

# Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes 2022 Business Survey: Report November 18, 2022



Survey Timeframe: October 4 – October 30, 2022

## Communities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge  
Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott  
Rideau Lakes | Westport

## Prepared by:

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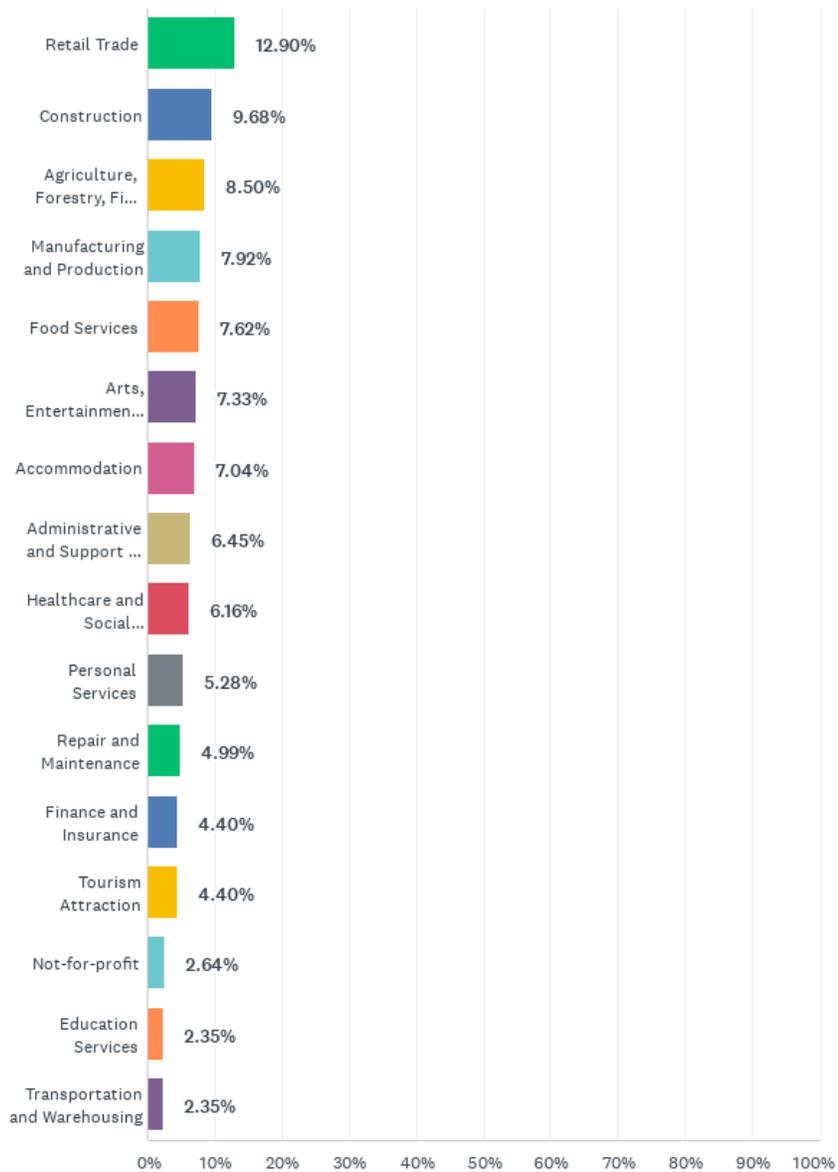
# #1 Where is your business located? (if servicing multiple communities identify main office)

Answered: 340 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Township of Athens	3.24% 11
▼ Township of Augusta	5.59% 19
▼ City of Brockville	18.24% 62
▼ Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal	5.29% 18
▼ Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley	6.47% 22
▼ Township of Front of Yonge	1.76% 6
▼ Town of Gananoque	5.59% 19
▼ Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands	12.06% 41
▼ Village of Merrickville-Wolford	6.47% 22
▼ Municipality of North Grenville	17.94% 61
▼ Town of Prescott	5.00% 17
▼ Township of Rideau Lakes	8.53% 29
▼ Village of Westport	3.82% 13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>340</b>

## #2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 341 Skipped: 0

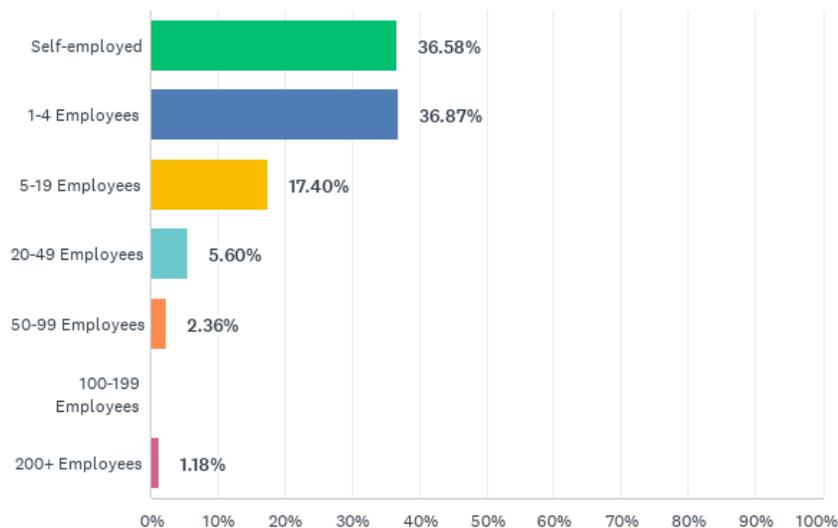


## #2 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Retail Trade	12.90% 44
▼ Construction	9.68% 33
▼ Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	8.50% 29
▼ Manufacturing and Production	7.92% 27
▼ Food Services	7.62% 26
▼ Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	7.33% 25
▼ Accommodation	7.04% 24
▼ Administrative and Support - Business Services	6.45% 22
▼ Healthcare and Social Assistance	6.16% 21
▼ Personal Services	5.28% 18
▼ Repair and Maintenance	4.99% 17
▼ Finance and Insurance	4.40% 15
▼ Tourism Attraction	4.40% 15
▼ Not-for-profit	2.64% 9
▼ Education Services	2.35% 8
▼ Transportation and Warehousing	2.35% 8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>

## #3 Typically, how many full-time equivalent employees does your company have?

Answered: 339 Skipped: 2

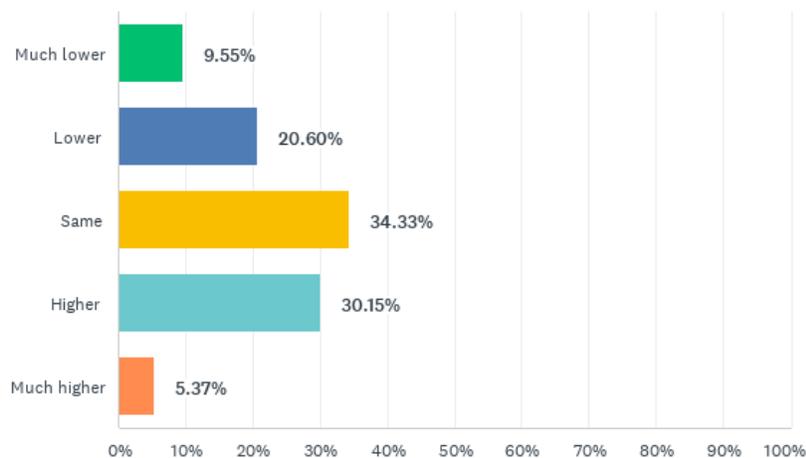


### #3 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Self-employed	36.58% 124
1-4 Employees	36.87% 125
5-19 Employees	17.40% 59
20-49 Employees	5.60% 19
50-99 Employees	2.36% 8
100-199 Employees	0.00% 0
200+ Employees	1.18% 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>339</b>

### #4 Where is your business activity level today, compared with pre-COVID levels?

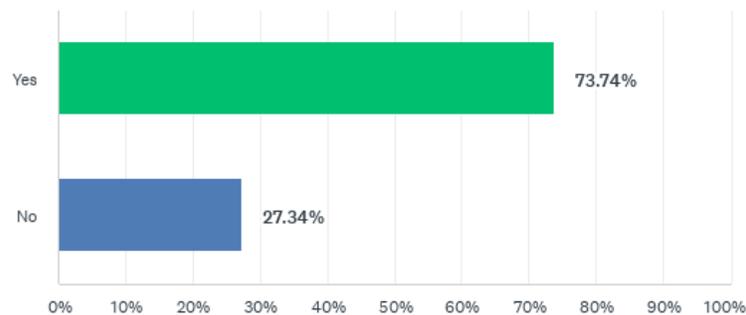
Answered: 335 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Much lower	9.55% 32
Lower	20.60% 69
Same	34.33% 115
Higher	30.15% 101
Much higher	5.37% 18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>

## #5 If your business is growing, are you confident your demand levels will continue?

Answered: 278 Skipped: 63



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.74%	205
No	27.34%	76
Total Respondents: 278		

### Additional Comments, Related to Growth (13):

- We are growing outside of the community.
- As a new business I am hopeful for business growth.
- New customers brought on board with more forecasted growth.
- Customer quantity achieved, no longer looking for new clients.
- We are exploring possible further revenue strains, particularly e-commerce.
- With the town of Kemptville growing in population, the demand for our product will increase.
- We've seen 20-30% growth every year since we started. Except for year 2 where it was 110%.
- We are in the new home construction business. Demand increased when COVID hit, now it has gone back to pre-COVID levels. With rising interest rates, we will see what effect that has on sales.
- We are as confident as can be. Obviously having gone through a global pandemic, things are subject to change overnight, however business has been strong in the Renovation/Design industry as a whole, so we are optimistic we will continue to see growth.
- While this business started as a solo practice and existed before COVID, it's now grown from a solo practice into a multi-disciplinary clinic that isn't well-known in the local area yet. Paying out of pocket for health services is often seen as an expense instead of what it actually is, which is an investment.
- I work in the digital marketing field and the demand is huge. I don't see the demand decreasing, only evolving with advancing technology.
- I make and service/repair textiles. People have become more mindful of waste management and economic management and thereby the repair and service business has increased.
- COVID brought an influx of students as parents were unhappy with what they saw was occurring within the Board during online learning. Parents became much more aware and involved in their child's education.

## #5 continued...

### **Additional Comments, Indicating a Barrier to Growth (15)**

- Labour shortage. (x4)
- Foot traffic has decreased on our street.
- High inflation and recession risk are having a high impact.
- Working employees and local apartment/housing rent are unavailable in this area.
- Accommodations are needed and Townships must provide support for hotels campgrounds and more.
- Watching disposable income remain the same, however costs are rising not sure it will sustain.
- We are an essential business and just keep getting busier. We need more resources to function.
- To a nearly detrimental affect as our resources are not able to increase and we are fighting more imbalances with inflation and demand.
- I am confident that our business will grow, however supply chain issues have contributed to slow completion of projects.
- Boating grew through COVID but gas prices and low water on the St. Lawrence hurt us this summer. There is not enough docking on the river and I don't have space to expand. There is a need for more dock slips in the 1000 islands.
- We have been attempting for 2½ years to find an additional employee. We are flooded with resumes when we advertise, but they never return your call. The occasional one who does, never shows up for the first day of work. It is virtually impossible to grow a business without more employees. We have been in business for 34 years and could take on more work if we had the manpower. We use Indeed and the local employment service to advertise.
- Demand levels will continue for my business if I spend more time networking and reaching out. So actually, the answer would be "yes". That being said I am working full time with no time to network or reach out do to my workload. The workload I have is enough to cover costs and barely profit. So, it is like a treadmill at the moment.

