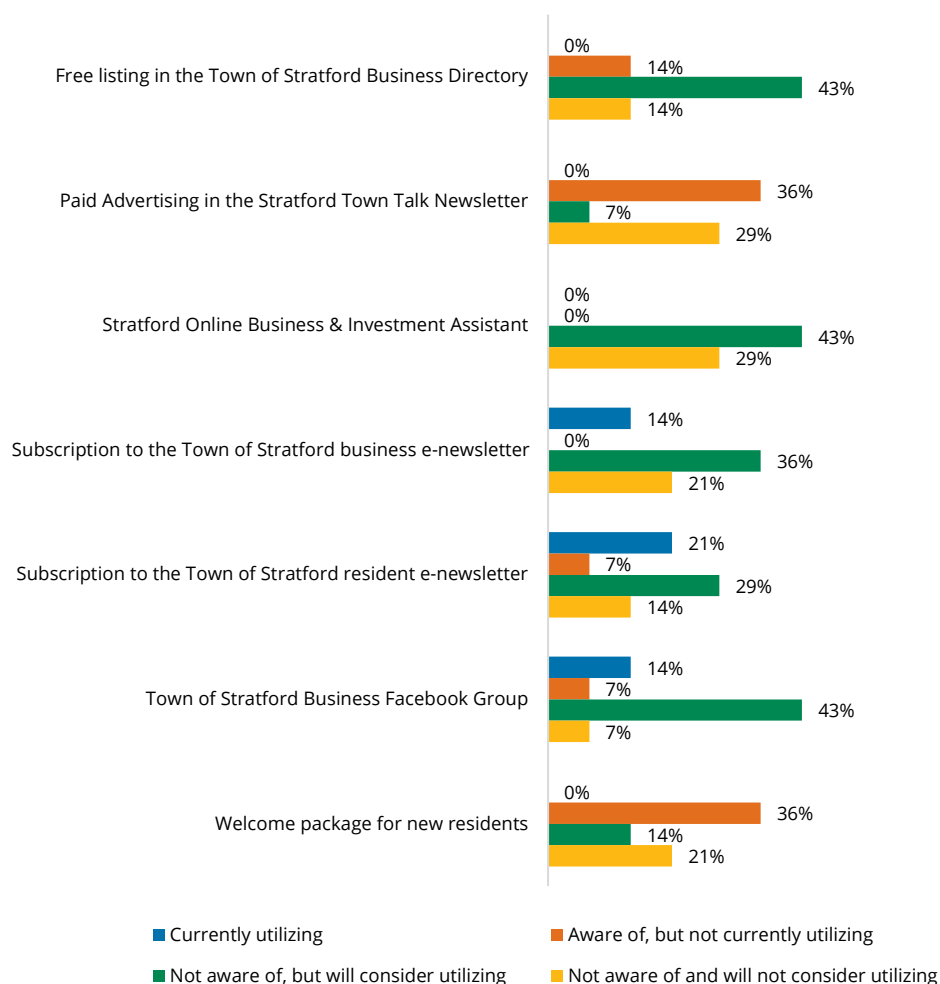
Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question to share how the Town could improve satisfaction with available services, supports, and infrastructure, however no substantial answers were provided.

4.4 UTILIZATION OF TOWN BUSINESS SUPPORTS

Survey respondents were asked to rate their utilization and awareness of various business supports offered by the Town. The most utilized support is the Town's resident e-newsletter (21%) followed by the Town's Business Facebook Group and business e-newsletter (14% each).

The majority of respondents are not utilizing the Town's business supports. Many respondents indicate that they were unaware of the business supports that the Town offers but will now consider utilizing. Business supports which the Town may consider increasing promotion of, based on the survey results, include the free listing in the business directory, the online business and investment assistant, and the business Facebook group, as 43% of respondents were not previously aware that these supports existed but will now consider utilizing.

Figure 19: Utilization or awareness of the following Town business supports.

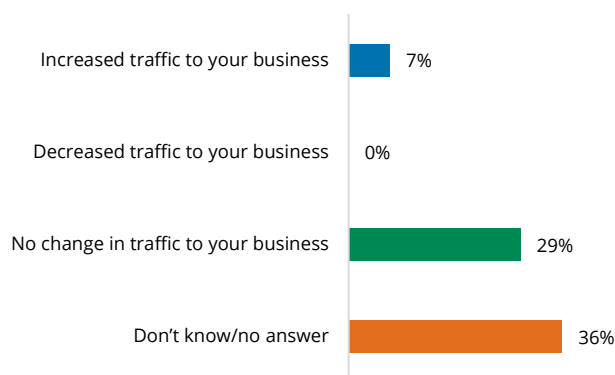


4.5 THINK! STRATFORD

Survey respondents were asked if they are aware of the Town of Stratford’s THINK! Stratford campaign. THINK! Stratford is a town of Stratford campaign that encourages residents to spend their money and time in Stratford when they shop, play, and explore. 43% of respondents indicate they are aware of the THINK! Stratford campaign.

Survey respondents were then asked if the THINK! Stratford campaign has resulted in a change in traffic to their business. Seven percent (7%) of respondents believe THINK! Stratford has increased traffic to their business.

Figure 20: Impact of the THINK! Stratford campaign



Responses to this question remained consistent from 2023 to 2024, with the majority of respondents being unsure how the THINK! Stratford campaign impacts their business.

4.6 RESULTS MATTER STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Survey respondents were asked to rank the importance of the following priorities, identified from the Town’s 2019 Results Matter Strategic Performance Management Plan.

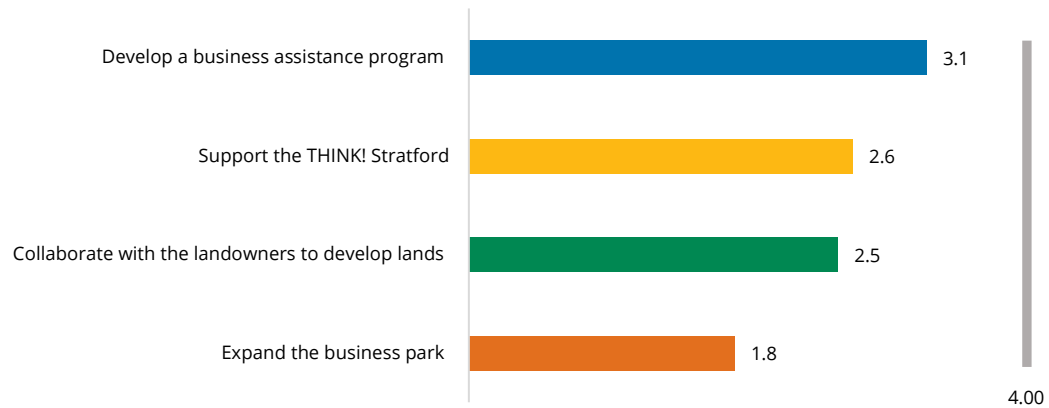
- Continue to support the THINK! Stratford support local campaign
- Collaborate with the landowners in the core area to develop the lands in accordance with the core area plan
- Develop a business assistance program to provide training and networking opportunities for local businesses and to act as a navigator for businesses looking to start or expand
- Continue to expand the business park to meet demand for industrial land

The highest-rated priority is for the Town to develop a business assistance program that provides training and networking opportunities for local businesses and acts as a navigator for businesses looking to start or expand. The lowest-rated priority of the four options is the expansion of the Stratford Business Park.

The results of this rating scale question were calculated using a weighted average formula. An explanation of the weighted average calculation can be found in the [methodology section](#) of this

report. The weighted averages for each option, and a maximum possible value demonstrated by a grey vertical line, are shown in the chart below.

