



CITY OF
FORT SASKATCHEWAN

**Public Presentation Report
Regular Council Meeting_Jun28_2022**

Business Survey Results

Topic Identification:

In April 2022, Administration engaged the services of Deloitte to conduct a business survey and provide an analysis of the data collected. The survey process, called “*Triage Business Retention & Expansion*”, is intended to provide information on the overall economic health of the business community, and identify areas where the City could improve its services. Deloitte has conducted this survey in more than 60 municipalities across Canada with populations between 15,000 – 200,000.

The consultants were provided with a list of licensed businesses, and they selected 100 at random to survey. The survey contained 23 questions designed to gather information on a business’ current status, future plans, economic outlook, and feedback on the City’s support and regulatory processes.

The survey was conducted between May 11th and May 30th, 2022. The response rate from the business community was above industry norms, and the consultants believe the results to be an accurate statistical representation of the business community.

The data collected from the survey was analyzed and used to determine areas the City can focus its efforts in supporting the business community better. The data was also incorporated into an economic model used to determine the City’s overall Community Business Health Index (CBHI). The CBHI is a numerical representation of how well the City performs across a range of factors, including revenues, outlook, satisfaction levels, business support, etc. The CBHI allows the City’s performance to be compared to provincial and national averages.

Results:

Overall, the City did well across all areas surveyed. Businesses that were surveyed expressed some optimism for the future and saw the City as a good place to do business.

Highlights from the survey included:

- 88% of respondents said they would recommend this region to another business looking to expand or relocate.
- 97% said they were satisfied with the City of Fort Saskatchewan as a place to own and operate a business.
- The City’s overall CBHI score was 810, which was higher than the national average of 750, and the provincial average of 745.
- The City outperformed the national average on businesses’ ratings of almost all the Business Health Index sub-scores and scored particularly high on satisfaction with business supports / infrastructure, historical revenues, and community recommendation.

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Overall, the survey results were positive. Areas were identified where the City can focus some resources to help improve economic conditions for those businesses who may be struggling or require assistance.

Key takeaways include:

- 1) A large portion of the local business community rely on the local market for their sales. The City can explore options to assist these businesses in reaching broader markets beyond the city's boundaries.
- 2) A number of local businesses are leasing space on a month-to-month basis, which could indicate a lack of suitable space, or they are facing uncertainty. The City could undertake additional outreach to support these businesses to find a more suitable location, or assist with available resources to support their continued operation.
- 3) Availability of skilled labour was flagged as a significant concern for most businesses surveyed. The City is exploring initiatives and partnerships with the Province and industry to address labour shortages and skills gaps.
- 4) Awareness of the incentive programs and business supports available from the City was lower than anticipated. Administration will work to enhance outreach to the business community and explore initiatives to better promote available supports.

Chris Bandak, Managing Director of Economic & Policy Advisory with Deloitte will provide Council with an overview of the survey process and results.

Attachments:

Appendix A – City of Fort Saskatchewan Triage BRE Presentation

Prepared/Approved by:	Mark Morrissey Director, Economic Development	Date: June 9, 2022
Approved by:	Janel Smith-Duguid General Manager, Infrastructure & Planning Services	Date: June 17, 2022
Approved by:	Troy Fleming City Manager	Date: June 17, 2022

The City of Fort Saskatchewan Triage BR&E Report

June 2022



Overview



Background

- The City of Fort Saskatchewan completed a business satisfaction survey to understand how to best support local businesses. Business retention and expansion (BR+E) activities can be employed to ensure business needs are monitored and addressed; however, engagement can be time consuming and complex.
- A Triage BR&E Survey was commissioned to engage the broader business community, while also allowing for the identification of potential expansion or retention opportunities for follow-up on a business-by-business basis.

Overview



Methodology

- A random sample telephone/online survey was conducted with 100 businesses out of an initial sample of 720. The total response rate for the online and phone surveys was 14.8%, which is very high in the market research industry. The average phone interview length was 12 minutes.
- This scientific approach ensures that the results have a high level of accuracy (with a 9.8% margin of error at a 95% confidence level) and statistically represents the business community in the region.

