



BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

# North Simcoe Business Retention + Expansion Report

Town of Midland  
Town of Penetanguishene  
Township of Tay  
Township of Tiny



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## Acknowledgements

The Business Retention and Expansion Project (BR+E) is the result of the work of many stakeholders, and community leaders. It was overseen by a volunteer Business Retention and Expansion Task Force and Leadership Team:

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**Yates, Heather** - Planning Department, Township of Tay

## Volunteer Visitors

Our Volunteer Visitors were individuals with an active interest in business at the local community level. These volunteers were responsible for visiting businesses to conduct interviews. We are truly thankful for their energy, dedication and commitment to confidentiality.

**Bryant, Sylvia** - BR+E Project Assistant, North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation  
**Clairret, Monique** - Connexion emploi/Collège Boréal  
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**Kramp, Stephan** - Councillor, Town of Midland  
**Matton, Ileine** - La Clé d'la Baie  
**McKay, Gord** - Councillor, Town of Midland  
**Muenz, Debra** - General Manager, North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation  
**Noel, Judy** - Executive Director, Simcoe County Training Board  
**Ross, Frances** - Midland Mirror

*A special thank you is extended to Cheryl Govier for her assistance and guidance throughout the stages of the Business Retention and Expansion Project. Cheryl is an Economic Development Consultant for the Rural Community Development Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.*

## The North Simcoe Region

The North Simcoe BR+E Project is comprised of the Towns of Midland, Penetanguishene, and the Townships of Tay and Tiny. Each community offers unique and diverse environmental features, as well as a variety of commercial, industrial, service and retail businesses. Close proximity to Georgian Bay and a rich cultural heritage make North Simcoe a natural tourist destination and a desirable area in which to reside.

The **Town of Midland** is situated at the gateway to Georgian Bay's Picturesque 30,000 Islands. The community is culturally rich and has experienced economic prosperity over the years. The Town offers a very safe, clean and hospitable community in which to reside and work, including year round recreational activities.



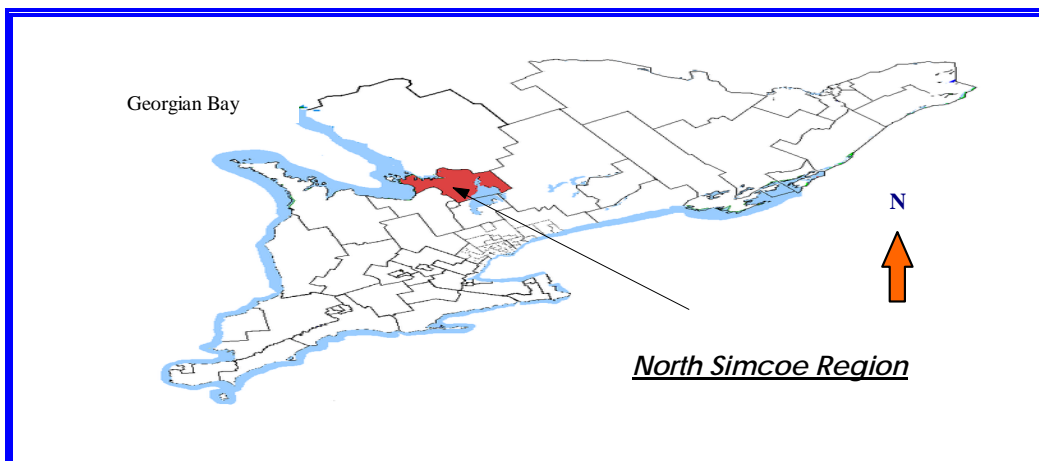
The **Town of Penetanguishene** is a picturesque, bilingual community at the southern tip of beautiful Georgian Bay. The Town offers numerous amenities as well as an array of recreational activities and tourist attractions. Penetanguishene has a rich and colourful history that reflects its three founding cultures - Aboriginal, French and British.



The **Township of Tay** is located in the northern area of Simcoe County on the shores of Severn Sound (Georgian Bay). In addition to a large, rural community, the Township of Tay also includes the villages of Port McNicoll, Victoria Harbour, Waubaushene and Waverly. The Township boasts a proud heritage and values the unique environmental features, waterfront areas and the natural setting.



The **Township of Tiny** is a bilingual community nestled in the Georgian Bay region with a combination of permanent and seasonal residents. The Township includes the villages of Wyevale, Perkinsfield, Lafontaine, Wyebridge and Toanche. The area is known for its agricultural land, sandy beaches and stunning views overlooking Georgian Bay.



## What is Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E)?

Business Retention and Expansion is a community-based, volunteer-driven economic development tool used to encourage growth and stability of local business. Business Retention and Expansion works to improve the competitiveness of local businesses by evaluating and addressing their broader needs and concerns. This is crucial to the sustained viability of communities, since businesses that stay competitive are more likely to remain and expand in their community.

Business Retention and Expansion projects are being adopted in communities throughout North America. Communities are recognizing the need to focus on business as a key element in the health and prosperity of the community. Understanding and acting on the issues to help keep existing businesses, and removing barriers to their expansion, is the key to building a more vibrant community overall.

- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs



## Goals and Objectives of Business Retention and Expansion

### The purpose of Business Retention and Expansion is:

- To identify opportunities and actions to assist local businesses in the expansion, retention and creation of jobs
- The diversification of the local economic base
- The implementation of defined actions to improve the local business climate

### Short-Term Objectives:

- Build relationships with existing businesses
- Demonstrate and provide community support for local businesses
- Address urgent business concerns and issues
- Improve communication between the community, government organizations and local businesses
- Retention of businesses and jobs where there is a risk of closure

### Long-Term Objectives:

- Increase the competitiveness of local businesses
- New business development and business attraction
- Establish and implement strategic actions for local, long term economic development
- Strong, diversified, local economy
- Job creation and job maintenance

## Business Retention and Expansion Executive Summary

The Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) project was introduced to the community in September 2007, as a North Simcoe regional project. Community stakeholders and volunteers were recruited in October and November 2007 to serve as the project's Leadership Team, Task Force and Interview Visitors. The Task Force determined that the project would include businesses located in the Towns of Midland and Penetanguishene and the Townships of Tay and Tiny.

The first phase of the project was spent compiling a business database for the region and designing the interview process.

In April 2008, businesses were sent a letter of invitation to participate in the BR+E project, along with a copy of the survey. Volunteer visitors followed up with telephone calls to arrange appointments to meet with the businesses to complete the survey. All participants in the Project, including the Leadership Team, Task Force and Interview Visitors signed a confidentiality agreement to ensure the information gathered was kept in the strictest of confidence.

Interviews began in May 2008 with one hundred and thirty-five (135) surveys completed by the end of October. The survey data was entered into specifically designed software, ensuring the business information remained confidential. A statistical analysis of the data was conducted in November and a preliminary report presented to the Leadership Team in December 2008. The group reviewed this information and prioritized the issues into eight key areas.

The Task Force gathered in January 2009 to consider the key areas and through a facilitated process, the group selected four priority issues where action could commence within the next year. A first draft of the objectives and actions recommended by the Task Force to address the four priority areas is included in this report.

The North Simcoe Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) project has been effective in gaining a better understanding of the issues that affect local businesses and our community. The findings present opportunities to develop strategies that will improve the business climate, help eliminate existing barriers to retention and expansion, and strengthen communication and relationships with all community partners.

The actions outlined in this report represents a guideline for achieving real and lasting results towards improving the economic environment in the region of North Simcoe. If directed by the Task Force, North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation will provide leadership in the creation of a BR+E Implementation Team to commence action on this plan.

## Scope of Project

The number of businesses to be surveyed was determined using a “systematic approach” from a total business population size of 1,063. Businesses were categorized by number of employees. For the purpose of the North Simcoe BR+E study, the following criteria was used to define Small, Medium and Large businesses:

Small	1 – 15 employees
Medium	16 – 49 employees
Large	50+ employees

Once the total number of small, medium and large businesses was determined, the number of surveys to be conducted within each category was calculated using the *Survey System Sample Method*.

The sample method indicated the following number to be surveyed:

Total Business Population		Total to be Surveyed	
Small	955	Small	87
Medium	73	Medium	42
Large	35	Large	26
Total	1063	Total	155

Of the 155 business selected, 135 participated in the survey.

