



# The County™

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY ✦ ONTARIO

## Community Development Department Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) Initiative **Report** -2016 Manufacturing & Construction Sectors-



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## Introduction

This Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) initiative provides insight and data into challenges faced by The County's construction and manufacturing sectors. The BR+E is a standardized interview and survey process conducted by County staff with 60 business owners located in Prince Edward County.

## BR+E Background

On June 24, 2015 members of the Prince Edward County (PEC) Community and Economic Development Commission (CEDC) participated in a facilitated priority setting session within the context of the PEC Community Development Strategic Plan that was completed in late 2013 and implemented beginning in 2014. The intent of the session was to review key goals and actions to affirm that the current strategy, stakeholder expectations and resources were aligned with the broader economic and community development landscape in which Prince Edward County competes. One of the outcomes of this session was a priority under Goal #2 of the Community Development Strategic Plan:

*Goal #2 – A supportive Environment for Business and Investment:*

*Action Item #5: “Develop a Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program that targets the top 50 companies in the County. These should include companies that are on a significant growth trajectory, are major employers and contributors to the local economy, provide high value products or services, or likely export a high percentage of their products.”*

BR+E programs are often conducted on a sector by sector basis, with updates to each sector taking place every few years. The process involves conducting confidential interviews with businesses to gather insights into their needs, challenges and opportunities for growth. It's focused on connecting with a large portion of the manufacturing and construction sectors, and has provided industry data specific to Prince Edward County.

The manufacturing sector in The County includes a diverse range of producers including agri-food processors with labelled products, niche-manufacturers and wineries.

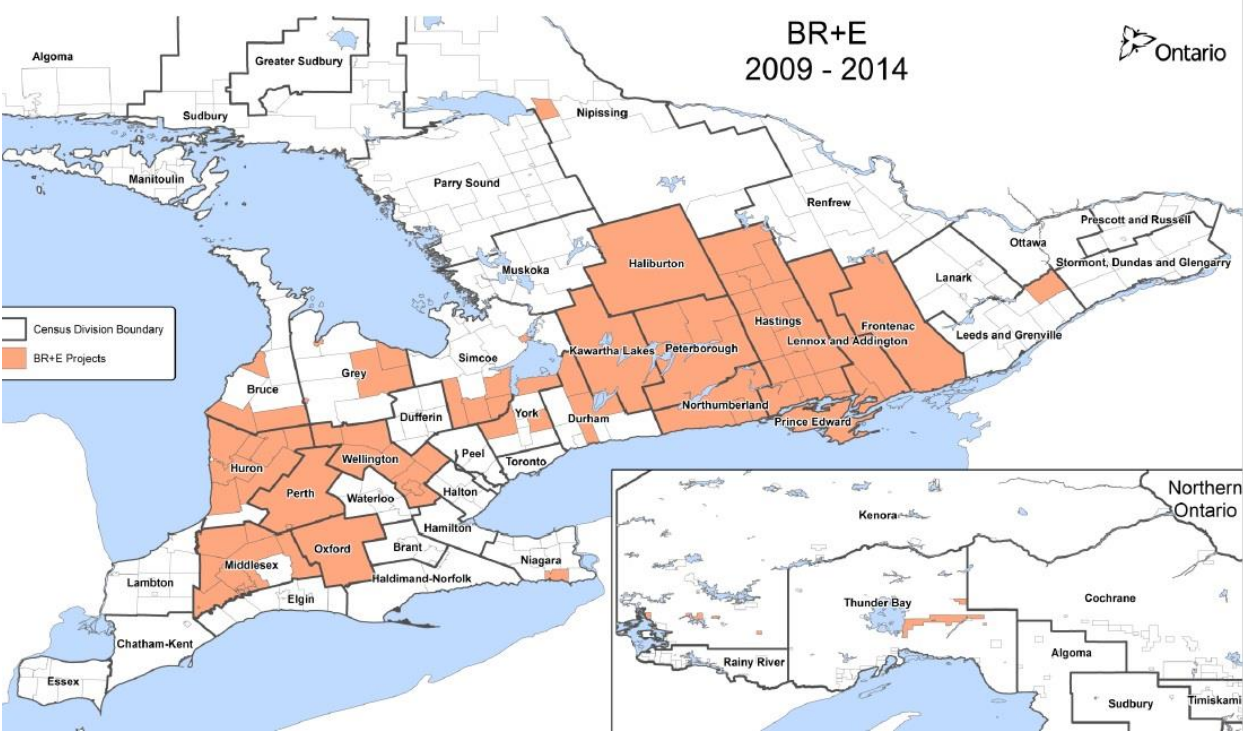
The BR+E also follows the Mayor's recent Development Forum in late 2015 and creation of a Development Framework Subcommittee in early 2016 and represents critical steps towards soliciting public feedback on development concerns from the construction industry.

This process has not only provided critical feedback for the Development Framework process, but has also provided an opportunity for the Community Development Department to connect with business owners in person and to help address any urgent matters they might be facing.

The Community Development Department recognizes that industry feedback from the business community is a first step towards achieving Council’s priority of improving our current development policies and procedures and supporting our growing community.

### About OMAFRA BR+E Executive Pulse

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) provides no-charge tools and resources for communities conducting BR+E surveys. This includes a best practices coordinators manual, a comprehensive business survey templates, and an online data management system known as Executive Pulse. By participating in, and using OMAFRA’s system, communities also gain the benefits of comparative data from other communities across rural Ontario. Provincial results are compiled from each of the communities contributing data to the online data management system. To date, 73 other communities in rural Ontario have participated in the BR+E surveys and represent over 3,123 surveys undertaken between January 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. This provides an invaluable comparative resource for Prince Edward County as key findings are determined. The comparative results can be seen throughout this survey showcasing the unique issues and opportunities Prince Edward County faces relative to other *rural Ontario municipalities*.



## Project Scope

The Community Development Department (CDD) conducted 60 interviews (other community's averaged 42 interviews) with both the manufacturing & Construction sectors within Prince Edward County from May through to August, 2016. The survey questions were based on OMAFRA's standard business retention survey and manufacturing survey with the addition of some specific Prince Edward County questions.

## The Sectors

The Manufacturing Survey involved both traditional manufacturing and more niche producers and processors. This included companies that produce products and suppliers to those companies as well (i.e hardware stores, rental stores, machine shops). When it comes to agri-food producers, the line was drawn with companies who only produce professionally *labelled* products in distribution. This excluded producers who only had farm stand labels.

The Construction Survey included Prince Edward County contractors, home builders and suppliers to those trades. Suppliers included heating & air conditioning, hardware stores, window and door suppliers, landscapers, excavation and electrical contractors. Special emphasis was placed on the few key developers and builders, which included a few in Belleville that often build in Prince Edward County.

## Key Findings Summary

The development process is a big challenge to many owners and operators who are looking to expand their operation. Their experience has been increased delays due to waiting for planning or building permit approvals, which sometimes causes them to miss economically important timelines, such as a busy tourism season. Many businesses experience difficulty when inquiring on the status of their site plan approvals or building applications. Not knowing when to expect approvals makes it difficult to plan ahead as a business. Some have suggested "Improved clarity up front from the Planning and Building Department as to what it costs and what it will take to finish the project."

Many businesses are remaining the same size due to lack of Skilled Trades help. The 'Skilled Trades Deficit' (aka Skills Trades Gap) is a Country wide problem. Today, many Trades business owners are nearing retirement with no succession plan in place. The result of this can be seen in the frustration of new residents looking to build a new home, a business wishing to expand, or a contractor trying to find a reliable source of Trades Suppliers. The issue has become so critical, that despite the need to expand, many businesses have chosen not to, because they cannot find the Skilled Trades workers to meet the demand.

During the peak tourism season, which starts as early as March, many producers and processors who also serve retail require a team of well-trained front line staff. This includes servers, customer service

representatives and behind the scenes help including cooks/chefs and kitchen help. As these businesses rely more on increased tourism traffic for their annual sales, this becomes a critical component to the success of a business. Workforce attraction in these key areas is desperately needed.

Farm labour has been an on-going issue for many farm based producers and processors. They simply cannot find the help they need, despite trying to find help locally. Many have candidly said that “The youth today simply don’t want to work in the harsh field conditions and only last a few days or weeks”. The population density of youth in Prince Edward County is simply not here to support the demands for farm labour in this agriculturally based region. Some farms have found success with hiring 50-60 year old second career retirees. The result is that foreign workers have been increasingly relied on during the growing season. However, this raises many challenges associated with foreign workers including a massive amount of paperwork and red tape from the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Temporary Foreign Worker Program. The result is that sometimes, businesses are not able to get the workers here *when they are needed* for the critical harvest period.

When local workforce cannot be found (despite much advertising and recruitment attempts, see data on Workforce) Employers are forced to hire from outside The County. This raises the difficulty with finding Affordable Housing. Employers work very hard at securing housing for their workers by providing temporary housing on-site at the farm in a mobile RV trailer, make shift accommodations, or bedrooms or basements of employers. These are less than ideal solutions, especially when employers are trying to retain their valuable employees. Due to the high demand for vacation rentals demanding premium prices, the availability of affordable rentals is very few. Also, due to the rural nature of farming, housing options are very limited near places of work. There is limited ‘family ready’ home rentals when compared to other areas in rural Ontario including the Quinte area.

The challenges faced by our manufacturing and construction industries are not small in nature. It’s important to recognize that the survey comments and data collected, along with the Development Framework Process Review will be instrumental in providing strategic direction for the Municipality, Council, and the Community and Economic Development Commission as it moves forward to tackle these issues in 2017 and the years to come.

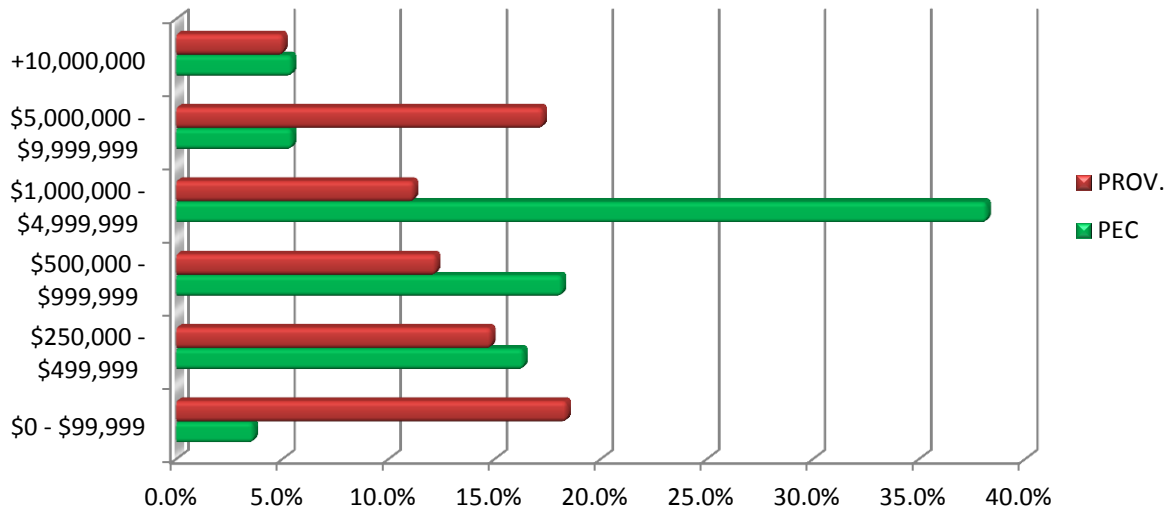
We are not alone, issues like Workforce Attraction & Affordable Housing are major challenges faced by many municipalities in North America. They will not be solved with a magic bullet. Only through strategic planning and effective implementation, will we start to see these issues resolved in order for Prince Edward County to leverage the growth opportunity we have in the coming years. The survey results below should provide valuable insight into the state of our burgeoning manufacturing and construction sectors.