Figure 21: Importance of the Results Matter Strategic Performance Management Plan priorities



Respondents were asked to provide any other local business community priorities not listed in the previous question that the Town should be aware of. One (1) respondent indicated that funding and grant opportunities should be incorporated as a priority for the Town.

Respondents were informed that the Town is working to provide more online services for businesses on the Town's website and asked to list other online services the Town could offer that would benefit their business. One (1) respondent suggested having a directory of federal and provincial business supports as well as a directory for office, land, and commercial real estate located within the Town.

5.0 FUTURE BUSINESS GROWTH AND EXPANSION

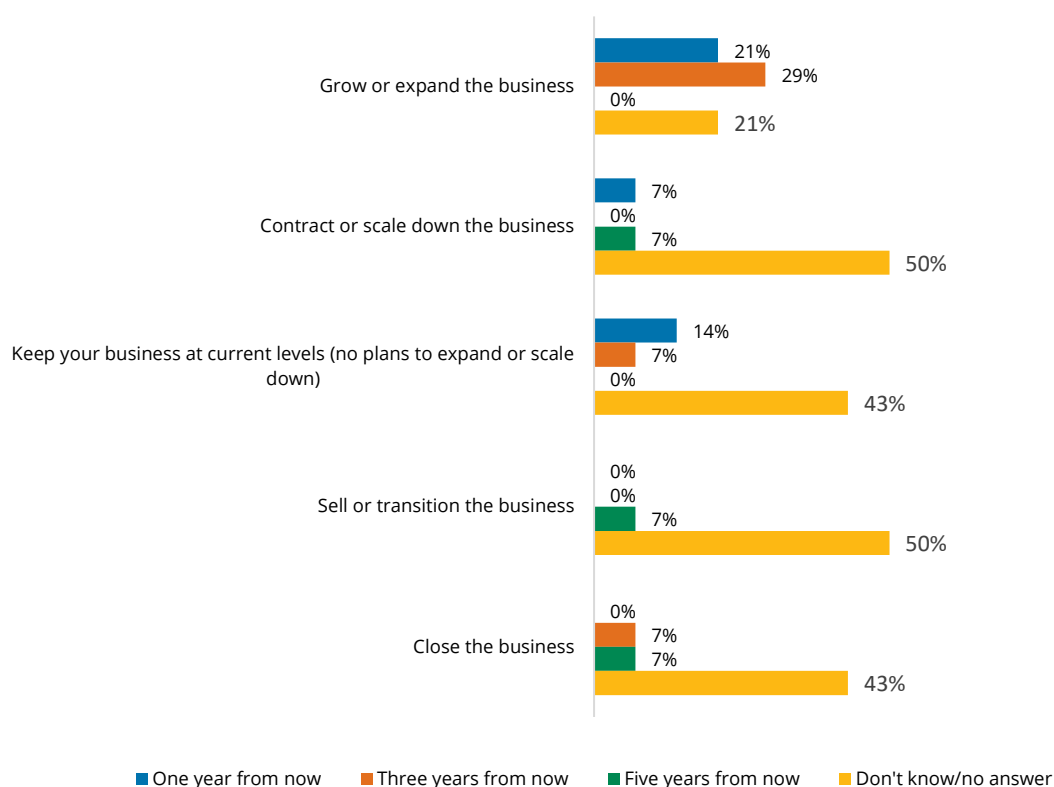
Survey respondents were asked a series of questions about their future plans for growth and expansion of their business. The following list contains the key highlights from the survey questions relating to respondents' future plans.

- 50% of respondents plan on growing or expanding their business in the next one to three years.
- Moderate challenges impacting businesses' ability to grow and expand include the lack of adequate commercial space, lack of customer base, and lack of qualified workers.
- No respondents have employee vacancies due to lack of available housing.
- Some business owners think that enhanced transportation options, including public transit and expanding the Hillsborough Bridge, would make Stratford a better place for their employees.

5.1 BUSINESS GROWTH AND EXPANSION

Respondents were asked about their intended business operations over the next few years. Half of all survey respondents plan to grow or expand their business within the next one to three years. 21% of respondents intend to sell or close their business within the next three to five years.

Figure 22: Business growth over the next five years



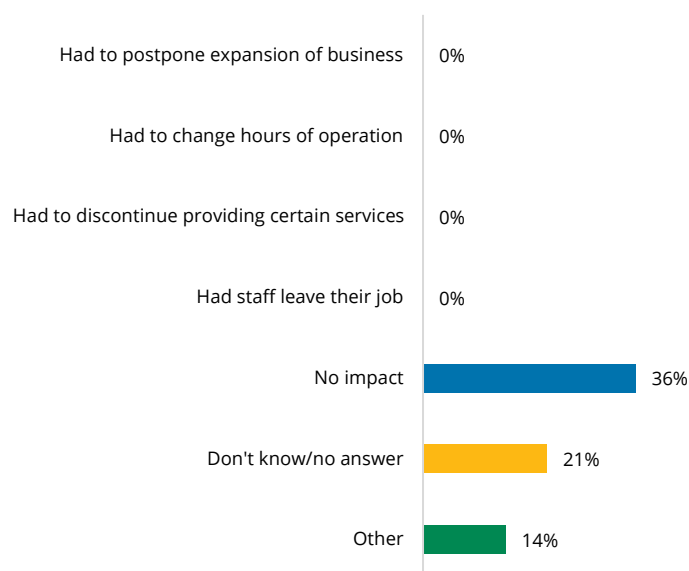
Compared to 2023, there is more uncertainty among survey respondents about future business operations. Please note that the 2024 survey provided a “Don’t know/no answer” option for this question whereas the 2023 survey did not.

Survey respondents who plan on growing or expanding their business were asked an open-ended question about if they plan to do so within the Town of Stratford. Three respondents indicated that they intend to grow their business within the Town, provided there is suitable commercial space available.

5.2 BARRIERS TO GROWTH AND EXPANSION

Survey respondents were asked about the impact that housing availability in Stratford has on their business. No respondents indicate that they have vacant employee positions due to lack of housing for employees. 36% of respondents report experiencing no impact at all and 21% do not know or have no answer about the impact of housing availability on their business.

Figure 23: Impact of housing availability within the Town

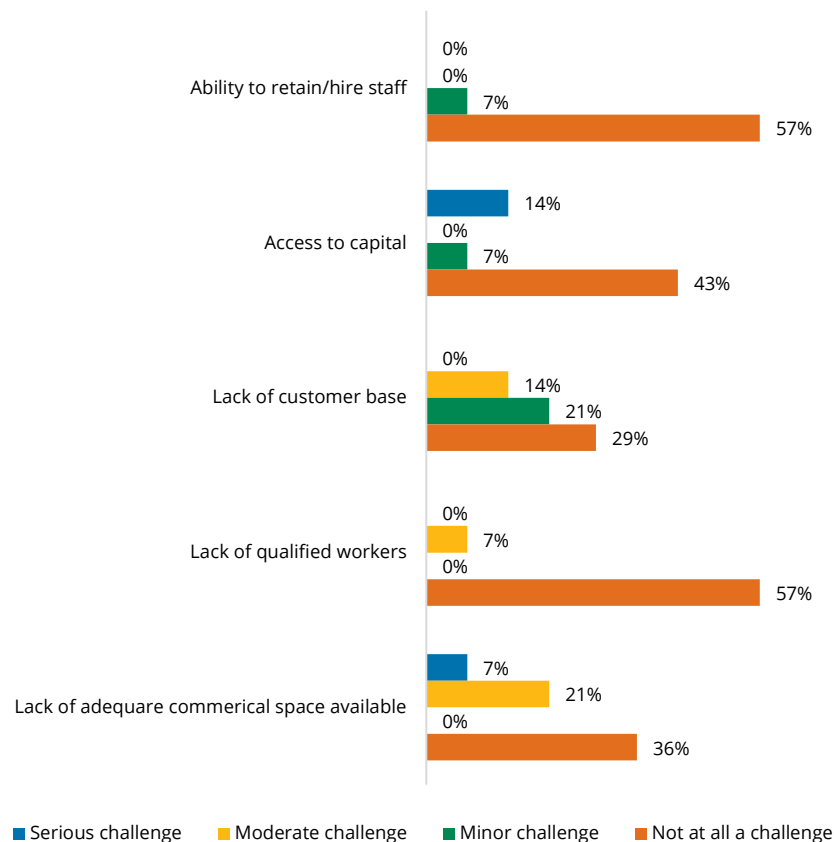


Two (2) respondents selected “other”. One respondent explains that the lack of affordable housing means that lower-income individuals and families are unable to use services offered by their business. The other respondent’s comment supports a “no impact” answer.

