

grow. expand. thrive.

Business Retention & Expansion Survey Results

TMCDC
Municipality of Boissevain-Morton

TURTLE MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE



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INTRODUCTION

The Turtle Mountain Community Development Committee (TMCDC) is an advisory board under the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton, which strives to promote economic and business development, community engagement, regional partnerships, tourism and marketing. With a renewed purpose, the TMCDC is determined to help local businesses grow, expand and thrive in Boissevain. To gain insight and assess the needs and priorities of the business sector, the TMCDC and Municipality of Boissevain-Morton conducted their first Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) survey in 2018. The information collected will form a basis for a Community Economic Development (CED) plan. To ensure the CED plan remains on track and to reevaluate the community's needs, a follow up survey will be conducted in two years. The following report is a summary of the 2018 BRE survey.

PURPOSE

The following are objectives of the TMCDC based on BRE results:

- Better understanding of the issues faced in the local economy
- Implement a community economic development plan
- Demonstrate the pro-business attitude of TMCDC and Municipality of Boissevain-Morton
- Develop communication and build relationships with local businesses
- Bring awareness to needs and concerns that may be addressed by TMCDC
- Identify training opportunities
- Develop strategies and actions that will support community development

METHODOLOGY

The process began with creating a database of 108 businesses in Boissevain, including contact persons, phone and e-mail. To get the word out about the survey, an advertisement was placed in the Boissevain Recorder (local newspaper), promoted on Facebook (@boissevainmorton), Instagram (@boissevainmorton), through the Boissevain & District Chamber of Commerce, along with interviews on CJRB (Boissevain) and Q-Country (Brandon).

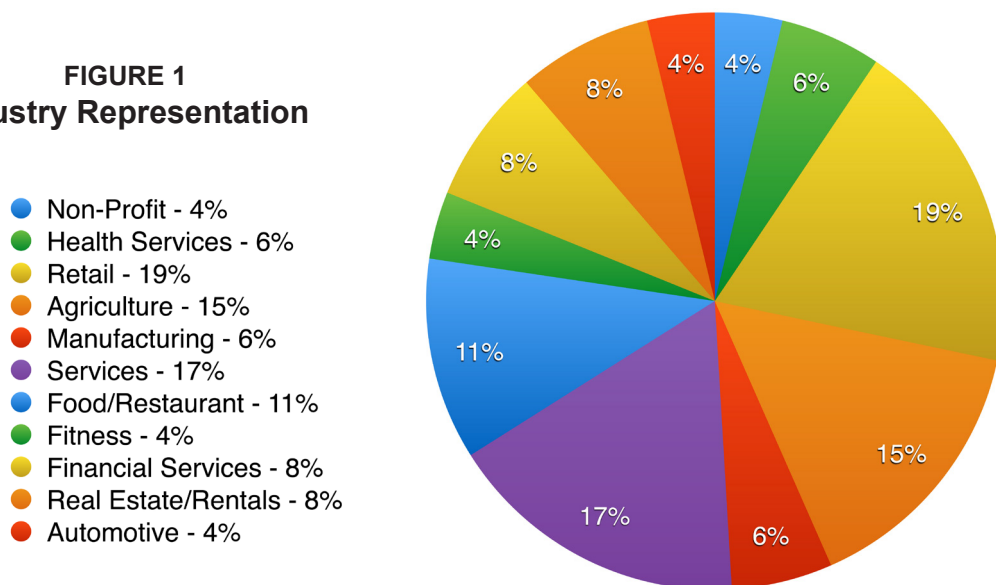
Businesses were contacted by e-mail and phone throughout the summer to set up meeting times. The BRE survey was conducted in person with business owners or managers. The survey included open ended questions to gain insight into the business’s strengths and weaknesses and identify opportunities for TMCDC to create support framework. Following the meetings, the data was collated into Survey Monkey online for analysis.

The survey began July 16, 2018 and closed on October 2, 2018, giving respondents two and a half months to participate in the survey.

REPRESENTATION

The committee’s goal was to obtain perspective and insight from a variety of businesses and industries within our municipality to represent a broad demographic and the survey was successful meeting this objective. The majority of respondents came from within the retail category, Figure 1 identifies industry representation.