## Survey Results:

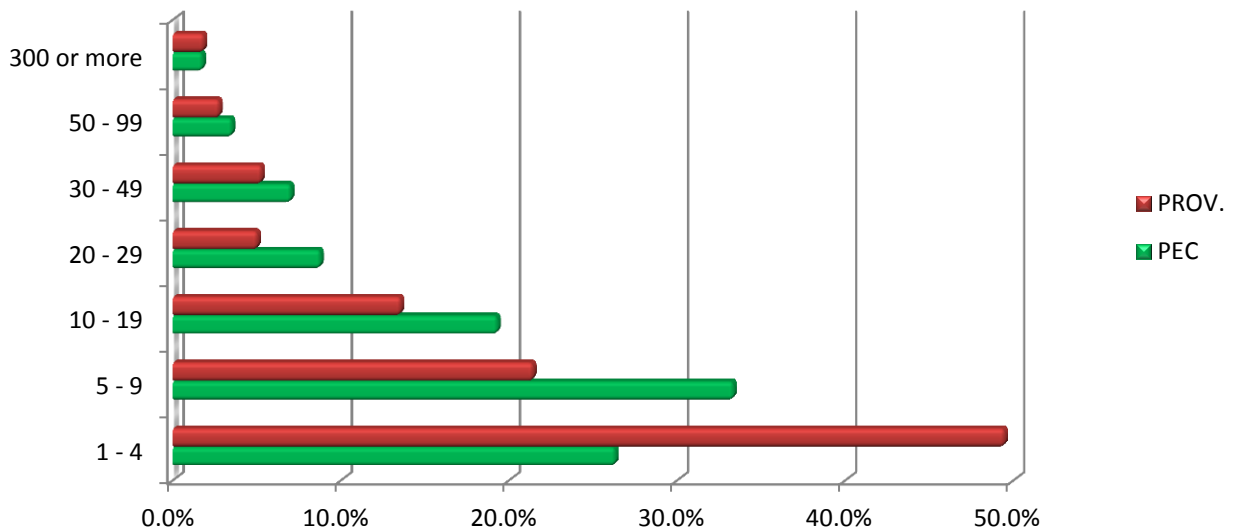
### Business Information

Many businesses in the construction and manufacturing sector are within the \$1m-\$5m annual sales range. This is primarily due to the types of businesses in operation in Prince Edward County which represents a majority of small to medium sized operations. This is also reflected in the number of employees and years in operation.

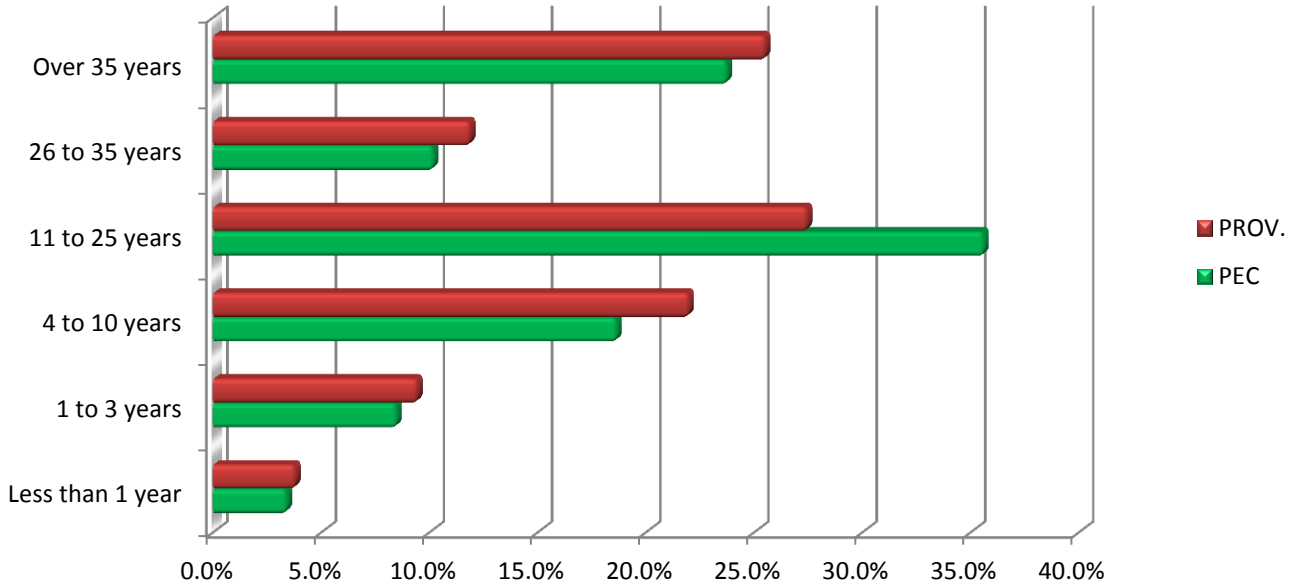
Please give an approximate annual sales range for your business



Including owner/owners, how many employees work at this location?

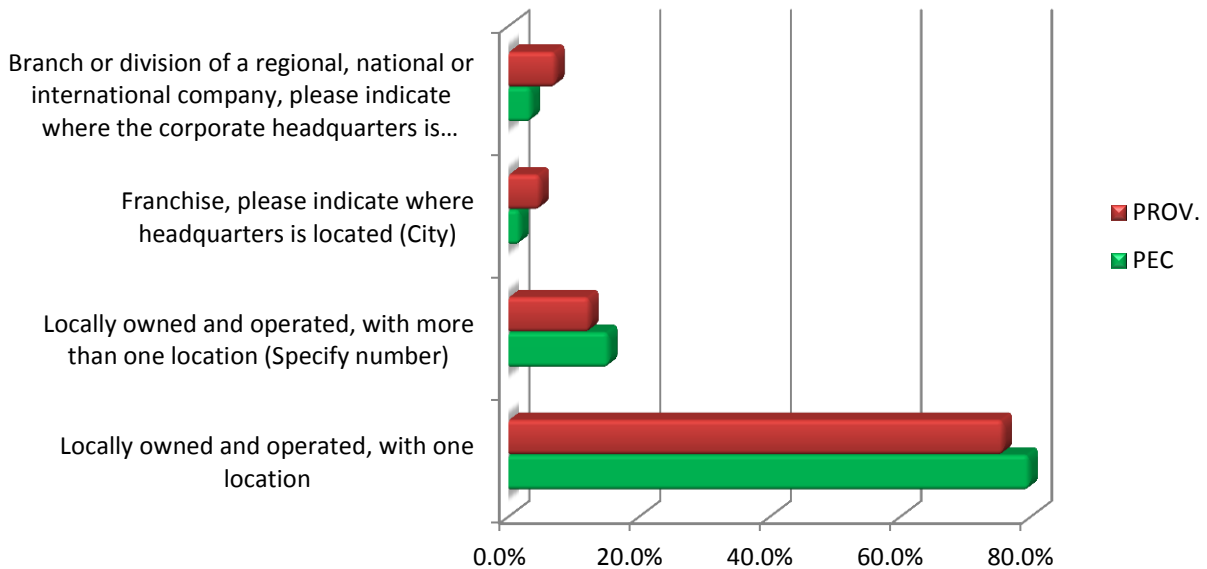


**How many years has your business been in operation in this community?**

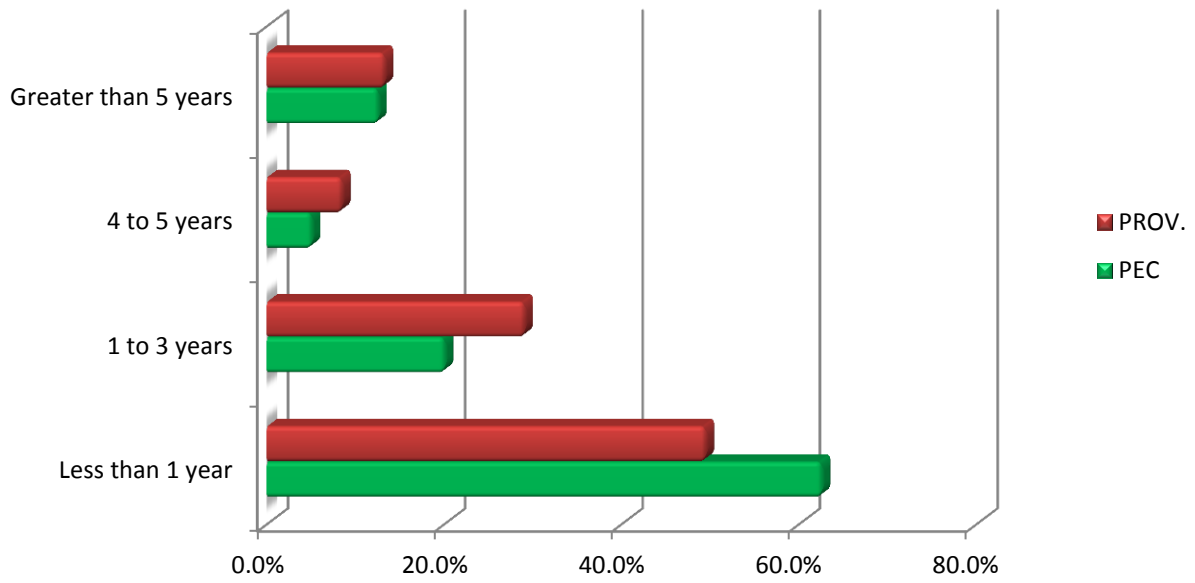


**Locally owned and operated with one location** is the predominant type of business in Prince Edward County. This closely matches the provincial average for rural Ontario. Many have cited the rising cost of electricity; the low Canadian Dollar (when purchasing raw materials) and the rising cost of WSIB premiums as negatively affecting competitiveness.

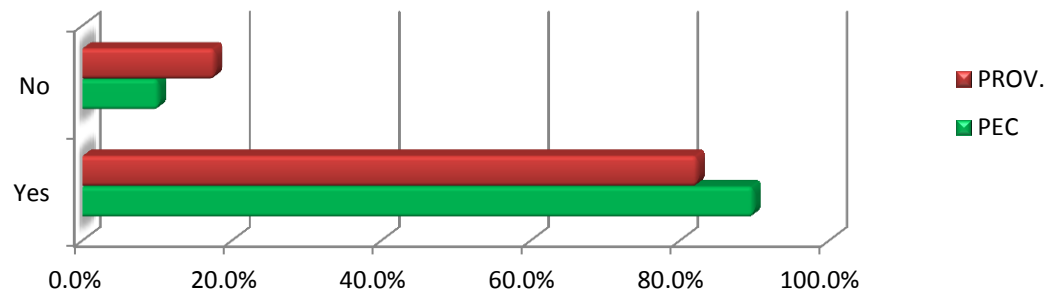
**Which of the following best describes your business?**



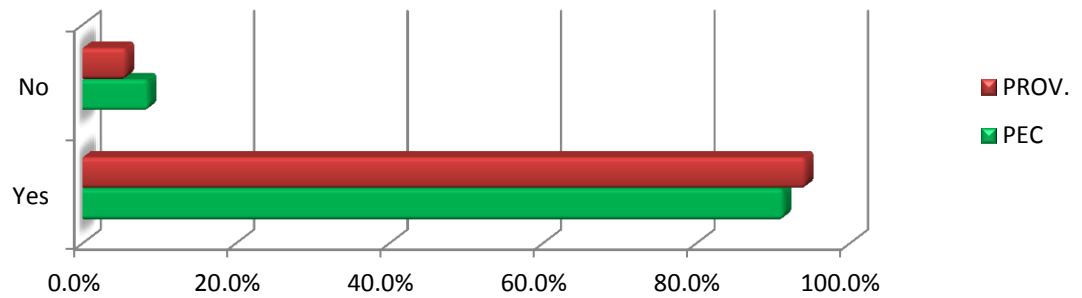
**Does your business have a business plan? - When was it last updated?**