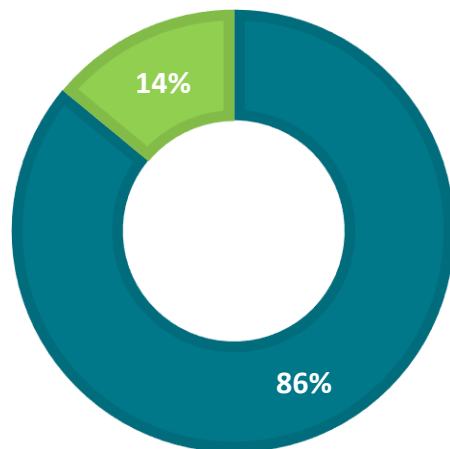


Business Community Firmographics

Firmographics



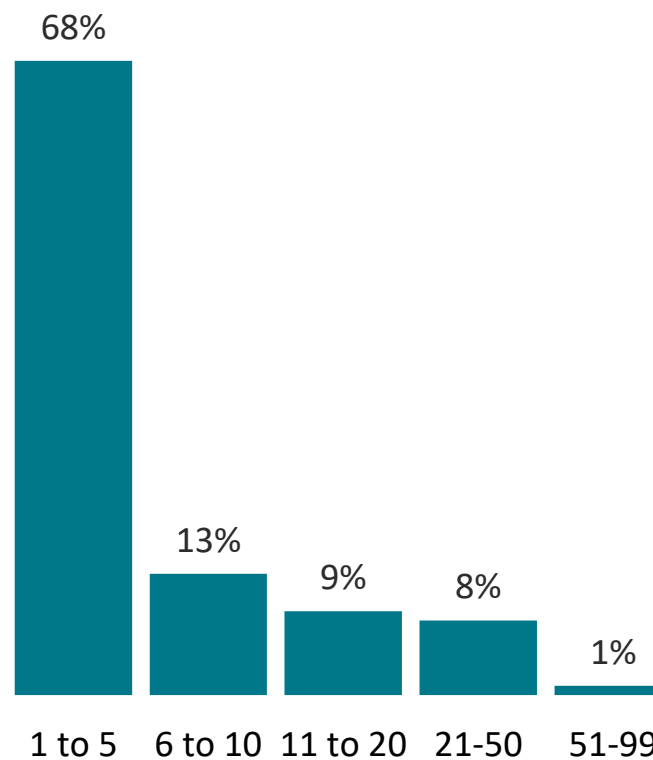
Ownership



■ Locally Owned and Operated ■ Externally Owned and Operated



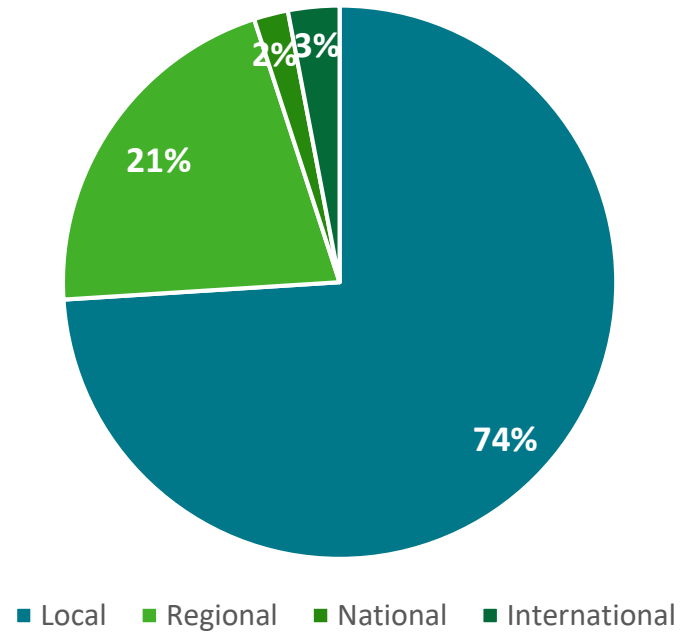
Number of Employees



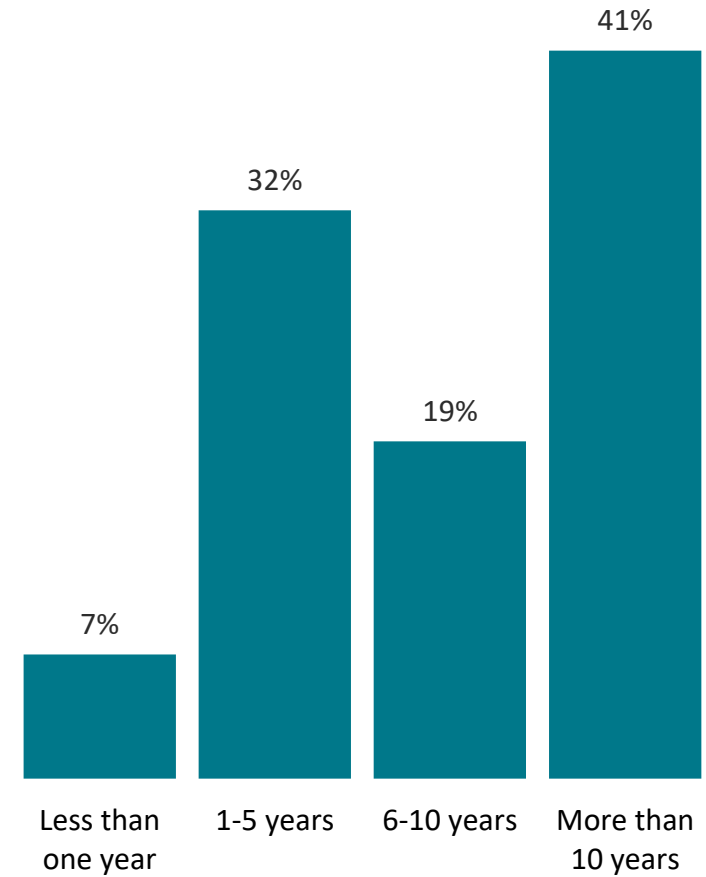
Firmographics



Target Markets



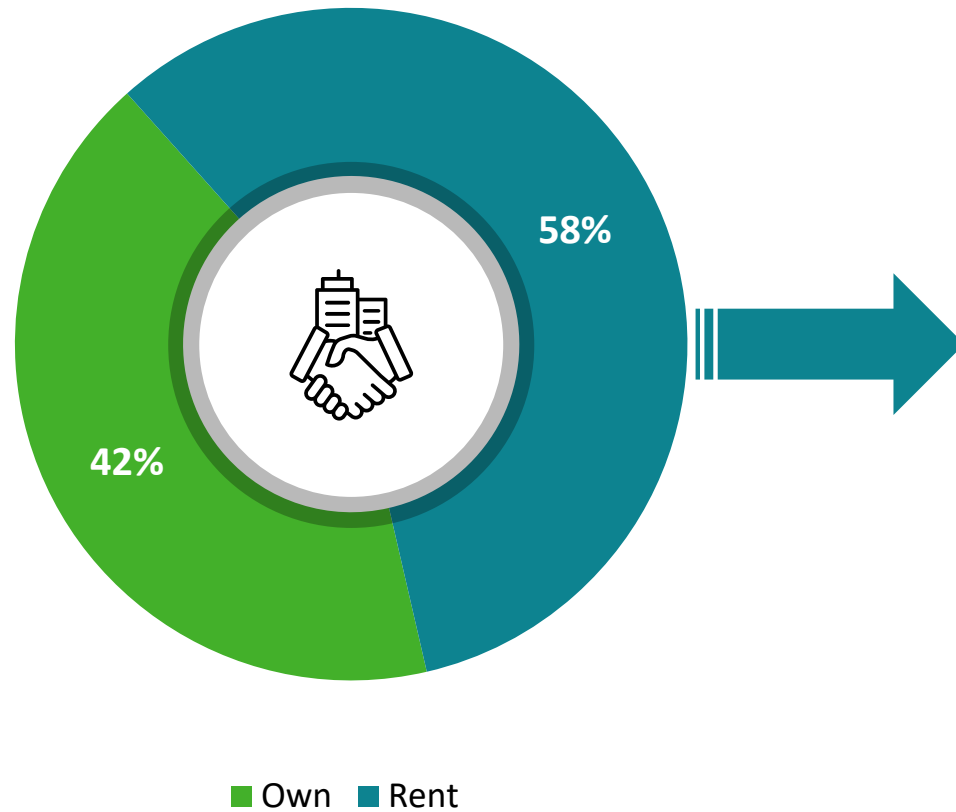
Years Operating in Community



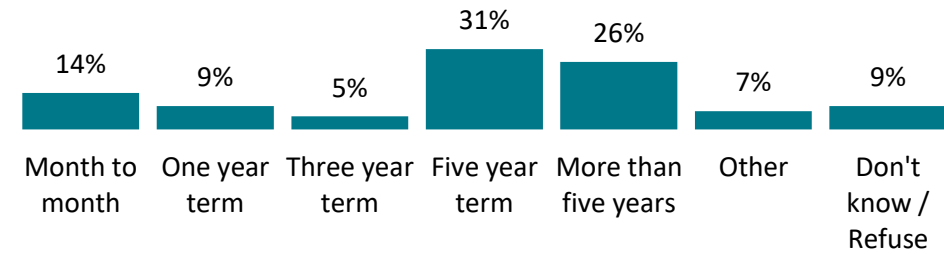