### **Additional Comments, Indicating Lack of Confidence about Growth or No Growth (15)**

- Cutting back. Age and COVID are a factor.
- Chose to decrease business activity level.
- So hard to say, I think so but slowing down recently.
- As people resume normal activities, we expect our business to slow slightly.
- Consumers are cutting back on spending due to increased household costs.
- Current business is stable, but down on pre-COVID 2020 figures.
- Business subject to construction industry demand which may have peaked this year.
- Local interest declined further for me in 2022. I'm working on pivoting to new online offerings and an additional business venture as the beginning of my exit/closing strategy.
- Some of our products are impacted by the upcoming ban on grocery-type bags. As well we are being impacted by the difficulty in international shipping and increasing energy prices and carbon tax.
- Our 'business' is a volunteer operated charity thrift shop and outreach, so growing is not necessarily a good thing - many needs have increased.
- Government screwed up our economy...and now they want more taxes...I am just about done. Pre-COVID I was thinking of expansion and hiring...not anymore.
- With the COVID measures in place many people are working from home and not choosing to go back to the office so their vehicle stays parked, so as you see less people travelling the roads, less for us to work on.

## #5 continued...

- We are in the legal sector. We expect real estate transactions and corporate matters to decrease as they have been over the last several months. Family matters, Estates and Estate Planning, are at full capacity and will likely remain so.
- I had a bumper year last year helping Canadian businesses ship Commercial goods into the United States. This year the volume has dropped off. I have lost some clients because they have moved their manufacturing facilities to either U.S. or Mexican facilities.
- I am a STEM editor. I lost my major client (~80% of revenue) to COVID death at end of 2020. Have had a dreadful time regaining a good clientele. Had one client fail to pay for outstanding invoices for 6 months. Looks to be a write-off. At this point, I've decided to semi-retire. I can earn enough to supplement OAS and CPP, but I likely will never regain the earning power lost in 2020

### **Additional Comments, Indicating Uncertainty about Future (9)**

- Concerns about recession. (x2)
- Due to the global instability, both politically and financially.
- Never sure what the future will bring.
- More viruses, recession.... all impact people travelling or wanting to get away.
- Flat is a good estimate. Between residential and commercial the dollar volume should be flat.
- We hope so, but will depend on how much our clients are able to afford during rough times.
- This isn't really a yes or no question for me. I am a new business that just opened in July 2022. I hope to continue to grow, but can't be confident in that happening.
- Expanding this business in 2020 and being shut down for most of the following year and a bit - I think no matter how hard we are working the economy is unstable, the prices are high and people are uncomfortable...and yet we persevere.
- Inflationary pressure on disposable income is worrisome for an entertainment business. The retail side of the business should be ok.

### **Other Comments (9)**

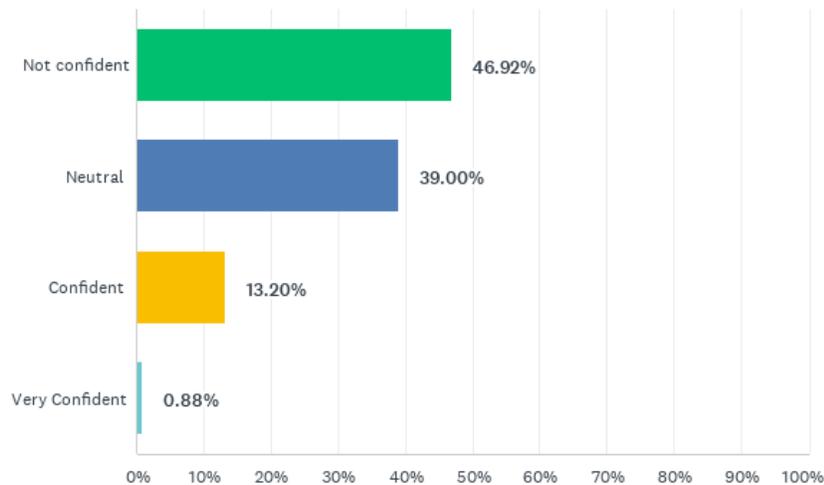
- I am a new business.
- With marketing.
- Wedding & events venue, decor rentals and cakes, so I hope so.
- I have found that, since COVID, more individuals are looking to start their own business. They want to work at something they enjoy and helps them find balance.
- It would help if the town would support us, by including us in more events around town we keep finding out about events after the fact.
- When COVID hit my industry was the only one that was completely left behind with no plan or guidance to rebuild. Youth sport/development quickly fell to the lowest priority of government officials and local MP's.
- Hopefully opening will be 2023. We hope to create many jobs as well. We, three owners, are looking forward to being busy as no Grocer and Deli exists in Lyndhurst Village.
- Stop the prison development. Fix the basics, proper signage, paving repair, more parking signs, proper parking, more police patrolling, speeding fines, cameras to catch racers, noisy Harley and cars fines, garbage pickup at the wrong times, etc.

## #5 continued...

- 25% Pre-COVID came from USA, Japan, China, UK, Europe, Middle East. Virtually none has returned but my reputation has led to becoming a destination and the go to accommodation (Top 1% of small hotels worldwide according to Trip Advisor) I think that 75% of pre-COVID US visitors and 10% of other Foreign will never return as folks are creatures of habit. Folks that routinely came here year over year every summer could have waited 1 year but after 3 they have found other equally attractive domestic venues and after 3 years established a new pattern. We have to cultivate domestic many of whom will stay in Canada vs cruise ships or Europe as was the case when the 1000 Islands was the Riviera of North America and the focal point with Muskoka of summer vacation (before affordable rapid transatlantic flight supplanted it).

## #6 How confident are you in the strength of the economy?

Answered: 341 Skipped: 0

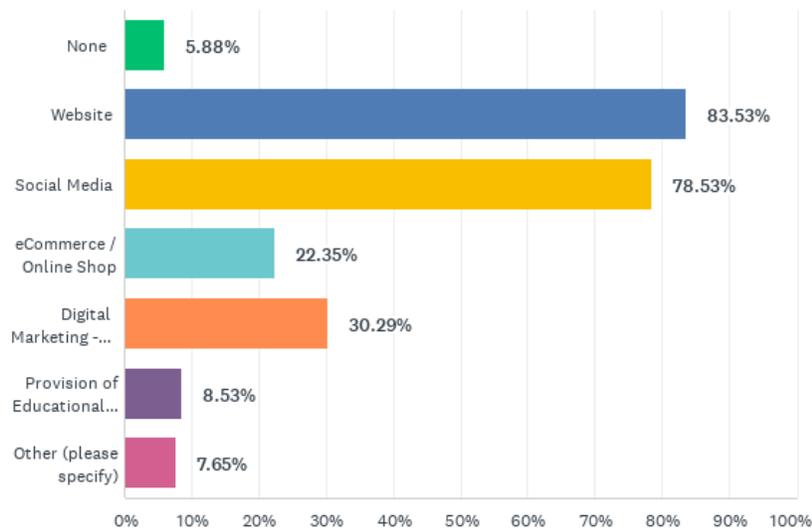


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not confident	46.92% 160
Neutral	39.00% 133
Confident	13.20% 45
Very Confident	0.88% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>

## #7 What type of online presence does your company have?

(check all that apply)

Answered: 340 Skipped: 1



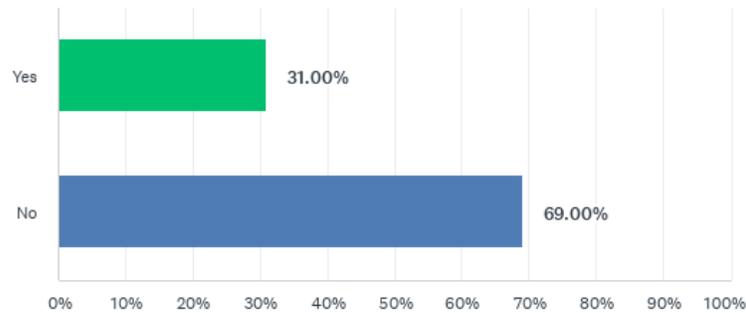
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
None	5.88% 20
Website	83.53% 284
Social Media	78.53% 267
eCommerce / Online Shop	22.35% 76
Digital Marketing - Advertising / Email	30.29% 103
Provision of Educational Webinars	8.53% 29
Other (please specify)	Responses 7.65% 26
Total Respondents: 340	

### Other (Please Specify) Responses:

- Online presence not worth it. (x4)
- Industry specific platform. (x4)
- Google. (x3)
- Online appointments. (x2)
- Live stream. (x2)
- Working on launching different platforms, but not using at the moment. (x2)
- Only use referrals. (x2)
- Paid media relationships.
- Speaking/podcasts.
- Local chamber.
- Online presence limited by poor internet availability.

## #8 Would you like to receive assistance with your online presence (website, social media, e-Commerce / Online shop, digital marketing)? Note: please provide your contact information in #16.

Answered: 329 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.00%	102
No	69.00%	227
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>329</b>

## #9 Identify your biggest challenges using the rating scale for each item, with 1 being smallest and 10 being your biggest challenge.

Answered: 335 Skipped: 6

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Increasing product prices	11.08% 36	4.92% 16	4.62% 15	4.31% 14	11.08% 36	4.62% 15	10.77% 35	20.31% 66	9.23% 30	19.08% 62	325
Supply chain	18.21% 59	5.56% 18	7.72% 25	4.32% 14	12.65% 41	5.25% 17	9.57% 31	15.12% 49	12.04% 39	9.57% 31	324
Labour force	25.08% 81	7.12% 23	3.72% 12	3.10% 10	8.05% 26	5.26% 17	5.26% 17	9.60% 31	8.05% 26	24.77% 80	323
Changes in your product demand	19.44% 62	10.34% 33	8.15% 26	7.52% 24	17.55% 56	9.72% 31	8.46% 27	8.15% 26	3.45% 11	7.21% 23	319
Increased overhead costs	6.12% 20	4.28% 14	4.89% 16	4.28% 14	11.01% 36	7.95% 26	10.40% 34	16.51% 54	14.37% 47	20.18% 66	327
Debt servicing capacity	33.65% 105	11.22% 35	5.13% 16	7.05% 22	14.74% 46	4.17% 13	7.05% 22	5.13% 16	3.85% 12	8.01% 25	312

## #9 continued...

### Other (Please Specify) Responses:

- Labor force challenges. (x4)
- Excessive Government Restrictions/By-Laws/Control. (x4)
- CEBA Loan Repayment. (x3)
- Rising Insurance Costs. (x3)
- Rising Gas Prices. (x2)
- Incomes of customers not rising in line with cost of doing business. (x2)
- Advertising/Customer awareness. (x2)
- Border issues preventing American tourists. (x2)
- Low water levels. (x2)
- Lack of funding/grants for small business. (x2)
- Work/Life Balance. (x2)
- Rising costs.
- Rising shipping costs.
- Rising Interest rates.
- Being new to the area.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Lack of Internet and cell service in rural areas.
- Lack of environmental protections that would preserve our natural heritage for tourism.
- Reductions in sales events and clientele due to restrictions.
- Our biggest work is online. Little effect of prices other than Internet services.
- When groups are stressed, dysfunctional, chaotic... is when they need advice & help the most... but invariably that is when they rarely believe they need it. And when there is economic uncertainty? They need help even more.
- This is a church (registered charity) and the above challenges are hard to identify. We operate based on donations. Attendance has certainly decreased since COVID-19 but our online presence has increased. Our congregation is aging and is not being replaced.
- As a registered charity, we are unable to carry debt, and as the gift shop is a small portion of the guest services we offer, the challenges listed don't really apply to us.
- Challenge is outside the realm of outside assistance. We have a long row to hoe to break through the barriers of an old way of doing people development. Whether students or people already at work, there exists a huge resistance to making the conceptual shift from the top-down method of helping people (I am in charge so I need to have all the answers to I am leading but I can't do that effectively until my employees - or youth - can state clearly what that help would look like. We have to find our own methods for getting this conceptual shift to happen, both for leaders and for individuals trying to make career decisions.

