



AGENDA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
April 17, 2023 9:30 AM

MEETING DETAILS

In-Person Location: Mulmur Township Offices, located at 758070 2nd Line East
Phone Connection: 1 647 374 4685 Canada / 1 647 558 0588 Canada
Video Connection: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84602248258>
Meeting ID: 846 0224 8258

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Recommendation: THAT the agenda be approved.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Recommendation: THAT the minutes of March 21, 2023 be approved.

4. **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

If any member has a disclosure of pecuniary interest (direct or indirect) they can declare the nature thereof now, or at any time during the meeting

5. **ADMINISTRATION**

5.1 **Spring Market**

5.2 **Central Counties Tourism Funding Opportunities**

5.3 **2024 Business Excellence Award Nominations**

6. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

6.1 **Dufferin Board of Trade Business Survey Results**

7. **ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

- **Mulmur 175 Event**
- **Honeywood Arena Business Fundraising**
- **Annual Yard Sale Event**

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Recommendation: THAT the meeting adjourns at _____ and meet again on _____, or at the call of the Chair.



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 21, 2024 – 9:30 AM**

Present: Darryl Stansfield, Chair
Lisa Thomson
Diana Morris
Savannah Rogers
Roseann Knechtel, Secretary

Regrets: Janet Horner

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The Secretary called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

2.0 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Thomson and Seconded by Morris

THAT the agenda be approved.

CARRIED.

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved by Thomson and Seconded by Morris

THAT the minutes of January 18, 2024 are approved.

CARRIED.

4.0 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS - NONE

5.0 PRESENTATION

5.1 Luke Panek: Yolo Nomads

Luke Panek was not in attendance. Members were encouraged to review the information provided in the package.

6.0 ADMINISTRATION

6.1 Spring Market

Members reviewed current vendors for the Spring Market. The Secretary was directed to forward promotional materials to Dufferin Board of Trade for further promotion.

Members discussed the creation of a Township-wide yard sale/garage sale to be held annually in the spring. Greater discussion will be held next meeting.

6.2 Central Counties Tourism Funding Opportunities

Members reviewed the funding opportunity and will bring ideas forward to the next meeting for consideration.

6.2 2024 Mulmur Post-Secondary School Grant Program – Review Committee Appointment

Moved by Thomson and Seconded by Morris

THAT the EDC Committee appoint Lisa Thomson to sit on the 2024 Review Committee for the 2024 Mulmur Post Secondary School Grant Program.

CARRIED.

7.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

7.1 Spring Townhall & Tree Sale

The Township is looking for volunteers to help with Tree Sale pick ups on May 4, 2024.

8.0 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

8.1 Mulmur 175

8.2 DBOT Business Excellence Awards

Nominations open in April. Members are to bring forward their nominations for consideration at the next meeting.

8.3 Honeywood Arena EDC Fundraising

Members discussed fundraising opportunities for businesses in Mulmur and surrounding areas. An information package would need to be developed with materials including but not limited to the history of the arena, letters of support from the community and a long-term renovation plan. Information packages could be presented to businesses for consideration with various fundraising opportunities available based on the business and its capacity.

8.4 New Business – The Heating Source

8.5 Spring Market

8.6 Annual Yard Sale

- 8.7 Spring Tree Sale Pick-up
- 8.8 Central Counties Tourism Funding

9.0 **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Thomson and Seconded by Morris

THAT Council adjourns the meeting at 10:45 a.m. to meet again on April 17, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. or at the call of the chair.

CARRIED.

DRAFT

SPRING MARKET VENDORS

| Business Information | | | Please provide information about your products: |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Name | Business Name | Website | Open-Ended Response |
| Donna Coulter | The Repurposed Equestrian | https://www.facebook.com/therepurposedequestrian | I make beautiful things out of old, broken and unwanted tack and horse shoes. |
| Savannah Rogers | Rural Rescue First Aid | ruralrescuetraining.com | First Aid Training, Youth safety courses, first aid kits |
| Fred Tustin | Mansfield Outdoor Centre | www.mansfieldoutdoorcentre.ca | Mansfield Outdoor Centre is a full service, four season property located in the heart of the Mulmur Hills, located just north of the village of Mansfield, Ontario. At MOC strive to provide exceptional experiences for all our visitors using our facility. We have programs and services to meet the needs of many individuals. School Groups Summer Camp (Overnight and Day) PD Day Camps Group Facility Rental Overnight Accommodation Cross-country skiing and fat biking Mountain biking, trail running and hiking |
| Sylvia Jones MPP | | https://sylviajonesmpp.ca/ | Member of Provincial Parliament MPP — DUFFERIN—CALEDON |
| Kelly Lamont | Sylvia Jones MPP Dufferin-Caledon | https://sylviajonesmpp.ca/ | outreach to the community - will be handing out lawn bags |
| Dawn Perry | FermenTonics | https://fermentonics.localline.ca | Lacto fermented, handcrafted, smallbatch, local ingredients, kombucha, pickles, beets, carrots, kimchi, sauerkraut, pickled eggs, apple butter, apple cider vinegar, fire cider |
| Linda Lennox | Tupperware | | Tupperware consultant - food storage and food prep solutions |
| Luba kalnins | Two of Us Gardening & Yard Maintenance | Twoofusgardening.com | Outdoor and indoor gardening products and plants(vegetable & flowers) |
| Savannah Rogers | Rural Rescue First Aid | ruralrescuetraining.com | Rural Rescue is your local full-service First Aid Training company. Founded by Savannah Rogers, who was raised and resides in Mulmur, offers engaging, memorable, and accessible first aid training and certifications. As a Canadian Red Cross Heart & Stroke accredited trainer Rural Rescue can offer WSIB courses and certifications. We offer public & private courses, which can be held at your business to ensure that every employee is able to attend and receive certification at the same time. As Rural Rescue has grown we are pleased to offer a full line of WSIB first aid kits, personal protective equipment, qualitative fit tests, Automatic External Defibrillators, and SaveStations. |
| Melissa-Ann Cotton | Experior Financial Group | https://experiorfinancial.com/ | Financial services - considering opening an office in the area - accepting new clients |
| Madeline Crawford | All Things For The Body | | I make all natural body, bath and shower products. They are all good for your skin. |
| Fay Maclachlan | Queen of Mansfield | | We mindfully create bespoke Writing and Junk Journals to record your gratitude, meditation and artistic pursuits. Custom Journals are our pleasure, let us create something exquisite for you! We love thrifting and upcycling. You'll love our one-of-a-kind Mixed media Art & Décor. |
| Fabienne Good & Darlene Hostrawser | Dufferin Foraged Inks | @dufferin_foraged_inks | We are Dufferin Foraged Inks. We harvest and produce inks with foraged plants from Dufferin County. With backgrounds in Wellness & Art Education, our goal is to find different ways for people to connect with nature. We sell our unique inks, postcard-kits, foraged loom kits and unique hand-painted art-cards. |
| Alicia Kielburger | Independent Scentsy Director | https://aliciasantaguida.scentsy.ca | Electric warmers and wax, on the go fragrance products, kids stuffies and more. Please see my website for the whole range. |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| Jamie-Lee Higginson | Prim Pickins | Primpickins.ca (on vacation mode) | Handcrafted solid wood furniture and decor, but will be focusing on plants! House plants, started vegetables and flowers, plant and spring related decor and accessories! |
| Caroline Mach | 4M - Mikoliew Mach Mulmur Maple Company | | maple syrup produced on our farm at the above location |
| Jessica Butler | Jessica's Originals | | I make and sell handmade jewelry, necklaces and bracelets, along with candles |
| Ruthan Johnson | The Victorian Pantry | | Shortbread that's been baked in a wood burning cookstove. Using top quality ingredients such as butter from the Alliston Creamery. Comes in a variety of flavors. Traditional, cranberry, chocolate chip, pecan, maple walnut and lavender |
| Victoria Hoyte Gaynor | Mom and Pop Handmade Shop | www.momandpophandmadeshop.ca | Handmade skin, body and health care products for people and pets. |
| Lisa Kerr | Calm Escape Creations | | Cricut work. Coasters, koozies, signs |
| Melissa Lloyd | All Dolled Up | @all.dolled.up.company | Personalized and customized home decor Vinyl and sublimation items |
| Gillian Duncan | Dabombbathsaltsnco | | Da bomb Bath Salt n Co are a Mother Daughter duo based out of the Orangeville area! We have been creating 100% Organic all natural bath products since 2020 Our product line started with Bath Salts, Shower Steamer and Bath Bombs, and has since grown to include a Full Organic Line of Body Scrubs, Luxury Tub Teas and we recently added Essential Oil rollers to our line |
| Jennifer Long | Jen's Favourite Scentsy | https://jenniferlong.scentsy.ca/ | Scentsy warmers, wax melts and various wonderful smelling products |
| Cheryl Devlin | Beary Scents - Scentsy Canada | https://bearyscents.scentsy.ca/ | Wax and warmer, cleaning products etc. |
| Nicola Kidd | Resurfaced | Www.resurfaced.ca | I print on metal and wood. I make local themed postcards, coasters, wall art and magnets. I make everything right here in Mulmur by hand. You can also see my products on Instagram @resurfacedca or Etsy https://www.etsy.com/ca/shop/ResurfacedStudio |
| Joanna Barrington | Unicamp of Ontario | UNICAMPOFONTARIO.ca | Adult and Children's Programming taking place at a Campground in Mulmur, Ontario |
| Catherine Carpenko | Upcycling With Gratitude | | All my products are up-cycled and hand made, mostly in Mulmur. I had some items on display at the Museum Christmas show this past season. |