Firmographics



Own or Rent Business Property?

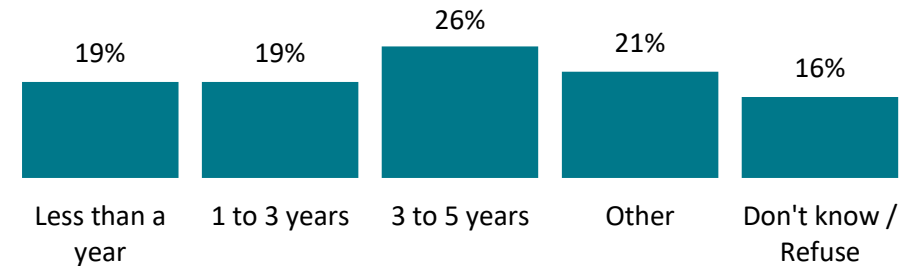


Term of Lease (n=58):



*Other includes: 20-year, There's no lease.

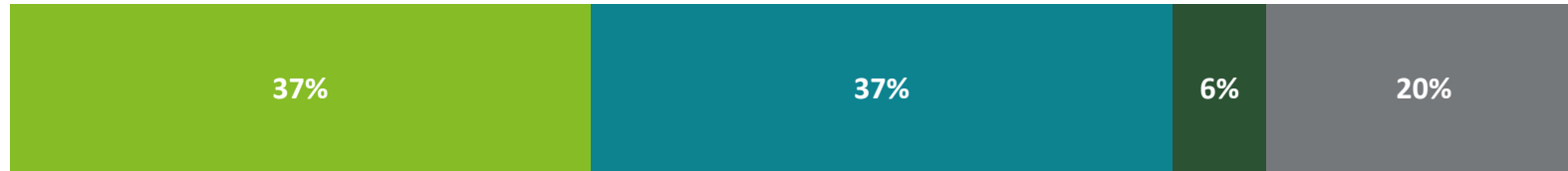
Lease expires (n=58):





Business Performance

Business Performance



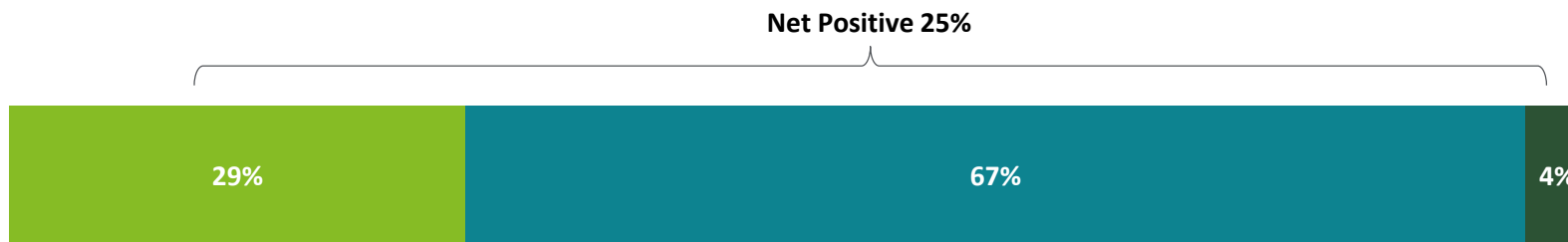
■ Increased ■ Remained the same ■ Not sure ■ Decreased

Over the past 12 months
have your revenues at your
business...