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question about if the Town can do anything to make Stratford a better place for the employees of local businesses. Two (2) respondents provided an answer to this question. Both indicate a need for enhanced transportation routes, including local public transit and expanding the Hillsborough Bridge. Another comment suggests the Town should ease regulations relating to short-term rentals.

Respondents were presented with a list of challenges that could impact their ability to grow or expand and asked to rate the severity of the challenge to their business. The most serious challenge affecting respondents is access to capital (14%). The majority of respondents feel that none of the identified challenges provided as answer choices are impacting their business.

Figure 24: Rate the severity of the following challenges.



In 2023, 39% of respondents identified the ability to retain and/or hire staff as a serious or moderate challenge, however, 57% of respondents this year don't believe this is a challenge at all.

Survey respondents were asked an open-ended question about whether there were other impacts to their business outside of the answer choices provided. One respondent indicates that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are still impacting their business. Another respondent indicates that the implementation of new bylaws/regulations (specifically short-term rental) by the Town Council are impacting their business' ability to grow.

6.0 POTENTIAL TOWN INITIATIVES

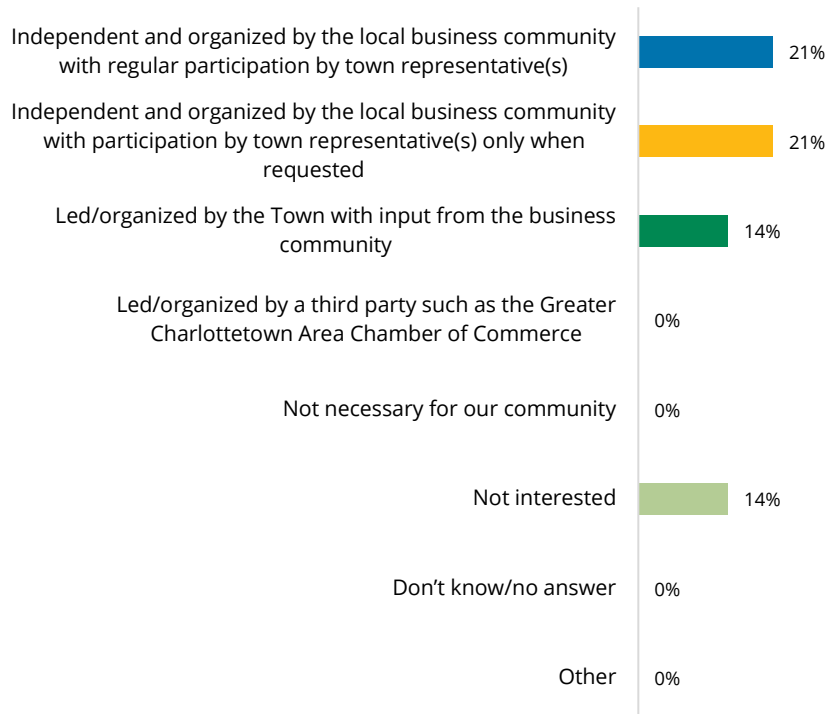
Survey respondents were asked a series of questions about potential initiatives the Town could implement to benefit the Town's business community. The following list contains the key highlights from the survey questions on various potential Town initiatives.

- Regarding potential new programming and supports, respondents are most interested in cost-shared marketing opportunities, networking opportunities, and partnering with the Town on events, activities, promotions, and/or programs.
- If the Town rebooted the Town of Stratford Business Group, respondents would prefer it to be a group independent and organized by the local business community with participation by Town representatives.

6.1 TOWN OF STRATFORD BUSINESS GROUP INITIATIVE

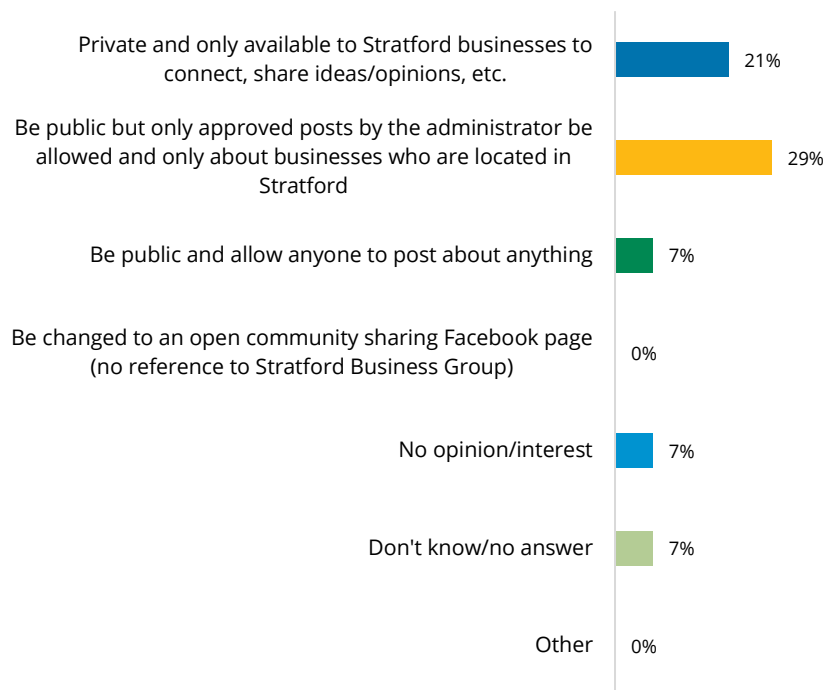
Survey respondents were presented with a list of potential strategies for forming and leading a new Town of Stratford Business Group. The strategy that received the most support is a Business Group independent and organized by the local business community with participation (regular or upon request) from Town representative(s) (43%). Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents are not interested in a Stratford Business Group.

Figure 25: Stratford Business Group structure



Survey respondents were asked about the permissions and accessibility of the Stratford Business Group Facebook page. 29% of respondents indicate they want the page to be public with all posts being related to businesses located in the Town and all posts approved by the group’s administrator.