CENTRAL COUNTIES TOURISM

2024-2025 Partnership Opportunities Eligible & Ineligible Expenses

INTRODUCTION

CCT's Partnership Program is generously funded by the Government of Ontario. As such, there are restrictions on expenses that the CCT portion of the partnership is permitted to support. This document contains overarching ineligible expenses along with eligible expenses for each of the three different partnership streams for fiscal 2024-2025.

COMPLETELY INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Insurance
- Office expenses including, but not limited to:
 - Office supplies
 - Permanent staff costs
 - Rent/Lease
 - Overhead costs
 - Offsite storage
- Website maintenance
- CCT research (we aren't allowed to double-dip)

Stakeholder-led Route Development Project

Eligible Expenses

- Expertise – paying someone to facilitate the development process
- Graphic Design – for logo, collateral, etc.
- Printing
- Equipment* – Things you need to purchase to implement your experiences
- Website Development
- Marketing & Communications including:
 - Any paid advertising (print, radio, television, social)
 - Familiarization tours
 - Graphic design costs
 - Printing and or production costs**

*Note: CCT's portion of equipment purchase can't be capital, however the partner portion can be including, but not limited to bricks and mortar buildings and equipment costing more than \$5,000 that will last more than 5 years.

2023-2024 Partnership Opportunities

Destination Development (Municipalities, BIAs, CoCs)

Eligible Expenses

- Equipment Lease/Rental expenses, but not limited to:
 - Fencing
 - Tents/Event Space
 - Staging
 - Sound Systems
- Signage (including wayfinding signs)
- Project-specific incremental labour
- Marketing & Communications including:
 - Any paid advertising (print, radio, television, social)
 - Familiarization tours
 - Graphic design costs
 - Printing and or production costs**
- Sport tourism and major conference bid support
- Sales mission support

Out of Region Marketing

Eligible Expenses (have to be focused on +40km audiences)

- Paid advertising including, but not limited to:
 - Print
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Social
 - Digital
 - Billboards
- Familiarization tours
- Graphic design costs
- Printing and/or production costs for out of region marketing:
 - Brochures
 - Videography
 - Photography**

** NOTE: any photography funded through partnership should be shared with CCT



CENTRAL COUNTIES TOURISM

2024-2025 Partnership Opportunities

INTRODUCTION

Central Counties Tourism's mandate is to help businesses build their capacity to be successful at growing the visitor economy which, in turn, creates vibrant communities and compelling destinations. As such, the CCT Partnership Program is designed to support businesses and organizations dedicated to growing the visitor economy. While we are not discounting the value of projects that engage residents and build vibrant communities, it is our mandate, coupled with finite funds, which requires us to focus on growing visitation.

With that in mind, the parameters of the program are changing for fiscal 2024-2025. The staff and Partnership Committee have reviewed all partnerships as far back as 2021 and believe that almost all projects which focus on increasing the visitor economy will fit within the new program structure.

Please take time to review this entire document and then contact your Industry Relations Manager prior to starting the process.

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| York Region | Sara Sterling | ssterling@centralcounties.ca |
| Durham Region | Lisa John-Mackenzie | ljohn-mackenzie@centralcounties.ca |
| Headwaters Region | Sarah Gratta | sgratta@centralcounties.ca |

It is also important to not wait until the last minute to a) start your application and b) connect with your Industry Relations Manager. Doing so will greatly decrease your chance of success.

Three Partnership Streams

CCT is focusing on three priority streams for partnership. Applicants will be asked to choose from one of the following three project types.