■ Higher ■ The same ■ Not sure ■ Lower

And what are your
expectations for the next 12
months in total revenues
compared to last 12 months?



■ More Positive ■ The same and has not changed ■ More negative

Over the past 12 months
would you say your attitude
about doing business in the
City of Fort Saskatchewan is...

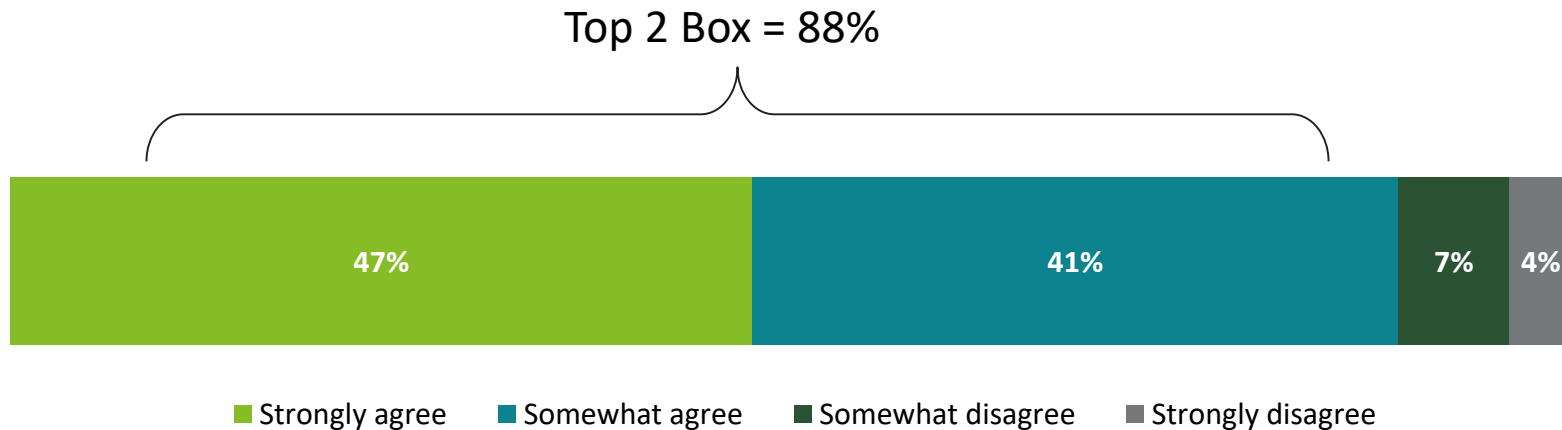


Net Promoter Score

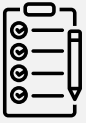
Community Recommendation



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

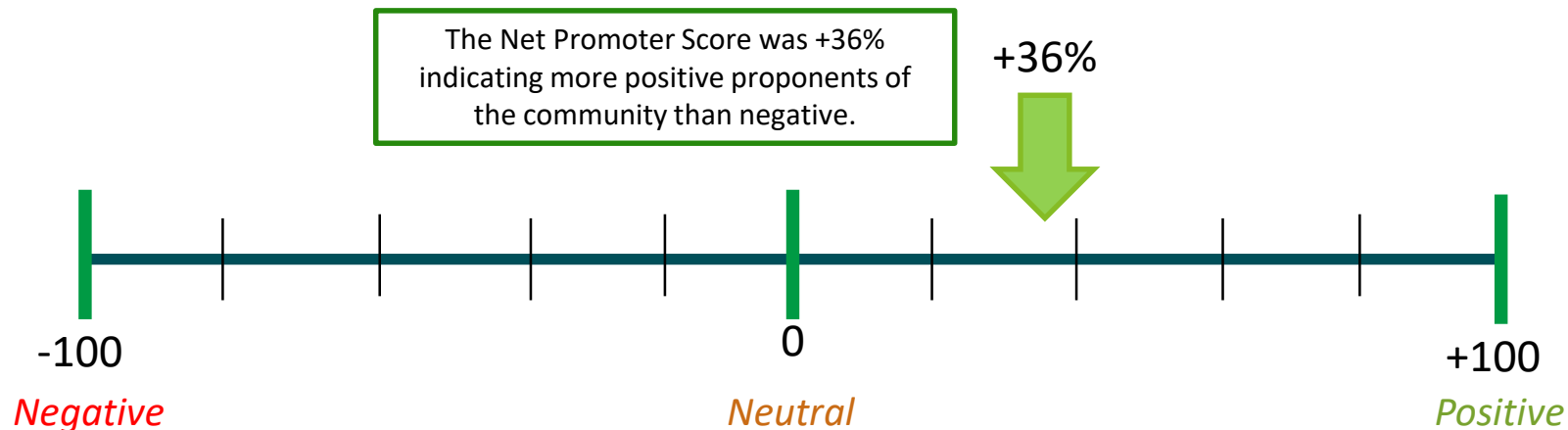


Net Promoter Score



Net Promoter Score: Based on response to the following statement – “I would recommend this region to another business looking to expand or relocate.”