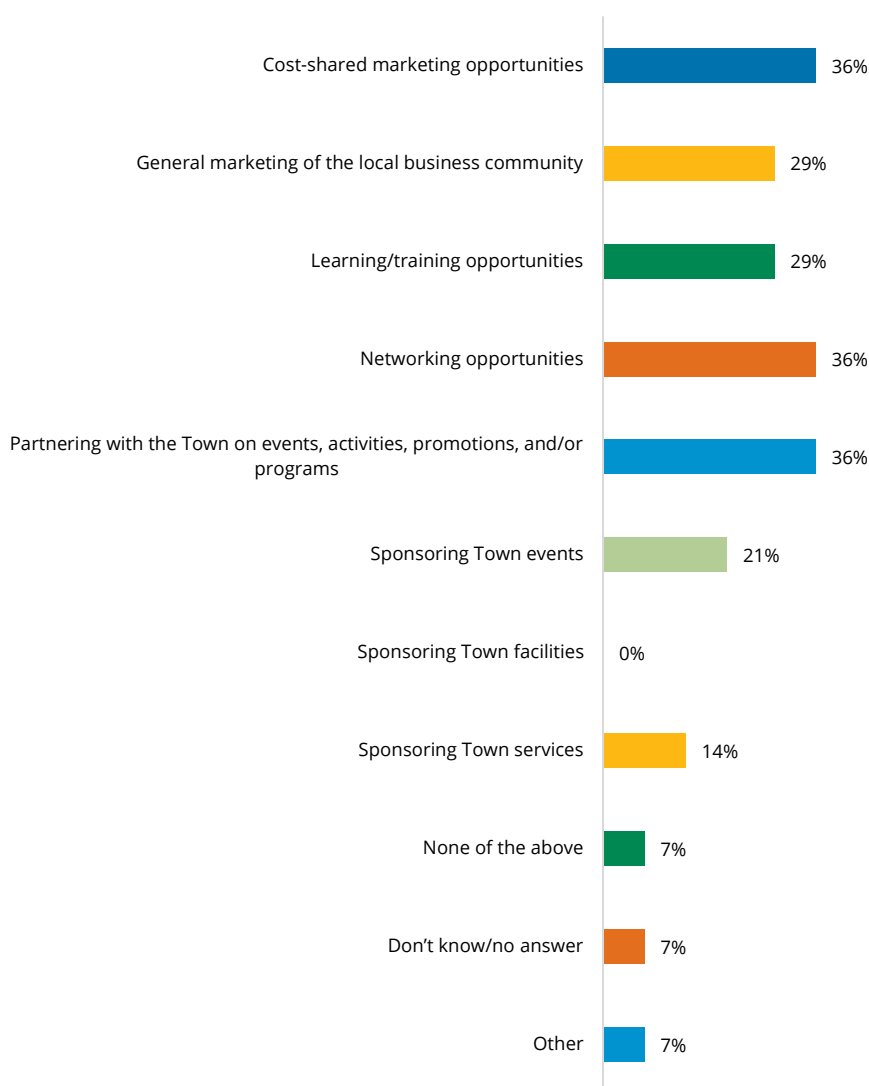
Figure 26: Stratford Business Group Facebook page preferences



6.2 SUPPORT FOR POTENTIAL TOWN INITIATIVES

Survey respondents were presented with a list of potential new programs and supports targeted towards the local business community and asked to select all the opportunities they would be most interested in. The opportunities that received the most support from respondents are cost-shared marketing opportunities (36%), networking opportunities (36%), and partnering with the Town on events, activities, promotions, and/or programs (36%). These top three rated supports are the same top three rated supports identified in the 2023 survey.

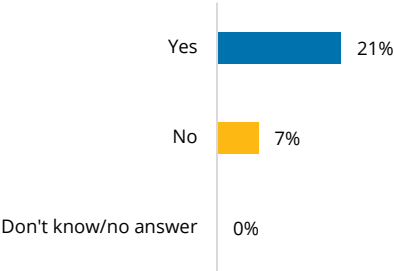
Figure 27: Interest in new programs and supports.



Survey respondents who expressed interest in learning/training opportunities were asked to describe the types of topics (e.g. tax tips, diversity and inclusion, online marketing, etc.) and delivery methods (e.g. half-day sessions, online training, etc.) that would most interest them and their business. Two (2) respondents provided an answer to this question. Training in marketing practices was mentioned by both respondents and other topics mentioned include operations, technology trends, networking, and human resources. These respondents did not specify their preferred delivery methods for learning opportunities.

Respondents were asked if they would be willing to pay to participate in learning opportunities provided for the local business community by the Town of Stratford. 21% of respondents are willing to pay to participate in learning opportunities provided by the Town.

Figure 28: Willingness to pay for learning opportunities put on by the Town



7.0 YOUR TOWN AND YOUR BUSINESS

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions about their relationship with the Town. The following list contains the key highlights from the survey questions on the Town and business community relationship.

- The 2024 Net Promoter Score for the Town of Stratford's Business Community is **-20**.
- Survey respondents are most satisfied with the Town's overall performance and ability to meet their needs.

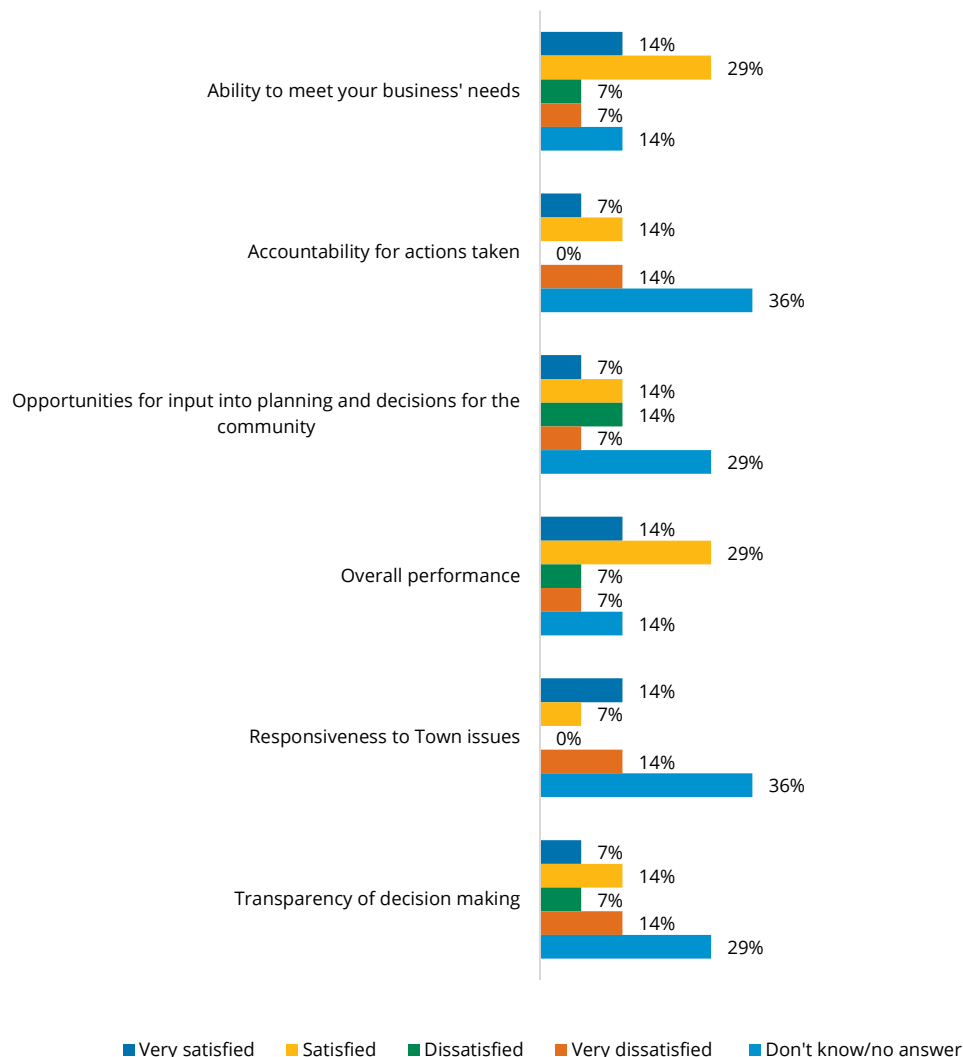
7.1 SATISFACTION WITH TOWN PERFORMANCE

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they are with the Town in the following areas:

- Overall performance
- Ability to meet your needs
- Responsiveness to Town issues
- Transparency of decision making
- Opportunities for input into planning and decisions for the community
- Accountability for actions taken

Survey respondents are most satisfied with the Town's overall performance (43% very satisfied or satisfied) and ability to meet their needs (43% very satisfied or satisfied). Respondents are least satisfied with the transparency of decision making (21% very dissatisfied or dissatisfied) and the accountability for actions taken by the Town (14% very dissatisfied).