1) Out-of-Region Marketing

- For stakeholders wanting to drive new visitors from further away
- All advertising, content development, social, media tours are eligible provided the messaging is directed at people 40+ kms from the destination
- CCT is only leveraging investments made to attract visitors from 40+ kms (eg. A festival has to spend \$1000 on 40+ kms marketing to be eligible for up to an additional \$1000 for 40+km marketing; they can't leverage a \$1000 fencing expense)

2) Multi-Stakeholder Development Initiatives

- For stakeholders who are developing new year-round multi-stop/location experiences, or promoting their existing multi-stop/location experience, with the goal of attracting day and overnight visitation (eg. [A Country Path](#), Passport Program, Brewery Trail, Studio Tour)
- Eligible expenses include website, graphic design, map printing, marketing/communications expenses, etc. Capital expenses are not eligible.
- Please note that CCT is also available to assist in the development of these experiences. Please contact your Industry Relations Manager.

2024-2025 CCT Partnership Program Opportunities

3) Destination Development

- Projects led by Municipalities, BIA's, Chambers and Boards of Trade that are focused on driving more visitation from out of region, and initiatives that extend length of stay (eg. Wayfinding Signage, patio projects, planning studies, conference/sport tourism bid support)

Application Evaluation Parameters

These are the areas of consideration that we will be looking for in an application:

- Showcases a positive return on investment (ROI). This means that the amount of money being brought to the community because of your project is greater than the cost of the project. The greater the ROI, the more impactful the project is.
- The length of time the project will drive visitation (<1 week is short vs >1 year is long)
- Brings in new visitors (from greater than 40kms) to the community and surrounding areas.
- Ensures that these new visitors spend time and money within the community (overnight visitation).
- Grows shoulder and off-season visitation.
- Collaborates with other businesses and organizations within the community/region to deliver the project.
- Promotes other activities and businesses in the community to visitors to extend length of stay or encourage repeat visitation.
- All applications must include a TREIMS (Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model) analysis based on projected visitation
- Provides a detailed budget that demonstrates that delivery will result in a positive ROI.
- Provides a marketing plan that outlines how visitors (40kms+) will be engaged and attracted to the community.
- A commitment to measuring and sharing project results.

Maximum Partnership Funding

The maximum that can be requested is 50% of your project budget up to a maximum of \$20,000. For example, if your total budget is \$25,000 the maximum you can request is \$12,500. Note that if approved you may not receive 100% of the requested budget but a portion.

Two Intakes

All applications are for projects taking place between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025.

Intake 1 Deadline is March 15, 2024 at 3:00pm.

Intake 2 Deadline is September 13, 2024 at 3:00pm.

One Application per Stream

Even if you plan on delivering more than one project during the fiscal year, please submit only one application per stream that outlines all of the projects.

2024-2025 CCT Partnership Program Opportunities

Partner Prerequisites

- At least one member of the team is required to complete the Tourism Ambassador program. We also highly encourage all applicants to complete at least one of the Social Media Marketing Program modules. Both of these are offered on the Central Counties Learning Lab.
- The organization/business MUST be registered with a profile on the Central Counties Website (you will be required to provide the link to your updated/current profile in your application).
- All applicants MUST speak with their Industry Relations Manager prior to applying. This should be completed no later than March 1, 2024 for applications submitted for the first intake and August 23, 2024 for applications submitted for the second intake.

Marketing Plan

Applicants must submit their out-of-region marketing and communications plan (if applicable) that outlines the following: Audience targeting (geographic and demographic), outreach tactics, ROI metrics and how you will report them.

Expectations of Successful Partners

Communication

Communication is key with a partnership. CCT wants to know how things are going as you hit project milestones. More importantly, CCT wants to share your story of success across the region to motivate others to think about investing in their business to help grow the tourism economy. By amplifying the success of our working together, we foster a better understanding, for political leaders, of the important role the visitor economy plays in our communities.

Reporting

Every partner must submit a thorough and 100% completed final report via the CCT Partnership Online Portal within **10 business days** of project completion. Please review the *Partnership Reporting Template* to understand the metrics that will be required.

Contract Adherence

Shortly after your project has been approved for partnership, you will receive a contract and a document called "Schedule D". It is vital to:

- a) Thoroughly read and understand your obligations for the partnership, and
- b) Sign both and return to Central Counties Tourism within 10 business days of receiving the documents.

Failure to complete all obligations of the contract and schedule will result in delayed/forfeited partnership funds from CCT and may result in ineligibility for future programs.

Financial Reconciliation

From a financial perspective, there are two options for the partner. Each requires the partner to verify both the expense and provide proof of payment for expenses covered by the partner. To help visualize, let's assume the total project cost is \$10,000.

2024-2025 CCT Partnership Program Opportunities

Option 1: Your organization pays supplier invoices of \$5,000. You submit those invoices along with proof of payment to CCT and then can submit the remaining \$5,000 in invoices directly to CCT for payment. All vendors whose invoices CCT is paying on behalf of the partnership must adhere to the CCT Vendor Policy.

Option 2: Your organization pays \$10,000 in invoices for the project. All invoices, along with proof of payment, are submitted on an agreed upon schedule and CCT reimburses the organization their \$5,000 commitment

Please review **APPENDIX I** to fully understand the payment guidelines and requirements.

2024-2025 CCT Partnership Program Opportunities

APPENDIX I – CCT PARTNERSHIP PAYMENT GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

In order for Central Counties Tourism to proceed with payment of expenses towards your partnership project smoothly and in a way that satisfies CCT's audit requirements, certain criteria must be met and documentation methods adhered to. This document outlines what you, the Partner, is required to do in order to proceed with the payment portion of your partnership contract. We at Central Counties thank you in advance for your adherence to these guidelines.

1. Prior to any expenses being paid out by CCT under your partnership, you must sign and return your partnership contract and Schedule D. CCT will not proceed with payment until a signed partnership is received.
2. For *Financial Option 1*: The amount of your portion of funds must be paid in full before CCT will begin to pay any invoices on your behalf.
3. For *Financial Option 1*: When you receive invoices that you would like CCT to pay, please forward them immediately by email for payment. Please do not hold and batch invoices before sending. Because CCT considers invoices payable within 30 days of receipt of invoice by CCT, any delay in forwarding invoices for payment may result in delayed payments to your vendors. The number of emails you send to CCT in a day, even if there are multiple emails at a time, is not a problem for us.
4. For *Financial Option 1*: Please notify your vendors that CCT pays by direct deposit, and that they need to provide their banking information or a void cheque along with their invoice. If an invoice is received for us to pay that does not include this information, it will be returned unprocessed, and may be resubmitted when this information has been obtained. Please note that CCT will not hold onto these incomplete invoices until such time as banking information is received. They must be resubmitted in full.
5. For *Financial Options 1 and 2*: All expenses/invoices must be paid for the full amount of either your contribution portion (*Option 1*) or the full partnership value (*Option 2*), stated and signed on in the contract. This document must be submitted in a single file (or as close to it as possible if email transmission limits file size) at the same time. CCT will not begin to contribute its portion of the partnership funds until your respective portion of the financial obligation is fulfilled.
6. For *Financial Options 1 and 2*: Copies of your original invoices/receipts must be submitted with proof of payment. Proof of payment can be in the form of:
 - a credit card or bank statement (with irrelevant, unrelated or sensitive information blacked out) showing:
 - corresponding charge, and
 - account holder name
 - a cancelled cheque
 - a statement or printout from your accounting system showing:
 - vendor invoice entry, and
 - payment entry showing payment details