## #10 Identify your biggest workforce challenges using the rating scale foreach item, with 1 being smallest and 10 being your biggest challenge.

Answered: 317 Skipped: 24

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Employees returning to the workplace	54.98% 171	5.47% 17	4.50% 14	3.22% 10	6.43% 20	4.18% 13	5.14% 16	4.82% 15	2.57% 8	8.68% 27	311
Ability to offer competitive wages and benefits	32.48% 101	6.43% 20	5.79% 18	4.18% 13	9.00% 28	6.43% 20	8.36% 26	7.40% 23	7.40% 23	12.54% 39	311
Desire for hybrid workplace models	66.78% 201	4.65% 14	4.65% 14	2.99% 9	7.97% 24	1.99% 6	3.32% 10	2.33% 7	1.00% 3	4.32% 13	301
Attraction of new employees	34.50% 108	2.56% 8	3.83% 12	3.83% 12	8.95% 28	3.83% 12	5.75% 18	8.63% 27	7.99% 25	20.13% 63	313

### Other (Please Specify) Responses:

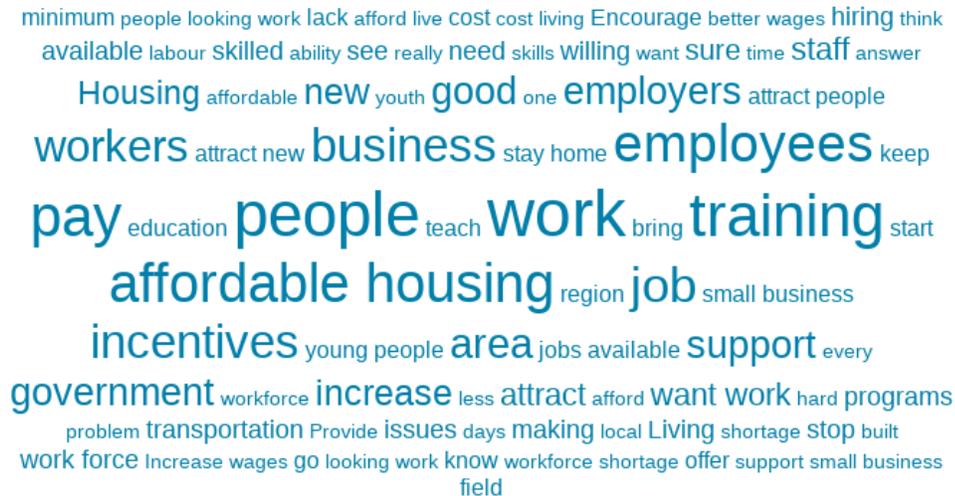
- No employees/Self-employed. (x18)
- Worker Quality/Lacking Skills. (x10)
- Can't afford to hire employees. (x6)
- Hard to find employees. (x4)
- No Significant Workforce Challenges. (x2)
- Retention of existing employees also challenging.
- If we had affordable housing the labor pool could grow.
- I don't understand the 'Desire for hybrid workplace models.
- Have a PT assistant who I pay minimum wage - she is more like a friend.
- Internet and cell service issues in rural areas negatively impact my capacity to do business and be safe while I do business.
- Where did they all go? If the CERB and other programs are still in place, they need to stop immediately and get people back to work.
- Dealing with a rotation of sick employees due to COVID and other respiratory viruses that are causing a shortage of staff.
- We continued working during COVID-19 as the majority of our work is contract work in new home subdivisions in Ottawa. Our work in private homes decreased for a while but is now back to its normal levels.
- Employing persons at the same wage I make (\$2-3 above minimum wage) (I make what I make because the industry can only charge so much for the services I produce) is not long term viable or healthy.
- As a seasonal tourism business, it is hard to compete with full-time year-round jobs. Our normal workforce of 55 plus is not interested any more in working all summer. Students are not the solution, since you a) need a car to get to work, b) are not reliable enough c) are not able to work in the shoulder season.

## #10 continued...

- Tiers have shifted. There are 3 tiers, Tier 1 is service industry a lower paying employment up to \$17 per hour. Tier 2 \$17 plus, entry level manufacturing and office, Tier 3 \$20 plus. Tiers 2 and 3 are now accepting candidates they would not have typically taken pre-COVID. It's not that people do not want to work, Tier 1 has shrunk with the opening of the higher tier positions. We need additional support in the first tier! Needed Immigration etc...

## #11 What should the region's focus be to address workforce shortages?

Answered: 202 Skipped: 139



### Cost of living/Affordable Housing (37)

- Affordable housing. (x24)
- More sustainable housing built.
- Lower city taxes. Housing supply.
- Sustainable housing grants for carbon neutral upgrades.
- Housing is an issue that prevents bringing in skilled talent.
- Increase local housing to draw in new people looking for work.
- Affordable housing in smaller communities, no place is affordable for casual workers.
- Living costs. Real estate prices. Ebb and flow of the seasonality of the industry.
- Housing and rental prices are insurmountable for many people, particularly those in lower paying jobs. We have a need for lower income housing and support. People can't move to the area due to cost of living.
- "Affordable and desirable" rental housing to attract new people from major cities to the area wanting a change.
- Increasing housing supply, attracting skilled people, increase college programs in technical and construction fields.
- Housing is an issue in rural areas. You can't attract employees when there's nowhere to live in the area.
- Environmental protections, affordable housing, limits on home sizes based on need and allowing tiny homes to be built and lived in year-round right across the region.
- Affordable housing and expediting processes to achieve a larger inventory of mixed-use housing, offsetting inflation for with rebates and incentives to support keeping people in their homes.

## #11 continued...

### Immigration / Labour Attraction (25)

- Immigration. (x9)
- Attract more labour.
- Attracting more middle-class jobs.
- Attract new people to move to the area.
- Be more welcoming to new Canadians.
- Trying to attract people to the area who actually want to work.
- Speak with federal immigration minister to have immigrants settle here.
- Increasing the availability of educated/skilled workers in our region.
- Promotion of the amazing quality of life in this area - attract new comers.
- Marketing to attract people still in the workforce to relocate to eastern Ontario.
- Perhaps offer more accommodation to students so that they can relocate for summer.
- Our immigration policies are too archaic. Too often I see new immigrants, with skilled training from other countries and yet they are not permitted to work in their field, or need to jump through hoops to obtain accreditation in Canada. I realize these are beyond regional control, however local input to other levels of government, hopefully would help.
- Ability to bring people from other provinces or countries! Attracting qualified people to the area, demographically we have a large senior population and our younger people cannot find affordable housing and there is not enough public transit, so they cannot afford to live in our smaller localities and we lose this work force to the larger cities.
- Provide linkages for new residents seeking employment, training options and communications highlighting success stories.
- I think that living in this "rural" area can be an advantage and showing the pros of moving to this area.

### Training/Skills (20)

- Focus on Training/skills. (x7)
- Incentive programs/grants for training. (x3)
- Training by work placement/on the job training. (x3)
- Funding for employers to train young adults coming into the workforce. (x2)
- Digital skills, digital skills and digital skills.
- It is hard to get qualified people to apply for jobs in construction.
- Training more graduates with degree level knowledge of electronic hardware design.
- More training programs for those looking for work but lacking skills in a job they are interested in.
- Our workforce issues are Canada-wide in the trades and currently the Ontario government as well as our trade association (Boating Ontario) are pushing hard right now to attract more workers to our trade. I don't see how there's anything that can be done at the county level. There is a Career Fair for Trades for eastern Ontario at the EY Centre in Ottawa where schools are being bused in to attend the event.

## #11 continued...

### Reduce Social Assistance (17)

- Pay them less to stay home.
- Cut back social assistance, working "under the table".
- Get people off welfare and teach them how to work.
- The government has to stop giving out free money.
- Demand the governments stop making it so easy to stay home.
- Stop paying them to sit at home with their parents or on EI.
- Increase criteria for EI eligibility; incentives to work rather than not.
- Make it harder for people who are healthy and able bodied to stay at home.
- I think it's more on the government level on not letting it be so easy to get EI and welfare.
- Repeal the CERB and any other incentive that incentivizes people not to work.
- Incentives for retraining or to get people working not paying them to stay at home.
- Stop giving handouts to individuals. They are becoming dependent on these handouts.
- I do not understand the workforce shortage. Where did the people go? or is the government supporting these people so they do not want to work? So, I really could not begin to guess how to change this situation.
- Encouraging the 35+% of those who have removed themselves from the workforce and unemployment counting to enter back into the system.
- Encourage People to stop getting Government money and not smoking government dope that they are buying with Government money and back into the work force.
- Encourage all levels of government to review EI, and other subsidy payments to individuals that simply find it as financially beneficial to stay at home as it is to work.
- Supporting local, less social assistance where not necessary and instead more incentive to be working.
- I don't believe our region can do anything to bring people to work - it is entirely reliant on motivation and mental health... the lack of work ethic and commitment to full time positions is deeply rooted in mental health issues... Perhaps is the government refused to provide aid unless a person was working i.e. topping up pay instead of promising it for nothing.

### Increasing Minimum Wage & Employee Supports (16)

- Higher wages and benefits. (x2)
- Valued labour force reflected in wages and general print.
- Flexible hours and better wages.
- Good wellness packages for employees.
- Pay equal to the amount of effort employers want.
- Emphasize the benefits of working for a small business.
- People cannot subsist on part time employment and minimum wage with the cost of living today.
- Work-life balance; employee appreciation, training/development for time management and stress.
- Pay people better and provide benefits so that existing employees aren't looking for greener pastures.
- Creating an environment where the employee is provided with descent wage, health benefits and inclusion.
- Living wage and encouraging employers to work with their employees on "what's in it for me" when they can't offer competitive wages.