Figure 29: Satisfaction with each of the following areas



Respondents were asked an open-ended question about suggestions for questions that could be posed to residents and/or the local business community via one of the Town's surveys or social media accounts. There was one (1) response to this question which suggests that the Town should ask residents what products, services, amenities, experiences, etc. they travel outside of the Town to get/consume.

7.2 NET PROMOTER SCORE

The Stratford Resident Survey contains an annual Net Promoter Score question to measure changes in residents' satisfaction with the Town of Stratford. The Net Promoter Score was originally created to aid businesses by gauging the attitudes and behaviors of their customers in terms of how likely they are to actively promote a product. The Net Promoter Score is utilized in the Stratford Annual Business Survey as an internal benchmarking tool for noting changes in satisfaction with Stratford as a place to own or operate a business.

The Net Promoter Score is calculated by first asking respondents how likely they would be to recommend the Town, as a place to own or operate a business, to someone else. Survey respondents then rate their likelihood of recommending the Town on a 1-10 scale. All answers are separated into three categories - promoters, passives, and detractors. The Net Promoter Score is determined by subtracting the number of detractors from the total number of promoters (passives are not included in the calculation) where:

- Detractors (ratings from 1-6) are considered dissatisfied residents who might cause your community to receive fewer referrals by creating negative word-of-mouth.
- Passives (ratings from 7-8) are considered passively satisfied residents who are susceptible to offers from competing communities in your area.
- Promoters (ratings from 9-10) are considered highly-satisfied residents who are loyal – and likely to recommend your community.

The 2024 Net Promoter Score for the Town of Stratford's Business Community is -20 and is comprised of 20% promoters, 40% passives (not included in the calculation), and 40% detractors. These percentages are based on the 10 respondents who provided an answer to this question. The 2023 Net Promoter Score for the Town of Stratford's Business Community was 36 and the 2021 Net Promoter Score was 14.

Figure 30: Likelihood of recommending the Town as a place to do business



7.3 FINAL THOUGHTS FROM RESPONDENTS

Two (2) respondents provided final general comments for the Town's consideration in serving the business community. Comments include:

- "Consider that a lot of us are solopreneurs who have different business interests than "regular" or brick and mortar business owners. The solopreneurs are anyone from people offering professional services to paid content creators, live streamers, artists, etc. Consider things like studio spaces, recording studios, meeting spaces, etc."
- "Social media communication strategies need to be modernized to reach younger demographics."

8.0 METHODOLOGY

The target audience of the Town of Stratford Business Survey was the Town's business community. Key areas of inquiry were identified in consultation with the Town's Chief Administrative Officer; senior staff; Council Members; and special committees including staff and volunteers. Survey questions were developed to help the Town learn more about key topics such as the local business environment, Town services, supports, programs, potential Town initiatives, engagement between the Town and the local business community, and more.

The survey was available online and administered using the SurveyMonkey platform. MRSB Consulting Services Inc. and the Town's Community and Business Engagement lead worked together to develop and implement a communications strategy to encourage businesses to complete the survey. The communications strategy utilized the Town's social media platforms, e-news and business e-news newsletters, and direct emails to businesses.

The survey was launched on November 18, 2024, and closed on December 16, 2024. The deadline was extended by one (1) week to conduct final outreach to businesses. Eighteen (18) responses were received from the Town's businesses community. Survey data cleaning removed four (4) substantially incomplete responses, leaving fourteen (14) substantially complete responses for analysis. Surveys were deemed substantially complete if respondents answered at least fifteen (15) questions, including the profile questions. It is important to note that the sample size of fourteen (14) substantially completed surveys is not a large enough to accurately represent the Town's business community and therefore the results contained in this report may be unreliable or inconclusive.

Response rates to the 2024 survey were lower compared to both the 2021 and 2023 surveys, despite the extension of the survey deadline and the continued efforts of the Town to engage with businesses. The low survey participation can likely be contributed to factors including the date range for survey response (approaching end of year and Christmas holidays) as well as the other active Town surveys and public engagement activities occurring around the same time.

A copy of the 2024 survey along with responses and open-ended comments for each applicable question is included in this report as [Appendix 1](#). The percentages in this report have been calculated by dividing the number of respondents who answered a question in a particular way by the total number of survey respondents and then multiplying the quotient by 100. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or individual respondents skipping questions.

Some rating scale question results were calculated using a weighted average formula, which is a calculation that takes into account the varying degrees of importance of the numbers in a data set. In calculating a weighted average, each number in the data set is multiplied by a predetermined weight before the final calculation is made. In the case of a rating scale, weights are usually assigned from one to five, with one being poor and five being excellent. Figure 31: Weighted Average Formula shows the mathematical formula for calculating a weighted average.

Figure 31: Weighted Average Formula

$$\bar{x} = \frac{w_1x_1 + w_2x_2 + \cdots + w_nx_n}{w_1 + w_2 + \cdots + w_n}$$

9.0 APPENDIX 1: COPY OF SURVEY WITH RESPONSES

See attached.

2024 Stratford Business Survey

The Town of Stratford is committed to building the best possible community and has a shared vision for the future that considers many facets of life, including a thriving local economy. Businesses operating in the Town of Stratford are an integral part of Stratford's progress, growth, and quality of life.

It is important for the Town of Stratford to understand the needs of local businesses and deliver solutions to meet those needs. We are asking you to assist us by completing the 2024 Stratford Business Survey by **December 16, 2024**. Your feedback will help us enhance the way we interact and collaborate with the Town's business community.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The survey is anonymous; your business will not be connected to the answers you provide. To ensure full confidentiality, only group data will be reported. No individual information will be included in reports, and no reports will make it possible to identify individual businesses. The 2024 Stratford Business Survey is administered by MRSB Consulting Services.

Please note that:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary.
- There are no right or wrong answers. Even if you "don't know," this is valuable information for the Town of Stratford to know.
- You are free to stop the survey at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact:

Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager, Town of Stratford
902-569-6921 | wwatts@townofstratford.ca

Melissa McDonald, Consultant, MRSB Consulting Services
902-368-2213 | melissa.mcdonald@mrsbgroup.com

IMPORTANT

This survey should only be completed by Town of Stratford businesses.

If you operate more than one business within the Town of Stratford, please complete ONE survey for EACH of your businesses.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Please answer the following demographic questions to help the Town better understand the needs of Stratford's diverse businesses and organizations.

1. Which best describes your role?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Owner/operator	85.71%	12
Manager	7.14%	1
Supervisor	0.00%	0
Employee	7.14%	1
Other (please describe)	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

2. When does the business typically operate?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Seasonal	21.43%	3
Year-round	78.57%	11
Other (please describe)	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

3. Would you classify the business as...?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
For-profit	92.86%	13
Not-for-profit	7.14%	1
Other (please describe)	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

4. Is the business a "home-based" business (i.e. any business that is primarily operated out of an individual's primary residence)?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Yes	42.86%	6
No	50.00%	7
Answered		13
Skipped		1

5. If your business has a "bricks-and-mortar" location, do you own or lease the space?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Own	28.57%	4
Lease	28.57%	4
Don't know/no answer	28.57%	4
Answered		12
Skipped		2

6. How long has the business been operating?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Less than one year	0.00%	0
1-5 years	35.71%	5
6-10 years	21.43%	3
11 years or more	42.86%	6
Don't know/no answer	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

7. Where is the business's primary location?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Within Stratford	85.71%	12
Outside of Stratford	14.29%	2
Answered		14
Skipped		0

8. How long has the business's Stratford location been operating?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Less than one year	7.14%	1
1-5 years	35.71%	5
6-10 years	28.57%	4
11 years or more	28.57%	4
Don't know/no answer	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

9. How many individuals does your business employ within the Town of Stratford?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
0 (self-employed)	64.29%	9
1-5	7.14%	1
6-10	14.29%	2
11-25	14.29%	2
26-50	0.00%	0
51-75	0.00%	0
76-99	0.00%	0
100+	0.00%	0
Don't know/no answer	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

10. What sector does your business primarily operate in?

Choose one.