**Is at least one of the owners a resident of the community?**



**Is at least one of the owners involved in the day-to-day operation of the business?**



## Business Climate

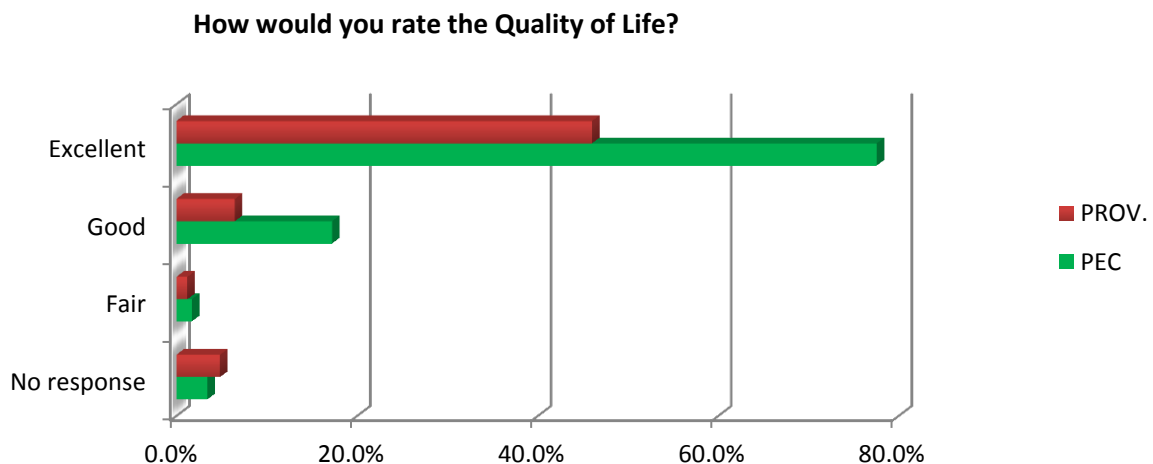
The County is experiencing a positive business climate resulting in a sense of optimism seen through the eyes of the business community. Many have cited the quality of life, the influx of new residents with new money, the sense of community, the growing economy and growing recognition and 'brand awareness' The County is receiving as the primary factors for the sense of enthusiasm . Business operators see the direct results of this with walk through traffic, direct sales figures and new business inquires.

## Almost 80% of businesses see their industry growing, **double** the provincial average.

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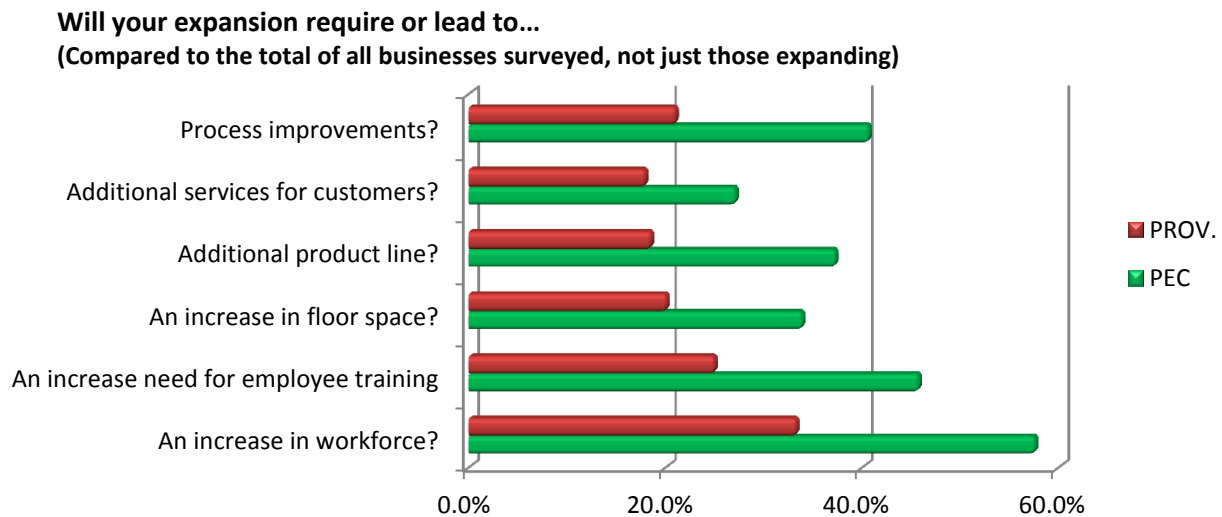
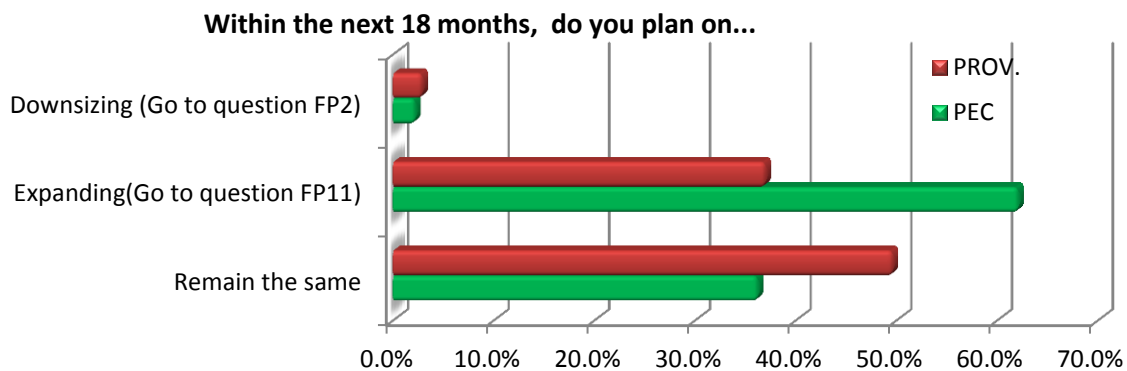
### Our Community's Top Advantages:

- Quality of Life
- Natural beauty
- Sense of community
- Growing economy and influx of new residents.
- Tourism draw & increased awareness
- Centrally located between Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal
- Creative energy & entrepreneurial community
- Established wine region.

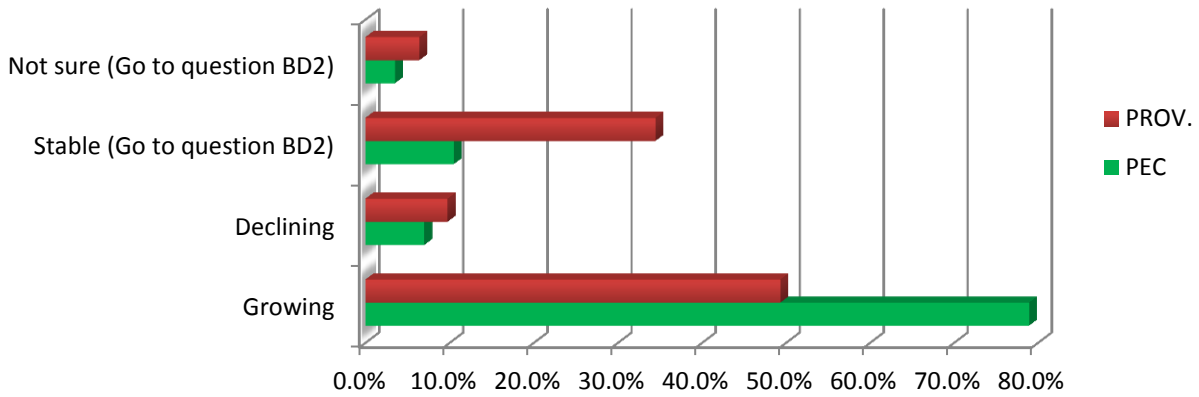


## Our Community's Expanding Businesses

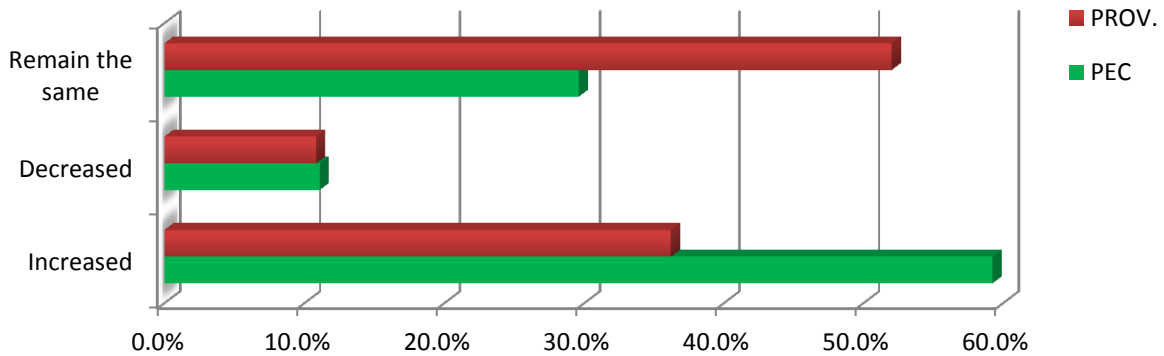
Prince Edward County is seeing unprecedented growth and expansion, nearly double the provincial average. Many are expanding in order to meet the increased demand for their products. Many believe their industry is growing due to the increase in awareness and reputation The County has been receiving in recent years. Others attribute the increase from the influx of new people moving here and spending money primarily from the GTA. These new residents are building new homes, renovating old ones, and starting new businesses. This influx of new business has inspired confidence in owners and operators to invest in expansion plans including new infrastructure for increased production capacities, increased staffing, and increased retail fronts for services to customers.



### What is the outlook for your industry?



### During the past 3 years, has the number of people you employ in this business increased, decreased or stayed the same?



During the past 3 years, out of the 60 businesses interviewed in The County, the number of people employed has increased by 130 positions. In the next 18 months, with these same businesses, **124 new positions** are expected to be created due to expansion, **double the provincial average** (1,198 prov. surveys, 1,525 increased positions prov. expected).

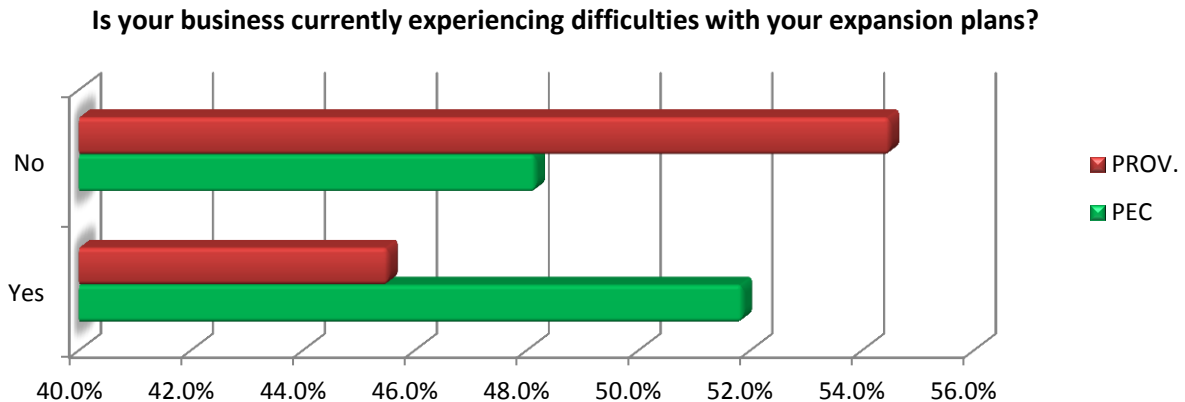
## Difficulties with Expansion

Despite the positive outlook and expansion plans business owners anticipate in the next few years, they are not without their road blocks. The primary issues identified are the perceived lack of cooperation from Planning & Building Departments in the past, and the inability to attract a qualified workforce.

Many businesses have cited that the influx of new business and awareness is an opportunity that The County must take advantage of by fostering and facilitating this growth.