2024-2025 CCT Partnership Program Opportunities

7. For *Financial Options 1 and 2*: You as the partner will be the sole business/organization contributing payment and requesting reimbursement. CCT will not reimburse you for expenses paid by employees, volunteers, or other businesses/organizations participating in your event or project. If you are faced with this situation, you as the partner must reimburse the employee/volunteer/participating business first. Once you have done that, your reimbursement will then be considered a reimbursable expense as part of your project and may be submitted along with proof of payment.
8. For *Financial Options 1 and 2*: Please provide a summary spreadsheet, attached as an Excel document, that lists details about your expenses (amount, vendor, etc.), and cross-references it to the corresponding payment document details. CCT does not provide or require a set template to be completed. A simple summary document is acceptable.
9. For *Financial Options 1 and 2*: You have applied, and were approved, for Partnership Funding in the amount that you expect to spend. It is CCT's assumption that, without our contributing funds, you would still have spent your portion of funding on your project. CCT allocates all expenses to your portion of the funding first, before contributing its portion of the funds. In the event that you do not spend the entirety of your funding allotment, CCT will not pay 50% of the lesser total. It will instead contribute the balance of expenses after your full portion has been paid.
10. CCT understands that circumstances can change mid-project and will provide you with an Addendum Request Form should you:
 - a. Need to change your financial option
 - b. Need to change any aspect of your partnership contract including, but not limited to, a project shift or redirection of funds

Once received and approved, the addendum will be added to the partnership contract rather than creating an entire new one.



Nominate Now: 2024 Business Excellence Awards Spotlight Dufferin County's Outstanding Businesses & Nonprofits!

Award nominees live and breathe their corporate values, have survived the challenges of the past few years, and are making our community better by being part of it. Nominations are open to DBOT members and non-member businesses located in Dufferin County.



Business of the Year

Recognizes a local business for noteworthy accomplishments, long-standing contributions to Dufferin County, and significant community involvement. This business demonstrates best business practices, is a leader amongst local business, and has:

- been in business longer than two years;
- champions “Thinking Local” within the organization, and to the community;
- demonstrated innovate and proactive leadership;
- made exceptional contributions to our community’s wellbeing; and
- practiced good corporate citizenship.



Businessperson of the Year Award

This award is presented to a local business person that has shown leadership, community involvement and is a pioneer and mentor in the business community. A business leader who:

- sets an example of positive leadership;
- projects a positive image in the community;
- works to motivate and encourage other entrepreneurs;
- promotes a positive image of Dufferin County and/or its people;
- actively contributes to the growth of the community, and support of local initiatives; and
- has been active in the community for a minimum of five years.



Inclusivity Champion Award

This Award recognizes a local business or non-profit in our community who has policies and practices of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those having physical or mental disabilities or belonging to other minority groups. Some ways this organization demonstrates their inclusivity may include:

- belonging to the Level Up Dufferin program as an LGBTQ+ Safe Space &/or Accessible Business (*optional, but recommended*);
- educating and training their staff and volunteers on DEI;
- setting an example of inclusivity best practices for other local organizations to follow;
- ensuring employees and customers are clearly aware of their inclusivity efforts; and

- creating new and innovate ways to promote DEI in our community.



Responsible Business Award

Recognizes a local business or non-profit who demonstrates both social and environmental responsibility in their business practices. This organization is committed to making life better by being a good steward of the environment, a good employer, and a good business. Some ways this organization demonstrates their responsibility may include:

- belonging to the Level Up Dufferin program as a Socially Responsible &/or Environmentally Responsible Business (*optional, but recommended*);
- taking tangible steps towards bettering our environment and our society. Steps which may include:
 - paying a living wage, having clear and inclusive hiring practices, changing to more earth-friendly products, implementing a local purchasing policy, etc.
- this business *may* have, or be working towards obtaining, “B Corp” status, or other similar status



Innovation Award

Awarded to a business or organization that is a trailblazer of our local business community, striving ahead to achieve remarkable results. Innovators are committed, determined, and skilled game-changers in their industry, and have:

- created, invented or developed an innovative product or process that has had a significant impact on the local community;

- made innovative improvements in their products, processes, technology, management, or customer service;
- been a socially responsible, engaged member of the local business community; and
- been in operation for a minimum of two years.



Community Builder Award

Honours a for-profit business that demonstrates outstanding community involvement and embraces the notion of giving back, with community investments that have resulted in an improved quality of life in our region, and increased community well-being. The Community Builder:

- invests in the lives of others and actively contributes to making Dufferin a great place to live and work;
- has initiatives that demonstrate a sustained and long-term commitment to improving the quality of life and community well-being in Dufferin;
- has policies and practices that demonstrate accountability and responsibility to the community; and
- actively supports existing community building programs, or establishes new programs and initiatives.

**Nominations are accepted at <https://dufferinbot.ca/2024-beas/>
until April 23, 2024**



Dufferin Business Survey Results

April 2024

Introduction

The Dufferin Board of Trade (DBOT) is a nonprofit, community-building organization dedicated to helping local businesses thrive. We focus on providing businesses with connections, promotion, cost savings, and advocacy.

Much of our advocacy works is shaped by the results learned through our Annual Business Survey. This is the sixth year for our survey and where possible we have provided comparison data from previous years' surveys. Comparisons are also made between our local data and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce's (OCC) 2024 Business Confidence Survey report¹.

The Process

The Dufferin Business Issues Survey was conducted using the Survey Monkey platform. The survey was open from January 12th until February 29th, 2024, and 109 responses were collected. The survey was open to all businesses in the area, regardless of membership in DBOT. The survey consisted of 15 questions, followed by the opportunity to provide general comments or concerns, and the option to enter contact information to be used in a draw to win one of three \$50 gift cards.

Survey Results

This report contains a breakdown and graphical representation of survey responses. In instances where data exceeds a total of 100%, respondents were permitted to select more than one answer on the survey. General comments provided are listed in the appendix section of this report.