FIGURE 1
Industry Representation



- Of the 108 businesses on the database, 43 businesses participated, resulting in a 40% response rate
- 40 surveys were completed by personal interviews and three online through a Survey Monkey link
- 20 businesses are located on South Railway Street in Boissevain
- Figure 2 shows a breakdown of businesses established in Boissevain by decade
- The average responding business has been operating for 33 years in Boissevain
- Oldest business was established in 1890, the newest less than one year
- Two businesses started in 2018, one in 2017, two in 2016
- A total of 13 businesses have been established since 2010
- On average, 70% of their business is serving the local market, Municipality of Boissevain-Morton (see figure 3)

FIGURE 2
Businesses established in Boissevain by decade

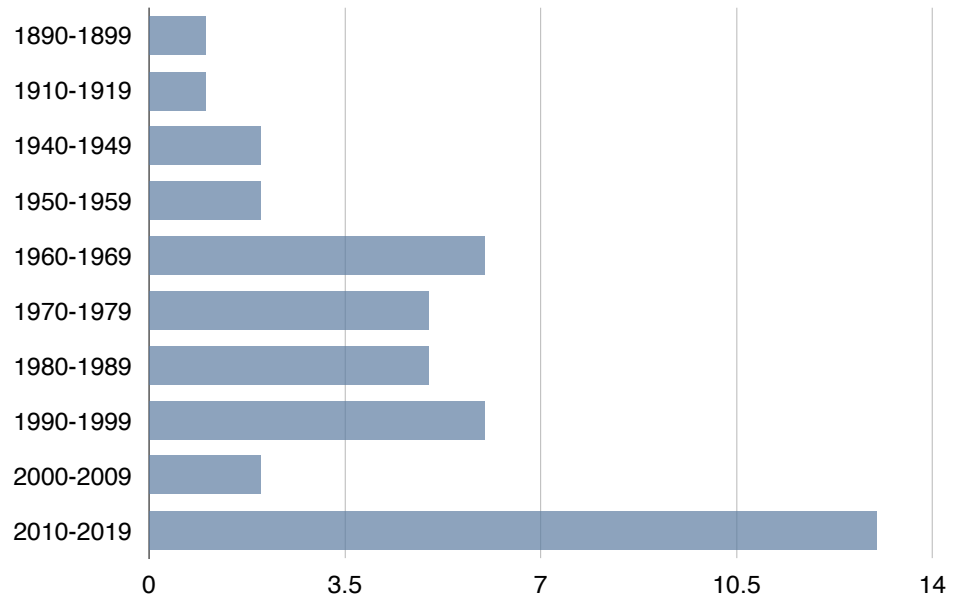
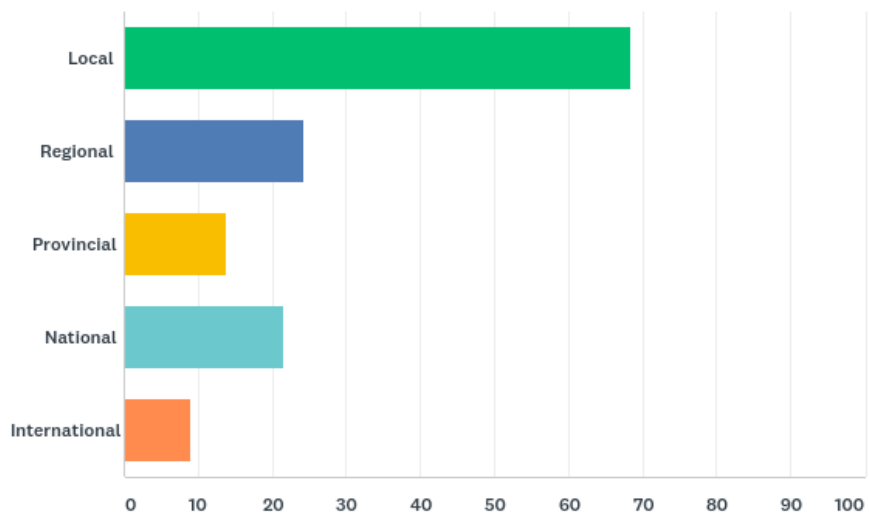


FIGURE 3
What markets do you serve?