Given a **Confidence Level\*** of 95%, the average **Confidence Interval\*\*** for the three business sizes is slightly more than 5.96% due to the businesses who decided not to participate in the survey. Small, medium and large businesses were chosen using a random selection process.

Sectors randomly surveyed included Manufacturing, Tourism, Agriculture, Mining/Quarrying, Retail/Service and “Other”. The “Other” category included Health & Social Services, Media/Communication, Veterinary Services, Travel Agencies and Utility Industries.

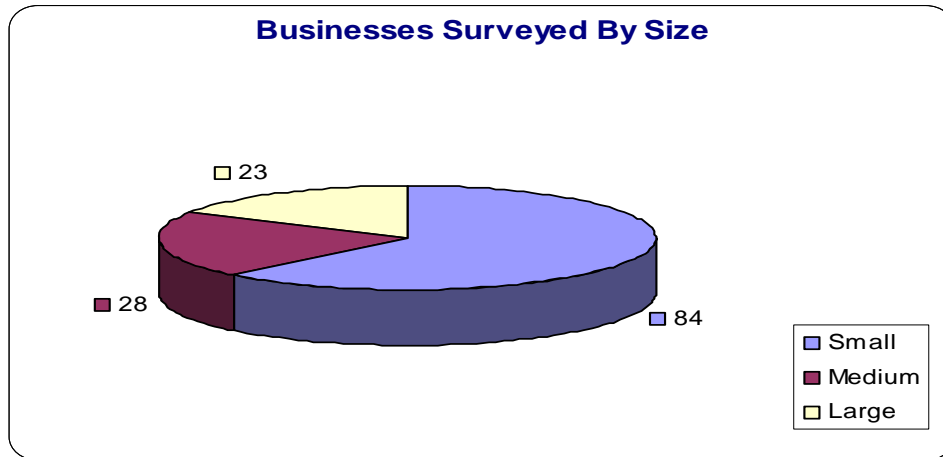
*\*Confidence Level is the probability value associated with a confidence interval. It is often expressed as a percentage, ie) a 95% confidence level.*

*Example: Suppose we believe that 50% of all the companies in the area wanted to expand. We would then run a survey (sample) that might attach a 95% confidence level to the interval 50% plus or minus 3%. That is, it is very likely that the survey result would be between 47% and 53%.*

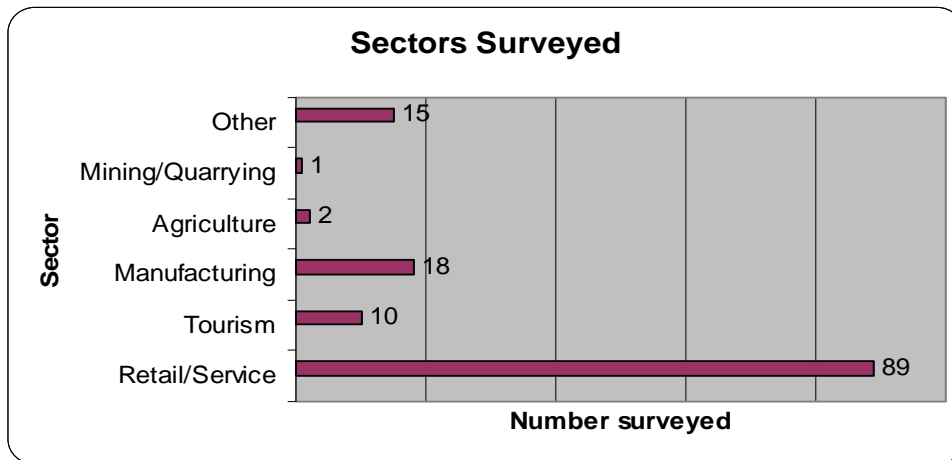
*\*\* Confidence Interval for a Mean specifies a range of values within which the unknown population parameter, in this case the mean, may lie. The width of the confidence interval gives us some idea about how uncertain we are about the unknown population parameter, in this case the mean. A very wide interval may indicate that more data should be collected before anything very definite can be said about the parameter. We can calculate these intervals for different confidence levels, depending on how precise we want to be. We interpret an interval calculated at a 95% level as we are 95% confident that the interval contains the true population mean.*

## Survey Participation

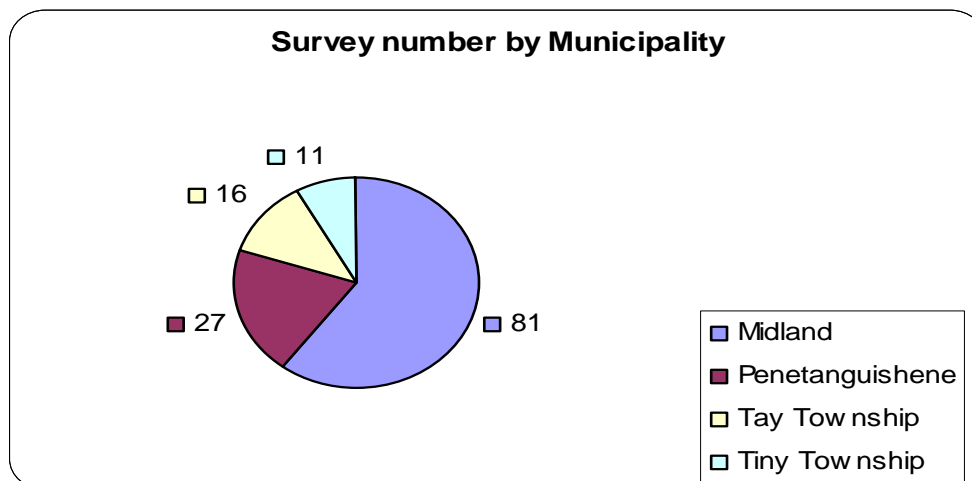
Completed Surveys by Business Size (randomly selected):



Completed Surveys by Sector (randomly selected):



Completed Surveys by Municipality (randomly selected):



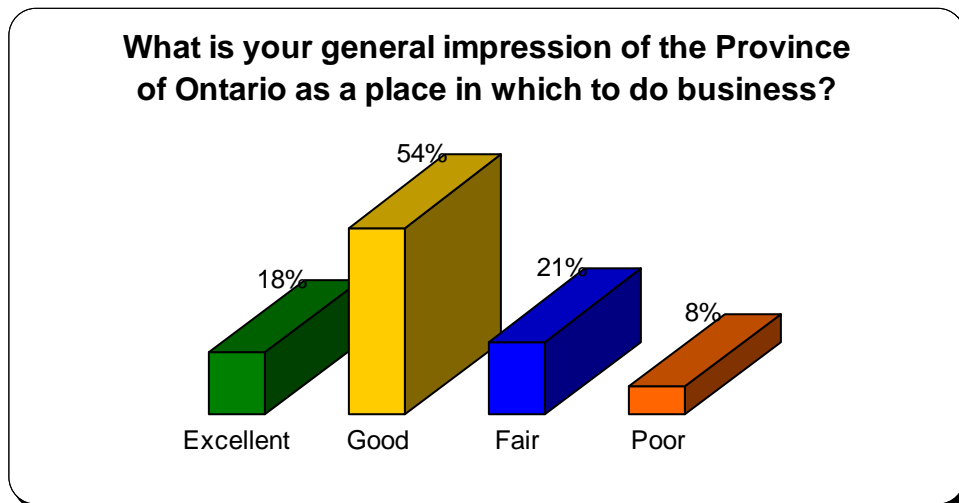
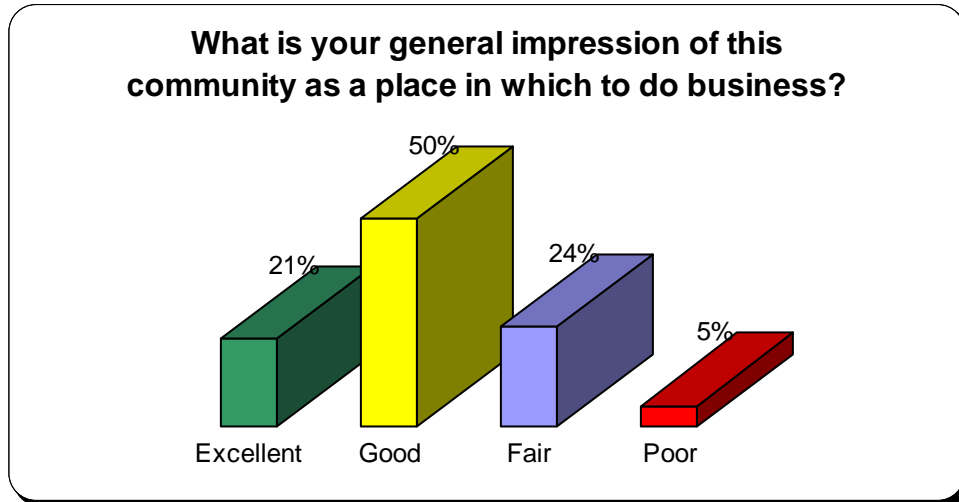
## About The Businesses Surveyed

