

Business Walk Program

On October 21, 2014 the Battle River Alliance for Economic Development (BRAED) along with its various community and business service provider partnered together to provide the Town of Killam with its first ever Business Walk Program. The Business Walk Program is meant to foster relationship building amongst business service providers and the local business community. This Program is designed to give an overall picture of the current business climate in a given area.

The Business Walk asks three key questions:

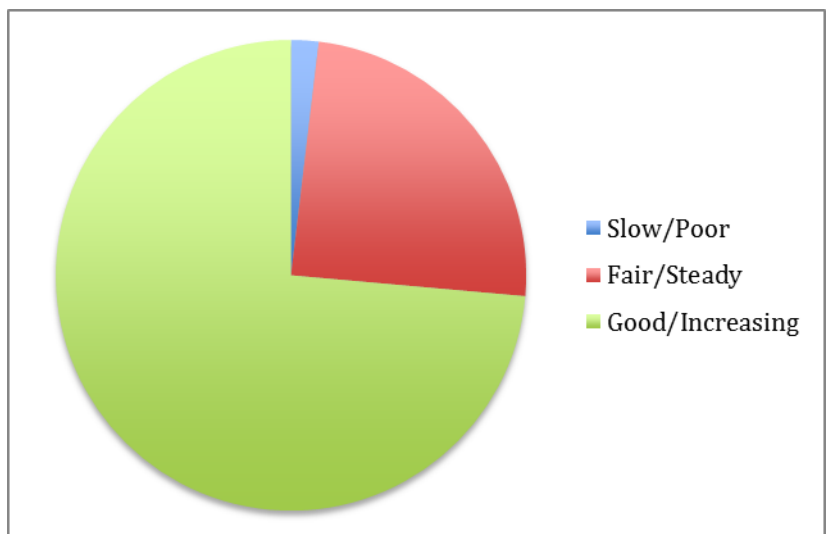
- 1) What is the current state of your business?
- 2) What do you like most about doing business in the area?
- 3) What can be done to help your business thrive?

Fifty four businesses were surveyed throughout the Town of Killam. These businesses were asked to evaluate the overall health of their business and to identify what could be done to help business in Killam.

Results:

Question 1: Please rate the Current State of your Business?

Based on the 54 businesses surveyed 72% stated that their business was “Good/Increasing”, 24% reported “Fair/Steady” and 2% reported “slow/poor”. The “slow/poor” rating was due to seasonal nature of the business.

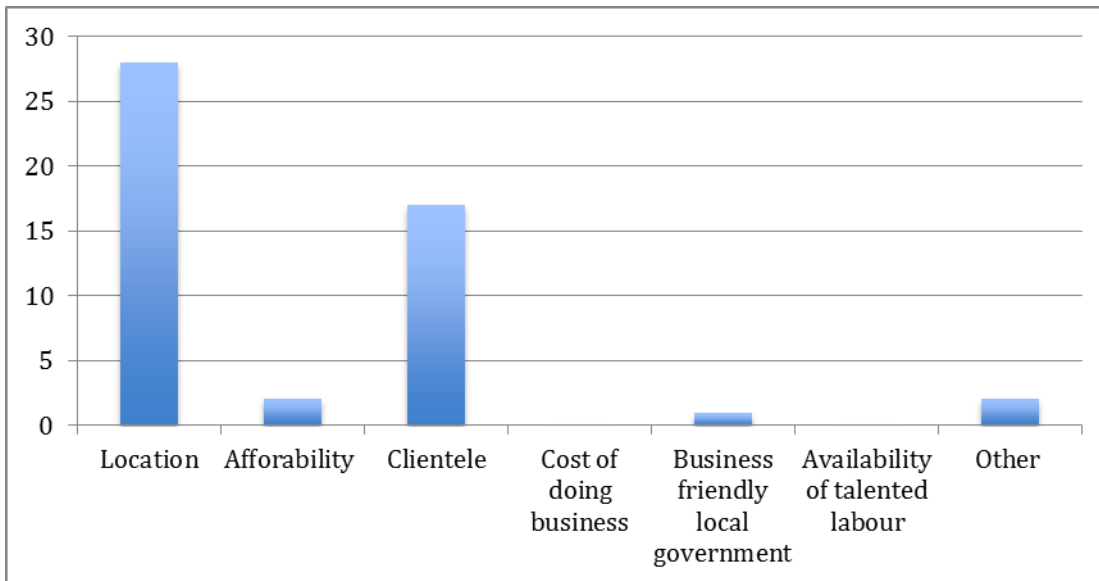




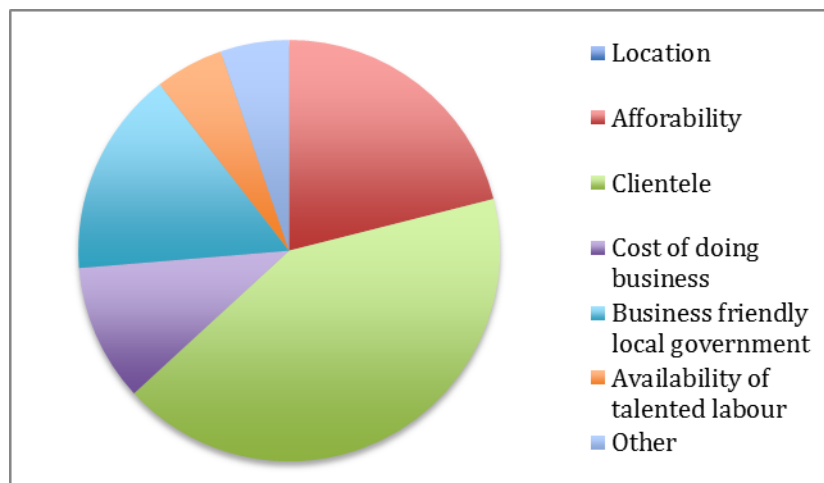
Question 2: What do you like most about doing business in the area:

The possible answers for this question were: location, affordability, clientele, cost of doing business, business friendly local government, availability of talented labour and other.

For this question participants were asked to choose their top two options. The top two first place options selected was location 56% of time, and clientele 34% of the time.



The most commonly selected second choice was clientele, followed by affordability. Generally business selected location and clientele together as the top two reasons why they like doing business in Killam.





Question 3: What can be done to help your business thrive:

There were many common themes that ran through the recommendation from the business walk participants.

1) The first major recommendation focuses on the pressures of growth. Many businesses stated that they were doing well and growing; however with growth comes issues of succession planning and staffing. Many Killam businesses struggle with the availability of skilled staff, staffing shortage, retention of staff and engaging younger employees.

2) The second major recommendation theme focuses on challenges faced when conducting business in a rural community:

- Encouraging people to shop local instead of going to larger centres
- A need for affordable child care
- Increased promotion of community businesses
- More volunteers
- How do you keep youth in your community?
- Fluctuating and seasonal business
- How does Killam become a rural shopping destination?

3) The third recommendation focused on support that business owners are looking for:

- Increased advertising; in town, online and social media
- Aesthetics of town and maintenance of streets
- Business owner apathy
- Different time for Chamber meeting
- Chamber to help business with investment options
- More activities and events in town to draw people in





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Next Steps:

1) What can BRAED and other organizations do?

- Help connect employer to employees
- Provide training and information on succession planning
- Identify tools for youth retention
- Connect businesses with social media and website training

2) What can the Town of Killam do?

- Promote shopping local
- Encouraging people to shop local instead of going to larger centres
- Create incentive for affordable child care
- Increased promotion of community businesses
- Create a plan to help establish Killam as a rural shopping destination





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The Battle River Alliance for Economic Development (BRAED), along with its various community and business service provider partners are proud to have piloted this program, as it fits well within our organization's mandate. BRAED is a not-for-profit Regional Economic Development Alliance made up of 29 Municipal Members, 16 Associate (for-profit) Members, and 5 Affiliate (non-profit) Members in East Central Alberta. We strive to work with, and provide tools and resources to our members and partners that help to enhance their economic development capacity at a regional level.

For more information regarding the Business Walk Survey, please contact:
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Killam

ALBERTA

Life
WITHOUT
COMPROMISE

For more information on the Town of Killam, please contact:
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Did you know?

BRAED is one of three Regional Economic Development Alliances that make up the Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor (EATC). The EATC is a joint---initiative aimed at connecting Eastern Alberta to the world. We work together to provide municipalities and businesses with effective and coordinated marketing and investment attraction support. The EATC covers over one-third of the Province, and over 80 Municipalities, Post-Secondary Institutions, Businesses, First Nations Communities, and Non-Profit Organizations.

The Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor recognizes the potential for investment attraction, retention, and expansion in the Eastern part of Alberta, and drives its mandate forward to reflect on and grow the communities within the Battle River Alliance for Economic Development, Alberta HUB (north), and Palliser Economic Partnership (south).

Understanding that the EATC region is home to over \$100 billion Major Capital Projects right now has driven our mandate forward, and placed our communities in the spotlight. In 2012 the EATC received accolades for being a best practice in municipal collaboration, winning the Municipal Affairs Minister's Award of Excellence. In 2014, EATC was fortunate to win a Marketing Award from the Economic Developer's Association of Alberta for their work in developing eye-catching, useful marketing collateral used to market the Region. Most recently, the EATC caught the eye of the Government of Alberta, Innovation and Advanced Education, who have provided us with a secondment of a highly-qualified and well-respected staff member to act as our initiative's Executive Director for the next two years.

Did you know?

The Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor recently became a member of the Ports to Plains Alliance, a not-for-profit, community-driven advocacy group led by leaders from more than ten U.S States, Alberta, and Mexico. Ports to Plains is an alliance committed to working on improving transportation infrastructure and business networks, by ensuring appropriate funding levels, so business and industry can thrive. They are focused on economic and business interests, and are the voice for small town, grassroots members who may otherwise not have access to the right audiences.

Because your community is a member of the Battle River Alliance for Economic Development, you benefit! BRAED, along with the EATC and Ports to Plains are here to support your interests. BRAED offers a number of business-focused events, forums, and projects, and the EATC is aimed at supporting high-level national and international marketing efforts of our Regional investment opportunities. We are enhancing our focus on supply chain, logistics, transportation infrastructure, and

building partnerships with key stakeholders.