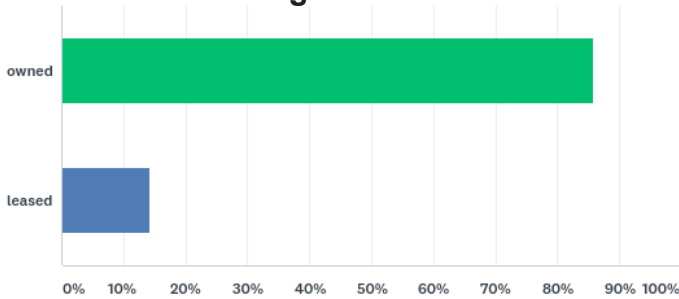


HIGHLIGHTS

Boissevain is a great place for businesses to grow, expand and thrive.

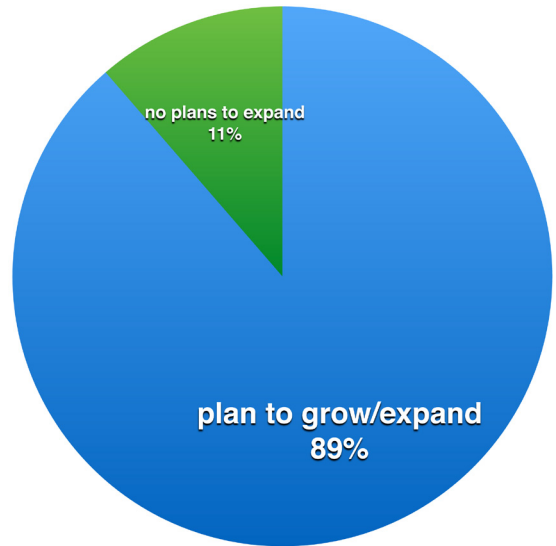
Businesses are invested in Boissevain and the future is bright for our community.

FIGURE 4
Is the building owned or leased?