### Our Community's Top Disadvantages:

- Lack of qualified workforce
- Development process
- Cost of electricity
- Red tape killing business (provincially)
- Restrictions on land use for agriculture
- Affordable Housing for attracting workforce
- Internet availability (true high speed)
- Seasonality
- Availability of commercial space



## Comments on Development Challenges:

*"Time and cost to go through development and permit process is hindering."*

*"Due to the amount of extra time and costs it takes to get anything done, future plans for expansion in Prince Edward County have been squashed."*

*"Development costs are too high which effect the cost per sq ft for young people trying to build here."*

*"Development fees are like a golf course wanting to build a club house and raising the rates for initiation fees to pay for the club house. Wouldn't it be better to signup many new golfers which will inevitably help to pay off the dept for the club house? By charging astronomical prices from the start we haven't received the sign ups."*

*"Lack of vision to take advantage of development opportunity now."*

*"Development Process needs to change. Improved timing, moving at the speed of business. The County has different policies when compared with Quinte West or Napanee. The County needs to take some risk for development sake."*

*"Am I going to expand? All depends on The County's end."*

*"We need a smoother process for developers, reduced cost of development and a vision for the future."*

*"Investors need reassurance that The County is a safe place to do business and develop."*

## Workforce Challenges

The workforce in Prince Edward County is a major concern to many employers. There simply is not the necessary skilled labour, farm labourers, and seasonal workers to meet the demand of the expanding businesses.

**Over 88% of employers have hiring challenges.**

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### Comments on Workforce Challenges:

*"We would grow if we could find quality candidates"*

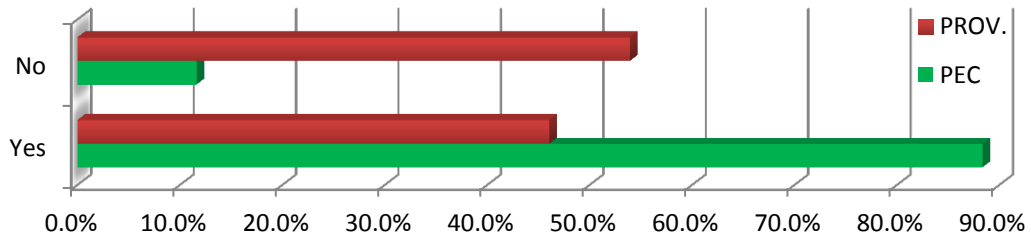
*"We need to do skilled workforce attraction"*

*"The Community needs a strategy to get more skilled trades workers."*

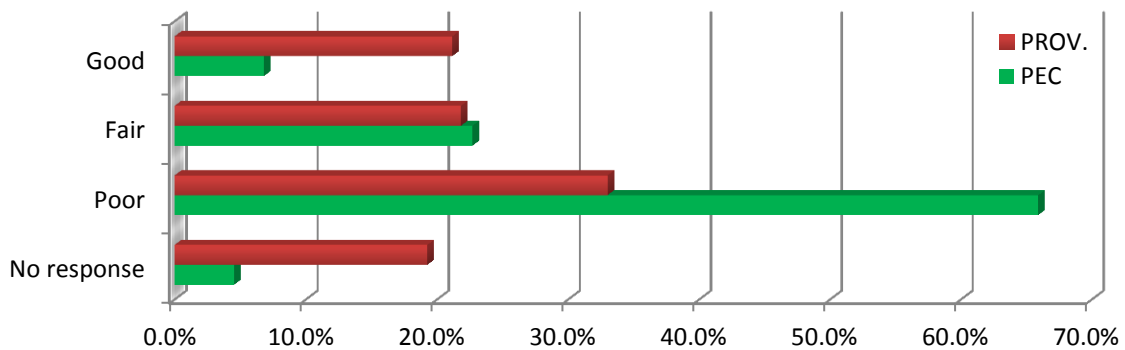
*"You need to continue to grow the workforce."*

*"Work on attraction of young families and a skilled workforce from outside The County."*

### Does your business currently have difficulty hiring?



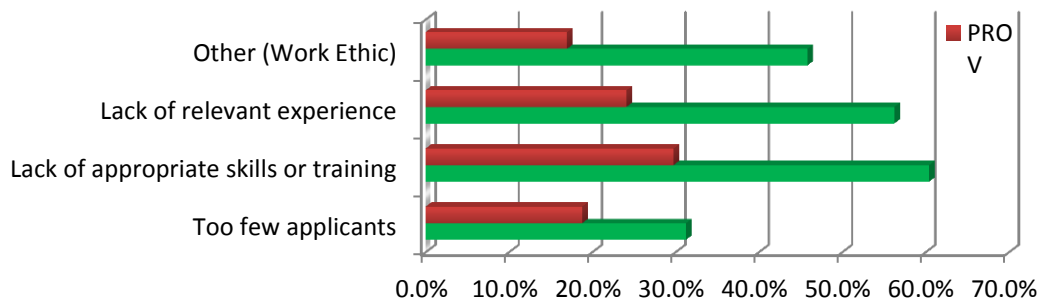
### Availability of qualified workers



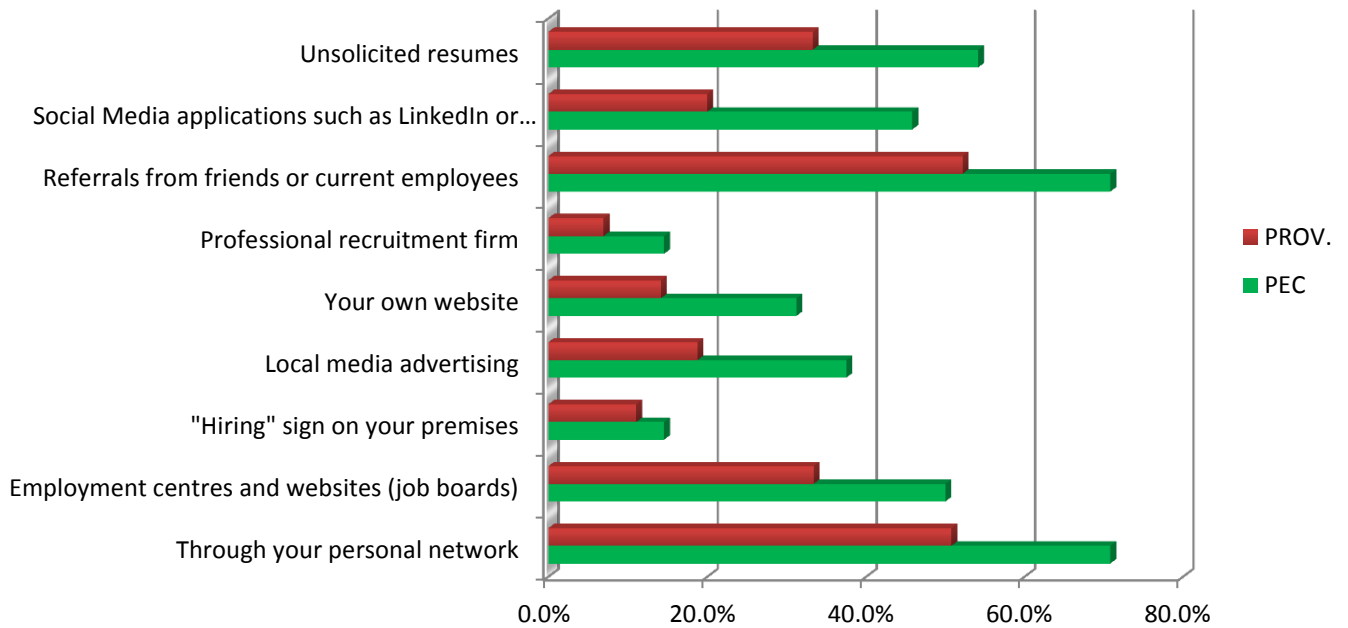
**Survey Comments on Occupations Businesses have difficulty in Recruiting: (Occupations have not been consolidated)**

- Framers & Skilled Carpenters.
- G Licence - AZ licence with experience
- People with soft skills - presentation of self
- CAD Designer
- farm labourers
- Craft brewers
- Welding
- Pastry Chef
- Farm labour
- Seasonal
- Customer service – bilingual,
- Delivery service
- farm labour
- Sommeliers, Kitchen
- Farm Labour
- Baking-Sous
- Chef level prep cooks
- Sales Associates
- Growing Manager; Assistant Growing Managers with knowledge of agronomy
- Farm labour, Farm labour (vineyard knowledge)
- Good General work ethic
- Sellers, Drivers, Field Workers
- Customer Service – bilingual
- Farm labourers
- Sub Trades
- Heating - gas and wood licencing
- All Trades
- General skilled laborer with carpentry experience
- Skilled Carpenters, HVAC
- Trades : Licenced Carpenter
- Workforce: Would grow if can find quality candidates.
- General Labourers
- Plumbers,
- Skilled Trades People
- skilled carpenters (framing to finish), HVAC - G2
- Trades, Landscape Designers
- Carpentry. Drafting
- Student labour
- Cleaning staff
- farm labourers
- Millwright & Machinist,
- Sales, Wine knowledge Staff,
- Farm labour
- Work in the shoulder season,
- Farm Labourers,
- Packing Room Manager
- Field Workers
- Store workers,
- Bar & Service Staff
- Line Cooks, Sommeliers
- Window & Door Installers.
- Engineers, Air Conditioning, lack of G2,
- More Sub contractors selection
- Skilled Trades. Concrete, electrical, plumbers, framers, drywallers, HVAC, HVAC, roofing
- Skilled Carpenters with finishing skills
- Licenced Gas Fitters
- Siding crews,
- Project Managers, Skilled Trades,
- Project Manager,
- Guest relations, Farm Labourers, Sous Chef,
- Part-time workers,
- Assistant Winemaker,
- Salespeople,
- Painters, senior carpenter.

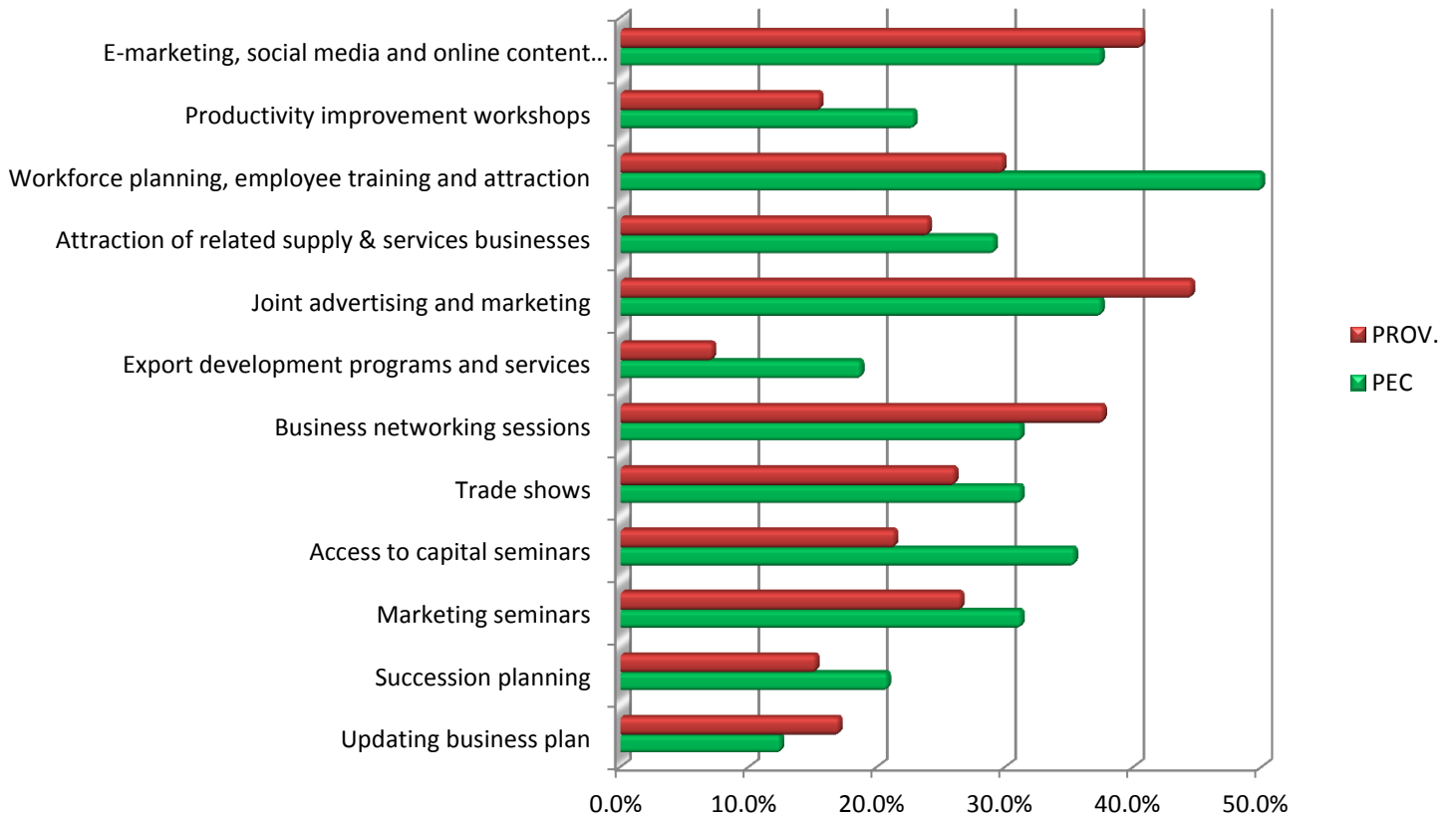
**Does your business currently have difficulty hiring? - How would you describe your company's hiring challenges?**