## #11 continued...

- Any business that requires staff needs to be paying more than the minimum requirement. The days are gone where business owners can keep the money in their pocket instead of paying staff. You want staff, respect them and know that without them you are out of business.
- Encourage employers to have Respect for employees. Consider the employer as a supporter rather than a boss and Retention would be higher. Pay weekly rather than bi-weekly.
- Stop saying there is a shortage of workers, there isn't. There's a shortage of businesses willing to pay what people know they can get if they shop around. We pay around 15-20% higher than the rest of our industry plus have five weeks of vacation to start. We have no problems finding staff.
- Part time hours, gas prices make it challenging for people to afford to go to work, lack of transportation... People can't survive on part time work and expecting people to work multiple jobs to make ends meet isn't sustainable.
- This is difficult to answer as I don't have employees however if I was looking for work in my field... I would expect to have the flexibility to work from home at least occasionally. And the issues with digital marketing roles I see posted is that there is often expectations that the individual knows all social media platforms, graphic design, photography, videography, copywriter, web design, analytics etc. etc. but at entry-level pay. It's a must-have role but it's not valued at times. I don't think this answers the workforce shortage question but it would attract better candidates in the digital field if these issues were addressed.

### Wage Support/Subsidies (14)

- Wage subsidies to attract talent to the area. (x2)
- Provide support for wages. (x2)
- More incentives.
- Funding for existing businesses.
- Tax incentives to hire new employees.
- Wage subsidies for employers to encourage people to work.
- More support for small business so they can afford to pay employees more.
- Government subsidy for businesses to get minimum wage employees over the poverty line.
- Access to wage subsidies for small scale employers to be able to offer better wages...including new start-ups, not just those with COVID losses.
- Incentive programs for employers to recruit and train new staff. Financial assistance to bolster wages until unemployment returns to normal levels and there are once again more people looking for work than there are jobs.
- More funding for seasonal employers. Wages keep going up, productivity of today's youth keeps going down. Requires more man hours to accomplish same work then it did pre-COVID.
- Financial support and investment in new technology through high interest rate environment.

## #11 continued...

### Trades/ Apprenticeships (12)

- Promote skilled trades in the area. (x3)
- Apprentice funding to the employers. (x2)
- Subsidized training to get more people in the trades. (x2)
- Train new Tradespeople for construction.
- Training skilled workers to replace those who retired during the pandemic Continued training, awareness and opportunities presented locally. Marketing and promotion of small business.
- Development of skilled trades specific to automotive industry- not truck and coach.
- We need skilled labour in the Construction Industry. Get workers into an Apprenticeship Program. Currently the Ontario Government has a Grant Program available to encourage workers to get their Red Seal.
- Support every single apprenticeship program going. Inform & encourage every business that could/should employ an apprentice to take one on. Or more than one. An apprentice that has a good experience will be far more likely to apprentice others in the future. Use any money to train employers in basic people management not in programs to study the workforce.

### Recruitment/Employer Supports (10)

- Recruitment support.
- Advertise that jobs are available.
- Assisting Employers in finding & retaining staff.
- Supports for small business, hiring supports.
- Awareness, training, communication to business owners.
- Supporting small businesses to be able to hire quality employees.
- An effective single platform to register job seekers and jobs offered.
- A proper guide to deal with paid days off, vacation pay, holiday pay for smaller business with both salary and part time workers.
- Offer businesses training on things like improving the moral in the workplace, creating a work environment that is attractive to employees or teaching the business owner ways in which they can make their employees feel appreciated (it's not just about increasing wages).
- Coaching for small business to help them to maintain business, and support staff. Navigating the increased cost of doing business alongside increases in job estimates to clients.

### Schools/Youth (9)

- Youth Employment programs. x2
- Start in schools.
- Attract youth to stay and upgrade their skills and education.
- Insurance industry education in local college and even in high school.

## #11 continued...

- The most useful focus would be on helping leaders - including those in schools - to understand that it is possible and critically important to teach people how to decide what kind(s) of work/learning is a really good fit for them. Once they are equipped to do that, there will be a lot more people who will willingly step up to the plate (whatever plate they know will be a good one for them) and to be excited to join the workforce. Leaders and individuals need to learn that it is possible and essential that employees are able to state clearly what they need in order to pick and stick with a job, an occupation and a career.
- Enable young people to start working on their "careers" with or without the pre-req of formal secondary education. Apprenticeships to get them into the work area would be ideal. However, I also believe that at the entry level position, there are too many jobs available ... we live in a world of too much choice, too much convenience. How many Tim Horton's does any one town need? How many grocery stores? How many gas stations?
- Somehow the message needs to get out that young people need to develop a work ethic. A lot of them don't seem to be able to function without a phone in their hands and some places of business do not allow that. Social media platforms are causing a lot of issues for business that don't rely on social media for day to day processes.
- Get students in high school out in the community doing things and teaching them skills so they have something on their resume once they graduate. Change your curriculum and bring back the trades, cooking etc. giving certificates etc. Not every parent sends their child to Girl Guides or Scouts so many are missing out on these opportunities
- Long term- SLC should offer a health and performance/wellness program to increase local education and produce high quality coaches. Other than that, it cannot be addressed locally.

### **Public transportation/Affordable Transportation (9)**

#### **Lack of Motivation in Workforce (8)**

- Motivation to want to work. (x2)
- Getting everyone back to work.
- Getting workers who want to work and show up for work.
- Just people do not want to work. Don't see this going away any time soon.
- We have no constructive suggestions there just don't seem to be people available or willing to work
- Not sure. I fear COVID made people rethink working in the service sector and working weekends and long hours. I fear this is a cultural change and a life choice.
- I'm not sure what the answer is but I know restaurants are suffering immensely. They are having a hard time finding anyone willing to work in that scene and quality employees are slim.

### **Less Government Intervention/Cut Red Tape (4)**

#### **Child Care (4)**

- Day cares that took children when not feeling well.
- More available and less expensive childcare.
- Ability to tap into parents with children -ability to offer flexible daycare for part-time employees.
- Child care support incentives for people who left the work force to stay with children during the pandemic.

## #11 continued...

### Improved Amenities (3)

- More amenities.
- High speed Internet for ALL areas, improved cell service for all areas.
- Better internet in rural areas.

### Other (21)

- More sustainable business.
- We don't have workforce shortages.
- Reduce government hiring.
- Good communication.
- Bio economy and tourism.
- "Return to normal" and entirely stop with the "fearmongering".
- Factors that affect employer's ability to pay competitive wages.
- Stop investing in Student hiring and get the 55 plus crowd to work.
- Look at why people aren't working or applying for the jobs available.
- Seriously don't know. The service industry has struggled to get back on track.
- Tough Q to answer because this problem seems to be a nationwide problem currently.
- Not sure this is something that can be fixed by government and other organizations.
- Convince businesses that are capable of using remote workforces to use it. Office work is gone, businesses who don't see that will slowly die.
- Working with everyone. I am actually in South Frontenac but Rideau Lakes benefits from me the most.
- The same model Alberta is using to attract people, our affordability, lifestyle and careers  
<https://www.albertaiscalling.ca>
- Stop increasing minimum wage and start increasing pension, benefits, and RRSP matching programs. Raising the minimum wage just keeps raising the cost of living. What this generation needs is help planning and preparing for the future and being able to afford medication and physio etc. to keep them at work instead of off sick.
- Hard for me to say. Based on my own experience looking for work, there's more competition in the positions I've applied to. I, more often than not, don't get call backs after applying to positions that I'm more than qualified for which has led me to believe there are more people looking for work than jobs available.
- Since the main industry in this region is seasonal, ensuring that there are jobs in the 'offseason' or that EI is available to the employees would be helpful in obtaining/retraining trained/skilled staff.
- Every occupation is vital and important. Just because some jobs are undesirable doesn't mean they aren't worthy or important.
- There are too many individuals making too much money as opposed to more people making enough. In my region specifically, the reputation for the municipal workers and services is not in positive light. It takes too long for people to respond to requests and there is no reason for them to worry about it, they get paid the salary regardless. There is no motivation for them to do better or be more reliable. They are short on staff and have no plans to grow (and probably can't when you are paying 1 individual 100K a year).

## #12 What are the 3 top areas of support that would be most helpful to your business right now?

Answered: 229 Skipped: 112

building support local businesses interest Find employees years Lower taxes reduction  
new employees loans resources local businesses within make Recruiting need product  
Brockville especially labour live offer None City buying Improved qualified incentives  
Wage community reduce access small increase Supply taxes relief costs  
supporting local services Promotion marketing control best Worker  
funding money advertising stop support Finding  
business work grants Internet people municipal  
area Financial small business job government  
government grants employees online new staff help improvement local  
Financing low customers attracting etc training debt opportunities assistance  
Social media n events Transportation hiring Workforce grow given Clients open expand  
grants training supply chain interest rates planning better internet tourism labour pool networking  
education

### Business Grants (50)

- Grants. x16
- Grants for capital.
- Accessing programs.
- Turn CEBA loan into a grant.
- Grants to help expand stock.
- Grants that are truly helpful.
- Funding for startup business.
- Grants for carbon reduction.
- Money grants Interest free loans.
- Financing support to modernize.
- Access to more government grants.
- Investment in New green technology.
- support for small Ontario producers.
- New event support through funding.
- Grants & funding for growth & expansion.
- Helping small business expand their buildings.
- Small business grants and funding opportunities.
- More grants for business/industries rebuilding.
- Low or no cost productions equipment loans and grants.
- Keep up and double down on support local businesses.
- Access to grants and business incentives to operate in the area.
- Looking for funding streams to assist with our organization.

## #12 continued...

- Improved small business supports and grants in the areas of marketing.
- Money to help with costs which were incurred during the pandemic.
- Grants/loans to purchase equipment/technology to grow business.
- Regular operational government funding: Provincial, Municipal, Federal
- Government grants that appropriately reimburse what I lost during the pandemic.
- Financial assistance for those that don't qualify for government grants would be great, if at all possible.
- Continued support via grant programs while we bridge the gap of inflation and its impact on resources.
- Grants to pay the conversion to new cheaper lighting and AC/heating options.
- Grant support for replacement of old HVAC units with modern high-efficiency HVAC units.
- Grant support for installation of electrical costs-saving retrofits, such as active power-factor correction.
- Grant support for installation of a Solar PV-powered charging station for HEVs and EVs.
- More funding for small business. Canada Summer Jobs Funding running for the entire summer not just 1/3rd as it takes at least that long just to get them trained. More CSJ Funding for small business.
- New business subsidies and grants. The focus has been on businesses with at least 2 years history or those who can demonstrate COVID losses, leaving new start-ups with few options for funding.
- Small business grants/ further promotional funding for organizations such as "What's On Westport" that assist local businesses with event organization without need to apply for onerous forms.

### Advertising/Marketing (33)

- Advertising. x9
- Marketing. x8
- Promotion. x2
- Online marketing.
- Visibility.
- Media coverage.
- Marketing strategies best approach.
- Getting the public to know my service exists.
- Exposure so people know we exist.
- Advertising at reasonably affordable rates.
- Marketing strategies in the face of an uncertain economy.
- Promotion and positive messaging of business growth.
- Marketing above the ordinary. The how and when to scale up.
- Direct features and collective efforts to spotlight our individual business.
- Attracting customers and return customers, helping me to grow my business
- Growing our audience through advertising and our digital outreach portfolio
- Pay directly for advertisement e.g. in Brockville Guide & Map, 1000 Islands Visitor Guide, free Advertisement on their homepages, exactly the amount that all advertisers paid in 2019. This way everybody will benefit with the same amount.
- Advertising options that are affordable. I would love to get on the radio and into the newspaper but the cost is astronomical even for just Brockville let alone the surrounding smaller hamlets that I service.