- 64% of businesses are Corporations
- 23% of businesses are Sole Proprietorships
- 78% of owners are involved in the day-to-day operation of the business
- 70% of owners are residents of the community
- 63% of businesses are family owned
- 38% of businesses have been in operation in this community for over 35 years
- 12% of businesses have been in operation in this community for 26 to 35 years
- 34% of businesses have been in operation in this community for 11 to 25 years
- 92% of businesses are non-unionized
- 8% of businesses are franchises
- 82% of the businesses' headquarters are located within the municipality
- 9% of the businesses' headquarters are located elsewhere in Ontario
- 5% of the businesses' headquarters are located outside of Ontario
- 5% of the businesses' headquarters are located outside of Canada
- 59% of businesses have a succession plan in place
- 73% of businesses have a business plan in place
- 72% of businesses have a marketing plan in place



## Business Climate

Survey participants were asked what their general impression was of this community and this province as a place in which to do business. Overall, the responses indicated doing business in this community and province is good.



Of the 135 businesses surveyed, 132 responded to the above questions.

## Business Climate

Through the interview process, we gained an overall opinion of the community, including factors which businesses believe are barriers to existing, expanding and new businesses.

Barrier	Count	Percent
Availability of skilled labour	60	47%
Health and medical services	44	35%
Lack of proactive new business recruitment	43	34%
Public Transit	38	30%
Approval processes	37	29%
Availability of properly zoned and designated land	36	28%
Business Taxes	36	28%

Note: More than one response could be selected for this question

Note: 127 businesses responded to this question

Level of satisfaction for services provided by local government and community organizations revealed the following:

Service	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Policing	55	42%	43	33%
Fire Prevention and services	70	53%	37	28%
Garbage removal	40	31%	46	35%
Libraries	42	32%	51	39%
Recreational facilities	47	36%	55	43%
Cultural facilities	27	21%	47	36%
Health Dept./health unit approvals	29	22%	42	32%
Public utilities	37	28%	58	44%
Snow removal	42	32%	50	38%
Schools	39	30%	38	37%
Community College	33	25%	40	31%
Child care services	14	11%	26	20%

Service	Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Planning, zoning & building permits	26	20%	20	16%
Street repairs	30	23%	16	12%
Public transit	17	13%	27	21%
Medical and health services	31	24%	18	14%

## Business Climate

Respondents were asked to provide comments as to their specific recommendations to improve the local business climate. The following are some samples of the comments. To view all of the recommendations please refer to Appendix A.

*"Diversify – bring in different types of employment. We need less automotive industry here."*

*"Have a dedicated economic development office independent of political influence (as far as that is possible) and representing all North Simcoe municipalities. Combine/amalgamate Tiny, Tay, Midland and Penetanguishene into one municipality."*

*"Change attitudes – take the approach that we want businesses here and will work to help them achieve instead of stifling new and creative ideas."*

*"Must have industry move in. Nothing to keep young people in the area."*

*"Municipality should be more proactive in getting businesses."*

*"Building permit process could be better stream lined."*

*"General ability to target growth and implement more development. More open minded regarding development."*

*"Improve public transit."*

*"Eliminate government red tape. Reduce costs for licensing and other stuff to help small businesses. Get some public transit to and from the communities."*

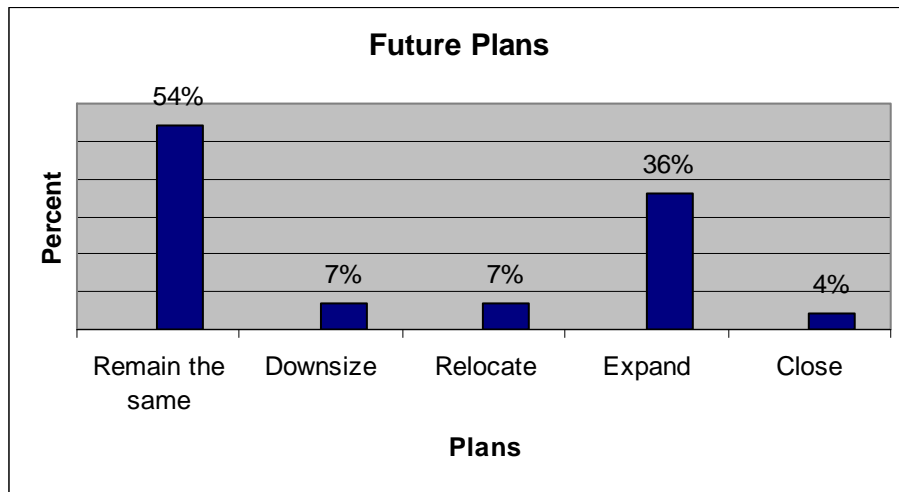
*"Supportive municipality, especially related to tourism and technology infrastructure."*

*"More education opportunities in the area."*

*"Attract new businesses to the community and provide tax incentives for the first five years."*

## Future Plans

Businesses interviewed were asked to indicate their future plans within the next three (3) years.



## Business Closures

Only five (5) businesses plan on closing within the next three (3) years. These are small, family run businesses where the owner is planning on retiring.

## Business Expansions

Twenty-five (25) businesses indicated that they have plans to expand over the next three (3) years. These expansions will lead to:

- ◆ An increase in work force 86%
- ◆ An increase in floor space 69%
- ◆ Additional product lines 69%
- ◆ Additional services for customers 93%
- ◆ Additional investment in equipment and technology 83%
- ◆ Process improvements 57%
- ◆ Importing goods or services to Canada 40%
- ◆ An increase in demand for skills training 48%

## Future Plans

### Expansion Plan Barriers

Sixteen (16) of the twenty-five (25) businesses identified that they are experiencing difficulties with their expansion plans. Challenges include the following:

Response	Count	Percent
Financing	7	44%
Labour availability	6	38%
Finding/developing strategic alliances	6	38%
Availability of buildings	5	31%
Local by-laws	5	31%
Water infrastructure	4	25%

**Note:** More than one response can be selected for this question

**Note:** Percentages are based on the number of businesses who responded to this question and may not total 100%

### Relocation

Nine (9) businesses who responded to this question indicated that they plan to relocate with the next three (3) years. Of these nine (9) businesses, five (5) answered yes to relocation, while four (4) answered that they were exploring this idea.

When asked where they plan to relocate, eight (8) businesses responded that they would relocate within this community. One participant said they would relocate outside the municipality, but within the County.

Reasons for relocating the business included the following:

Response	Count	Percent
Inadequate facilities in terms of building space	4	50%
Availability of appropriate labour	2	25%
Change in markets	1	13%
Expansion limitations	1	13%
Local regulations too restrictive	1	13%

**Note:** More than one response can be selected for this question

**Note:** Percentages are based on the number of businesses who responded to this question and may not total 100%

### Downsizing

Seven (7) businesses indicated that they plan on downsizing with the next three years. Six (6) of these businesses advised that the downsizing would result in a reduced work force.

## Business Development

### Energy

Businesses in our community expressed great concerns with respect to energy supply, management, efficiency and cost. 50% of participants advised that their business would benefit from engineering or technical support with respect to energy conservation and efficiency.<sup>1</sup>

100% of the businesses use electricity/hydro as their main energy source. Of these businesses, only 28% said they prefer to use this type of energy. 88% of businesses use natural gas as an energy source and 50% prefer to use it.