Summary Report

Business Information:

- The Dufferin Business Issues Survey collected data on various aspects of respondents' organizations, including membership status, size, sector, location, years in operation, and the position of the person completing the survey.
- 67% of the 109 respondents were members of the Dufferin Board of Trade.
- Most respondents were self-employed (27%) or leaders in small businesses, with 19% having 2-5 employees, 28% with 6-20 employees, and 10% with 21-50 employees.
- Business longevity is strong, with 39% of respondents operating for over 20 years.
- Various industries were represented, with business and professional services (14%) being the top sector.
- Orangeville, with approximately half of Dufferin County's population base, contributed 51% of the responses.
- The majority of respondents (63%) were business owners or partners.

Business Confidence:

- On average, businesses rated their performance as a 6 in 2023, similar to previous years.
- In 2024, the rating dropped to 6, indicating a slight decline compared to the previous year.
- Marketing and advertising remained a top priority for respondents, followed by growth and getting connected in the local business community.
- Inflation/rising costs emerged as the primary concern (60%), followed by attracting employees and competition.
- Factors driving economic growth included creating a live-work community, affordable housing, and attracting large companies.

Workforce Questions:

- Employment levels remained steady in 2023 compared to previous years.
- 61% of respondents successfully filled their vacancies with suitable candidates.
- Networking with local businesses and professional development opportunities were prioritized activities.

Policy Issues:

- Respondents believed DBOT should be involved in economic development, local government accountability, and addressing housing costs.
- Other important issues included addressing the skills gap, planning, and education and training.

Conclusion: The Dufferin Business Issues Survey provides insights into the local business landscape, highlighting areas of strength, such as business longevity, and areas of concern, including rising costs and workforce challenges. Understanding these dynamics can inform strategic decisions and policy initiatives to support economic growth and prosperity in the region.

Full Report

Business Information

Within the business information section of the Dufferin Business Issues Survey, respondents were asked questions pertaining to their organization’s membership status, size, sector, location, years in operation, and position within the company of the person completing the survey. This information was gathered to ensure adequate representation across Dufferin’s municipalities, as well as to allow for further segmentation of the data by municipality and industry sector.

Question 1:

Are you currently a Dufferin Board of Trade member?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

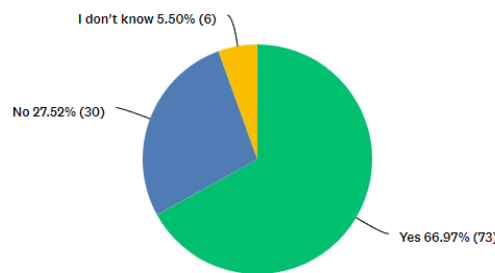


Figure 1: DBOT membership

Of the 109 respondents, 67% were currently members of the Dufferin Board of Trade.

Question 2:

Approximately how many employees does your organization have?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

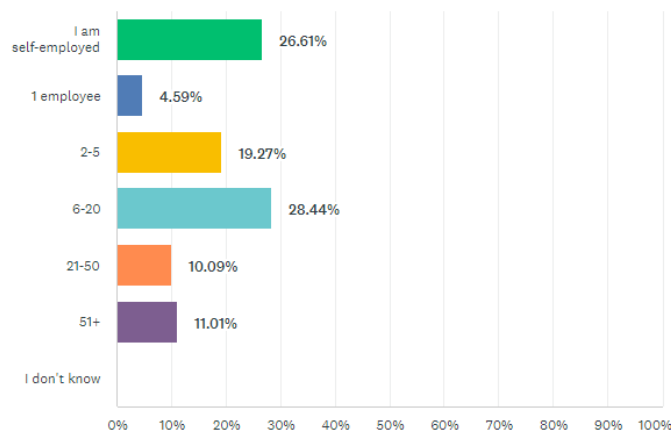


Figure 2: organization size

Survey respondents are primarily self-employed (27%) or leaders in small businesses - 19% have 2-5 employees, 28% have 6-20 employees, and 10% with 21-50 employees. Larger businesses, with 51 or more employees, made up 11% of the survey respondents.

Question 3:

How many years has your current business been in operation?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

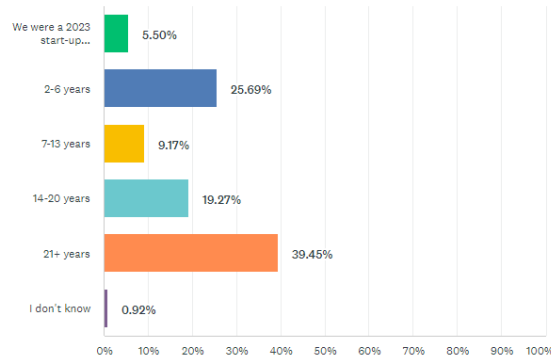


Figure 3: organization age

Business longevity is strong in Dufferin, with 39% of respondents operating their current business for over 20 years. Businesses operating for 14-20 years made up 19% of responses, 7-13 years 9%, 2-6 years 26% and new start ups 5.5% of responses.

Question 4:

What industry or sector is your business?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

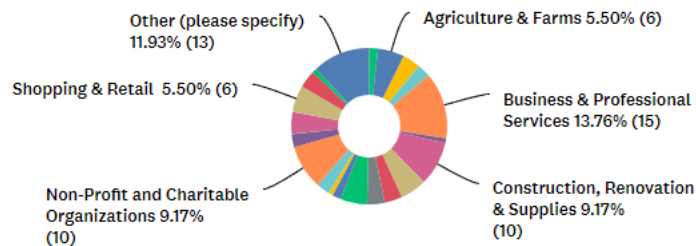


Figure 4: industry sector

A wide range of industries were represented in this survey. Business and professional services (14%), non-profit and charitable organizations (9%), construction, renovation, and supplies (9%), were the top, with agriculture & farms, education & childcare, health care, and shopping & retail each with 5.5% of responses. The “other” responses can be found in the attached appendix.

Question 5:

Where is your organization primarily located

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

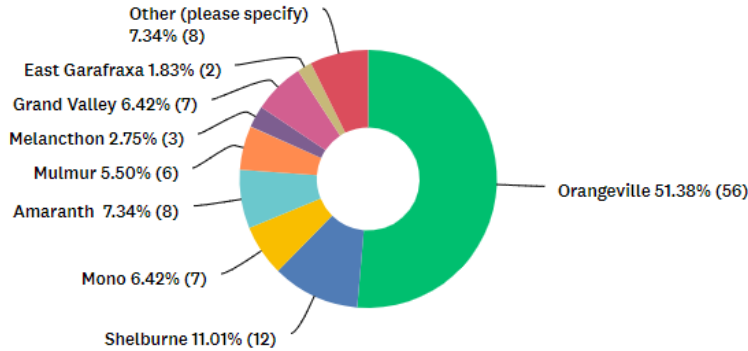


Figure 5: Location

The majority of respondents are located in the most populated municipality, Orangeville (51%). The remaining respondents were from Shelburne (11%), Mono (6%), Amaranth (7%), Mulmur (5%), Melancthon (3%), Grand Valley (6%), East Garafraxa (2%). "Other" responses are located in the appendix.