## #12 continued...

### Labour (32)

- Finding employees/workers. x11
- Workforce hiring. x2
- Attracting staff/labour. x3
- More qualified employees. x3
- Labour guidance.
- Recruiting trades.
- Educated workforce.
- Increase available labour pool.
- Retaining the work force in our area.
- Getting more young people in the trades.
- Pool of qualified people to work in the insurance field.
- Finding proper employees with a proper work ethic.
- Hiring quality practitioners that are a great fit for the clinic.
- Greater access to 25-35-year-olds with business or finance degrees.
- I would like to find an assistant to handle my invoicing and receipts. It would only be a couple hours per month.
- Recruiting skilled workers. Introducing skilled workers into the Construction Industry. Recruiting workers with a proven construction background.
- Labor workforce is the main issue. Need Temporary foreign worker work permit and visa expediate.

### Red Tape Reduction/Government Regulation Federal and Provincial (28)

- Reduced red tape. x4
- Keeping the Feds hand out of our cookie jar.
- OHIP support for out-patient Lactation support.
- Fiscally responsible and accountable government.
- Government intervention encouraging people to return to work.
- Stop the Government programs/EI programs and get people back to work.
- Recreation should be affordable and could be more affordable if HST exempt.
- The provincial government needs to stop finding new policies for businesses to create and maintain.
- Making incentives for people to get jobs and a trade as in stop paying them to stay home.
- Encourage Government of Ontario to make tuition payments a tax deduction / tax credit.
- Make all services and events open to all regardless of vaccination status going into the future.
- Have front line people at business and governments return calls, answer email or texts within 24 hours.
- No more restrictions and lockdowns that have crippled small business and have done nothing to improve the community's health or safety.
- Stop giving handouts to the big companies. They are the ones using machines at the cash. They don't employ local people.
- Have better data sharing and integration systems at all government places e.g. hospitals, Service Ontario.
- Persuade Province of Ontario to devote some of the school "catch up" funds to established for-profit businesses.

## #12 continued...

- Quit subsidizing one company over another. Success should not be based upon unfair competition. Loans only.
- Tougher environmental protections of land, water and forests - preserving and enhancing what attracts people here.
- Rework of the bidding / Tender system. All of the bids (and I am thankful to even be asked) go to the lowest bidder by default. This is a toxic and flawed system. If I outsource goods and services outside of my country (China) and resell them for the bare minimum increase / profit I will win the bid when someone using local products and local workforce could have been given that bid
- Legislation to protect small business owners from the landlords taking their assets through litigation if small business owners have to terminate their leases early as a result of slowdowns, closures, fear mongering and a failure of many businesses to return to the workplace "return to normal" having complied with the politicians dictates.
- Never have the IJC let the water levels get low, have tourism and the boating/fishing/marina industry become a factor in water level decisions, have the IJC use common sense about deviating from the outflow levels when it can save an entire half of a season for this industry!
- Water levels never being so disruptive, stop with the over-high and especially stop with this over-low, this over-low issue should have been dealt with instead of hiding behind the rules for plan 2014, seems like they can deviate when other issues arise, this extremely low was a crushing blow after 2 seasons of lock-downs!

### **Funding for training/Labour (27)**

- Wage subsidies. x6
- Grants to train staff/new employees. x7
- Training opportunities. x3
- Workforce incentives.
- Apprentice financing.
- Financial incentive programs for recruitment and training.
- Financial assistance for wage/benefit enhancements.
- Labour subsidy or apprentice program in plants for florist.
- Bursary to tap into to attract practitioners to the area.
- Hiring subsidies or programs that are not just for skilled or trades.
- Apprenticeship and training programs for automotive technicians.
- Gov't supplement for new trades people. Better college in school training total lack of support for new apprentices from the colleges.
- There is little to no support for small businesses when it comes to hiring or employing individuals locally. When you are responsible for making enough to pay someone a competitive wage (benefits, health care, paid vacation and sick days) but struggle to pay yourself, that doesn't make sense does it?
- Training webinars etc. are great and I want to continue to learn, but it's hard to do it all. I would love if there was availability of resources either funded or maybe even 'discounted/reasonable pricing' based on either subsidized or a 'group rate' for things like product photography, in-house videos. Product photography for ecommerce is a real challenge for me right now.

## #12 continued...

### Cost Reductions (25)

- Interest rates decreased. x5
- Lower Utility Costs. x3
- Lower building material costs. x2
- Lower Fuel Costs. x4
- Access to lower interest rate finances.
- Less overhead expenses.
- Lower labour costs.
- Lower insurance costs.
- Lower supply cost.
- reduce payroll costs.
- Lower operating costs.
- Shipping and supplies costs being controlled.
- Prices from suppliers coming back down, they are taking us to the cleaners
- Capping fees (credit cards, shipping, utilities) Insurance premium discounts.
- Drop the costs of utilities and water bills they are horrendous bills. Cut the costs for business banking - especially POS, Visa etc., It's out of control.

### Digital Support (25)

- Social media education. x4
- Website. x3
- Social media advertising. x 2
- E-commerce. x2
- Digital support.
- Digital marketing.
- Web presence.
- Increased online sales.
- Technology marketing.
- Increased digital presence.
- Online learning for business owners.
- Computer, web page and Facebook help.
- Support for marketing and digital presence.
- Clear advice and assistance regarding online sales.
- Getting a good website up within my school course selection up on-line store.
- Basic knowledge of running a successful business, including basic accounting, advertising & marketing in a digital age.
- Identifying and accessing additional online/social media advertising opportunities for our outdoor Market.
- More information about online advertising (being able to decipher which online platform would be best to invest in for advertising).

## #12 continued...

### Tax Relief (22)

- Less taxes. x7
- Lower municipal taxes. x3
- Tax relief. x2
- Eliminate carbon tax. x2
- Decrease business taxes. x3
- Tax break for small business.
- lower tax for small businesses.
- Financial support or property tax.
- Tax reduction so additional dollars can be invested in business.
- Drop business tax costs, cut the city cost to get rid of our garbage. Help the businesses by cutting their costs. Drop capital gains taxes for businesses.

### Tourism (18)

- Tourism attraction. x2
- More opportunities to bring people to area in winter. x2
- Tourism marketing.
- Increase traffic to area.
- Exposure to more tourists.
- Increased tourism during shoulder seasons.
- More events downtown Brockville for the slower months.
- Combining various sectors for example Agriculture and tourism.
- Expanding year round and modern attractions and businesses opportunities.
- Promoting the area locally and provincially and into the bordering U.S. states.
- Tourism marketing/advertising strategy, attracting US customers post COVID.
- Strategic consumer-based marketing plans (with implementation plans and money to support), to attract people to come and visit this region.
- Targeted tourism campaigns during the off season that is not centered around the Rideau Canal. The area around the Rideau lakes has much more to offer than boating. Year-round outdoor activities, music, food & beverage, arts, photography.
- Progressive and collaborative economic development that includes tourism and progressive scientifically based bio-economy.
- A tourism strategy that supports all of the Leeds and Grenville/Thousand Islands/Rideau Lakes- off season is a great time to organize this.
- Improving downtown cores and tourism within our towns/city. Brockville's downtown is a ghost town and when it's not it's just crack heads. Encourage businesses to be open. This would make the area more attractive to young professionals and tourists.

## #12 continued...

### Municipal Regulations /Matters (15)

- Township support - weak in business support.
- Responses from Township on issues requested information on.
- Equal support amongst all similar businesses in the township.
- Sites exposure for business in Brockville.
- City advertising small business in local events
- More activities offered by the city and in the city.
- Understanding the new government recycling contract without needing a lawyer
- Community Improvement Plan Leniency i.e. instead of 3 quotes maybe just 2
- Have municipalities have a sense of responsibility. Shorter approval process from municipal sector.
- Building inspectors who have a background in building things and understand what they are looking at.
- I'm having great difficulty expanding my business because of the overly restrictive rules regarding % of land use. I need a new shop, have the land, but with a 30% land use limit, I can't build what I need. Truly, it's this one single thing that has me handcuffed to grow.
- There is no point in listing things outside of municipal control, so the best thing the municipality can do is to have Overly stringent, ideologically-driven, and onerous municipal bylaws.
- Township supporting all levels of business and dealing with privileged individuals that refuse healthy growth.
- Reduce the number of competing fiefdoms to one tourism operator /marketer for the region. Combine the budgets so we can hire the best and the brightest together with resources akat the example of the Florida Keys marketing <https://www.visitflorida.com/places-to-go/southeast/florida-keys>
- To not host outside foreign based (not a Brockville based business) retail goods sales event at the Memorial Centre... for a few days rent. It harms the local economy already struggling to maintain sales.

### Supporting Local (14)

- Support with locals.
- Shop local incentives.
- Word of mouth in the community.
- More emphasis on supporting local.
- Spreading the word about our business locally.
- Community support, community involvement.
- Promoting "support local businesses/producers".
- Widespread information about buying 'local' matters.
- Community support, community involvement.
- Promotion of all local businesses within the community.
- Promote buying and supporting local. Create special events around supporting local.
- education on the importance of shopping local and sustainability of your community.
- Supporting Canadian businesses-municipal policies to shop 100% Canadian-owned and operated businesses (Canadian subsidiaries of foreign corporations are not Canadian companies.

## #12 continued...

- Local governments need to support the concept of shopping locally, it is so easy for people to order on line and they do not realize that that hurts our small businesses.
- Regional support for local businesses – buying products from the local businesses in your region as opposed to outsourcing thousands a year from other provinces would greatly improve the long-term success of said small businesses.

### **Housing/Cost of living (14)**

- Increase housing stock. x4
- Affordable housing. x2
- Rent relief.
- Cost of living.
- Cost of living support.
- Income to support our clients.
- Living costs for all, especially for staff.
- If we had affordable housing the labour pool could grow.
- Rental assistance and cost of living allowances.
- Subsidy for local food in grocery stores, markets, etc.

### **Networking (13)**

- Business networking. x6
- Collaboration.
- Finding local partnerships.
- Member support for hospitality services.
- Going together to build stronger relationships.
- Networking with other accommodation providers.
- Potentially some B2B introductions to people who might like to have their written materials edited. Although I currently work mostly with STEM materials, I have in the past edited a lot of business communications for people who have lauded my work.
- Better centralized networking opportunities (apart from privately-run groups). A new method or opportunity to advertise within rural communities that don't have a central plaza or cluster of storefronts.

### **Cell/Internet (10)**

- Improved internet. x4
- Internet is too slow in the area.
- Good internet without having to use towers.
- Internet and cell service improvements in our area.
- Cell phone and internet connectivity in the Lyndhurst area.
- Being rural, phone and internet services are spotty at best.
- High speed Internet access and improved cell service for all businesses in ALL rural areas.

## #12 continued...

### **Business Supports (8)**

- Guidance for managing/operating a growing enterprise.
- Training/development for time management and stress.
- More support from government for small business
- More programs for mom and pop shops.
- Support for women entrepreneurs in service industries
- More communication of support available from government sources
- Business management workshops: communicating, budgeting, and networking 'how-tos'
- Have seminars for business and government employees on how to communicate more effectively.