Sixty-nine (69) out of one hundred and thirty-one (131) companies responded **YES** as to whether or not they had concerns with respect to energy supply, management and efficiency.

Businesses were asked what concerns they have with respect to their current supply of energy, management and efficiency. Responses were as follows:

Response	Count	Percent
Inconsistent supply/periodic brownouts	31	45%
Unusually high-energy consumption	2	3%
Loss of productivity	2	3%
Cost of energy	48	70%

Note: More than one response can be selected for this question

Note: 69 businesses responded to this question

Several businesses would prefer to use alternative energy sources such as **wind** and **solar**. When asked why they did not use the type of preferred energy, responses were as follows:

Response	Count	Percent
Not available in this community	27	57%
Not available to my site	7	15%
Insufficient/inadequate availability of supply	3	6%
Price	10	21%
Cost of installation	14	30%

Note: More than one response can be selected for this question

Note: 47 businesses responded to this question

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<sup>1</sup> As a first step, North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation hosted an Energy Breakfast Seminar on November 6, 2008 to start addressing the concerns and requests for energy information identified during the survey process. The seminar was well received by local businesses and proved to be both informative and useful.

### Telecommunications Infrastructure

Survey results indicate that Telecommunications Infrastructure in our community is a barrier to the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses. This is more apparent in the rural areas of North Simcoe and was seen as a disadvantage as far as a place in which to do business.

Responses to listing the community's disadvantages as a place in which to do business as it relates to telecommunications infrastructure were as follows:

- "Lack of technical infrastructure"
- "Can not get Rogers high speed Internet in the industrial park"
- "Slow to introduce new technology"
- "Bell lines within the town are old and cause problems with Internet"
- "Information technology capacity – no high speed Internet in Township"

When asked which new suppliers of products or services would you like to see added to this community, responses included:

- "Information technology"
- "Wireless Internet service"
- "High speed Internet"
- "High speed in rural areas"
- "Portable Internet solutions"

Future need for improved telecommunications infrastructure proved to be an important issue for a large number of businesses:

Looking forward to the next 3 years, indicate how important each of these factors will be in ensuring that this business remains competitive – ***Availability of telecommunication services***

Response	Count	Percent
Very important	65	54%
Somewhat important	29	24%
Not at all important	7	6%
Not applicable	19	16%
	120	100%

## Business Development

### Markets

The Business Market section of the survey provided insight into where businesses are marketing and selling their products, what is important to their growth and how they identify their customers' needs.

Businesses expressed interest in pursuing the following with other businesses in the community:

- Joint product purchasing
- Joint Marketing
- Collaboration/networking/information sharing

At the time of the survey, total dollar sales trends had seen an increase over the past three years, according to 52% of the businesses surveyed. 57% of the businesses expect next year's total dollar sales (compared to last year) to be higher.

The reported, approximate percentages of our businesses total dollar sales in each of the following markets (where customers live) are:

- Within Canada 92%
- Within USA 6%
- Europe 2%

Businesses receive market research and/or trend information regarding their sector from the following sources:

- Suppliers 73%
- Trade Shows 69%
- Industry/sector association newsletters 68%
- Business Networking 52%
- Industry/sector association websites 49%
- Government publications 41%

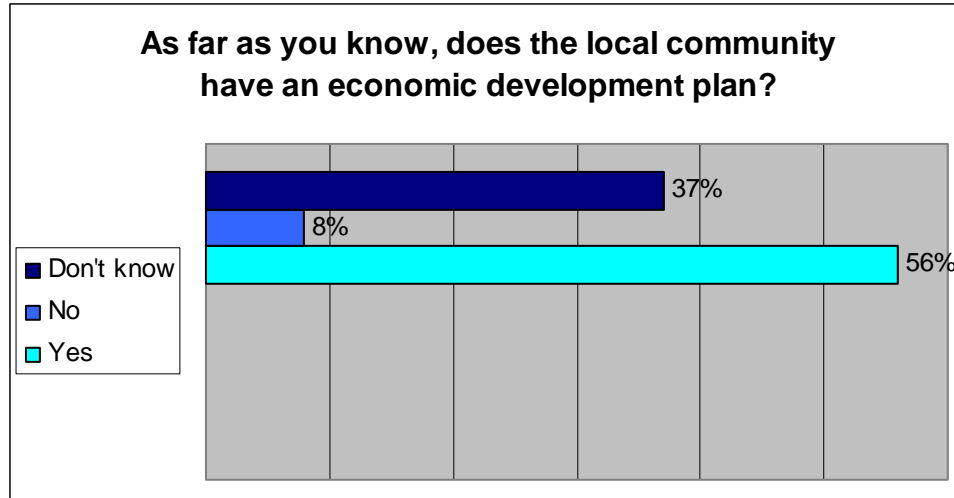
Businesses were asked how they identify their customer's needs. Based on the responses, it appears that customer service/contact is the most valuable tool available:

- Informal customer contact 78%
- Customer complaints 66%
- Customer surveys 49%
- Sales calls 39%
- Electronic communication 39%

## Local Community

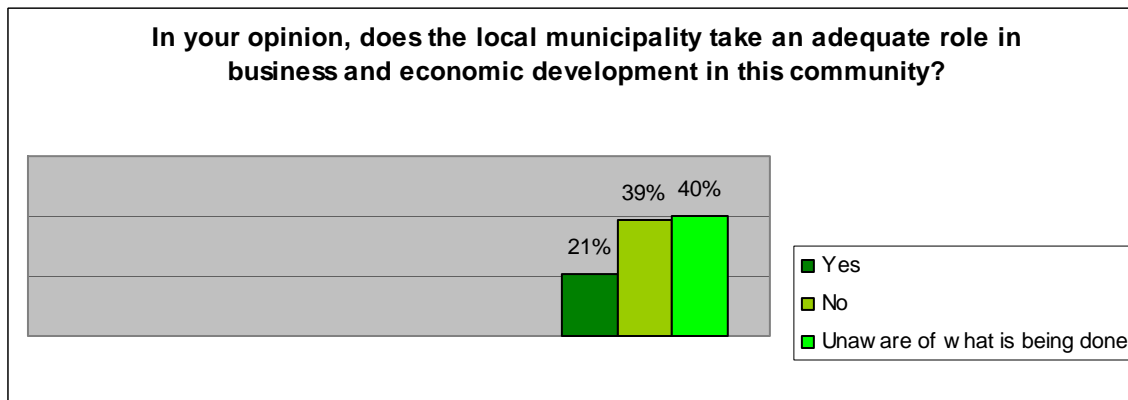
### Economic Development

Survey participants were asked if the local community had an *economic development plan* in place and was it being effectively implemented. Many businesses believe that a plan is in place, however, they don't know if the plan is being implemented.



As far as you are concerned, is this plan being effectively implemented?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	17	23%
No	16	22%
Don't know	40	55%
	73	100%



What other comments about this community as a place in which to do business would you like to raise? **(See Appendix B for a full listing of comments made)**

## Local Community

Using a scale of excellent, good, fair and poor, businesses were asked to rate certain factors in doing business in this community.