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Accommodations	7.14%	1
Automotive and machinery	0.00%	0
Artist and artisans	7.14%	1
Children and family services	0.00%	0
Construction and building	0.00%	0
Community groups	7.14%	1
Fitness, health and wellness	14.29%	2
Finance and professional services	14.29%	2
Manufacturing and processing	0.00%	0
Personal care services	0.00%	0
Pet, animal and veterinary	0.00%	0
Restaurant, food and beverage	0.00%	0
Retail and services	14.29%	2
Senior services	7.14%	1
Other (please describe)	28.57%	4
Answered		14
Skipped		0

Descriptions provided for "Other" selection:

- Sport and recreation
- Computer system design
- Media and communications
- Janitorial

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Please answer all questions from a business/organization perspective, not the perspective of a resident.

11. How would you describe your “sense of belonging” to the Town of Stratford’s business community?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Very strong	0.00%	0
Somewhat strong	21.43%	3
Neutral	28.57%	4
Somewhat weak	28.57%	4
Very weak	21.43%	3
Don't know/no answer	0.00%	0
Answered		14
Skipped		0

12. How would you rate the health of the Town of Stratford’s local economy?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Excellent	0.00%	0
Good	50.00%	7
Fair	35.71%	5
Poor	0.00%	0
Very poor	0.00%	0
Don't know/no answer	14.29%	2
Answered		14
Skipped		0

13. Over the past year, do you think the health of the Town of Stratford’s local economy has...

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Improved	42.86%	6
No change/stayed the same	28.57%	4
Worsened	0.00%	0
Don't know/no answer	28.57%	4
Answered		14
Skipped		0

14. Why do you think Stratford’s local economy is improving, staying the same, or worsening?

Please try to focus your answer on Stratford’s economy, not the economy of PEI as a whole.

Open-ended Responses	
Growing with new business, bringing people across the bridge to visit.	
Growth within the town	
I can't think of any major or minor particulars that are that much different from this time last year.	
It's growth	
Same	

Answered 5
Skipped 9

15. How would you rate the Town of Stratford as a place to do business?

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Excellent	7.14%	1
Good	42.86%	6
Fair	28.57%	4
Poor	7.14%	1
Very poor	0.00%	0
Don't know/no answer	14.29%	2
	Answered	14
	Skipped	0

16. Please rate the Town of Stratford, as a place to do business, based on the following factors:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Don't know/no answer
Access to public transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to labour that requires training	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to general labour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Annual business licensing fees	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Availability of land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Availability of office, commercial, or industrial space	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Business support services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Business-to-business networking opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Commercial municipal tax rates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Population demographics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Regulations and processes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town growth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town infrastructure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer Choices	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Very poor		Don't know/no answer	Total	Weighted Average
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	
Access to public transportation	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	57.14%	8	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	3.00
Access to labour that requires training	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	57.14%	8	1.43
Access to general labour	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	50.00%	7	1.43
Annual business licensing fees	0.00%	0	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	64.29%	9	1.07
Availability of land	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	50.00%	7	1.29
Availability of office, commercial, or industrial space	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	35.71%	5	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	1.86
Business support services	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	35.71%	5	1.79
Business to business networking opportunities	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	28.57%	4	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	2.21
Commercial municipal tax rates	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	64.29%	9	0.86
Population demographics	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	35.71%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	28.57%	4	2.57
Regulations and processes	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	28.57%	4	21.43%	3	0.00%	0	42.86%	6	1.64
Town growth	21.43%	3	42.86%	6	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	3.14
Town infrastructure	21.43%	3	14.29%	2	35.71%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	28.57%	4	2.71
Answered												14	
Skipped												0	

17. Do you have any suggestions that would help the Town of Stratford become a better place to do business and/or encourage more businesses to locate within the Town of Stratford?

If you operate a business in a location other than the Town of Stratford, please consider business services and supports offered in that location that could benefit the Town of Stratford's business community.

Open-ended Responses
I believe Stratford can be a great destination, but people need to be able to get here and easily stop here. Public transit must be expanded. Speed limits on the TCH should be reduced to 50 at all four Town boundaries. The limit is 50-60 in Charlottetown when passing through business areas on Riverside Drive and Upton Road. Signage rules should be updated and properly enforced.
In the absence of Hotel/Motel accommodations refrain from measures that negatively target short term rentals. STR's greatly benefit many other Stratford businesses and services.
Lower taxes
Provide areas for families with more disposable income to live. Generally, IMO, those families are not seeking density builds.
Second bridge
The bridge construction is a huge deterrent for many people who reside outside of Stratford. We also feel the town could do more to help promote our business.

Answered 6
Skipped 8

TOWN SERVICES, SUPPORTS, AND PROGRAMS

Please answer all questions from the perspective of a business owner, not the perspective of a resident.

18. What are your MAIN sources of information regarding the Town of Stratford, and what are your PREFERRED sources of information regarding the Town of Stratford?

Please check all that apply.

	Main Source of Information	Preferred Source of Information
Business e-news	☐	☐
Community (Resident) e-news	☐	☐
Local newspapers	☐	☐
Radio station	☐	☐
Social media (such as Facebook, X, or Instagram)	☐	☐
"Stratford Town Talk" paper newsletter	☐	☐
"Stratford Town Talk" podcast	☐	☐
Town of Stratford website: www.townofstratford.ca	☐	☐
Word of mouth	☐	☐

Answer Choices	Main Source of Information		Preferred Source of Information	
	%	#	%	#
Business e-news	7.14%	1	21.43%	3
Community (Resident) e-news	7.14%	1	21.43%	3
Local newspapers	7.14%	1	28.57%	4
Radio station	0.00%	0	28.57%	4
Social media (such as Facebook, X, Instagram)	28.57%	4	57.14%	8
Stratford "Town Talk" paper newsletter	21.43%	3	21.43%	3
Stratford "Town Talk" podcast	0.00%	0	21.43%	3
Town of Stratford website: www.townofstratford.ca	21.43%	3	21.43%	3
Word of mouth	35.71%	5	21.43%	3
Answered				10
Skipped				4

19. Has your business utilized any of the following Town services within the past year?

Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Safety Services (animal control, police, fire, noise and nuisance, unsightly premises or general complaints)
- ☐ Planning (building permits, plans or development)
- ☐ Infrastructure (sidewalks, trails, buildings, properties, sewer and water)
- ☐ Recreation, Culture and Events (schedules, bookings, special events, program registrations)
- ☐ Finance and Technology (utility bills, statements, payables and receivables)
- ☐ Don't know/no answer
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Safety Services (animal control, police, fire, noise and nuisance, unsightly premises or general complaints)	14.29%	2
Planning (building permits, plans or development)	0.00%	0
Infrastructure (sidewalks, trails, buildings, properties, sewer and water)	7.14%	1
Recreation, Culture and Events (schedules, bookings, special events, program registrations)	7.14%	1
Finance and Technology (utility bills, statements, payables and receivables)	21.43%	3
Don't know/no answer	28.57%	4
Other (please specify) – see response below	7.14%	1
Answered		12
Skipped		2

Description provided for “Other” selection:

- Home-based usage as a percentage of my residence

20. The Town of Stratford seeks to provide services, supports, and infrastructure that help businesses grow. Please rate your satisfaction with the following Town of Stratford services, supports and infrastructure.