### **Hiring Supports (8)**

- Recruiting support. x3
- Partnership for hiring.
- HR/Business Related training.
- Understanding how to afford hiring staff.
- Guidance/a checklist on hiring staff. What you need to do or have in place as an employer; help with figuring out payroll.
- Help navigating any funding Job boards, help connecting qualified workers to job openings worker etiquette- proper replying to job applications, job offers, communicating with potential employers.

### **Public infrastructure (8)**

- Better parking.
- Infrastructure repairs.
- Better signage, regional linkages.
- Improve services to increase population.
- Governmental funding towards infrastructure.
- Foot traffic increases. Side street flowers, flags and road maintenance. Currently zero.
- Public facilities are critical, like public washroom, signage, parks, cycling paths,
- Better road, so city customers don't mind driving on non-rough and dusty roads. Help with better highway signage.

### **Debt (7)**

- Debt repayment.
- Servicing debt.
- Debt relief.
- Repayment of loans.
- Debt service assistance.
- Interest relief on Government loans. Extension on Government loans.
- The government has given us another year to try to pay them back and if we don't, we can pay back at a 5% interest rate, it is far better than the bank will offer us. So, if we could get a \$40,000. loan at 5% interest we will be forgiven 20,000. This would take a huge stress from us at any rate, because we will not likely have that amount by the end of the year.

## #12 continued...

### Supply Chain (6)

- Improved Supply Chains. x2
- Resolving supply chain issues.
- Supply chain.
- Improve bottlenecks in supply chain especially due to net zero emissions politics.
- Increased supply chain support.

### Transportation (5)

- Transportation.
- Public transport.
- Transportation of refrigerated or frozen product.
- Improved transportation (I realize this is part of supply chain, but lack of adequate transportation alone is a huge issue).
- Transportation options for those who cannot drive. Many of our client's do not have a family physician which slows down our ability to provide care.

### Resident/Business Attraction (5)

- Attracting young skilled people to the region.
- Attract more businesses to open in the local area.
- Strategic consumer-based marketing plans (with implementation plans and money to support), to attract people to come and live/work.
- Stop shunning high tech businesses. Our payroll is higher than other businesses in the area with twice the staff quantity but nobody seems to care if we're here or not. Which begs the question, why keep our business here? We can work anywhere.
- Promotion of the area and area businesses, I work hard at promo and social media but there's only so much time in the day.

### Business Plan (4)

- Business plan. x2
- Budgeting/cash flow planning.
- Financial planning/managing business finances.

### Lobbying (2)

- Government Advocacy.
- Industry (Forestry/Wood Supply) Advocacy- Lobbying provincial support.

### Office Space (2)

- Shared office space.
- Affordable office rentals for small business.

## #12 continued...

### Other (34)

- Investment.
- Price stability.
- Education.
- Supply.
- Mentoring.
- Clients.
- Better technology.
- Finding wholesalers.
- Fraud with online services.
- developing contracts.
- Gaining new clients. Ways to grow.
- Referrals to our services.
- Financial Online service providers charges.
- People get over fear of COVID.
- Climate mitigation. Wetland restoration.
- Consulting services, accounting services.
- Freeze minimum wage.
- Incentives for return to work.
- The ability for scientists to clone me so that I can have a week off.
- Inflation Reduction. Economy Stabilization.
- Make it easier to access community resources.
- Incentives for low to medium wage people to go to work.
- Increasing our efficiency in providing service to our clients.
- Leeds Grenville community control and returning emails to resolve.
- Get the insurance companies to allow the employers more say in their hiring,
- Decrease import products so that domestic product and production can gain some ground.
- Help connecting to leaders of teams who are struggling to keep/find/satisfy their employees.
- Guidance for HST remittance for moneys that we accumulated during COVID but had to use as cash flow instead of submitting.
- We are in a good position as we have a well-established business history, a bit of a tourism draw, but supply local restaurants. We don't really need support, but there are others that do. As a small food business, we have problems producing enough products for small during busy times especially during peak holidays. I guess it's a good thing. Having to turn customers away due to lack of product
- Universal basic income would increase the median wage of the area significantly which would help all local businesses, and local businesses doing well would help our business.
- Communication- we need to effectively communicate with each individual in the communities we live in, especially letting those in the workforce know what are the job opportunities.
- Greater presence on the Chamber of Commerce social media platforms and website. Referrals from clients (difficult to solicit as my business focuses on client confidentiality). Referrals that actually turn into solid leads!

## #12 continued...

- How best to utilize existing resources and making connections easier to support businesses plus bringing in skilled immigration that can be a valuable addition to our business retention and expansion.
- A change in the perception that our school is for the elite - we have very affordable tuition and offer subsidies etc. Continued awakening within the parent community that raising expectations in academics can only create more successful adults who strive to do their best and work hard to reach goals.

## #13 What are your expectations for 2023?

Answered: 242 Skipped: 99

2022 Slow growth improve work hard Hoping lowest employees hopeful numbers demand  
return need hire little will continue due services still keep prices new move  
hope slow year now better unless growth growth hope will  
worse business profit increase able continue solid  
expect work sales revenues grow stable 2023 inflation hopefully area  
levels things continue grow see changes labour economy expand supply chain issues  
None MUCH increase revenue customers sure

### Comments Surrounding Positive Expectations (105)

- Continued growth at a slow pace. (x6)
- Growth. (x9)
- Good. (x5)
- Growth to pre-COVID levels. (x4)
- Hopeful. (x3)
- Modest growth. (x2)
- Increased revenue. (x2)
- Better than 2022. (x2)
- Moderate.
- Moving up.
- Surpass 2019.
- Continuing hiring.
- Customer growth.
- Increase in patrons.
- Getting back on track.
- Increased business.
- Slight increase in sales.
- Expansion if possible.
- To improve sales.
- To continue to work hard.
- Feeling quite optimistic.
- Growing, cautiously.

## #13 continued...

- Increased sales & profit.
- 5% increase in receipts.
- To improve membership.
- Increase volume of sales.
- More customers purchasing local.
- Increasing revenue and team size.
- Continue to grow and expand.
- To double our numbers.
- 10% growth to the bottom line.
- Outlook is good for cottages.
- Hopefully to grow as a business.
- Continued growth in needs of clients.
- Increased productivity, larger market.
- To maintain 2021 income and grow in 2023.
- Increase in sales both online and in our area.
- Increases in sales for hospitality.
- Double my sales, cross my fingers
- To increase productivity by 10-15%.
- Lots of downtown foot traffic.
- That our business will continue growing.
- Opening our physical store to the public.
- Expect to see growth and hope to hire.
- Continue with our solid base and increase 4-5 percent.
- New business growth and new hire.
- Our goal is to increase our revenue to 85,000.
- I expect supply chain issues to resolve themselves.
- We hope to offer more attractions to our business.
- Continue improving client engagement, customer service.
- Growth in sales and consistency in supply to our customers.
- To continue to grow the business and hire reliable workers.
- I hope for a much better winter and spring.
- Hopefully to improve our income as shows and sales return.
- Grow locally as the go-to for voice-over services.
- Increased awareness of our business and revenue growth.
- Incremental growth, much based on my own personal efforts.
- Continued presence in the market place and growth.
- Strong year. Continued growth and success for our staff, partners, clients.
- A decent year, if I am lucky I will be back to close to pre-COVID levels.
- I have confidence that 2023, will return to growth year over year.
- Hoping for things to return to pre-COVID. Back to buses rolling in daily.
- We still expect vendor participation and public engagement to continue to increase.
- Another year of sales growth, increased online presence and sales.
- We would like to double our sales, by growing our rentals and styling services.

## #13 continued...

- To continue to provide employment for our staff and hopefully hire more in the future.
- To have a stronger more streamlined business with trades and customer service.
- more employees, equipment acquisition and development of internal processes and controls.
- To work on getting the word out about how amazing this area is all year round!
- Being a new business and looking to expand, we are hoping to double our sales.
- Hoping to increase revenue by increasing online presence and broaden customer base which will hopefully help to mitigate future economic downturn.
- To attract more customers now that people are able to enjoy their properties from all over the world.
- I am now selling my skincare line, bath & shower products and wellness creams in two Pharma Choice pharmacies. I would like to grow this to more locations. Since I am the only employee, I need to know how to do this and increase my inventory volume.
- An increase in customer base, possibly a little more in retail sales. And hopefully new equipment.
- We expect that we will continue to provide superior knowledge and customer service to excel in our field.
- Increased visitation (including in the shoulder seasons) which contributes to multi-day stays for accommodations.
- To bring in products that are greatly needed in our community at affordable prices. I opened my store at home to avoid the overhead of unaffordable rent. I put those savings into my pricing to do my part to help the community.
- My business will continue to expand, expecting a 15% growth. Generally regional economy will struggle due to inflation, labour availability and supply chain issues.
- Keep growing the agritourism side of our business - it is becoming more lucrative than our actual farming enterprise.
- I am hopeful that we can see continued growth in our student body now that COVID restrictions are more lenient and we can raise classroom caps - I am also hopeful that as we re-examine tuition fees and salaries that we will be able to pay more competitive salaries to our amazing employees.

### **Comments Surrounding Positive Expectations but Indicating a Barrier (24)**

- Good unless the economy tanks totally.
- Although recession is forecasted we expect growth.
- That it will be unpredictable and full of potential.
- A solid year, but an inability to access capital to grow.
- Economy will continue to fluctuate so there may be some caution.
- Hope thing get back to normal; and supply chain get better with pricing.
- Increased growth but worried about supply chain issues and inflation.
- To have adequate human resources to help run a profitable business.
- We anticipate a steady year and would like to find skilled labourers.
- I hope that COVID is a memory and we can stay constantly busy and attract a new practitioner.
- An economical dip followed by increased consumption of goods and services.
- We expect to continue to grow, despite having to adapt to inflating costs of goods
- Business to stay on current course and profits, unless we are able to hire a qualified candidate.
- Would love to grow more as product demand is there but labour markets is big deterrent.

## #13 continued...

- Increased business levels with more people wanting to go out however with the increased costs of going out not sure how many will have the spare money for a night out.
- Our company's workload is increasing. I'm expecting it to be easier to find highly-skilled technical workers (engineers etc.) mainly due to economic slowdown.
- Unsteady market conditions, but a general upwards trend in larger community infrastructure builds.
- Better but still tentative with COVID. We are looking to have more success with a growing economy in this area. Better room amenities and renovations to be a better overall draw for our business.
- A continued return to pre-COVID numbers. Unfortunately, there is still some hesitancy and trepidation in terms of travel with increased costs and health concerns for example.
- We may see a bit of a downturn in 2023, due to the economy, but, because we are a local producer of bakery goods, we always have the market covered.
- I'm expecting 2023 to be a good year but I do worry about the state of the economy, supply chain issues and ever-increasing prices.
- I would like to say that the business will grow in 2023 but without adequate amount of staff, I see 2023 to have the same struggles as this year.
- Still a slower than usual start/winter season. Jan-April 2022 was brutal. Maybe 2023 won't be as bad but I expect it to be very low in sales & foot traffic. Then I have cautiously optimistic outlook for summer 2023.
- I'm hoping that despite looming recession warnings, that we continue to maintain current sales and service numbers.