### **Factors that received the highest levels of satisfaction were:**

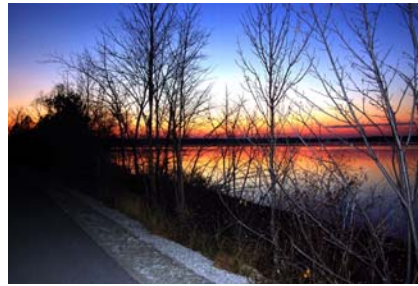
- Cost of leasing space
- Availability of utilities
- Access to markets/customers/clients
- Access to suppliers
- Quality of life
- Water and sewer capacity
- Support from local business and residents

### **Factors that were rated at the lower end of the scale were:**

- Availability of skilled labour
- Transportation costs
- Availability of transportation
- Availability of appropriately zoned land
- Land costs
- Cost of construction
- Local permit process
- Municipal taxes
- Development charges
- Support from Municipality
- Municipal by-laws
- Size of local market
- Access to research and development
- Access to training facilities

Businesses were asked how local business associations and/or economic development offices could assist their business sector. Survey participants felt the following would be beneficial to their business:

- Marketing seminars
- Access to capital seminars
- Business networking sessions
- Joint advertising and marketing
- Workforce planning, employee training and attraction
- Trade shows
- Website development
- Attraction of related supply and services businesses
- E-marketing
- Productivity improvement workshops



## Community Advantages

Respondents were asked to list 3 community advantages as a place in which to do business. The top 3 community strengths were:

1. Quality of life
2. Proximity to Georgian Bay
3. Recreational opportunities

Other responses included:

- ◆ Geographic location
- ◆ Beautiful area
- ◆ Clean air and clean water
- ◆ Great place to live
- ◆ Support services
- ◆ Georgian Bay
- ◆ Wonderful location
- ◆ Lifestyle
- ◆ Quality of life
- ◆ Loyal community
- ◆ Community spirit
- ◆ Nice, friendly people
- ◆ Historical and cultural sites
- ◆ Cost of living
- ◆ Peaceful and safe
- ◆ Good place to live and work
- ◆ Great recreation community
- ◆ No rush hour traffic
- ◆ Low crime rate
- ◆ Water accessibility
- ◆ Easy to get around
- ◆ Great vacation destination
- ◆ Access to services and recreation
- ◆ Tourism
- ◆ Only 2 hours from Toronto
- ◆ Lots of marinas
- ◆ Non-stressful
- ◆ Easy access to great outdoors
- ◆ Healthy lifestyle
- ◆ Natural beauty
- ◆ Roads are good
- ◆ Clean environment
- ◆ Small town atmosphere
- ◆ Room for expansion
- ◆ Talented people
- ◆ Beaches
- ◆ Friendly merchants
- ◆ Lots of available land
- ◆ Influx of summer residents
- ◆ Businesses work together
- ◆ Good labour force with good ethics

# Community Disadvantages

Respondents were asked to list 3 community disadvantages as a place in which to do business. The top 3 community weaknesses were:

1. Transportation/public transit
2. Lack of economic development
3. Technology infrastructure

Other responses included:

- ◆ No economic development plan
- ◆ Lack of skilled and unskilled trades
- ◆ Lack of public transportation
- ◆ Slow to introduce new technology
- ◆ Lack of foresight for population expansion
- ◆ Unsupportive municipal government
- ◆ Political roadblocks
- ◆ Limited shopping
- ◆ Cost of transportation
- ◆ Lack of jobs for young people
- ◆ Distance to and from major highways
- ◆ Municipal bylaws
- ◆ Transportation routes & congestion
- ◆ Zoning can be restrictive
- ◆ High leasing/purchase rates
- ◆ Small community - lack of resources
- ◆ Community not educated as to culture
- ◆ No expansion of business community
- ◆ Healthcare
- ◆ Lack of community support
- ◆ Lack of community promotion
- ◆ Water and sewer costs
- ◆ No strategy for job creation
- ◆ Lack of services
- ◆ Distance to major cities
- ◆ Access to major highways
- ◆ Loss of manufacturing jobs
- ◆ Lack of technical infrastructure
- ◆ Red tape at municipal level
- ◆ Limited market
- ◆ Tourism oriented, but not a destination
- ◆ Seasonal population/fluctuation
- ◆ Need more entertainment for youth
- ◆ Waterfront esthetics
- ◆ Property taxes too high

## Public Transit

Public Transit was identified as an area for improvement within the community. Rural areas have no public transit to and from the towns and services in neighbouring communities.

Using the scale provided, please rate the condition of your commercial district for each factor. – *Adequacy of public transit*

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	6	11%
Good	15	28%
Fair	6	11%
Needs improving	26	39%
	53	100%

Businesses were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with services provided by local government and community organizations. Public Transit service is not available to 46% of the respondents in the region.

Response	Count	Percent
Very satisfied	9	7%
Somewhat satisfied	16	13%
Somewhat dissatisfied	17	13%
Very dissatisfied	27	21%
Not available	58	46%
	127	100%

Specific recommendations to improve the local business climate included the following comments related to public transit:

- "Need public transit to tourist attractions"
- "Better public transit"
- "Public transit is needed between communities and to recreational areas (golf courses, beaches)"
- "Get some public transit to and from the communities"
- "Public transit needed to bring people to the beaches"

*In addition to the above, 38 out of 127 businesses identified the availability of **Public Transit** as a barrier to the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses in the community.*

## Transportation

List the community's disadvantages as a place to do business as it pertains to Transportation:

- *"Distance from major transportation routes (trucking)"*
- *"Transportation"*
- *"Highways"*
- *"Cost of transportation"*
- *"Transportation routes and congestion at peak times"*
- *"Access to major highways"*
- *"Crowded roads in summer, bad driving conditions in winter"*
- *"Distance from major highways (400)"*
- *"Transportation – getting in and out of the community"*
- *"Road infrastructure"*

Using a scale of excellent, good, fair and poor, participants were asked to rate factors in doing business in this community – **Availability of Transportation**

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	9	8%
Good	43	38%
Fair	28	25%
Poor	33	29%
	113	100%

The majority of businesses in our community rated the cost of transportation as fair or poor.

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	3	3%
Good	30	27%
Fair	47	42%
Poor	33	29%
	113	100%

## Workforce Development

Businesses were asked to rate the availability, quality and stability of the workforce in this area for their business needs.

### Availability of Workers

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	10	8%
Good	49	38%
Fair	40	31%
Poor	29	23%
	128	100%

### Quality of the Workforce

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	17	13%
Good	53	41%
Fair	44	34%
Poor	14	11%
	128	100%

### Stability of the Workforce

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	11	9%
Good	66	52%
Fair	30	24%
Poor	19	15%
	128	100%

During the past three years, has the number of employees in this business increased, decreased or stayed the same?

Response	Count	Percent
Increased	42	33%
Decreased	27	21%
Remained the same	57	45%
Don't know	0	0%
	126	100%

During the next three years, do you think the number of employees in this business will increase, decrease or stay the same?

Response	Count	Percent
Increase	53	42%
Decrease	8	6%
Remain the same	64	50%
Don't know	2	2%
	127	100%

## Workforce Development

Participants were asked if they are able to recruit qualified employees for their businesses?

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	81	65%
No	44	35%
	125	100%

The forty-four (44) businesses that indicated they were unable to recruit qualified employees were asked what specific skills or qualifications they have difficulty in recruiting ⇒

- "Employees with computer and telephone training"
- "Tourism course graduates and licensed by " *Travel Industry Council of Ontario* "
- "People who are reliable, can think independently and have food knowledge"
- "Expectations exceed experience"
- "Willingness to work the hours demanded by the business"
- "Opticians"
- "People with specialized fine wood-working skills"
- "Certified technicians and apprentices (auto mechanics)"
- "People with basic skills (reading, writing)"
- "Good workers with good ethics"
- "Skilled in marine electronics and electrical"
- "Gas fitters with experience"
- "Qualified electronic/computer technicians"
- "Manual labourers"
- "Marine technicians"
- "Experienced marine technicians and general maintenance personnel"
- "Registered nurses"
- "Senior management"

## Workforce Development

Businesses were asked to tell us about employee training and the barriers associated with receiving the necessary training. It appears the most significant barriers to training include cost, availability, distance to training facilities and loss of productivity during the training period.

Where do your employees receive training?

Response	Count	Percent
Local Community College	42	34%
Distance Education	25	20%
In-house	110	90%
Customized Training	50	41%
University	16	13%
Outside of area	22	18%
Other	9	7%

**Note:** More than one response could be selected for this question

**Note:** 122 businesses responded to this question

What are the most significant barriers to your employees receiving the necessary training?

Response	Count	Percent
Cost	49	54%
Awareness of existing programs	14	15%
Awareness of training programs	7	8%
Relevant training is not offered at community college	18	20%
Distance to training facility	28	31%
Availability of training locally	28	31%
Unable to release employees	19	21%
Losing trained employees to other businesses	15	16%
Awareness of legislated training	5	5%
Loss of productivity during training period	25	27%

**Note:** More than one response could be selected for this question

**Note:** 91 businesses responded to this question

What is your level of satisfaction with each of the following services provided by local government and community organizations? – **Local Training Board**

Response	Count	Percent
Very satisfied	15	12%
Somewhat satisfied	23	18%
Somewhat dis-satisfied	10	8%
Very dis-satisfied	6	5%
No contact	74	58%
	128	100%

## Workforce Development

The availability of skilled and unskilled labour is an important issue to the businesses in our community. Some businesses feel the lack of skilled labour poses a barrier to the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses.