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know/no answer
Awareness of Town decisions impacting the business community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emergency services (e.g. police, fire, and ambulance)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Involvement in Town decision-making processes impacting the business community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online services/website	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Service provided by Town staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support/information when starting a new business	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town communications	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town's sustainability vision	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer Choices	Very satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Somewhat dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Don't know/ no answer		Total Response # and Weighted Average	
Awareness of Town decisions impacting the business community	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	10	2.60
Emergency services (e.g., police, fire, and ambulance)	35.71%	5	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	10	4.00
Involvement in Town decision-making processes impacting the business community	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	42.86%	6	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	10	2.40
Online services/website	0.00%	0	28.57%	4	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	9	2.78
Service provided by Town staff	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	10	2.40
Support/information when starting a new business	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	21.43%	3	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	10	1.90
Town communications	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	28.57%	4	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	14.29%	2	10	2.90
Town's sustainability vision	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	9	2.22
													Answered	10
													Skipped	4

21. Please let us know how the Town can improve your satisfaction with the Town of Stratford services, supports, and infrastructure listed in the previous question.

Open-ended Responses

None at this time

Answered 1

Skipped 13

22. Please rate your utilization or awareness of the following Town of Stratford business supports.

	Currently utilizing	Aware of, but not currently utilizing	Not aware of, but will consider utilizing	Not aware of and will not consider utilizing
Free listing in the Town of Stratford Business Directory	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paid Advertising in the Stratford Town Talk Newsletter	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stratford Business & Investment Assistant (located on the Town's website)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Subscription to the Town of Stratford <i>business</i> e-newsletter	☐	☐	☐	☐
Subscription to the Town of Stratford <i>resident</i> e-newsletter	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town of Stratford Business Group Facebook Group	☐	☐	☐	☐
Welcome package for new residents	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer Choices	Currently utilizing		Aware of, but not currently utilizing		Not aware of, but will consider utilizing		Not aware of and will not consider utilizing		Total
Free listing in the Town of Stratford Business Directory	0.00%	0	14.29%	2	42.86%	6	14.29%	2	10
Paid Advertising in the Stratford Town Talk Newsletter	0.00%	0	35.71%	5	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	10
Stratford Business & Investment Assistant (located on the Town's website)	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	42.86%	6	28.57%	4	10
Subscription to the Town of Stratford business e-newsletter	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	35.71%	5	21.43%	3	10
Subscription to the Town of Stratford resident e-newsletter	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	14.29%	2	10
Town of Stratford Business Group Facebook Group	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	42.86%	6	7.14%	1	10
Welcome package for new residents	0.00%	0	35.71%	5	14.29%	2	21.43%	3	10
Answered									10
Skipped									4

23. Are you aware of the Town of Stratford's THINK! Stratford campaign?

THINK! Stratford is a Town of Stratford campaign that encourages residents to spend their money and time in Stratford when shopping, playing and exploring.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know/no answer

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Yes	42.86%	6
No	21.43%	3
Don't know/no answer	7.14%	1
Answered		10

24. The THINK! Stratford campaign began in 2016. In your opinion, over the past nine years, the THINK! Stratford campaign has resulted in...

- ☐ Increased traffic to your business
☐ Decreased traffic to your business
☐ No change in traffic to your business
☐ Don't know/no answer

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Increased traffic to your business	7.14%	1
Decreased traffic to your business	0.00%	0
No change in traffic to your business	28.57%	4
Don't know/no answer	35.71%	5
Answered		10
Skipped		4

25. The Town of Stratford identified several priorities directly correlated to the local business community in the *Results Matter Strategic Performance Management Plan, 2019 Renewal*. Please rate the following priorities, in order of importance to your business, from 1 (most preferred) to 4 (least preferred).

#_____ Continue to support the THINK! Stratford support local campaign

#_____ Collaborate with the landowners in the core area to develop the lands in accordance with the core area plan

#_____ Develop a business assistance program to provide training and networking opportunities for local businesses and to act as a navigator for businesses looking to start or expand

#_____ Continue to expand the business park to meet demand for industrial land

Answer Choices	1		2		3		4		Total	Score
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#		
Support the THINK! Stratford	14.29%	2	21.43%	3	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	9	2.6
Collaborate with the landowners to develop lands	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	14.29%	2	14.29%	2	9	2.5
Develop a business assistance program	35.71%	5	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	0.00%	0	9	3.1
Expand the business park	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	28.57%	4	9	1.8
									Answered	9
									Skipped	5

26. Please list any other local business community priorities not listed in the previous question that the Town should be aware of.

Open-ended Responses	
Funding and grant opportunities	
No	

Answered 2

Skipped 12

27. The Town is working to provide more online services for businesses on the Town's website. What online services could the Town offer that would benefit your business?

Potential online services could include directories of federal and provincial business supports, a directory of Town real estate available for sale or lease, etc.

Open-ended Responses	
I was actually going to mention the suggested "directories of federal and provincial business supports" and I do like the office/ land/ commercial real estate directory.	
None at this time	

Answered 2

Skipped 12

FUTURE PLANNING

28. Over the next few years, do you plan to...

	One year from now	Three years from now	Five years from now	Don't know/no answer
Grow or expand the business	☐	☐	☐	☐
Contract or scale down the business	☐	☐	☐	☐
Keep your business at current levels (no plans to expand or scale down)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sell or transition the business	☐	☐	☐	☐
Close the business	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer Choices	One year from now		Three years from now		Five years from now		Don't know/no answer		Total
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	
Grow or expand the business	21.43%	3	28.57%	4	0.00%	0	21.43%	3	10
Contract or scale down the business	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	50.00%	7	9
Keep your business at current levels (no plans to expand or scale down)	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	42.86%	6	9
Sell or transition the business	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	50.00%	7	8
Close the business	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	42.86%	6	8
Answered								10	
Skipped								4	

29. If you plan on growing or expanding your business, do you plan to do so within the Town of Stratford? Why or why not?

Open-ended Responses
I will continue as a home-based business until I need commercial space, at which time I will obtain space within Stratford.
If we can find suitable commercial space. It's been challenging.
Yes.....location

Answered 3
Skipped 11

30. Do you have vacant employee positions you have not been able to fill which you believe to be because of a lack of housing for employees?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know/no answer

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Don't know/no answer	7.14%	1
Yes	0.00%	0
No	64.29%	9
Answered		10
Skipped		4

31. What has been the impact of housing availability in Stratford on your business?

Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Had to postpone expansion of business
 - ☐ Had to change hours of operation
 - ☐ Had to discontinue providing certain services
 - ☐ Had staff leave their job
 - ☐ No impact
 - ☐ Don't know/no answer
 - ☐ Other (please explain):
-

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Had to postpone expansion of business	0.00%	0
Had to change hours of operation	0.00%	0
Had to discontinue providing certain services	0.00%	0
Had staff leave their job	0.00%	0
No impact	35.71%	5
Don't know/no answer	21.43%	3
Other (please explain)	14.29%	2
Answered		10
Skipped		4

Descriptions of "Other" selection:

- Low income families unable to use services,
- No impact. Plenty of affordable housing available

32. The Town of Stratford is working towards making the Town a better place for your employees, as well as for your business. In your opinion, what can the Town of Stratford do to make the Town a better place for your employees?

E.g. affordable housing, diversity of housing, public transit, etc.

Open-ended Responses
Expand the Hillsborough bridge. Ease up on unnecessary STR regulations.
No
Public transit

Answered **3**
Skipped **11**

33. If any of the following challenges are impacting your ability to grow or expand your business, please rate the severity of the challenge.

If none of these challenges are impacting your ability to grow or expand your business, or if you are satisfied with the current size of your business, please skip this question.