### Comments Indicating Neutral Expectations (27)

- No changes. (x2)
- To match the sales of 2022.
- I expect little change.
- Same as current year.
- More of the same.
- Sustainability.
- A normal non-COVID year.
- Steady, but no growth.
- Flat year.
- Continue services.
- I expect 2023 to be very much like 2022.
- Zero growth, hope to maintain 2022 numbers.
- Don't expect growth, but just hope it would be stable.
- I expect that I will be just as busy in 2023 as I was this one.
- Hoping for a stable demand for construction materials in 2023.
- To continue as normal working to full capacity but not able to expand.
- I will do the same as last year due to staff shortages.
- I am continuing on and do not foresee any changes to what I do or how I do it.
- Work harder to stay constant in a likely recessionary environment.
- Low. Weather dependent. Planning for reduced growth and a catch-up year.

## #13 continued...

- Maintain current sales as growth now requires additional square footage, increased marketing,
- Just to keep my hand in during my semi-retirement, and earn enough to be comfortable.
- That our revenues will remain neutral, and that we will aim at increasing our efficiency.
- Continue with events and festivals and expand to offer wellness retreats at our Heritage Farm.
- I feel our business will stay the same till people are forced to go back to the office and our labour force returns to pre-COVID times.
- International tourism and travel influx to maintain business operation levels; maintenance is expected as opposed to growth.

### Comments Indicating Uncertainty (10)

- Unknown. (x4)
- No crystal ball... it's day-by-day, month-by-month.
- Expect the worst - hope for the best.
- Not sure because of the recession we are in and the hindrance of the carbon tax which is driving prices up.
- Stable but not higher revenues; vulnerable to economic recession (prediction) so future revenue uncertain.
- I'm not sure. We hope that the inroads that we've made with some leaders and their team members will generate others who are willing to make the conceptual shift needed for this new kind of work world that exists. We hope, but we aren't sure how quickly the shift will happen
- I don't have any specific expectations as we are in a very apparent recession that is even affecting former wealthy families.

### Comments Surrounding Negative Expectations (55)

- Recession. (x3)
- Worse.
- Liquidation.
- Bankruptcy.
- It will be much worse.
- Continued labour shortage.
- Stay afloat.
- Trying just to hold on.
- Hope to still be in business.
- To keep the business alive.
- To hopefully not go bankrupt.
- To hopefully be open for business.
- Not sure I will survive that long.
- Difficulty continuing to survive as a viable business.
- Hope to keep head above water, return to normal.
- None really, we hope to carry on and keep above the red.
- Pay our bills and hopefully make a profit.
- Having to scale back due to burn out.
- Slowing construction. Poor financing options.

## #13 continued...

- Choppy markets and high interest rates.
- A recession commencing in Q2 that will last 2-3 years.
- Increased hardship finding new employees.
- At this time, I feel more vulnerable to things I didn't expect.
- Another year of market and labor uncertainty.
- A slight decrease in sales from the 2022 post COVID.
- Keep working hard, hope things change or we are done.
- We're just going to buckle up and hold on and hope for the best.
- To keep the doors open to provide the best brick and mortar floral service.
- Keeping enough sales to not lay off staff as they have families to feed.
- The continued controlled demolition of our economy and way of life.
- Same, ever increasing prices, labour costs and smaller and smaller profits.
- Business down yet again, we are headed back down to 2020 sales levels this year already.
- Low expectations due to worsening supply chain issues and increasing costs.
- Unless Government stops overreaching its powers, not good.
- I think it will be tough for customers to pay their insurance premiums.
- I suspect that we will be at a loss in 2023 unless something amazing happens.
- Expecting continued challenges to provide service without any additional trained technicians.
- I am thinking of winding down my business and moving towards retirement or semi-retirement
- Change of what appears to be negativity towards businesses for everything they provide.
- More COVID; more economic upheaval; foreign interference in Canadian affairs.
- Economy is failing, and clients have lost confidence in water levels for August, September and October.
- I suspect a downturn this winter, but a lessening of downward economic pressure in a year to 18 months.
- Another difficult year. Skilled staff shortages will continue and make us unable to open full-time hours.
- Cost of materials will skyrocket, interest rates will continue climbing, more people will be defaulting on payments.
- I foresee a slowdown in purchasing for non-essential - will have to really work on inventory management and crafty ways to move product to ensure I can continue to employ my staff at full capacity.
- Little hope that cell and internet services will be available to all with fast speed and reasonable cost. Too much talk and too little to show.
- Myself, and most of my neighbours and family members, expect things to worsen moving forward, not only in this area, but also across Canada and globally.
- That if the financial impacts continue there will be less discretionary money and tourism will take a hit
- Costs will continue to rise, wages won't keep up and proportional product increases will not be supported industry wide.
- To be poor, basic people cannot afford expensive holidays, so basic level holidays will be a better option, continued over prices for fuels and commodities, water levels to be a crapshoot and this area's reputation being tainted due to the lowest water levels in late summer and fall EVER!
- I expect that demand will stay the same with a little drop after 2023 due to the increase in costs, shipping, inflation and with the decrease in local spending compounded by international companies selling online.

## #13 continued...

### Other (19)

- Trying to retire.
- We are re-evaluating our business plan.
- Business change of direction.
- Increase wages to keep employees.
- I will need to raise prices.
- To have more vehicles.
- Fields prepped to receive lavender and blueberries.
- Municipality elections will bring changes.
- More government red tape to traverse through.
- Government funding increase.
- Obtain Registered Charity Status.
- Improve the economy and get inflation under control.
- World War 3. Unfortunately, I'm not joking.
- Bad news brought on by inaction or wrong action by elected officials.
- Some new stronger Local governments will get their act together.
- High taxes, high interest rates, little work.
- That we would begin implementing the strategic tourism plan outline that was completed in 2022. That the new slate of elected officials in the region work together, better to create a stronger regional presence rather than a "township" approach.
- I'm working part-time jobs on top of operating my business and expect this will be the new norm.
- Keep moving forward. Residential demand should drop off as interest rates rise. In the past that has been when commercial demand would increase. Now is new.

## #14 Do you currently receive the Leeds Grenville business eNewsletter?

Answered: 333 Skipped: 8

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	57.06% 190
No, but would like to. (please provide your contact information in #16)	20.42% 68
No	22.52% 75
TOTAL	333

## #15 Please provide any additional comments related to your business viability and your challenges as a business owner.

Answered: 99 Skipped: 242

### Comments Surrounding Barriers/Challenges (65) (Further broken down below)

#### Costs (14)

- Increase in food costs and labor wages have decreased margins making it next to impossible to service debts incurred from COVID even though business levels are higher.
- High taxes, high fuel costs, high insurance costs.
- Support services such as contractors are overpriced and not meeting deadlines.
- Small Farm Start-up with high input costs.
- Big box stores making it more difficult for the little guys to compete. The cost of everything including the mortgage here is going through the roof.
- The ever demanding need to market effectively, with high costs to advertise, staff overhead costs, maintaining staff with appropriate pay.
- As a new business it is extremely hard to access capital to enable growth.
- Challenges with the cost for renovation. Challenges to hire entry level staff and the new expectations. Challenges that the staff are in the driver seat when it comes to employment demands and due to shortage, we have no choice but to accept the demands.
- Price of Gas is rising too fast. Cost of Goods are rising too fast. My shipping costs inured and cost of goods are making it un-affordable for consumers.
- The expectation of patrons is that the service level will remain the same without large increases in pricing. Costs, however are rising at a rate where maintaining a seasonal business becomes unfeasible.
- Challenge in my business is after being deemed non-essential for three years, expenses require price increases and current inflation means people cutting back. I need employees and can't afford to hire. So, working alone more than I'd like.
- Challenged by costs of living (supplies, heating etc.). Also, by insurance companies who are now reducing coverage for the health service I provide. People less willing to pay out of pocket.
- The government loans deferred to Dec 2022 are still looming and I am likely not alone in wondering if the money will all be there to pay back. Debt from being closed yet paying rent etc. to remain viable and the extra costs are now being felt.
- We are a new Bed and Breakfast business that has struggled with renovation delays through 2021 and 2022. This has caused us to miss the entire spring, summer, and most of fall travel season since we will only open on Nov 16, 2022. We intended to open July 1st, 2022. This has had a significant impact on revenue and cash flow that has put us way behind before we really start. We are hopeful, but it is concerning and some means of cash flow relief would be welcome. Unfortunately, since we are not yet open we don't qualify for any COVID relief payments.

## #15 continued...

### Labour (11)

- People.
- The challenge we face is the availability and retention of skilled labourers.
- 20 years in business in North Grenville, hiring has never been this challenging!
- We're in the growth position of needing more support/staff than we have revenue to pay for.
- We have hotel and restaurant; major challenges are the workforce is hard to find to continue the business. Also, the minimum wage increase is having a big impact on revenue.
- Lazy society... Need to start teaching the next generation that life won't be handed to them anymore.
- Employee turnover has been difficult. Finding skilled people in technical trades and professions. Unprecedented demand for services. A lot of stressed people due to the Pandemic makes service professions difficult.
- Have had a hard time due to the number of people hiring retaining employees and staying competitive pricing in our area.
- The biggest challenge is a shortage of trained professionals. As the economy declines, there is further demand from clients to repair vehicles. Demand for service increases with a diminished capacity to respond.
- Recruiting trades is the #1 challenge for us, Leeds Grenville has much to offer but we need to showcase it.
- I am currently selling my business. COVID was difficult, but we managed with a well-seasoned staff. This past season has been my biggest challenge in 20 years of running my business. Staffing was nearly impossible and we had to reduce our hours/days of the week. This obviously impacted our bottom line, but also disappointed our customers. While I had decided to sell before the summer, I am doubling my efforts now. I do not want to spend another summer like the last one!

### Exposure/Marketing (6)

- Lack of exposure through 2 years of lockdowns and uncertainty has crushed a largescale marketing plan we undertook pre-COVID.
- I have a very niche business and finding my clients is tricky.
- My biggest challenge is that people are not aware of my Guitar Making School. I cannot afford to advertise any more than I do now.
- As a new business starting during the pandemic it has been a challenge to get visibility. Renovation delays and increased pandemic costs of renovations have caused challenges for our business. We hope this coming year will be a better one.
- It has been an uphill battle ever since I launched my business earlier this year. Expectations that an event like the IPM might pay off seem quite futile. Even though I have contacts locally in many of the areas where my services are needed, for example lawyers and insurance agents, referrals from same are very sparse on the ground. Most of my referrals have come from other appraisers.
- COVID cut my business in half. New clients are difficult to find. I'm exhausted and couldn't work more than 20 hours a week if I wanted to. I am just hanging on for another 10 years until I'm 65 and can retire.