Which, if any of the following factors are barriers to the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses in the community?

Response	Count	Percent
<b>Availability of skilled labour</b>	60	47%

Note: 60 of 127 businesses responded to this question – question could have multiple responses

Using a scale of excellent, good, fair and poor, how would you rate the following factors in doing business in this community? – **Availability of skilled labour**

Response	Count	Percent
Excellent	9	8%
Good	37	31%
Fair	49	41%
Poor	25	21%
	120	100%

Availability of Labour and Workforce Skill Development are important factors in ensuring that our community businesses remain competitive in future years.

Looking forward to the next 3 years, indicate how important each of these factors will be in ensuring that this business remains competitive – **Availability of Labour**

Response	Count	Percent
Very important	67	54%
Somewhat important	34	27%
Not at all important	4	3%
Not applicable	20	16%
	125	100%

Looking forward to the next 3 years, indicate how important each of these factors will be in ensuring that this business remains competitive – **Workforce Skill Development**

Response	Count	Percent
Very important	69	57%
Somewhat important	29	24%
Not at all important	4	3%
Not applicable	20	16%
	122	100%

## Review and Selection Process for Objectives

Project rollup and analysis reports were downloaded from the *BR+E Executive Pulse Website* upon completion of the data entry. At this stage, these “higher level” reports identified several themes, issues, needs and concerns of the businesses surveyed.

The BR+E Project Coordinator and BR+E Assistant conducted an in depth analysis of the data reports to start narrowing the results into key areas. The Leadership Team met to review the issues that emerged from this analysis and prioritized the list to eight major areas of concern:

- Business Development and Support
- Economic Development
- Energy
- Health and Medical Services
- Telecommunications Infrastructure<sup>2</sup>
- Transportation
- Public Transit
- Workforce Development

The responsibility of the Task Force was to select four areas from the above list where objectives could be drafted and that action teams could commence work on. Through a facilitated process, the following priorities were selected:

- Business Development and Support
- Economic Development
- Transportation and Public Transit
- Workforce Development

The following pages represent a first draft of action plans recommended by the Task Force to address the four priority issues. Objectives and action items were created and will be developed further with the assistance and support of potential partners and resources.

Lead organizations have not been identified at this time by the Task Force. The group felt that it would be the role of the partners that are working on the specific items to select the lead agency.

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<sup>2</sup> While Telecommunications Infrastructure was identified as a major issue by the Task Force, it was determined that Simcoe County is taking the lead for this initiative through the “Rural Connections Broadband Program.” They are currently collaborating with Municipalities to implement this Infrastructure Project. NSCFDC is a participant on the Sub-Committee for this initiative.

Business Development and Support		
Objectives	Actions	Potential Partners
Develop ongoing training opportunities to improve and enhance customer service	Select a lead organization to work with partner organizations to identify suitable training and develop an action plan to implement the training to a broad business base. Need to work with government funders and partners to obtain financial resources to assist in sponsoring these programs.	Employers and Staff Employment Resource Centres (YMCA & La Clé d'la Baie) Simcoe County Training Board SGB Chamber of Commerce Georgian College Federal & Provincial Agencies Community Stakeholders Adult Learning Centre Collège Boréal
	Investigate the availability of customer service training (ie: <i>Super Host Training</i> Program or an equivalent formal customer service training program such as <i>Service Excellence</i> )	
	Collaborate with the Southern Georgian Bay (SGB) Chamber of Commerce to offer training at their Alliance Conference	
Implement workshops that will assist in the development of a marketing strategy and strengthen local opportunities through networking and collaboration	Organize training and seminars in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Product Purchasing</li> <li>• Joint Marketing</li> </ul>	North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation SGB Chamber of Commerce Georgian Bay Tourism Tourism Simcoe County Financial Institutions Small Business Week Committee La Clé d'la Baie
	Collaborate with the Small Business Week Committee and SGB Chamber of Commerce to offer training during Small Business Week events and the Alliance Conference	
Enhance support to businesses that are facing barriers starting up and/or expanding	Identify specific problem areas and develop actions to address (reference – Severn Sound Sustainability Plan – Pillar # 3 – Economic Prosperity – Goal E1- E.S.5)	All levels of government Banks North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation SGB Chamber of Commerce
	“Bizpal” could be a tool considered to enhance this process	
Increase awareness of opportunities for financial assistance and support	Increase the profile of the North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation and the resources and services available (reference: Severn Sound Sustainability Plan – Pillar # 3 – Economic Prosperity – Goal E1 – E.S.3)	North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation Financial Institutions SGB Chamber of Commerce Government provide Staff Support
	Streamline existing funding program (reduce paperwork and/or complexity of applications and processes (reference: Severn Sound Sustainability Plan – Pillar # 3 – Economic Prosperity – Goal E1 – E.S.4)	
Provide assistance and support to businesses when dealing with Municipal Approval Processes	Encourage all Municipalities to register with “BizPal” – a new online information tool for small businesses that provides local information on “approval processes”	Municipalities
Open the doors of communication between Municipalities to discuss Business Taxes and Development Charges	Hold Open House	Municipalities
	Implement a Customer Satisfaction Survey	

Economic Development		
Objectives	Actions	Potential Partners
<p>Create a regional economic development plan for the four Municipalities (Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay Township and Tiny Township)</p>	<p>Conduct an historical review, analysis and summary of economic development strategies that have been completed for the area, as well as studies that are underway i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Simcoe Regional Economic Development Strategy (completed June 2005);</li> <li>• the South Central Region Economic Competitive Analysis Project (to be finalized in May 2009);</li> <li>• Severn Sound Sustainability Plan (to be finalized in May 2009). (In particular, reference Pillar # 3 – Economic Prosperity – Goal E 1- Create a sustainable, diverse and balanced economic base that provides quality employment and sustainable wages for residents)</li> </ul>	<p>Municipalities</p> <p>Stakeholders</p> <p>North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation</p> <p>SGB Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>La Clé d’la Baie</p> <p>RDÉE</p>
	<p>Local Official Plans/Growth Plans – key documents to look at</p>	
	<p>Develop a separate and distinct regional economic development strategy with cooperative ownership for the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage key stakeholders</li> <li>• Focus on priorities, determine objectives</li> <li>• Develop action plans/workshops</li> <li>• Determine financial resources and human resources required</li> <li>• Select a lead “agency” and/or joint membership Board to oversee</li> <li>• Implement ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reporting</li> <li>• Municipalities to determine involvement</li> </ul>	

Transportation and Public Transit		
Objectives	Actions	Potential Partners
Improve adequacy and availability of public transit and transportation	Develop a regional transportation and public transit system where services are shared amongst the four municipalities: 1. Increase the range and types of transportation 2. Reduce dependency on automobiles 3. Protect corridors for tourists	County of Simcoe Municipal Governments Ontario Ministry of Transportation
	Review the Simcoe County Transportation Master Plan	
	Review the Severn Sound Sustainability Plan and ensure items/issues related to transportation are integrated into the regional transportation plan	
	Complete an inventory of assets	
	Design commuter parking lots	
	Explore funding opportunities from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (Gas Tax)	
	Be the voice for North Simcoe (ie) identify corridors from north to south municipalities	

<b>Workforce Development</b>		
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>
Ensure accurate and consistent information is communicated to employers and the local workforce	<p>Select a lead organization to oversee</p> <p>Ensure educators and organizations involved with workforce development are all fully aware of what each partner is doing and what programs and services are available. ie) inventory of programs and services</p> <p>Develop a communication strategy to educate employers and employees about training available</p> <p>(reference: Severn Sound Sustainability Plan – Pillar 3 – Economic Prosperity – Goal E1 – E.S.7 &amp; 8)</p>	<p>Simcoe County Training Board</p> <p>Georgian College</p>
Reduce youth outmigration	Examine in more detail and develop a long-term plan to create jobs that retain and attract young professionals	<p>Employment Resource Centre</p> <p>Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities</p>
<p>Increase and enhance workforce skills and training opportunities with the community.</p> <p>Collaborate with employers and education institutions</p>	Educate employers on the availability of the Essential Skills Assessment Program to assist in the development of a training action plan	<p>Employers</p> <p>High Schools</p>
	Skilled Trades – update and upgrade hard skills	<p>North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation</p>
	Provide employees who are interested in changing careers/jobs with the needed resources	<p>Mentors</p> <p>Collège Boréal</p>
	Collaborate and provide education/training for young people as to basic job expectations ie) punctuality, dress code, manners, etc	<p>La Clé d’la Baie</p> <p>RDÉE</p>
	Provide customer service training skills	<p>Centre de ressources en emploi</p>
	Develop and implement employee appreciation/recognition programs	

## Conclusion

The completion and presentation of the BR+E Report is only our first step. Developing a long term strategy to retain and expand existing businesses and attract new businesses to the area will result in a stronger and sustainable community. Collaboration and commitment by all North Simcoe Community partners and stakeholders is essential to implement the recommended actions.