### How do you currently recruit new employees?

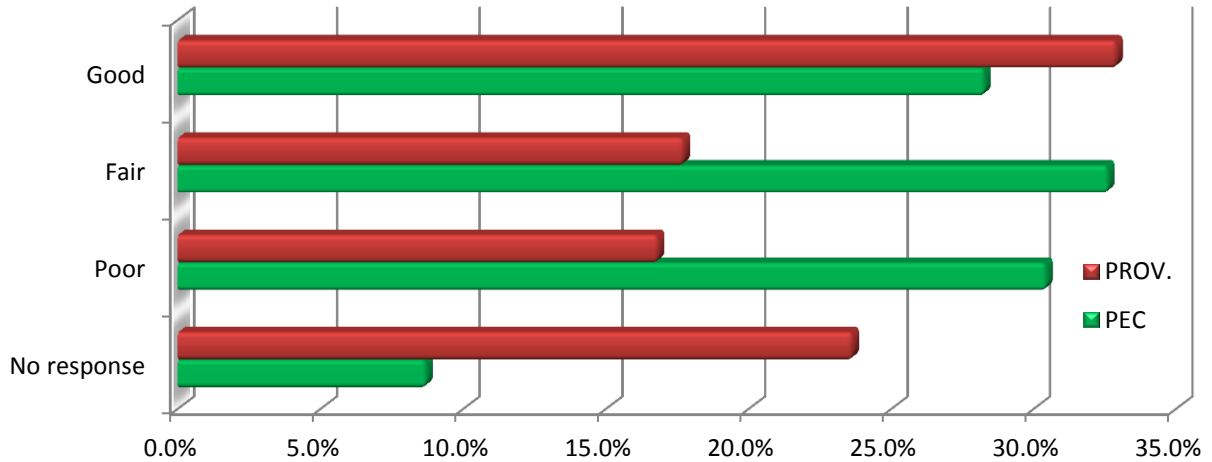


### What Assistance or opportunities would be beneficial to support your business?



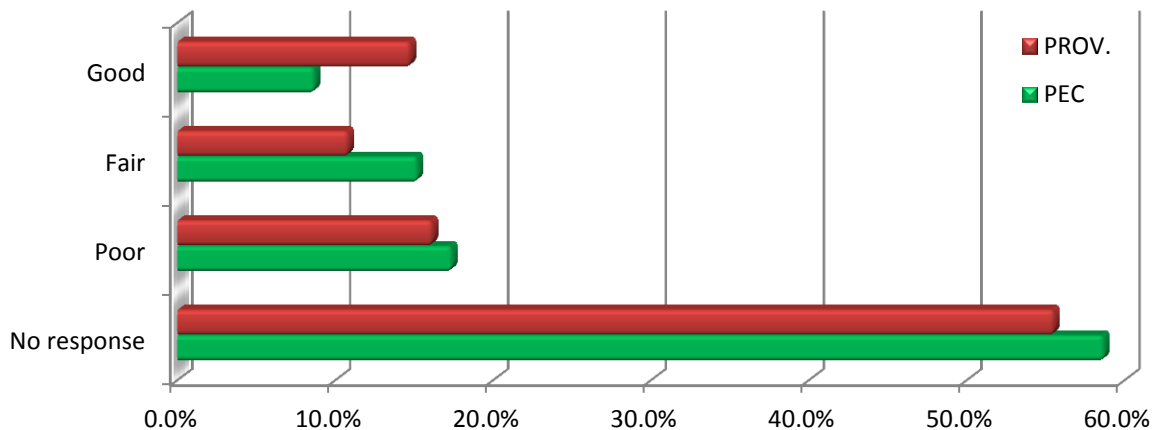
## Adequate Housing Challenges

Availability of adequate housing:

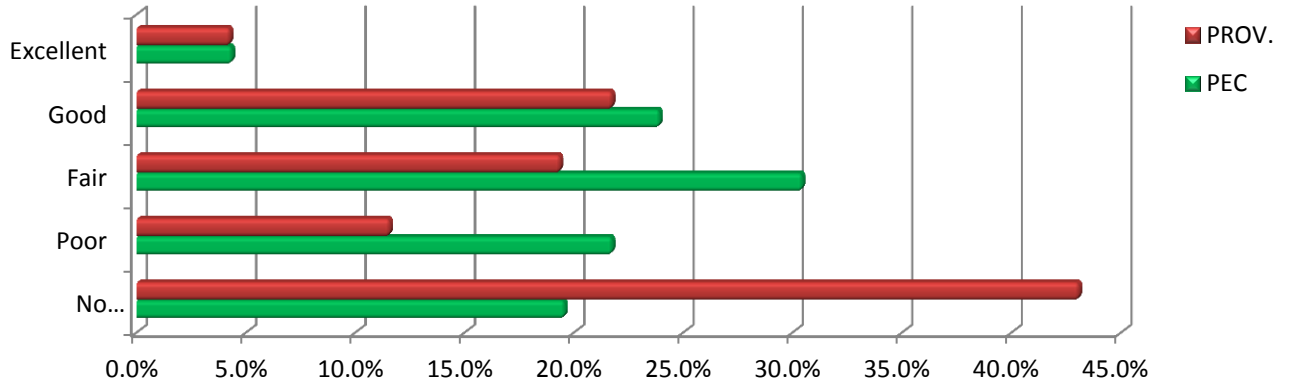


Availability of adequate housing is a growing concern for employers looking to attract both full time skilled labour and seasonal workers to The County. Many employers work on behalf of the new employees to find housing. Often employees attempt to commute from outside, only to find the travel time into rural parts of The County not sustainable. Others attempt to find accommodations in less than ideal or temporary situations with the goal of finding longer term housing at an affordable price point. The result is that employers find it very difficult to attract the help they need from outside The County.

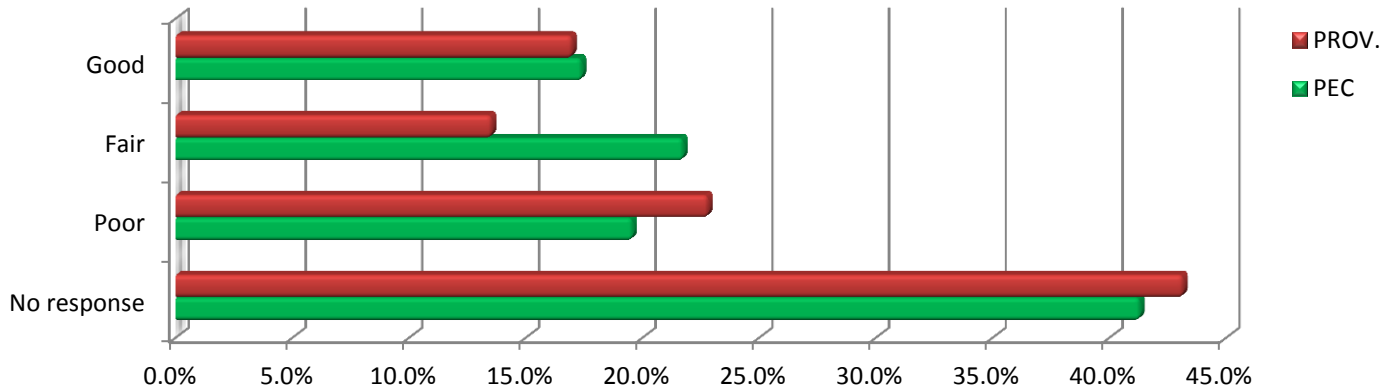
How would you rate the availability of serviced land?



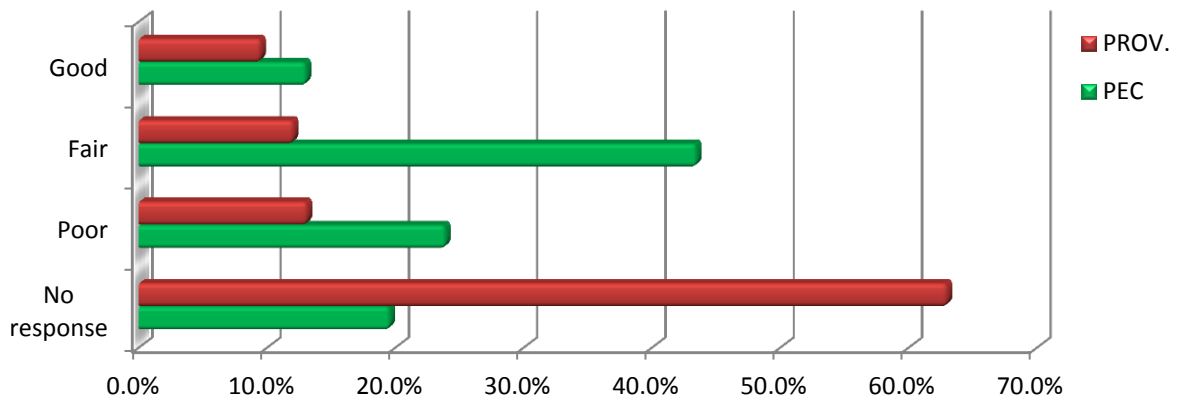
### How would you rate land costs?