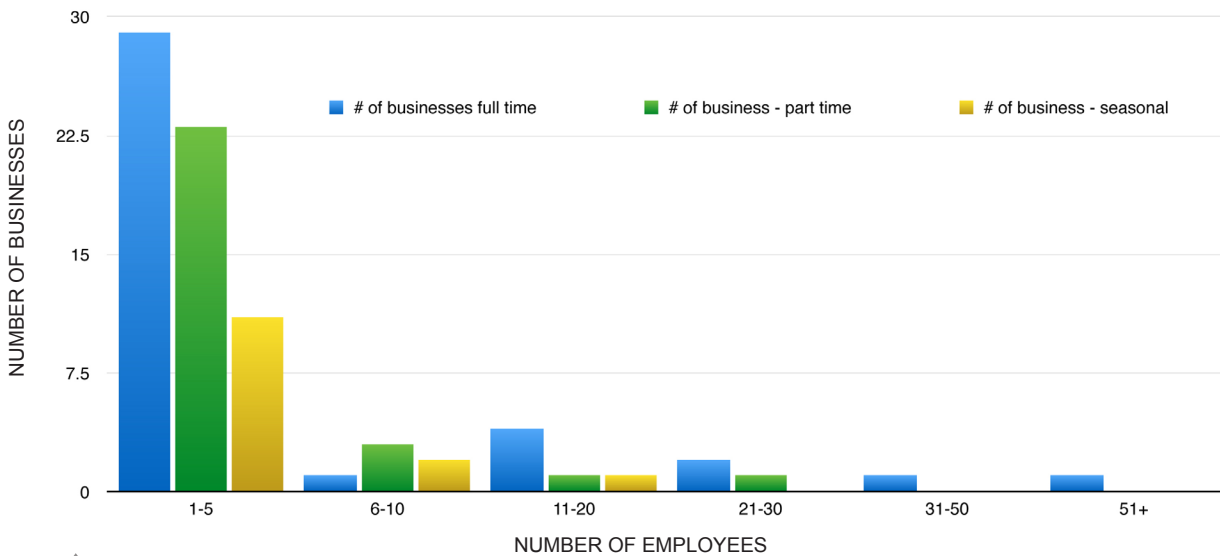
86% of the businesses own the building

FIGURE 5
Plans to expand



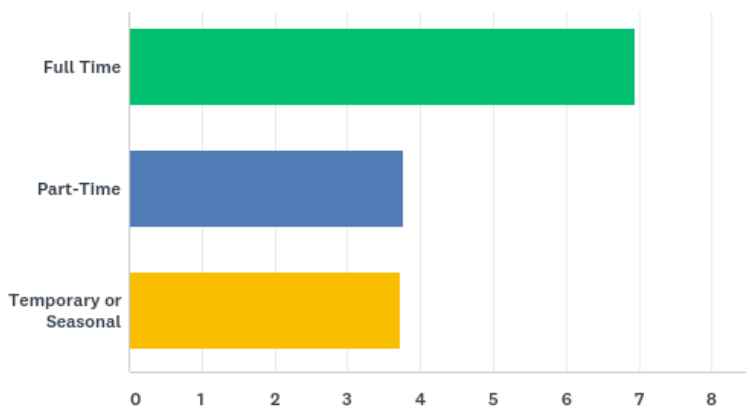
89% of the respondents have plans to grow or expand their business, or have recently expanded their business. This may be as simple as expanding their services, adding more product, or planning an expansion or renovation

FIGURE 6
Business Size



Most of businesses are small, 67% of respondents have five or less full time employees

FIGURE 7
Average number of employees



◀ Average number of employees is 7 full time, 4 part time and 4 seasonal or contracted

In total, there's 264 full-time, 113 part-time and 56 seasonal or contracted jobs created between these 43 businesses.

29% of respondents could create new jobs if there were qualified applicants, 44% would need to increase their sales

FIGURE 8
What needs to happen to create new jobs?

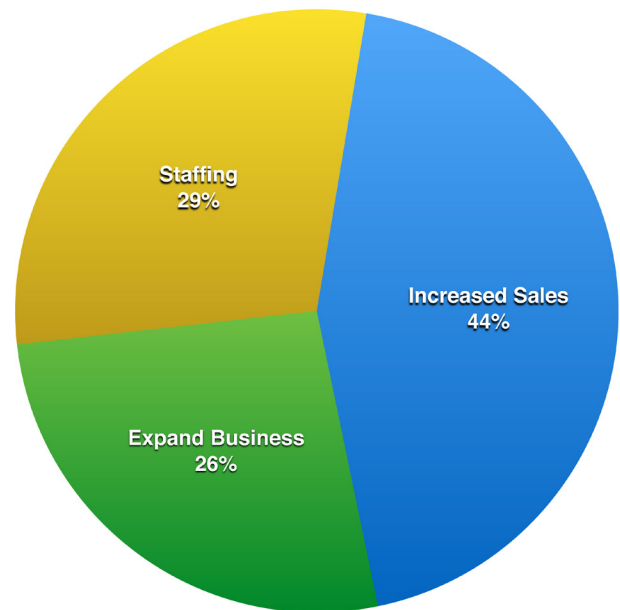
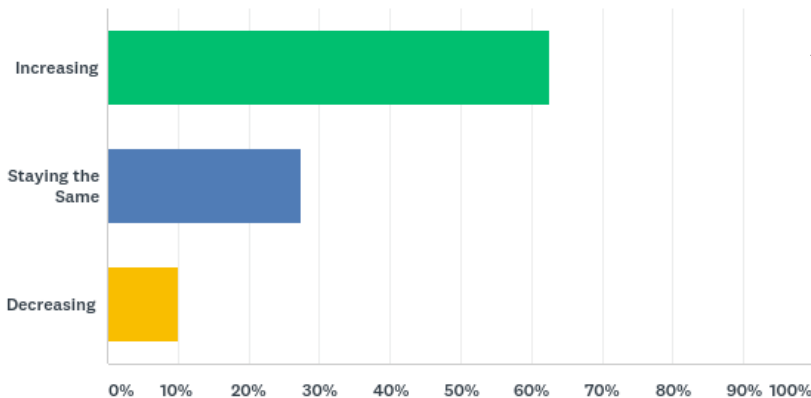