Group	Definition	Response to question	Percentage
Promoters	Active proponents of the community	Strongly Agree	47%
Passives	Neutral businesses	Somewhat Agree	41%
Detractors	Businesses with a negative opinion that may harm branding efforts	Somewhat Disagree or Strongly Disagree	11%





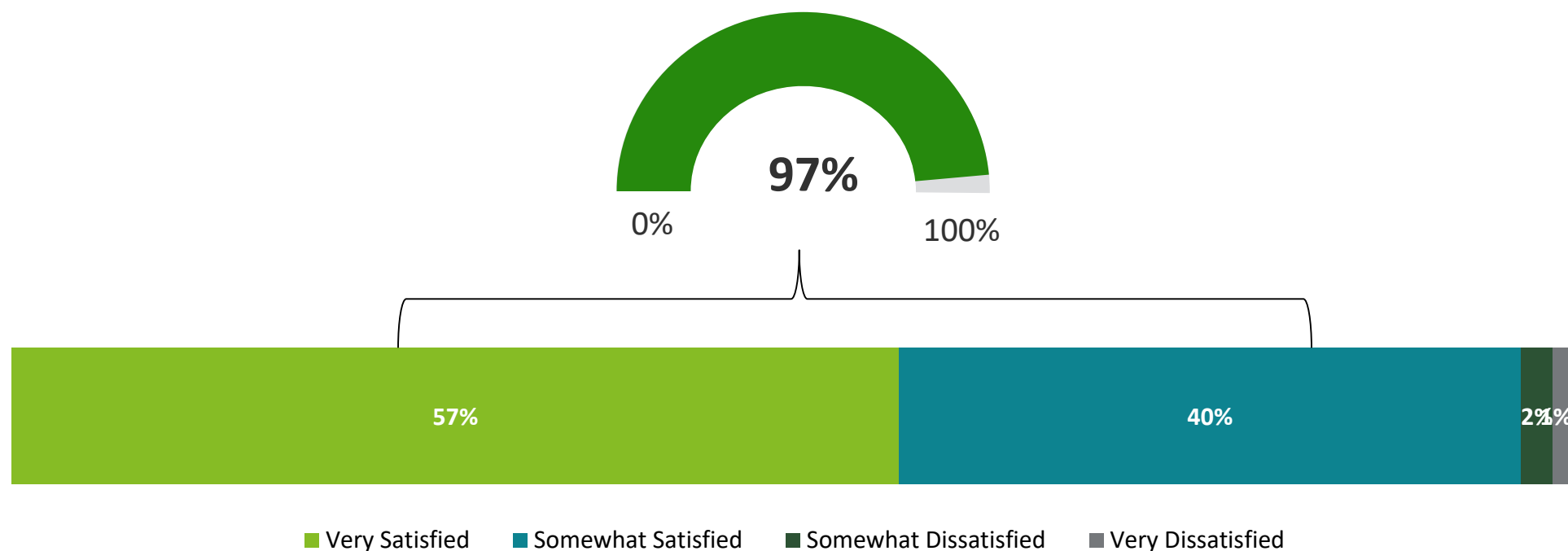
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)



Overall, how satisfied are you with the City of Fort Saskatchewan as a place to own and operate a business?

KPI:



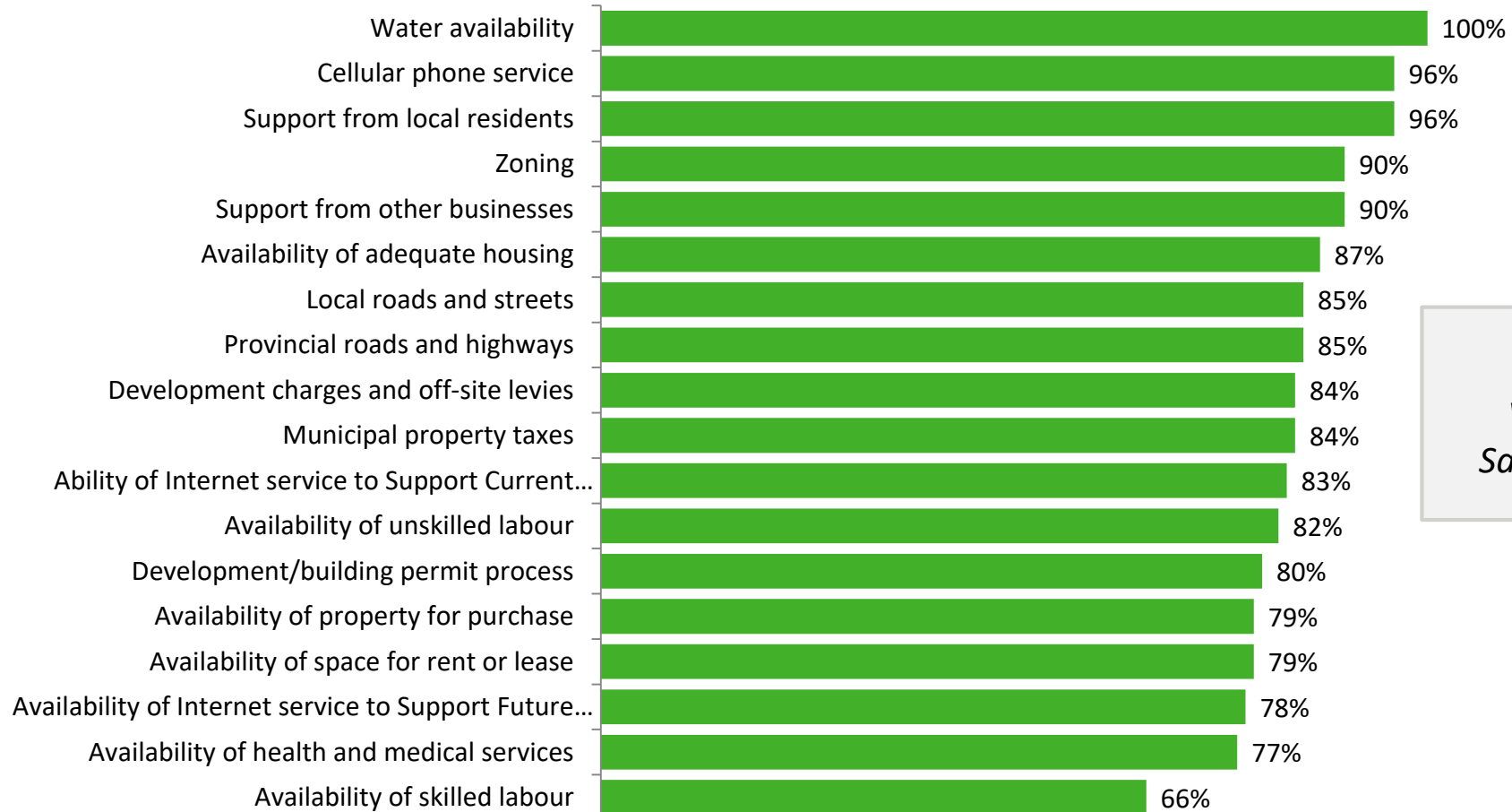


Satisfaction Levels

Satisfaction Levels



How satisfied you are with each of the following factors of doing business in the Community?



Top two box:
Very Satisfied &
Satisfied combined.





Derived Importance & Priority Matrix

Derived Importance & Priority Matrix



Derived Importance

- A statistical calculation of importance
- Far more accurate relative to asking importance
- Calculates the correlation coefficient of business factors with the KPI
- Factors with a high derived importance will have the greatest impact on the KPI



Priority Matrix

- A list of business factors to focus efforts
- Each priority is calculated using the level of satisfaction and the importance of each item (Derived Importance)
- Factors with lower satisfaction scores and higher importance become the top priorities
- Making improvements to the top priorities will have the greatest impact on improving the overall KPI



Priority Matrix

Community Factors	Performance	Importance	Priority
Availability of skilled labour	66%	5.7	1
Availability of property for purchase	79%	7.8	2
Provincial roads and highways	85%	9.1	3
Availability of health and medical services	77%	6.0	4
Availability of space for rent or lease	79%	6.0	5
Development/building permit process	80%	6.3	6
Local roads and streets	85%	8.1	7
Availability of Internet service to Support Future Business Needs	78%	5.5	8
Availability of unskilled labour	82%	5.7	9
Support from other businesses	90%	9.4	10
Ability of Internet service to Support Current Business Needs	83%	5.2	11
Municipal property taxes	84%	5.2	12
Development charges and off-site levies	84%	5.2	13
Availability of adequate housing	87%	5.2	14
Zoning	90%	5.2	15
Support from residents	96%	5.0	16
Cellular phone service	96%	4.7	17
Water availability	100%	5.7	18



Higher Priority

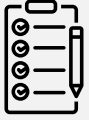


Lower Priority



Business Community Health Index

Community Business Health Index



Using the results of this business survey, Deloitte combines the questions into a proprietary Community Business Health Index which is the combination of the following nine sub-scores:

Overall Satisfaction

**Workforce Attraction and
Retention**

Change in Attitudes

Future Plans

**Business Policies,
Supports and Incentives**

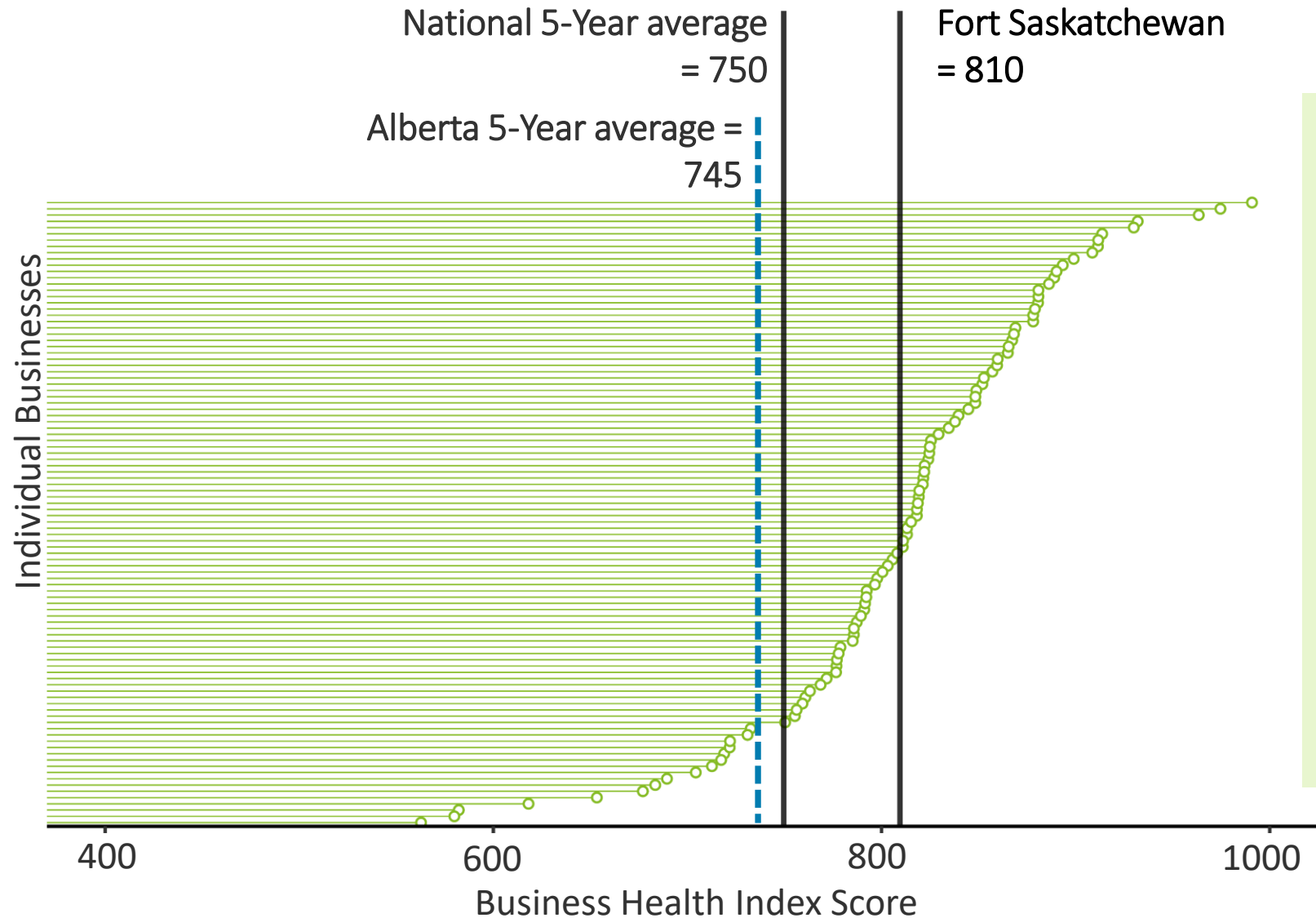
Change in Revenue

**Community
Recommendation**

**Infrastructure and
Amenities**

Revenue Outlook

Community Business Health Index



The City of Fort Saskatchewan scored very well compared to other communities on the Community Business Health Index. This index is based on several factors:

- The City of Fort Saskatchewan outperformed the national average on businesses' ratings of almost all the Business Health Index sub-scores. The City scored particularly high on satisfaction with business supports/ infrastructure, historical revenues, and community recommendation.
- The only indicator that was rated relatively lower in Fort Saskatchewan compared to the national average was changes in business attitudes over the last 12 months.

Future Plans – Next 24 months



Businesses with plans to expand:

- **20** businesses total
- **6** in less than 6 months
- **14** in more than 6 months

Plans to downsize:

- **3** businesses total
- **1** in less than 6 months
- **2** in more than 6 months

Plans to relocate:

- **3** businesses total
- **3** in less than 6 months

Plans to close:

- **2** businesses total
- **2** in less than 6 months

Plans to sell:

- **2** businesses total
- **2** in less than 6 months

Triage Flag Results

Throughout the survey process Triage cases that represented green or red flags were tracked. Out of the 100 businesses surveyed, 35 businesses presented an opportunity for intervention.



= Businesses considering expanding in the next 2 years.

= 20 businesses.



= Businesses with a month-to-month lease or those that expire in the next year. Businesses considering relocating, downsizing, selling, or closing.