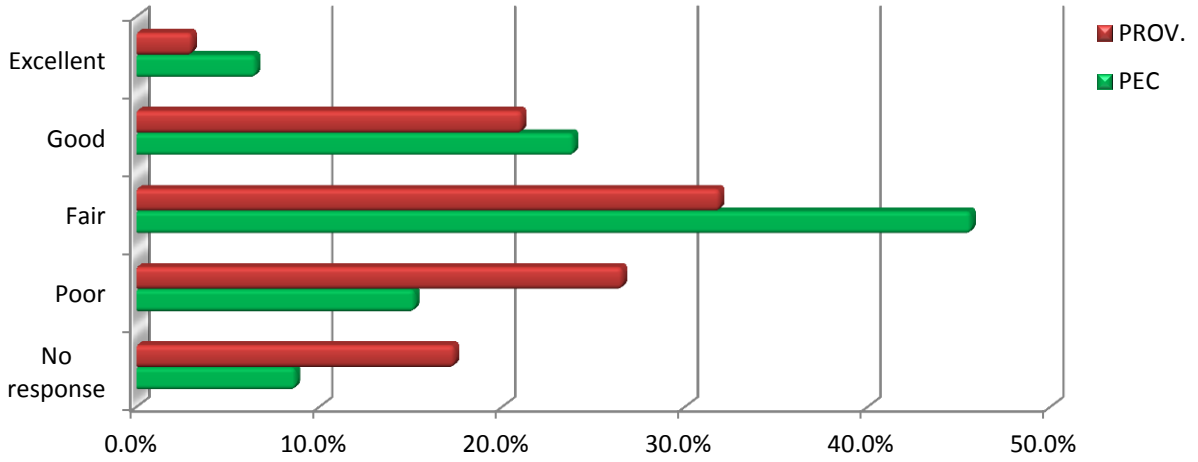
### How would you rate the availability of space for rent or lease? (Commercial, Industrial)



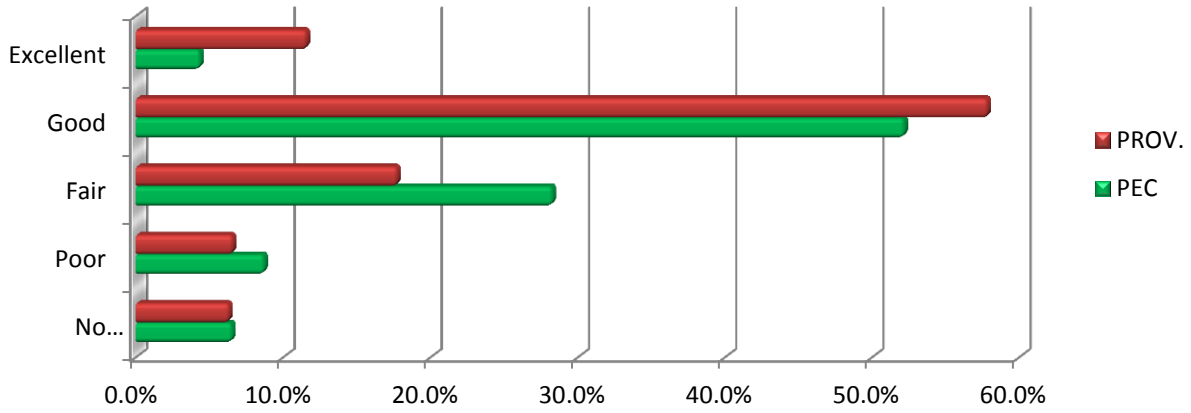
### How would you rate Development charges?



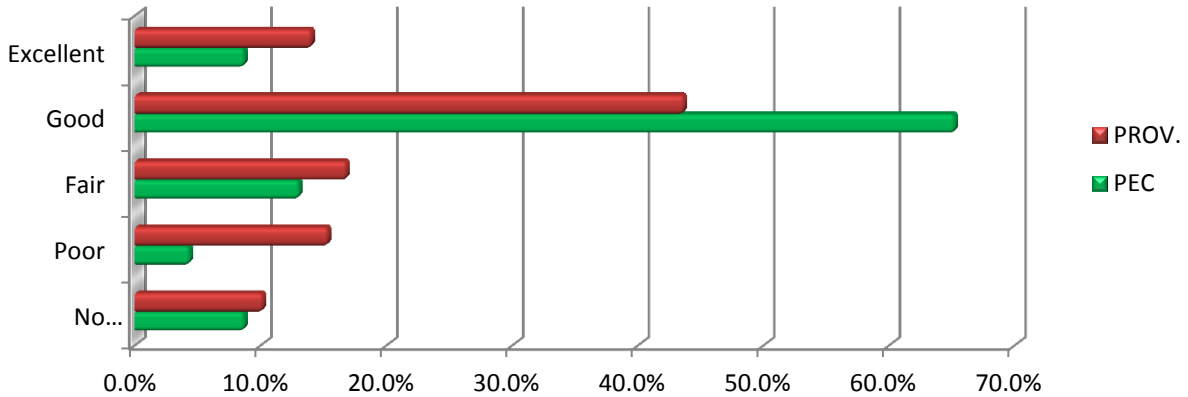
### How would you rate Municipal property taxes?



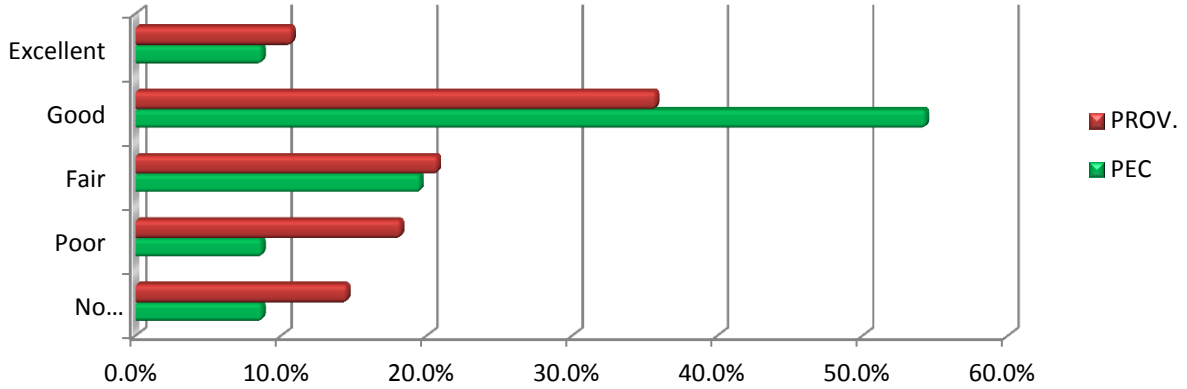
### How would you rate Local roads and streets?



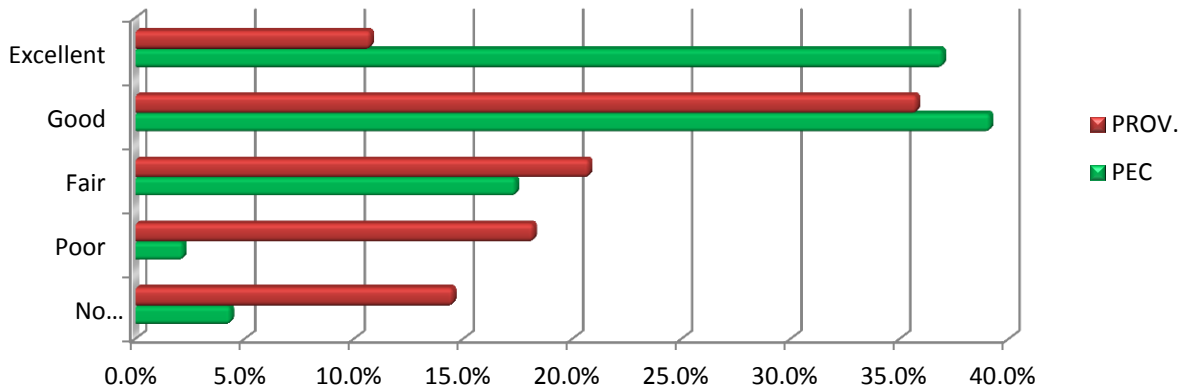
### How would you rate availability of health and medical services?



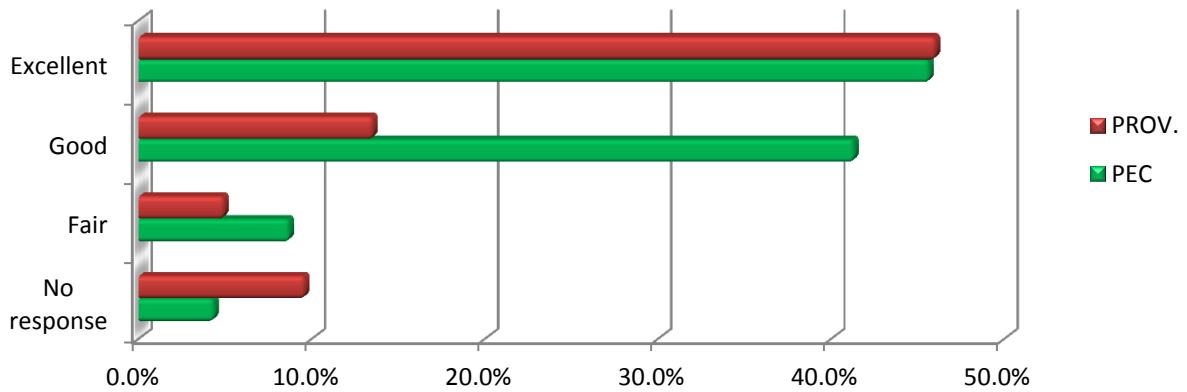
### How would you rate the Support from municipality?



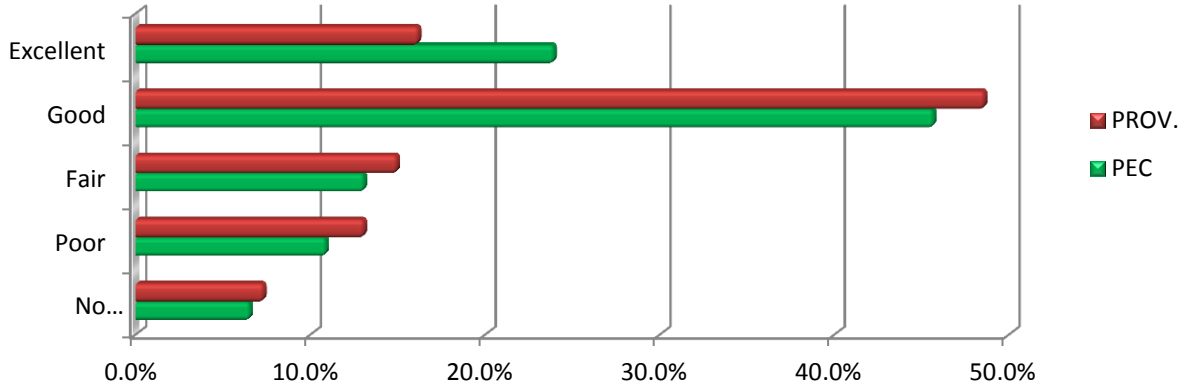
### How would you rate the Support from other businesses?



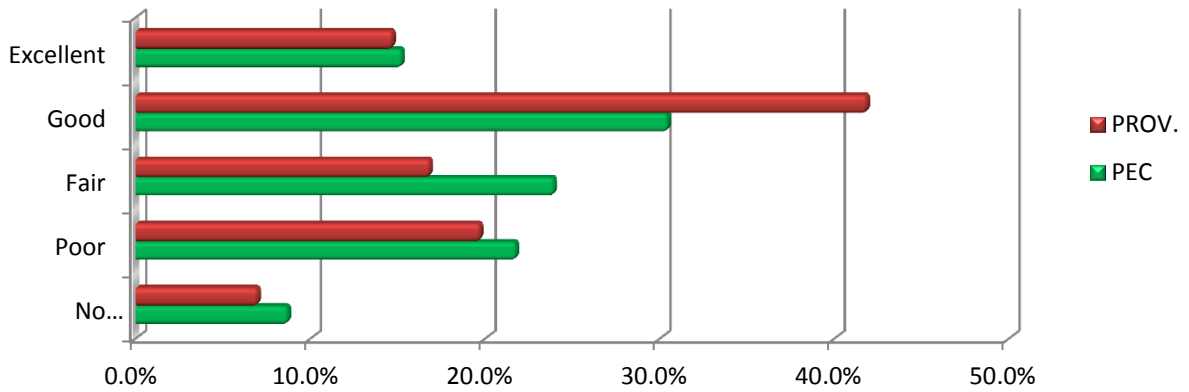
### How would you rate the support from local residents?