FIGURE 9
Revenue in the past 5 years



◀ **Most of Boissevain's businesses are thriving**

63% reported in the past 5 years they experienced an increase in sales, 27% were stable and 10% reported a decrease

Biggest challenges:

- 33% indicate finding staff is a problem. It may be lack of applicants, or lack of skilled, reliable employees. Staying competitive with wages is a challenge, as is Boissevain's rural location
- 19% report their biggest dilemma is federal or provincial government, whether it's cutbacks, regulations or services provided
- 21% reported competition with Brandon or online shopping as an issue
- 16% struggle with marketing, reaching a broader market and social media

Reasons for locating business in Boissevain:

- Family, grew up here, want to stay here/or come back to hometown
- Opportunity
- Motivated by the number of young families
- Felt welcome, liked the feeling of our community
- Like the town, murals, flowers, green space
- Location to the park and lakes

Suggested resources

the TMCDC could offer:

- Informational packages for starting a small business
- Help with creating a business plan
- Liaison to CAO and councillors
- Training opportunities (for business, management, staff)
- Bring more people to town, tourism, promote relocation, young families
- Help promote their business
- Promote Boissevain business; business profile/spotlights
- Welcome packages for new residents
- "How to" book for new residents
- More access to what's going on in our community
- Share info on what's going on; weekly updates
- New promotions, campaign ideas, events
- Grants, funding, programming
- Connect renters and rentals
- Connecting employees and employers

Opportunities for recruiting new businesses in Boissevain

- Courier
- General or dollar store (similar to Red Apple) - can businesses fill in these gaps?
- Animal kennel
- Service similar to Daughters on Call
- Wholesalers for plumbers, electricians
- Cleaning supplier

Further exploration will be done into the supply chain of respondents to identify other opportunities for new businesses.

DOMINANT THEMES

Labour shortage

- Need to be aware of the kind of employees local employers need now, and the kind they will need in the future
- Provide education and employment training supports
- Training on Recruitment & Retention
- Create database of employers
- Create database of regional educational institutions, and courses that could be offered here
- Identify education opportunities, formal/informal

Business in decline, closing or leaving

- Acknowledge value of the business in the community
- Work on relationship building
- Business succession planning seminar
- Attract and support entrepreneurs

Competition

- Create a campaign to support local businesses
- Research what does shopping out of town cost?
Cost of gas, travel, time, vs losing a business and jobs
- Businesses need to understand great customer service and ensure employees have a good knowledge of their products of services
- Businesses need to know their competition and how to develop customer loyalty

Marketing

- Offer training opportunities and resources on how to market your business, how to create a marketing strategy, social media for businesses

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

With the results from the BRE survey, TMCDC plans to:

- Create a Quality of Life survey, to obtain opinion and satisfaction level with the community, distribute to all residents to participate
- Create a new business package, with information to start a small business
- Offer a training opportunity on how to write a business plan
- Partner with Travel Manitoba, as well as develop regional partnerships in an effort to attract more tourists to the Turtle Mountain region
- Create social media pages to promote community development, tourism, events, training opportunities, available grants and programs, business opportunities, etc.
- Work on Boissevain's website, to make it the go-to for all community information, businesses, events, government, recreation, etc.
- Build a community development page on boissevain.ca, webpage and social media will be linked to stay current and relevant
- Start a local business spotlight, a regular feature showcasing a local business
- Host regular *Eat, Grow, Learn* luncheons, workshops or round table discussions with topics of interest identified through the survey. Ideas include, but not limited to: how to write a business plan, contracting vs. employees, social media for businesses, how to create a marketing strategy

CONCLUSION

The results from the 2018 Business Retention and Expansion Survey suggest that the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton and Turtle Mountain Community Development Committee are moving in the right direction when it comes to the business community; it appears businesses are growing, expanding and thriving. The participating businesses were receptive and eager to participate in the survey. Overall, the feedback was positive and very informative. Responses can be utilized in attraction efforts of marketing Boissevain as a great place for businesses to grow, expand and thrive.

This report will be made available to the public, municipal council and Boissevain Chamber of Commerce. Copies are available at the Municipal Office and online at boissevain.ca.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For any comments, questions or concerns regarding the survey, please contact

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