Leadership will be needed to ensure that the actions are being further developed and implemented and a process is in place to monitor progress and report back to the community. Implementation and completion of the recommended action is necessary for the BR+E project to be considered a success.

It should be noted that parallel economic development projects are underway that need to be considered along with the North Simcoe BR+E report. These initiatives include the Severn Sound Sustainability Plan and the South Central CFDC Network Economic Competitive Analysis Project. These reports are being published in the first six months of 2009 and their results will be integrated into the BR+E action plan.

We would like to thank all of the businesses for participating in the Business Retention and Expansion Project. Without their honest input and co-operation, this report would not be possible.

Special thanks to our Leadership Team, Task Force members and Volunteer Visitors for their dedication, wisdom, interest and time.



### Task Force Members

Back row, left to right: André Claire, Doug Luker, Scott Warnock, Ted Walker, Anita Dubeau, Denise Hayes and George Cornell

Front row, left to right: Eleanor Rath, Sylvia Bryant, Debra Muenz, Lois Irvine, Heather Yates and Martina Wahl  
Members not present: Peter Hominuk, Judy Noel, Chris Johnston, Ileine Matton, Wes Crown and Pierre Casault

## Appendix A

### What are your specific recommendations to improve the local business climate?

"Change in members of town council. Public transit to tourist attractions in the area. Sidewalks are rolled up on Sunday in a tourist town. Township assists the Wye Marsh in many ways, while the town does nothing"

"Get rid of parking meters downtown"

"Better restructuring for utilities. Advertising venues that don't cost huge dollars. Joint advertising"

"Need round table discussions with the town that need to be listened to and acted on. The BIA is more dictatorial than anything"

"Better infrastructure on electrical grid"

"More doctors per capita"

"Downtown core – better hours. BIA needs more power"

"Encourage home based businesses with higher visibility. More temporary office space and free wireless coffee shops"

"Students can't write or give proper change back (numeracy skills). Have a tough time where the population base is low to support local businesses during tough times. Winter can be very long. What used to work doesn't work in business any more. need to look at things differently. Need someone hired to market our community – independent of the towns – serving the region and representing the region"

"Difficult for small businesses to attain property and build, due to building codes, planning departments – red tape takes up too much time and money. Municipality places unrealistic demands on small business owners"

"Would like to see one municipality – combine all four"

"Everything is good"

"Upgrade main street appearance – weekend events – close section of main street to traffic"

"Lower development fees"

"Tourism is not comparable to other areas ie) Niagara On The Lake"

"More active BIA. It seems to be a constant struggle for leadership"

"Nothing available for tourists after 5 pm. Keep downtown alive, such as Kingston is"

## Appendix A continued

### What are your specific recommendations to improve the local business climate?

"Exposure is a magic word in doing business. Accessibility and creativity for other businesses"

"Roads"

"Tax incentives. Government needs to step in and help"

"Need more manufacturing jobs. Retail is good, but does not pay good wages to employees. Price of gas needs to improve. Weather needs to improve – has been poor summer weather to date and this greatly affects sales (huge factor)"

"A cultural centre built in the area:

"More programs for kids to get involved/educated in heritage"

"Rental and taxes are too high for many local businesses"

"Move closer to Toronto. Double cost: bring product to make product. We've got lots to offer but....."

"Businesses downtown – stores should stay open later. There should be sales advertised. Businesses should be open minded. We need a local market area"

"Recruitment of new business"

"Focus recruitment of business attraction activities. Provide guidance and support to complete "red tape" paperwork. Get the land prepared to support new industry"

"Condition of the main street – needs improvement and an effort to beautify"

"Town has to get more involved – lack of retail stores"

"Reverse option to turn retail space into apartments on the main street. Clean up the main street – weeds coming through sidewalks, no flags on light fixtures, store fronts are dirty, dull and unappealing. Recruit small business. Enforce building and signage exterior standards"

"Review of business taxes as they are very high. Approval times – need a liaison between businesses and town council for permits. More frequent information from the town via a newsletter outlining activities, planned projects and upcoming events"

"Township needs a plan – if they don't have a plan, the developers will take over. We need sufficient industrial land (employment land). The municipality focuses only on residential development"

"Support artist! All arts! Make it a Quebec city!"

"Better policing. Costs are far too high for utilities. The town needs a face lift"

## Appendix A continued

### What are your specific recommendations to improve the local business climate?

"More transparent zoning by-laws. Township should be more in line with other communities"

"Schools/education system needs improvement"

"Life time locals should be on the planning and committee of adjustments, etc."

"Very poor planning by township. Need a better economic development plan. Township should be lobbying for a bank in this community. We need signage on Highway # 12 to bring people in the town. The township needs a new planner"

"We need a committee for business people to meet and discuss local concerns/problems. The municipality should be focusing on businesses. There are too many "municipal bridges" that we (businesses) have to span"

"Council is a little bit small town"

"Community Colleges need to improve the marine technician program they offer. Course should be a two year course. Apprentice programs are not sufficient. Difficult to hire qualified technicians"

"More advertising to inform residents/visitors of local businesses"

"No way of hiring students"

"Public transit to bring people to the beach. Doctors for older population"

"More positive support from local government. Improved infrastructure"

"Encourage small business to operate within the province by providing additional support where ever existing services are already in existence. ie) snowplowing, green bin pick up, health benefits affordable to owners and staff, sur-charges on hydro, native cigarettes, telephone billing"

"Activities to bring people to Balm Beach. ie) Summerama, Winterama, Santa Claus parade"

"Need the township to be more pro-active in tourism. The camera on the beach promotes negativity – seen as not safe. Street lighting for walkway would be nice. Beautify the beach"

"Listen to the business community's requests"

"Proper policing and response time. Town does not support local businesses. Office furniture for new office was purchased out of town and without the tender process"

"Local municipality is basically doing a good job for having their hands tied"

**What are your specific recommendations to improve the local business climate?**

"Get politicians who want to encourage new business growth. What is the long term goal for the town? Do they have the know how and the proper people to draw new business to the town?"

"Create an environment where municipalities actually want businesses to succeed. Rather than providing countless hoops to jump through, with reams of paperwork all in the interest of protecting themselves from some obscure and miniscule chance of being sued. Take some responsibility, take same risk businesses do every day!"