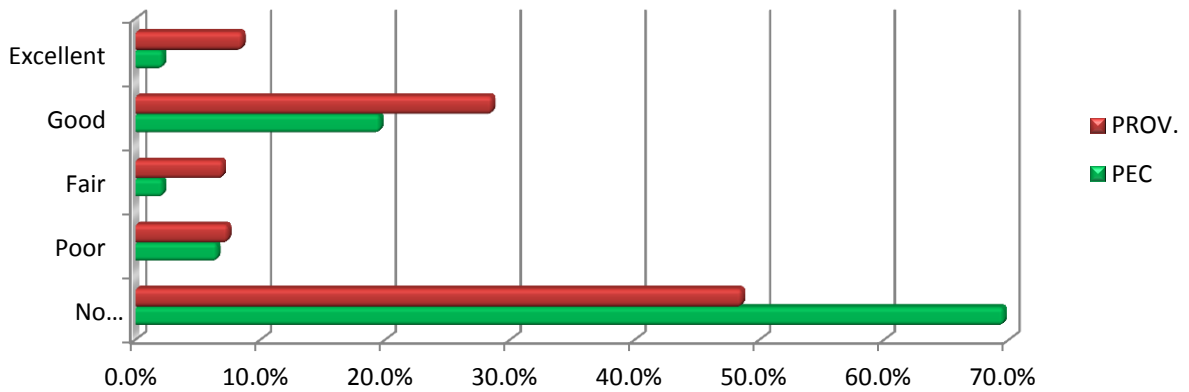
### How would you rate cellular phone service?



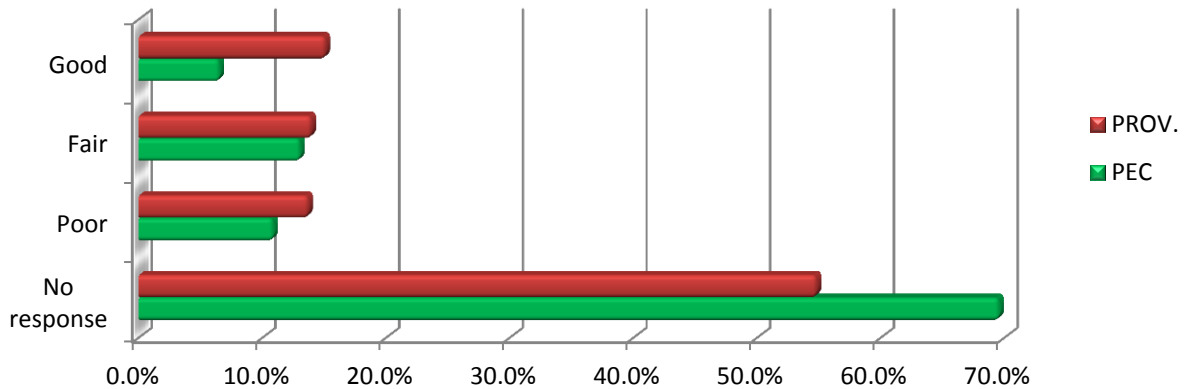
### How would you rate internet service?



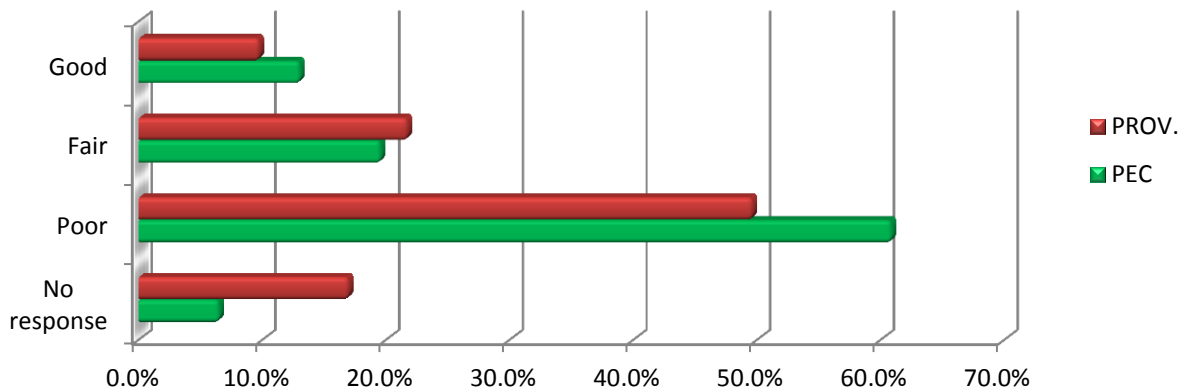
### How would you rate Water/wastewater capacity?



How would you rate Water/wastewater fees?



How would you rate cost of electricity?



## Community Development

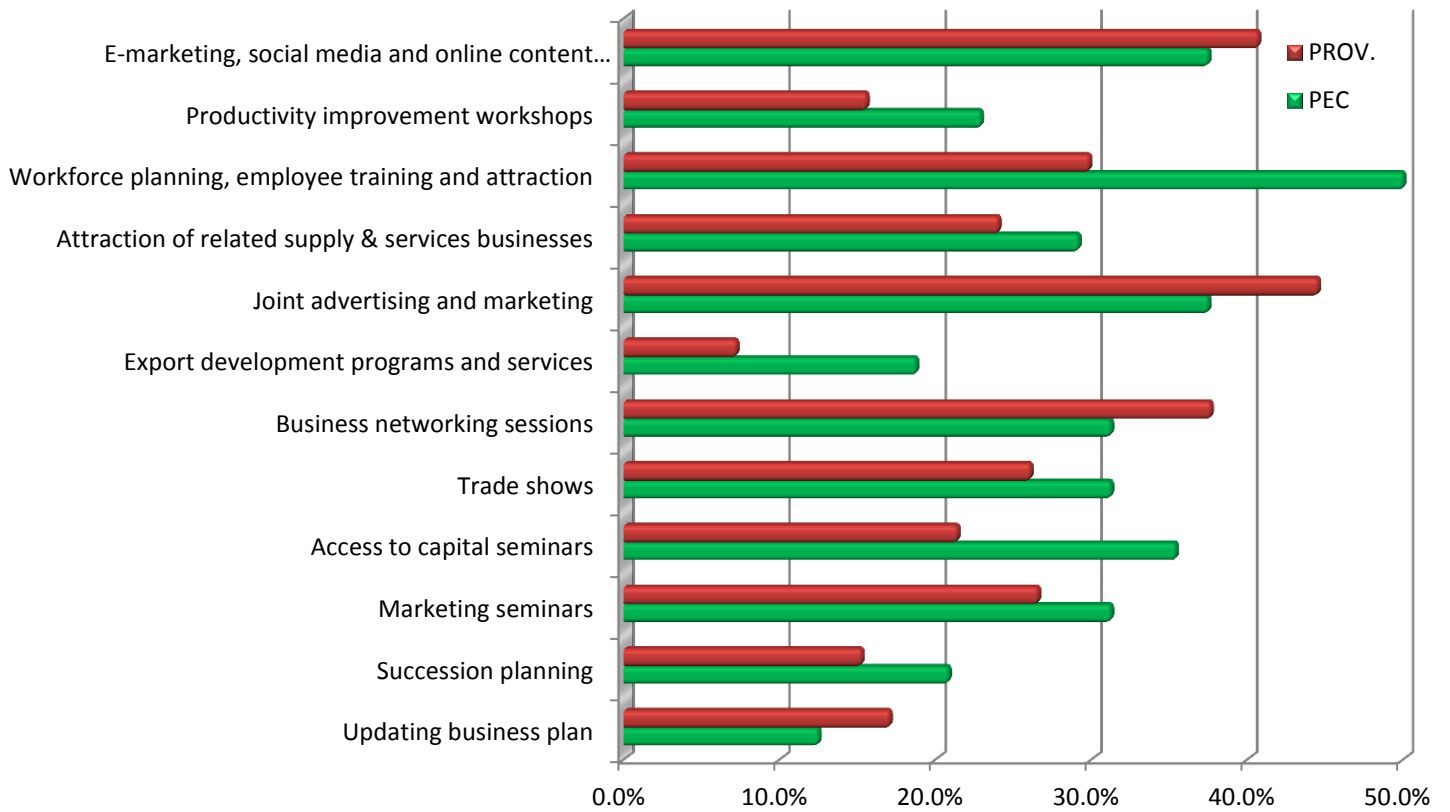
### Training & Workshops

67% of employers use external training for employees. Typically this includes standard Workplace Safety (WSIB), Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHIMIS), Working at Heights (Fall Protection), CPR, Sales Training and other specialised programs related their respective industries.

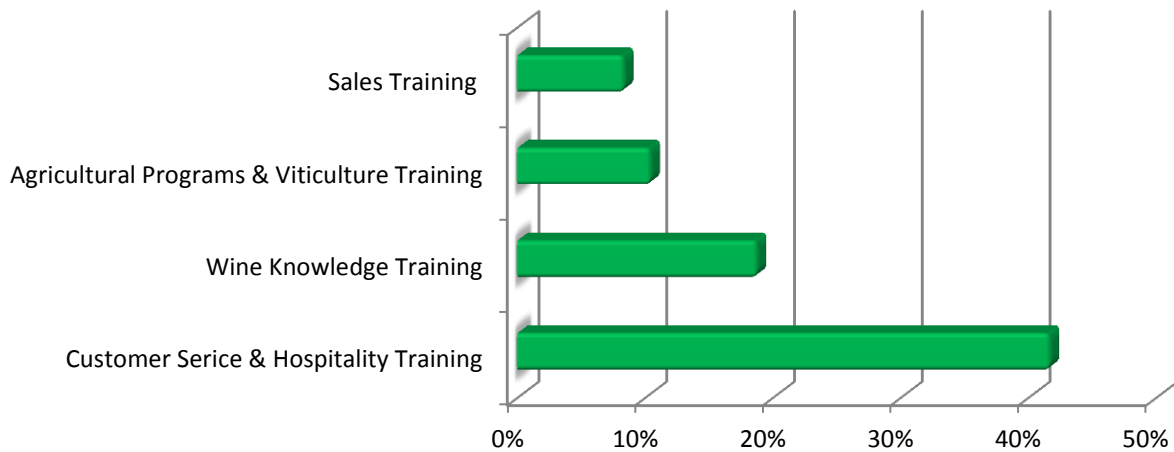
**55% of employers experience barriers to receiving the necessary training, double the Provincial Average.**

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**What assistance or opportunities would be beneficial to support your business?**



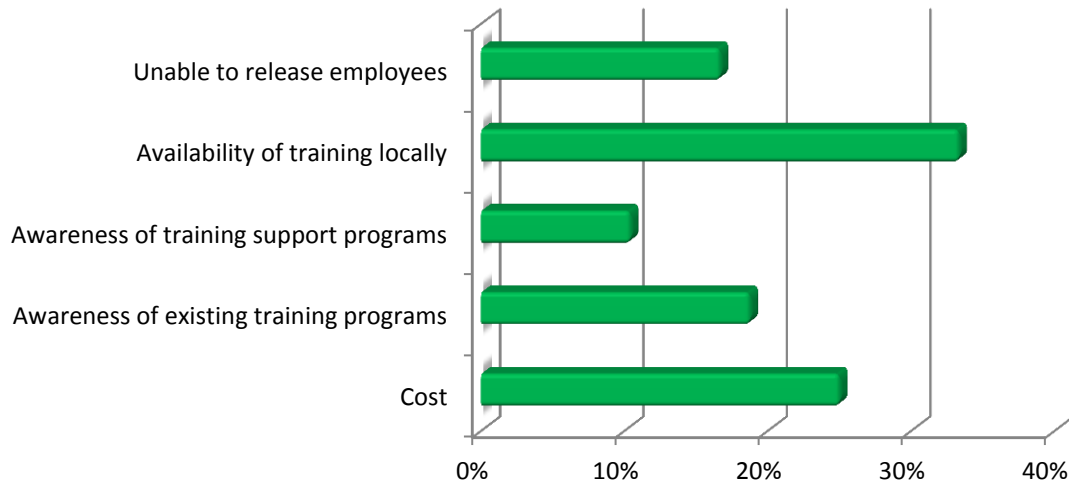
**Are there any training programs/topics that would be beneficial to you and your employees? If "Yes", Please specify: (Top candid suggestions, not from a list)**



**Other Suggestions:**

- Management/Supervisor/Leadership Training.
- Human Resources Workshops.
- Agri-Product Development. (Labels, marketing, food safety)
- Grant Writing Workshops.
- Basic skills, High School- Teach how to work, ethics, expectations, etc.
- Certified training courses in the trades.
- Training on Health & Safety, working from heights (Career Edge provides this).