## #15 continued...

### **Government (6)**

- The government has to become honest and accountable and address the fiscal disaster they have created and lead by example rather than have every level of government leveraged to the max and using valuable tax revenues to service debt.
- The biggest challenge now is the government restrictions.
- The township is our highest liability... too much red tape.
- Very busy consulting in bio economy - all pro bono; with heritage property in the downtown discouraged with state of downtown and antagonism at the Town Hall (hopefully will improve); amateur approach to tourism, economic development and brownfields.
- Red tape. As an owner I do it by the book, as my township expects. Business owners need the townships to stand up for them, show strength and leadership and not suck up to every so-called concerned environmentalists whose real prime objective is to keep this area to themselves. This area belongs to everyone.
- Social media has become a tool for all spammers and keyboard warriors. We have removed all social media accounts cell phone numbers etc. as overseas (India) scam artist have copied, spammed bombarded our phones with bogus calls and online scams that directly affect our business. Political correctness has become a joke in that you cannot call these individuals out for fear of being labelled racist etc. Unproven COVID mandates have become a standard in the work field restricting our ability to provide services in some areas and industries because the government has placed the burden of enforcing their distorted policies on businesses or lower governing bodies and threatened them with fines if they do not comply and forcing them to become liable if they do not conform.

### **Lack of Grants (4)**

- Small businesses in our rural region are not receiving the same amounts of grants, funding or recognition.
- Lack of supports/grants to encourage investment in growth opportunities.
- I have found it difficult to find support locally as the business development programs favour supporting female entrepreneurs and leave the men to fend for themselves with unequal referrals and opportunity.
- Everyone talks about supporting small business and then everyone helps themselves to taking more money away from them, no one is really doing anything to help. It will take courage and not focusing on being elected.

### **Internet Quality (3)**

- Better phone and internet service.
- Our main challenges are terrible and expensive satellite internet and poor cellular coverage. We moved here 4 years ago and opted not to have a land-line - we can only use our phones in front of one window of our house or calls drop.
- Internet is a big problem in this area. We have multiple clients that are rural and they're running on terrible internet which reduces their effectiveness significantly. Costing money and stunting growth. Because we have no incentive to stay in the area, we're likely going to get rid of our office space when our lease is up and move all our equipment to Kingston or Ottawa.

## #15 continued...

### Misc. Barriers/Challenges (21)

- Amazon.
- Reports of doom in MSM are damaging the industry.
- Gender bias against home-based businesses.
- It's a challenge to know what's best to invest in to further service and sales.
- We are always the first be shut down for COVID, it has pretty much killed our business.
- We are in a somewhat "recession proof" industry. However, we will face challenges as consumers shift to essentials and stop purchasing luxury items. This will affect margins and gross profit.
- The off season is our biggest challenge. Increasing support and collective attractions to bring customers year-round is our greatest need.
- Due to the LOW water in the St. Lawrence River I will be closing my business about a month sooner!
- We are a wedding venue and are not recognized in any category. Government says not tourism? Although I stand to differ and if not then, where!!
- We have a sense of urgency to get the job completed, unfortunately that is a foreign concept to most people.
- It has been exhausting worrying about the health of every person who comes in the door. Dancing around to keep socially distanced. Not providing as many activities due to concerns. That has been a big change. Growing weary of it.
- Health and recreation and the arts are the first to be cut when facing financial instability. So, my business is always affected by the economy.
- Most of my business is person to person sales but slow times in the winter of a tourist town are a challenge. I make all of my products and also work the retail store - paying a retail employee is a challenge but would be ideal.
- Wake control on the St. Lawrence is a real challenge. Big boats are not held accountable for their wake and do damage to boats at fixed docks. As more big boats take over, this issue is going to only get worse.
- Not sure how to grow my business as it's starting to get overwhelming for me to supply the pharmacies and Ottawa Artisans stores. I am also selling my products in three Ottawa Artisans locations - Bayshore, St. Laurent and Tanger Outlets.
- Biggest challenges for me is getting tourists to walk down Merrickville side streets. All decorations of flowers and streetscape, phone pole flags do not extend down our commercial side streets. Side streets with businesses are neglected and continually overlooked by municipality, and provinces.
- Personally, my biggest challenge has been relocating to this area and experiencing the decline in local interest and the ability to network. I have not received a warm welcome since moving here because I'm not originally from this area... and this became even more evident in my attempts to network and create alliances. I've taken this as a queue to shift away from focusing on local business because it's no longer sustainable for me.
- The increase in rural housing density resulting in reduces speed limits is adding significant travel time for picking up supplies and doing deliveries. Most of our farm produce goes to Ottawa, Toronto and Niagara.

## #15 continued...

- As the sole employee of my little business I have hit the maximum of what I can to ensure that my clients are happy. I rely on some free family help because I don't make enough to hire help and I feel that I can't increase the prices of some services during this time when so many are struggling to put food on the table. My services and products are mostly nonessential - fun, touristy, artsy. I love what I do but I do it because I do not have to support my family.
- Currently the last-minute appointment cancellations due to COVID/exposure to COVID are a challenge for staffing. The cost of all our medical supplies have doubled or in some cases more than doubled since COVID. The fact that everything has gone up and many people are struggling, means that if we put our prices up we may get people not coming for care when they should, adding a bigger burden to the health care system down the road.
- Young people don't want to work. There is poor work ethic in our society. Our population has an entitled mentality. Our youth is more concerned about TikTok, You Tube and Facebook.

### Comments Surrounding Opportunities/Suggestions of Action to be Taken (15)

- Networking locally.
- It's incredibly difficult to connect with local business owners in rural areas – improved networking opportunities would be helpful, as well as improved marketing of local businesses by the region.
- We have to shop local and keep money here in the area, also like to see prices of fuel go down and product cost down it's out of control.
- Getting people back to shopping on main street and buying online from us vs Amazon, Walmart and Costco!
- More support for business through township and Chambers of Commerce to promote buy local.
- Regulate short-term rentals to be held accountable for safety/water/and fire code issues, have short-term rentals pay a fee to operate, keep water levels up!
- Due to input cost increases and fast interest rate increases it is difficult to stay ahead of costs. Investment in green technology to reduce our monthly expenses would help us the most.
- A home-based registered business that has been paying taxes and HST for over 10 years should have access to same Digital support grants as storefronts.
- This far end of the region gets very little attention other than the casual mention of the view from Spy Rock. The music scene is phenomenal with local talent and talent from far and wide. The food and beverage scene is competitive with other regions with the benefit of everything being in walking distance. There are scenic drives in 5 different directions from Westport. You can hike the Rideau trail from the village to the top of Foley Mountain, along the ridge with spectacular views and down the hill out towards the Winery. I would like to see the county review this gap in your tourism marketing.
- With the closure of the local agricultural programs at the Kemptville College, our ability to recruit individuals with the skill set required for this business, we have been challenged to find a pool to draw from in Eastern Ontario. There needs to be a local educational institution that draws students who are interested in working in this industry.
- I have demand for more Maple Syrup, but have trouble in funding the cost of expansion. With the increased fuel costs related to my cow/calf operation I'm probably just breaking even. There has to be some control put on fuel and fertilizer prices. I could be selling more beef and pork locally but there is only 1 abattoir locally and to book an animal in for slaughter you have to book a spot before the animal is born. The abattoir's need help to meet all of the regulations.

## #15 continued...

- As a storefront I can't overemphasize the importance of basic beautification services and facilities be provided and upkeep. When our municipalities fall down on the job of basic services such as grass cutting, garbage emptying, flower watering, washroom cleaning etc., then it gives both locals and tourists the impression that we are a community that doesn't care.
- Keep the borders operating without restrictions, and water levels should never be this low, especially when the ability to decrease the flow was available, but was just never implemented, recreational boating, fishing, tourism is a major player and need to be treated as such in the decision making,
- I am 3 houses outside of Brockville, so technically Augusta, there are so many more opportunities for promotion within Brockville. I would love to see a collaboration, my shop saw only a few tourists this summer, If I could participate in Brockville tourism programs it would be of great benefit.
- Not many cities can boast of having a unique waterfront historically themed boutique hotel that has been awarded as in the top 1% of small hotels worldwide. Most tourism regions would feature such a location... not ignore it as is the case here. Not a complaint as I am achieving quite well without recognition or support ...just an observation. Feel good self-congratulatory newsletters do not bring new customers from outside the area nor does multiple competing separately funded economic and development departments 3 in Brockville County Township City... to say nothing of the DBIA. then Prescott etc. etc. with virtually no new industry resulting... Splintered fiefdoms can't compete with the likes of Kingston or Ottawa.

### Comments Surrounding Positive Feedback (4)

- You are doing a wonderful job keeping us connected.
- As a young business, we learn something new every day. Finding new clients, reaching out and booking new events is actually a touch intimidating. Though we have been doing this type of work successfully for years through past careers, we still suffer from imposter syndrome! We don't have a concrete business plan, yet we know what we want to do, we are simply unsure how to accomplish that goal. We are learning as we go.
- I did receive assistance in setting up and designing a website, so thank you for that help. Also, an employee is presently receiving training with support from CSE and COJG. This support is very much appreciated.
- We were part of the Digital Main Street program in 2020. We have attended several webinars through the township/tourism region - these have been excellent, please keep them coming!

### Comments Surrounding Future plans (2)

- Getting to the point of selling online. i.e. interesting to have digital media support training but getting on to selling online would be a next helpful step.
- Setting up mentoring program.

## #15 continued...

### Other Comments (6)

- I do not foresee any changes. I will still offer Sustainable Governance workshops but fill my time with volunteering.
- New business that started in June 2022, so I don't have much comparison.
- The Heritage Sector is often not included in surveys, and often overlooked as a high contributor to regional economic development.
- I'm happy to be referred to businesses looking for marketing support!
- Very important to take things day by day, stay on top of changes and adjust where necessary
- The business I am in is good but I face challenges like any. I'm lucky to have been able to stay open during the pandemic.

## #16 If you would like to speak to someone regarding support available to businesses, or if you answered yes to question #8 or #14, please provide your contact information:

Answered: 124 Skipped: 217

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	97.58%	121
Business Name	Responses	96.77%	120
Contact Number	Responses	89.52%	111
Email	Responses	100.00%	124

## Additional Notes:

- Survey Timeframe: October 4, 2022 to October 30, 2022
- Survey Distribution: Businesses that were part the Counties Economic Development business directory, with active email addresses, received the survey directly. In addition, some members of Business Support Working Group distributed the survey through their membership lists and social media channels.

## Business Support Working Group:

### Municipalities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge | Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott | Rideau Lakes | Westport

### MP / MPP

MP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes  
MPP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

### Community Futures Development Corporations

1000 Islands CDC | Grenville CFDC | Valley Heartland CFDC

### Small Business Enterprise Centres

Leeds Grenville Small Business Centre  
Small Business Advisory Centre – Smiths Falls | Lanark

### Chambers of Commerce

1000 Islands Gananoque | Brockville and District | Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay & District | Merrickville and District | North Grenville | South Grenville

### BIAs

Downtown Brockville | Downtown Gananoque | Downtown Prescott | Old Town Kemptville

### Employment Services

CSE Consulting | Employment and Education Centre | KEYS Job Centre

### Other Business & Education Agencies

Regional Tourism Organization 9 | St. Lawrence Corridor Economic Development Commission | Eastern Ontario Workforce Innovation Board | St. Lawrence College | Kemptville Campus Education and Community Hub

## THANK-YOU!

On behalf of the Business Support Working Group, I would like to thank each business who took the time to complete the survey. Members of the Working Group will be reaching out to assist businesses who indicated they would like assistance. The Working Group contact list is available on the webpage, along with any new programs and resources as they become available.

Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager  
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

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