Question 6:

What position do you hold in your organization

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

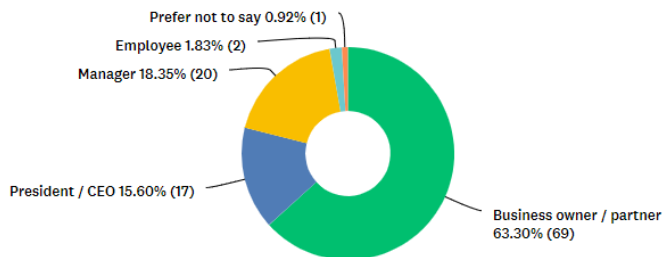


Figure 6: Respondent's position

The majority (63%) of respondents were the business owner or partner, 18% a manager, 16% the president/CEO, 2% an employee, and 1% preferred not to say what position they held within their organization.

Business Confidence

The next questions asked businesses to compare look at their performance, priorities, areas of concern and employment levels.

Question 7:

How did your business perform in 2023 compared with 2022

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

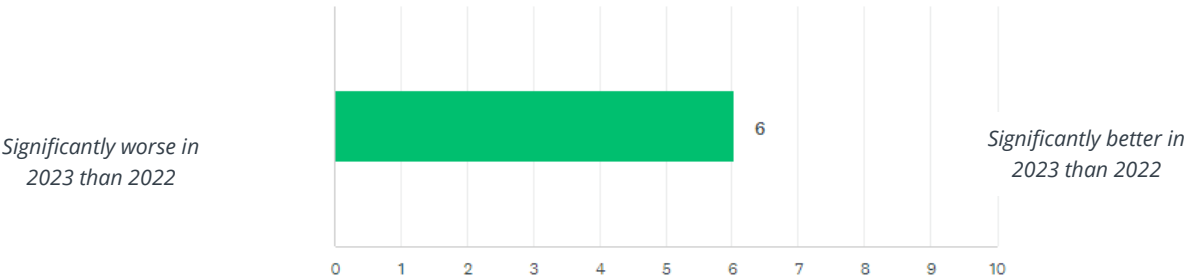


Figure 7: business performance – last year

On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being “significantly worse in 2023 than 2022” and 10 being “significantly better in 2023 than 2022”, businesses averaged a 6 in their responses. In the 2022 and 2023 surveys, businesses had a similar feeling comparing their last year’s performance with the year before.

Question 8:

How do you think your business will perform in 2024 compared with 2023

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

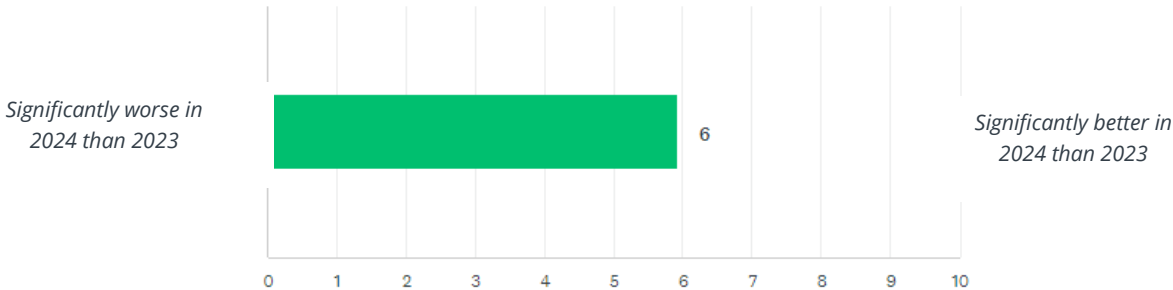


Figure 8: business performance – this year

On a sliding scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being “significantly worse in 2024 than 2023” and 10 being “significantly better in 2024 than 2023”, businesses averaged a 6 in their responses, a full point less than the 2023 survey. On the provincial level, the OCC reports that 53 percent of businesses expect to grow their business in 2024. (Source: OCC Business Confidence Survey¹)

Question 9:

What are the top priorities your company will focus on in 2024? (please select 1-3)

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

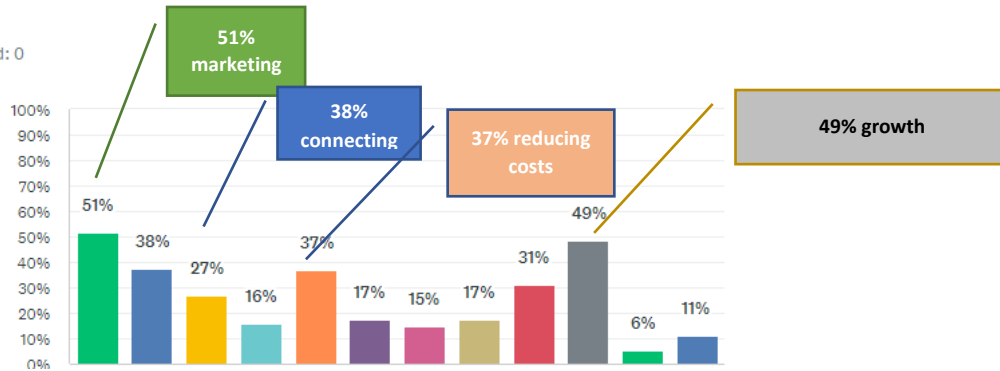


Figure 9: Top priorities

Marketing and advertising was once again a top priority for respondents with 51% this year and 53% last year indicating it as a top priority. Growth was a priority this year for 49% of respondents, while last year it had a few respondents answer growth in the “other” comments. Getting connected in the local business community was at 50% in 2023 and only 38% this year. Reducing operating costs came it at 37% this year compared to 28% last year. Strategic planning was 31% this year, compared with 37% last year. Attracting employees was 27% this year and 24% last year. Access to business supports and training or skills upgrading of workforce both had 17% of respondents, with employee retention at 16% and better leveraging technology at 15%. “Other” responses are in the appendix.

In previous years marketing has consistently been in the top three priorities, with reducing operating costs scoring higher (46%-53%) in all previous years’ reports. Attracting workers has been a declining priority, with 44% of businesses in 2019, 35% in 2020, and 17% in 2021 identifying it as a top priority.