**Are there currently any barriers for you and/or your employees receiving the necessary training? - If Yes, please specify:**



**Key Findings and Priorities:**

*“Continue to grow the workforce.”*

*“Attraction of young families and a skilled workforce from outside The County.”*

*“Loosening rules on agriculture and what you can put on your land.”*

*“Would like to see more quality inns/hotels for people to stay.”*

*“Would like to increase the agri-tourism business in Prince Edward County.”*

*“Better roads, internet access, more accommodations, greater push on development (residential/commercial)”*

*“Would like to see all businesses of the County promote the County and all it has to offer.”*

## Development Process

The development process is a big challenge to many owners and operators who are looking to expand their operation. Their experience has been increased delays due to waiting for permit approvals, which sometimes causes them to miss economically important timelines, such as a busy tourism season. This results in lost revenue. That said however, many have had a positive experience with planning and engineering, citing that “Once you get to know the people and the process, expectations become much more realistic.” Also, many small businesses have had no direct contact with Development Services, and it only seems to be an issue with the larger producers (namely wineries) and developers that have the most concerns. For the wineries, the type of complaints often revolve around requirements for serving the general public, public venues, parking and restroom requirements resulting from rural and ‘agricultural use’ challenges and nuances. For developers, the issue seems to be primarily with the initial cost and complexity of developing subdivisions.

## Customer Service

Many businesses experience difficulty when inquiring on the status of their site plan approvals or building applications. Often multiple messages and emails are left with no response. Many just want to plan around the inconvenience of delays. However, not knowing when to expect approvals makes it difficult to plan ahead as a business. Some have suggested “Improved clarity up front from the Planning and Building Department as to what it costs and what it will take to finish the project.”

## Workforce Attraction

### Skilled Trades Deficit

Many businesses are remaining the same size due to lack of skilled trades help. The ‘Skilled Trades Deficit’ (aka Skills Trades Gap) is a Country wide problem. Many in the trades have cited the root cause of this problem from 25 years ago when the high schools removed The Trades from the curriculum in preference for more computer based and University skills development. Automotive, machine shop, woodworking and electrical courses were since removed, now leaving a deficit of skilled trades workers 25 years later. Today, many Trades business owners are nearing retirement with no succession plan in place. One business owner said “There are many 30 year career employees that are aging, but no one coming up through the ranks to replace them when they retire.”

These Trades in The County are incredibly busy, working many hours, and booked several weeks or months in advance. Many trade workers simply turn down inquiries and only pick jobs they want to do.

The result of this can be seen in the frustration of new residents looking to build a new home, a business wishing to expand, or a contractor trying to find a reliable source of Trades Suppliers. This increased demand for Trade workers also creates price hikes relative to costs of Trade Suppliers in the Quinte area. Also, many business owners have been frustrated by the lack of professionalism from some new recent trade businesses. These ‘tailgate startups’ (working only from the tailgate of their truck and sometimes taking cash deals) not only cut into the long standing professional companies, but also create risks for home owners. Competition is good, however when those tailgate operations are not paying for

proper liability insurance, proper Health & Safety Training, and proper WSIB coverage for employees, problems arise. Many homeowners are not aware that the responsibility for any on-site accident is now the homeowner responsibility when a supplier is not properly insured or licenced.

Combine the fact that Prince Edward County is seeing nearly double the expansion rate compared to the provincial average with a shortage of younger, skilled trade workers, *the problem is likely to accumulate*, unless critical steps are taken to attract a skilled workforce to meet the demands of our expanding community.

### **Front Line Staff**

During the peak tourism season, which starts as early as March, many producers and processors who also serve retail require a team of well-trained front line staff. This includes servers, customer service representatives and behind the scenes help including cooks/chefs and kitchen help. As these businesses rely more on increased tourism traffic for their annual sales, this becomes a critical component to the success of a business. Also, customer service training is critical in selling product and increasing revenue during this crucial tourism season.

### **Farm Labour**

Farm labour has been an on-going issue for many farm based producers and processors. They simply cannot find the help they need, despite trying to find help locally. Many have candidly said that “The youth today simply don’t want to work in the harsh field conditions and only last a few days or weeks”. The population density of youth in Prince Edward County is simple not here to support the demands for farm labour in this agriculturally based region. Some farms have found success with hiring 50-60 year old second career retirees, looking for physical labour (For the health benefits of staying active). For instance, one employer says “We only hire local people over the age of 50 to work in the fields as the young people won’t do the job.” However with that said, many want to choose their own hours and be flexible with their retirement lifestyle.

### **Foreign Workers**

The result is that foreign workers have been increasingly relied on during the growing season. However, this raises many challenges associated with foreign workers including a massive amount of paperwork and red tape that is both time consuming and a system (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Temporary Foreign Worker Program) that is sometimes not reliable in order to get the workers here *when they are needed* for the critical harvest period. Also, acclimatization to our Canadian culture has been cited as an issue as well. Many smaller producers rely on larger producers to apply on their behalf due to the time and experience required to properly apply for the Foreign Workers Program.

### **Affordable Housing**

The #1 difficulty with retaining good employees is the lack of available housing. When attracting employees from outside The County, the issue of “finding a place for them to stay” naturally becomes the next challenge in recruitment.

### **Temporary Housing for Seasonal Workers**

Many seasonal workers can only find temporary housing on-site at the farm in a mobile RV trailer, make shift accommodations, or bedrooms or basements of employers or property owners. Due to the high demand for vacation rentals demanding premium prices, the availability of affordable rentals is very few. Also, due to the rural nature of farming, housing options are very limited near places of work.

### **\$200,000-\$300,000 Family Housing**

For those employers looking to attract full time skilled labour such as site supervisors, office staff, engineers, or highly skilled industry specific occupations not normally found locally (i.e., architect, or surveyor) employers usually have to aid prospects in finding affordable housing for either renting or purchasing. There is limited 'family ready' home rentals or the purchase prices are usually higher than average, when compared to other areas in rural Ontario including the Quinte area.

## **Concluding Remarks**

I would like to thank the many businesses for taking the time from their busy schedules to provide feedback on the opportunities and challenges faced by our manufacturing and construction sectors. Your input will be instrumental in providing strategic direction for the Municipality, Council, and the Community and Economic Development Commission as it moves forward to tackle these issues in 2017 and the years to come.

We are not alone, issues like Workforce Attraction & Affordable Housing are major challenges faced by many municipalities in North America; these are complex problems that require a multifaceted approach by various levels of government and the private sector.

As your Community Development Department, we are committed to taking a holistic, collaborative approach to these challenges. Only through strategic planning and effective implementation will we start to see these issues mitigated in order for Prince Edward County to leverage the growth opportunities that are presenting themselves now and in the coming years.

We look forward to working with you on these challenges during what is an exciting time for The County.

### **Neil Carbone**

Director of Community Development  
The Corporation of the County of Prince Edward

## Appendix:

### Comments & Recommendations from the Community:

**Question: “In terms of overall impact on this community as a place to do business what is the most significant change you would like to see in the next five years?” Answers:**

- Affordable housing such as apartments required to enable hiring of employees.
- 1. Growth based on collaboration. Partnering with schools on architectural projects. (the Community of Littlebank did this and were successful. There is a growing need for trade specialization.
- 2. Official plan is very important. Everything done should be looked at under a lens of the island and reinforce the basis for the development decision around agriculture and culture and would make staff's jobs easier and make nice changes.
- The municipality needs to choose what it wants to be. It encourages new businesses in the downtown sector. If someone puts a new business such as bar in town, then it has to acknowledge the fact that there is going to be noise and not then penalize the new business with a noise by-law.
- Council spends too much time on insignificant issues rather than taking a look at the larger picture and issues that affect the community. They need to prioritize. Small business should be a large part of that.
- Picton Harbour needs a facelift which will bring new tourists here.
- High speed internet. Would like to see PELA, Career Edge, Chamber etc. tie in to a nucleus. Communicate with each other more.
- Need to create building lots.
- Keep going in the Agri-Tourism and Tourism Direction.
- Development Fees reduced for business.
- Support local businesses - look to getting jobs done using local county businesses before going outside of the County.
- Would like to see more manufacturing opportunities available in Prince Edward County.
- Moving products to Toronto in a coordinated system. Prince Edward County shipping/distribution something like 100km foods.
- Build new roads and infrastructure. Customer experience. Build a road to bypass the town as locals aren't coming in to shop because of the traffic. Those who are going to sandbanks to camp or other campgrounds just want to get through town, set up and then maybe they will be back in town to shop.
- Can't expand if don't have 20 acres. Support of agri-tourism to include accommodations.
- Ease in permitting process.
- Funding available for wineries.
- Loosening rules on agriculture and what you can put on your land.
- Require better places for people to stay. Hotels, Motels, Inns
- Would like to see more quality inns/hotels for people to stay.
- Would like to see more support for younger people, post secondary, to help them create

businesses. There needs to be access to workspace with training support.

- Would like to increase the agri-tourism business in Prince Edward County.
- Improved gateway signage.
- Public washrooms.
- Community Food Hub would be great. Building with processing facility. Can incorporate programs for the high school. (example - Stratford high school program - food initiatives - links 4H and farmers with kids in the high schools.)
- Reduction in overall costs that government is imposing on business and to overhead. This is detrimental to longevity.
- Continue to grow the workforce.
- Better roads, internet access, more accommodations, greater push on development (residential/commercial)
- Efficient planning and process development. There are too many NO's. Solar panels take away from the beauty of the region.
- More support for wineries to make it easier to grow and become an estate winery. Accommodations for workforce, and public transit needed.
- Require infrastructure for businesses to grow and expand to. Anything over 2500 sq ft.
- Accept that The County is a growing region, and that we need to increase infrastructure, including public transit, # of beds, etc.
- Recognition of the Wine Region by Municipality
- Streamline and foster development program
- Would like to see all businesses of the County promote the County and all it has to offer.
- 1. Improvement of planning process speed, 2. Road improvements/repairs, 3. Customer

service in Municipality as far as returning calls

- Continued expanded strategic planning that creates a unified community. Buy-in and engagement from the people delivering it.
- Would like to see municipal sewage expanded to be able to tie in the business.
- Accommodation: Quality Inns for people to stay
- Wind Turbines coming in a threat.
- Greater appreciation for farmers in PEC.
- Tourist burden -How do we get tourist to pay?
- Strategy for Rossmore.
- Affordable housing strategy.
- Economy: Trying to encourage people to support local.
- Economy: Address 'under the table' workers by building awareness of risks to home owners.
- Working relationship with development and planning needs to be much better. It's very dysfunctional organization with poor communication. Always "No, no, no". Compared with Quinte West, where they work together to solve problems,
- Increased sewer capacity in Picton
- Need more development or we could have a big problem.
- Workforce: Need to do skilled workforce attraction.
- Quarterly meetings to inform developers on what is going on in The County.
- Looking for large project to continue construction part of business in The County.
- Development fees and market affordability for young families - \$200-\$300k over that is very difficult.
- Community: Understand how we can attract more young people.
- Workforce Attraction.

- Strategic planning in Community Development.
- Increased private/public partnerships to achieve high level strategic goals.
- Community needs strategy to get more skilled trades workers.
- Reduce the development fees, would increase new development. Little more release on land development zoning, minor variances applicants.
- Economy: Can't compete with a guy out of his truck taking cash. (need enforced)
- Workforce: Lack of skilled trades people - huge trade gap.
- We need a vision and model for affordable housing.
- Tendering of municipal buildings needs to be more transparent. (HVAC tenders)
- Attraction of young families and a skilled workforce from outside The County.
- Economy: increased growth from outside moving into The County.
- Smoother process for developers.
- Reduced cost of development and a vision for the future.
- Investors need reassurance that The County is a safe place to do business and develop.