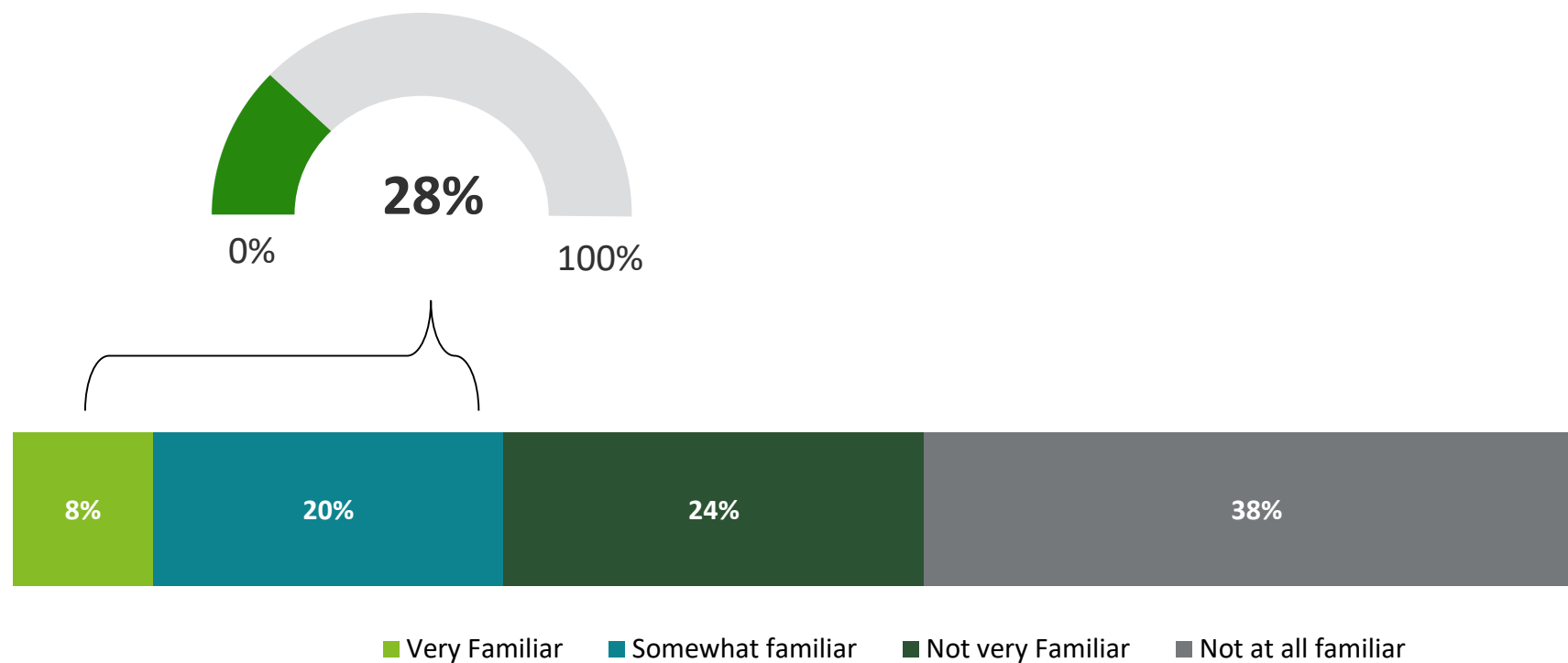
= 15 businesses



Business Incentives and Programs



How familiar are you with the business incentives and programs offered by the City of Fort Saskatchewan?



Business Incentives and Programs



Is there a program or additional incentive that the City of Fort Saskatchewan is not currently offering that would be helpful for your business?

Additional incentives mentioned

Non repayable small business grants

Road signs and advertising programs

More support for home-based businesses

Renovation grants

Focus on local small businesses vs industrial heart land

Expand incentive's eligibility

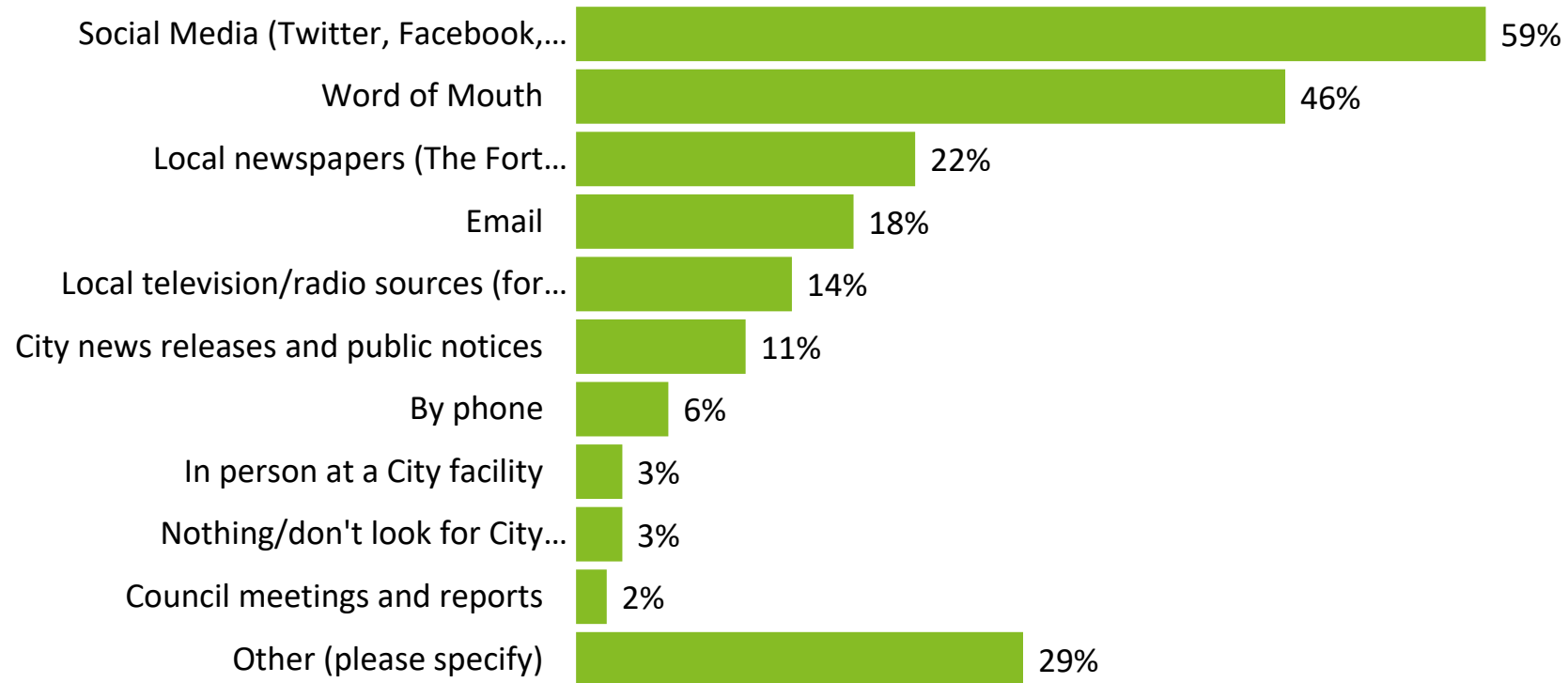
Focus on downtown businesses

Incentivize local purchases

Sources of Information



What are the main sources you use to find relevant local information for your business?



Other sources mentioned included: Internet search, chamber of commerce, city's website, etc.

Contact

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