	Serious challenge	Moderate challenge	Minor challenge	Not at all a challenge
Ability to retain/hire staff	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access to capital	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of customer base	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of qualified workers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of adequate commercial space available	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer Choices	Serious challenge		Moderate challenge		Minor challenge		Not at all a challenge		Total
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	
Ability to retain/hire staff	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	57.14%	8	9
Access to capital	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	42.86%	6	9
Lack of customer base	0.00%	0	14.29%	2	21.43%	3	28.57%	4	9
Lack of qualified workers	0.00%	0	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	57.14%	8	9
Lack of adequate commercial space available	7.14%	1	21.43%	3	0.00%	0	35.71%	5	9
Answered									9
Skipped									5

34. Are there any other challenges not listed in the previous question that are impacting your ability to grow or expand your business?

Open-ended Responses

Covid

Stratford town council implementing STR Bylaws/regulations where no problem exists.

Answered 2

Skipped 12

POTENTIAL TOWN INITIATIVES

Please answer all questions from the perspective of a business owner, not the perspective of a resident.

35. The Town of Stratford has seen many iterations of business groups over the years, from the Stratford Area Business Association to a partnership with the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce, and most recently an independent Stratford Business Group. The Town of Stratford believes that having regular communications with the business community enhances collaboration.

Moving forward, how should a new business group be formed and led?

- ☐ Independent and organized by the local business community with regular participation by town representative(s)
- ☐ Independent and organized by the local business community with participation by town representative(s) only when requested
- ☐ Led/organized by the Town with input from the business community
- ☐ Led/organized by a third party such as the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce
- ☐ Not necessary for our community
- ☐ Not interested
- ☐ Don't know/no answer
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Independent and organized by the local business community with regular participation by town representative(s)	21.43%	3
Independent and organized by the local business community with participation by town representative(s) only when requested	21.43%	3
Led/organized by the Town with input from the business community	14.29%	2
Led/organized by a third party such as the Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce	0.00%	0
Not necessary for our community	0.00%	0
Not interested	14.29%	2
Don't know/no answer	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
Answered		10
Skipped		4

36. The Stratford Business Group has a Facebook page. Would you like to see this page be:

- ☐ Private and only available to Stratford businesses to connect, share ideas/opinions, etc.
- ☐ Be public but only approved posts by the administrator be allowed and only about businesses who are located in Stratford
- ☐ Be public and allow anyone to post about anything
- ☐ Be changed to an open community sharing Facebook page (no reference to Stratford Business Group)
- ☐ No opinion/interest
- ☐ Don't know/no answer
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Private and only available to Stratford businesses to connect, share ideas/opinions, etc.	21.43%	3
Be public but only approved posts by the administrator be allowed and only about businesses who are located in Stratford	28.57%	4
Be public and allow anyone to post about anything	7.14%	1
Be changed to an open community sharing Facebook page (no reference to Stratford Business Group)	0.00%	0
No opinion/interest	7.14%	1
Don't know/no answer	7.14%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0

Answered 10

Skipped 4

37. If the Town of Stratford were to offer new programming and supports targeted towards the local business community, which of the following opportunities would you be most interested in?

Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Cost-shared marketing opportunities (e.g. Town marketing campaigns that promote participating businesses)
- ☐ General marketing of the local business community (e.g. marketing campaigns similar to THINK! Stratford)
- ☐ Learning/training opportunities (e.g. tax tips, social media marketing)
- ☐ Networking opportunities (e.g. business 'mixer')
- ☐ Partnering with the Town on events, activities, promotions, and/or programs
- ☐ Sponsoring Town events (e.g. Canada Day)
- ☐ Sponsoring Town facilities (e.g. Town parks)
- ☐ Sponsoring Town services (e.g. recreational programs)
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Don't know/no answer
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Cost-shared marketing opportunities (e.g., Town marketing campaigns promoting participating businesses)	35.71%	5
General marketing of the local business community (e.g., marketing campaigns similar to THINK! Stratford)	28.57%	4
Learning/training opportunities (e.g., tax tips, social media marketing)	28.57%	4
Networking opportunities (e.g., business 'mixer')	35.71%	5
Partnering with the Town on events, activities, promotions, and/or programs	35.71%	5
Sponsoring Town events (e.g., Canada Day)	21.43%	3
Sponsoring Town facilities (e.g., Town parks)	0.00%	0
Sponsoring Town services (e.g., recreational programs)	14.29%	2
None of the above	7.14%	1
Don't know/no answer	7.14%	1
Other (please describe)	7.14%	1

Answered 9

Skipped 5

Description of “Other” selection:

- Everything should be for sale. Shameless promotion is a good thing.

38. Please describe the types of learning opportunity topics (e.g. diversity and inclusion, online marketing etc.) and delivery models (e.g. half-day sessions, online training, etc.) that would be of most interest to you and your business.

Open-ended Responses
I do think there would be general demand for online marketing training session(s).
Sharing how-to best practices for marketing and operations; New trends in tech, equipment, processes; Proper networking; Labour and HR education and information sharing; Benefits of both mentorship and volunteer programs.

Answered 2

Skipped 12

39. Would you be willing to pay to participate in learning opportunities provided for the local business community by the Town of Stratford?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know/no answer

Answer Choices	Responses %	Responses #
Yes	21.43%	3
No	7.14%	1
Don't know/no answer	0.00%	0
Answered		4
Skipped		10

YOUR TOWN AND YOUR BUSINESS

Please answer all questions from the perspective of a business owner, not the perspective of a resident.

40. When you think about the Town of Stratford, how satisfied are you with each of the following areas?

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know/no answer
Ability to support your business' needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Accountability for actions taken	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Opportunities for input into planning and decisions for the community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Responsiveness to Town issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transparency of decision making	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Answer Choices	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		Don't know/ no answer		Total	Weighted Average
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#		
Ability to meet your business' needs	14.29%	2	28.57%	4	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	10	2.3
Accountability for actions taken	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	0.00%	0	14.29%	2	35.71%	5	10	1.2
Opportunities for input into planning and decisions for the community	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	28.57%	4	10	1.5
Overall performance	14.29%	2	28.57%	4	7.14%	1	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	10	2.3
Responsiveness to Town issues	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	0.00%	0	14.29%	2	35.71%	5	10	1.3
Transparency of decision making	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	7.14%	1	14.29%	2	28.57%	4	10	1.4
Answered											10	
Skipped											4	

41. How likely is it that you would recommend the Town of Stratford as a place to own or operate a business to someone else?

Not at all likely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Extremely likely
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

DETRACTORS	Responses #
1 (Not at all likely)	0
2	0
3	1
4	1

5
6
Total

1
1
4

PASSIVES
7
8
Total

2
2
4

PROMOTERS
9
10 (Extremely likely)
Total

1
1
2

Detractors (1-6)	4	40%
Passives (7-8)	4	40%
Promoters (9-10)	2	20%
Net Promoter Score (P%-D%)	-2	-20%

42. The Town of Stratford asks questions to residents through several methods, including the Annual Resident Survey and the Town's social media accounts. Please suggest questions the Town could ask that you feel would benefit the entire local business community.

Open-ended Responses	
Not at time	
What are the products, services, or experiences that you still find yourself travelling outside of the town to source from other communities?	
Answered	2
Skipped	12

43. Do you have any additional comments, ideas, thoughts, or suggestions? Please describe briefly.

Open-ended Responses	
Consider that a lot of us are solopreneurs who have different business interests than "regular" or brick and mortar business owners. The solopreneurs are anyone from people offering professional services to paid content creators, livestreamers, artists, etc. Consider things like studio spaces, recording studios, meeting spaces, etc.	
No	
Social media communication strategies need to be modernized to reach younger demographics.	
Answered	3
Skipped	11

Thank you for your input!

If you are not currently receiving the Town of Stratford business e-newsletter, please email wwatts@townofstratford.ca and request to be added to the mailing list so we can keep in touch!