Question 10:

Which of the following do you anticipate will be the biggest issues of concern your company will face in 2024? (Please select 1-3 responses)

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

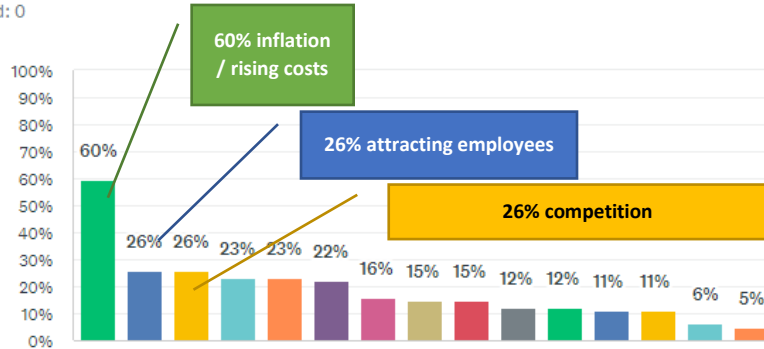


Figure 10: issues of concern

Inflation/rising costs is by far the biggest concern of local businesses this year with a whopping 60% ranking it in their top three. Last year’s top concern was attracting employees (30% in 2023), with it in a tie for second along with competition this year, both at 26%. Followed by business taxes and government red tape and regulations (23% for both), then cost of rent/lease at 22% up from 16% last year. Other concerns are barriers to expansion/scaling-up (16%), decreasing consumer confidence (15%), retaining employees (12%), global markets/trade up from 6% last year to 12%, access to capital (11%), high speed internet (11%), access to business supports (6%) and transportation/infrastructure (5%). “Other” responses are included in the appendix. Provincially, through the Ontario Chamber of Commerce’s Business Confidence Survey businesses shared that their top policy concerns were:

Government Policies

The policy priorities of Ontario’s business community reflect their major pain points, including business and living costs, consumer spending, and workforce gaps (Table 1).

The top priority cited by all sectors is reducing or simplifying business taxes (50 percent of all businesses, and 83 percent of businesses in the accommodation and food services industry). This puts policymakers in a difficult position; simply lowering taxes would lead to lower revenues and less capacity to invest in critical infrastructure, services, and support programs. In 2024, governments will need to be strategic and targeted about how they balance concerns about long-term fiscal prudence with the need to alleviate cost pressures.

Table 1: Top 10 policy priorities among Ontario businesses

| Priority | Share of respondents |
|--|----------------------|
| Reduce/simplify business taxes | 50% |
| Encourage Ontarians to buy/travel locally | 34% |
| Invest in workforce development | 33% |
| Support affordable housing development | 33% |
| Enhance access to credit/capital | 26% |
| Support businesses with technology adoption & innovation | 25% |
| Address health care capacity | 24% |
| Expand mental health and addictions programs | 23% |
| Strengthen local supply chains & manufacturing | 22% |
| Invest in broadband internet infrastructure | 22% |

Question 11:

Which of the following are the most important factors driving Dufferin County's economic growth and prosperity? Please select 1-3

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

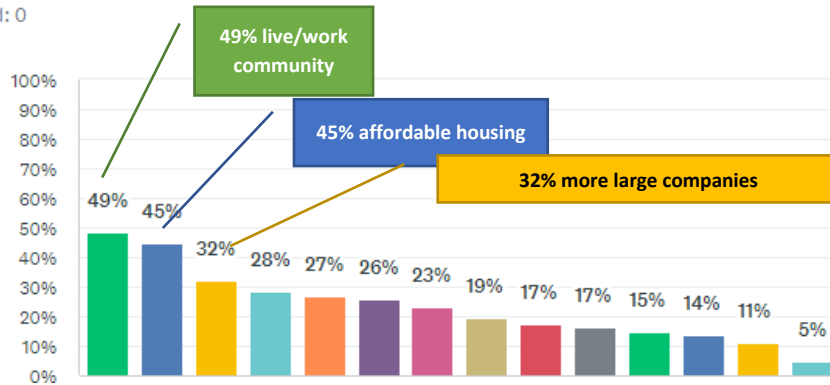


Figure 11: Dufferin's economic growth factors

The top three factors have not changed since last year, with the majority of respondents (49%) feel that creating a live-work community, so more people both live and work in Dufferin is the top factor driving Dufferin County's economic growth and prosperity (53% last year). Affordable housing is still second but with a much higher rating this year (45%) compared to 35% this year. Attracting more large companies to Dufferin remained fairly consistent at 32% this year versus 30% last year. Other factors include: Access and affordability of high-speed broadband (28%), support for growth and expansion of existing businesses (27%), attracting new talent to work in our community (26%), attracting more small companies to Dufferin (23%) up from 15% in 2023, utilities such as hydro costs and availability of natural gas (19%), developing new businesses and entrepreneurs (17%), better connect young talent with employment (17%), business occupancy costs (15%), availability of space (14%), access to public transportation (11%). "Other" responses are listed in the appendix

Workforce Questions

Question 12:

What happened with employment levels in your company in 2023 compared with 2022?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

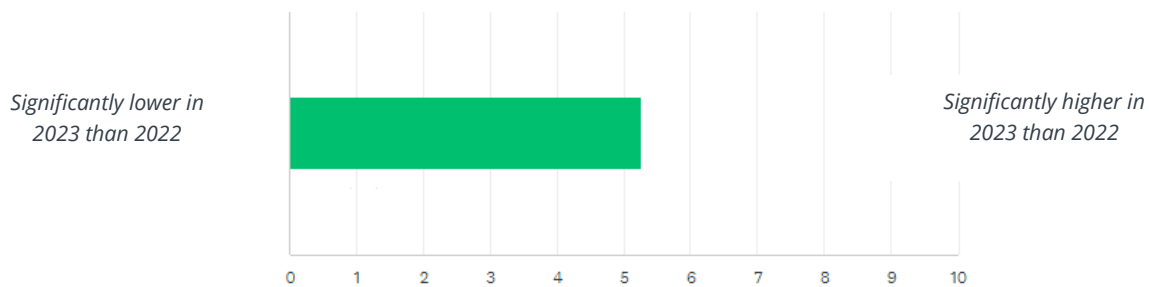


figure 12: employment levels

On average businesses stated that employment levels remained roughly the same in 2023 compared with 2022 and 2021.

Question 13:

Within the last year have you been able to fill all of your positions with candidates that meet your needs and requirements?