"More business owners need to be involved in the community. Bottom end of the main street needs to be cleaned up"

"It is critical that we create an atmosphere that we are here and open for business. We need administrative support to facilitate and cut through local government red tape"

"Local university in Barrie area. Medical and health services. Finding skilled labour"

"More training opportunities in the community. Child care and health care is a continuing problem. Students need tools and guidance to get into the work force. They are not being taught the proper skills in high school and college. I have had co-op students that have failed the program"

"Create jobs"

"Need to broaden our manufacturing sector. Lots of tool and dye operations, but need more varied industry. Municipality needs to measure successes and failures"

"We need to hire a program director who's sole job is to develop and sell programs, tournaments, events, concerts, etc. to try to fill the new rec centre on a 24/7 basis. Right now it sits more empty than full. We also need to have a better way of selling our community to the world. There are limited funds and resources to do a good job in this area. We also need an experienced economic development person to drive new business to locate in this area"

"Local municipal offices should fairly shop retailers. Zero purchases recorded for municipal offices of Tiny, Tay, Midland and Penetanguishene"

"Better public transit"

"In stock, price, customer service"

"Zoning and development charges make it difficult for the small business person to acquire land/buildings for business at affordable prices. Restrictions on what areas businesses can open. ie) I looked at a home on Yonge St. beside the Shamrock Hotel and was told I could not create a business dwelling there. However, I see on the other side of the hotel there is commercial building plans"

**What are your specific recommendations to improve the local business climate?**

"As we are a small community with many home based businesses, the town needs to recognize us as unique entities and afford us more latitude when the legitimate (registered and tax paying) home based businesses need assistance with re-zoning or permits to improve our home based business"

"Improved technology"

"Match what the Ontario Government does with what we do locally – seem to be at odds"

"Get the homeless people off of the main street. Attract a university to the area"

"Don't know"

"Consolidation of Midland and Penetanguishene – should be one municipality"

"The economy is driving business. Community is very automotive. Over index for manufacturing in this area. Need to attract other types of business in the community"

"More organizations like the Chamber of Commerce need to come out and talk to the businesses. Schooling, medical and child care are big concerns for people who are thinking of re-locating to this area"

"To have local government operate in a more business environment"

"Public transit is needed between communities and to recreational areas (golf courses, beaches). Street and road repairs. One municipality for Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay and Tiny. Get rid of multiple school boards"

"Town needs better economic plan to recruit manufacturing companies to the area"

"Marketing Midland and area as a positive place to do business. Recreational facilities and Georgian Bay should help attract interest"

"Encourage more retail business and a better downtown core"



## Appendix B

### What other comments about this community as a place in which to do business would you like to raise?

"American owned companies and corporations give less back to the community"

"For me, it is a great place to live and work"

"Highway system – need a more direct route to highway 400 to cut travel times"

"While traveling the province, I often meet people who do not know where Midland is"

"Expansion of BIA was poorly planned"

"Speakers from local area rather than Toronto for my business needs. Community website (Chamber) more effective"

"A larger population base would enhance business. Brand the area – we need a WOW factor. Hire a professional, high paid person to market our town. Copy successful communities"

"Getting better. Need higher end men's clothing stores. Need stores that will keep people here and not go to Barrie to shop. Develop waterfront with more walking trails"

"Friendly place to do business"

"Midland is a lovely town to do business in"

"BIA is trying hard but things are not always bringing people to the stores"

"Property taxes are far too high"

"Lack of consistent, positive feel of combined communities. Amalgamation would be a positive thing. Lack of business mind set at municipal level. Tourism office in Midland is not open when tourists are here"

"We need more industry, not more retail! Town should be issuing more building permits for developments within the town limits"

"Too much emphasis on trying to attract new business – business retention should be the main focus. Midland is a nice place to live and I prefer to see it stay small town/rural"

"Midland people are very helpful. Friendliness of people – always wanting to make life easier/better for you. Service Groups are great"

"We really need a plan to address image, increase global awareness, better traffic flow in and out of town, better internal signage, more major events, etc."

"Great place to live and work"

## Appendix B continued

### What other comments about this community as a place in which to do business would you like to raise?

"In general, Midland and the surrounding community has been a great place for me to do business"

"Need to be more open minded – there is a fear of change. Older community, need to adapt to younger demographics"

"Tiny does not have a Chamber of Commerce"

"Unsupportive Municipal government"

"Take the fence and camera down. Clean the beach and the creek – do more sweeping. Open more township parks (ie) Stotts Park – this would reduce congestion of parking/roads at Balm Beach"

"Increasing year round residential market that needs support services (ie) restaurant/transit"

"More communication between business owners and the township"

"Tiny Township has potential"

"Pretty lucky – snow removal is good and roads are great. Business should be more involved with municipality to get to the bottom of problems. Great place to work and live"

"It is a beautiful environment to live in. Good quality of life. Safe, clean water and small community feeling"

"Parking for my business is a real issue for me"

"Tay Township should be more pro-active in tourism development"

"Comments made at open public Municipal meetings are not listened to. Council and municipal employees have made their minds up on planning issues prior to public meetings. Constituents are not valued. Municipality should take advantage of local expertise rather than trying to do things on their own. A lot of business people have experience and could offer assistance in certain areas"

"Township is uncooperative, over regulated and unresponsive"

"I love this community (Tay Township) great area for me to do business"

"Farmers are important. Keep business at home"

"Disadvantage getting to Midland and Penetang on highways – numerous traffic lights make access more difficult. Major traffic corridors are being protected"

## Appendix B continued

### What other comments about this community as a place in which to do business would you like to raise?

"Beautiful community to raise a family"

"Town of Penetanguishene has been excellent to deal with"

"Small town mentality. Hostility towards tourists"

"Penetanguishene needs to make businesses more aware of what they perceive to be the long term goal for the town from an economic development point of view"

"Publicly funded organizations should purchase products and services locally regardless of the cost. Local manufacturing company (CCL) gives Costco cards to its employees – this takes business out of town. 54% of taxes come from the businesses in Penetang and the money is spent on a Sports Hall of Fame. I can support this as an individual, but not as a business. Poor planning by the town"

"We need more niche, boutique type shops on the main street. There are too many professional buildings on the main downtown street"

"Midland needs to have a better marketing plan – a strong four season plan. Should have a plan in place that ties tourism, marketing and economic growth as one. Waterfront needs improvement and a plan. Need to get all businesses working on the same page as far as tourism. A good example of this is "Niagara On The Lake"

"Business depends a lot on weather conditions. Weather plays such a big part in the business"

"One of the few recognized bilingual municipalities north of Toronto"

"Being more self contained locally. Having the Chamber of Commerce do more marketing and advertising of their services"

"The business community is very supportive of each other"

"Fortunate to be able to live and work here"

"This is a great place to be proud of"

"We put an addition on 5 years ago and still do not have a building permit for it. Property taxes in Penetang are huge. I am considering moving my business to Midland"

"Small minded town officials"

"This community used to have lots of events that drew people to the area (ie) Battle of Georgian Bay, July 1<sup>st</sup> celebrations, a swimming beach with a life guard, Summerfest, Craft Festival, Farmers Market and our own Chamber of Commerce. The Southern Georgian Bay Chamber of Commerce does not work for Penetanguishene – we are paying for a "Midland" Chamber of Commerce"

## Appendix B continued

**What other comments about this community as a place in which to do business would you like to raise?**

"Nice community with limited access from other areas (Hwy 12 & 93), No big drawing points"

"An incredible community that works together"

"It's a wonderful place to raise a family"

"The acceptance of Wal-Mart and Home Depot into this town was not adequately addressed by our municipal government. Other businesses have suffered"

"This community is no different than others. Difficult to do business outside of Toronto. Taxation rates, property taxes too high. Mill rates are lower in big cities"

"From a cultural standpoint it is a great place. Remote location is an issue"

"Local governments lack appreciation of business tax base and employers of residents"

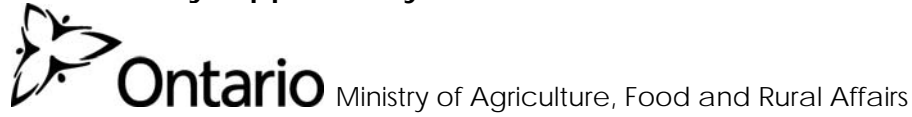
"What incentives are available to attract new businesses to the area? It should be easier for companies to come to this area and commit to stay. Stronger commitments from companies are needed"

"New Rec Centre has no additional seating for sporting events. Rec Centre is competing with local businesses that offer banquet hall facilities. Chamber of Commerce should not be called "Southern Georgian Bay" – this takes in a vast area. We are not focusing on "Huronion". Midland is the centre of Huronia. No four lane access to Midland and Penetanguishene"



## Project Supporters and Partners

This project was financially supported by:



Simcoe County Training Board



Town of Penetanguishene



**NORTH SIMCOE / SIMCOE NORD**  
Community Futures Development Corporation  
Société d'aide au développement des collectivités



### Partners:



Southern Georgian Bay Chamber of Commerce



La Clé d'la Baie

*Some of the photos used in this report were taken from the Tay Township Photo Gallery Website. We thank Tay Township as well as the individual photographers for their contributions.*