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

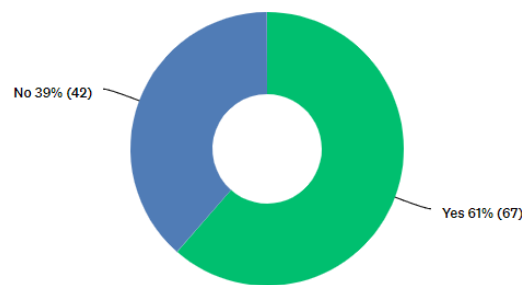


figure 13: filling vacancies

The majority of respondents (61%) were able to successfully fill their vacancies with candidates that met their needs and requirements. Locally, we have seen similar responses year over year. Provincially, “Labour shortages have eased somewhat this year, but demand for workers continues to exceed supply in certain sectors. Overall, 40 percent of organizations are directly experiencing a labour shortage, down from 55 percent last year.” (OCC OER Report)

Question 14:

The following activities are undertaken by the Dufferin Board of Trade. Please rank them in order of importance.

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

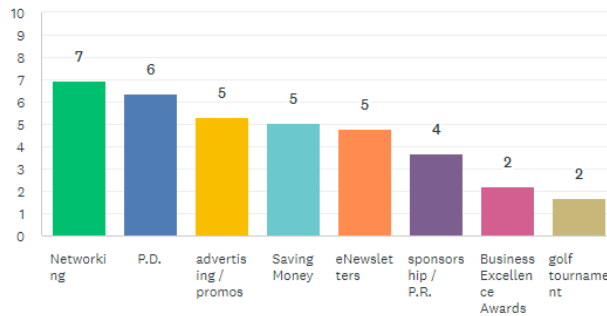


Figure 14: activities

Similarly to last year, respondents selected opportunities to network with local businesses as the most important activity, followed by professional development opportunities, eNewsletters, opportunities to save money, advertising and sponsorship opportunities, with the annual golf tournament and business excellence awards ranking lowest in the priorities.

Question 15

Please indicate the top 1-3 policy issues you would like to see DBOT involved in

Answered: 109 Skipped: 0

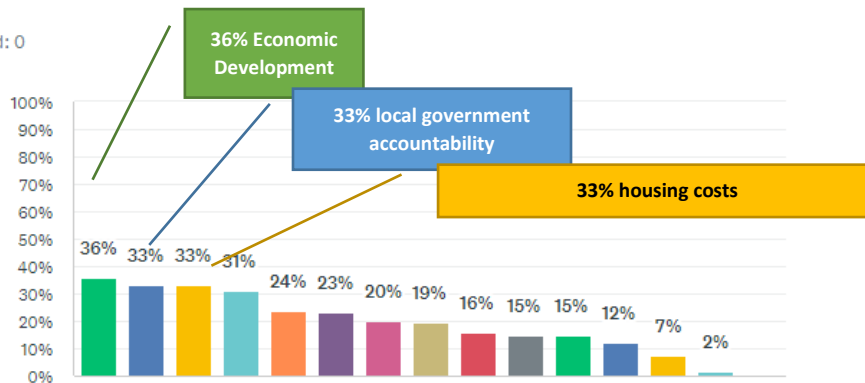


Figure 15: policy issues

Respondents felt that DBOT should be involved in: Economic development – 36%; Local government accountability / governance - 33%; Housing costs – 33%; Addressing Skills Gap (lack of qualified talent to fill existing positions) – 31%; Planning - business land zoning; residential density – 24%; Education and training – 23%; Access and affordability of high-speed broadband – 20%; Property Taxes – 19%; Energy - Cost of Hydro – 16%; Public Transit – 15%; Environment / sustainability – 15%; Social & Human Services – 12%; Crime/Safety – 7%; Signage By-laws – 2%; Flooding - prevention and response – 0%.

In 2023, the top responses were: Economic development – 46%; Access and affordability of high-speed broadband – 30%; Addressing Skills Gap (lack of qualified talent to fill existing positions) – 28% “Other” responses can be found in the appendix.

Appendix

Question 4: What industry or sector is your business in? Other responses:

| OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Shopping, retail, tattooing, piercing | |
| Heritage Education/ Consulting & Travel | |
| Brand Strategy + Photography | |
| Merchant services | |
| Security | |
| Travel | Cleaning Service |
| signs | Charitable and Pet Supply |
| Industrial Safety and Custom Apparel | SOCIAL ENTERPRISE |
| Landscaping | Government |

Question 5: Where is your organization primarily located?

| OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) |
|---------------------------|
| Fergus |
| online |
| GTA and Dufferin County |
| Mansfield |
| Collingwood |
| Dufferin/Caledon |
| Erin |
| Newfoundland and Labrador |

Question 9: What are the top priorities your company will focus on in 2024? (please select 1-3)

| OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) |
|--|
| growth - financial grant opportunities |
| improving quality of service |
| gaining new customers and community awareness of our products and services |
| finding funding and food to meet the increase in need |
| Completing renovations which did not happen because of the impact of covid and rising cost of everything |
| Educating our elders to protect the from the increase in fraudulent activity and cyber security. |
| Funding- high speed |
| Avoid bankruptcy |
| Better internet |
| Combo of marketing and community engagement ("getting connected") |
| Gaining new clients |
| better supply of product for resale |

Question 10: Which of the following do you anticipate will be the biggest issues of concern your company will face in 2024? (Please select 1-3 responses)

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)

Attracting new patrons

Time!

attracting clients

digital promotion

Advertising in a saturated market

Marketing to the right audience to attract customers

Fraud

Awareness and Adoption of service

Increasung community awareness

Collecting on my A/R

Small businesses that need support won't be able to afford it due to the terrible economy

interest rates

interest rates

Red tape not only government (CRA, ONCA, etc.) but also grant-makers and onerous grant application/reporting processes.

This question doesn't make sense

Getting new customers

Economic factors that impact occupancy rate. It could go the other way, people don't want to travel as far and take less expensive weekend trips.

residual Covid related issues.

Government funding and volunteers

Question 11: Which of the following are the most important factors driving Dufferin County's economic growth and prosperity? Please select 1-3

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)

The question isn't clear - we feel these are the most important things preventing growth and prosperity

affordable land

diversity vs invasion

Improvements to hwy 109, and expanding from Mono to Grand Valley

Support for growth and expansion of existing LOCAL independent businesses - not box stores and chains. ;)

Question 15: Please indicate the top 1-3 policy issues you would like to see DBOT involved in

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)

Supporting businesses or advocating govt and local govt to support small business in scaling up, making town related requirements like planning more accessible and affordable for small businesses

Don't know why you'd be involved in any of this

Roadway improvements especially along Hwy 109 from Grand Valley to Orangeville

Footnote:

The Ontario Economic Report, produced by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (of which DBOT is a member), based upon the OCC's 2024 Business Confidence Survey, which can be found at:

<https://occ.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024-Ontario-Economic-Report-1.pdf>