



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION



# Four Corners Economic Development Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program

**Research Report**  
**April, 2021**



# Four Corners Economic Development Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program

## RESEARCH REPORT

**April 2021**

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**NOTE:** The data, analysis, and findings described in this report are specific to the geography, time frame, and project requirements of Lonsdale, Minnesota. Findings are not transferable to other jurisdictions. Extension neither approves nor endorses the use or application of findings and other contents in this report by other jurisdictions.

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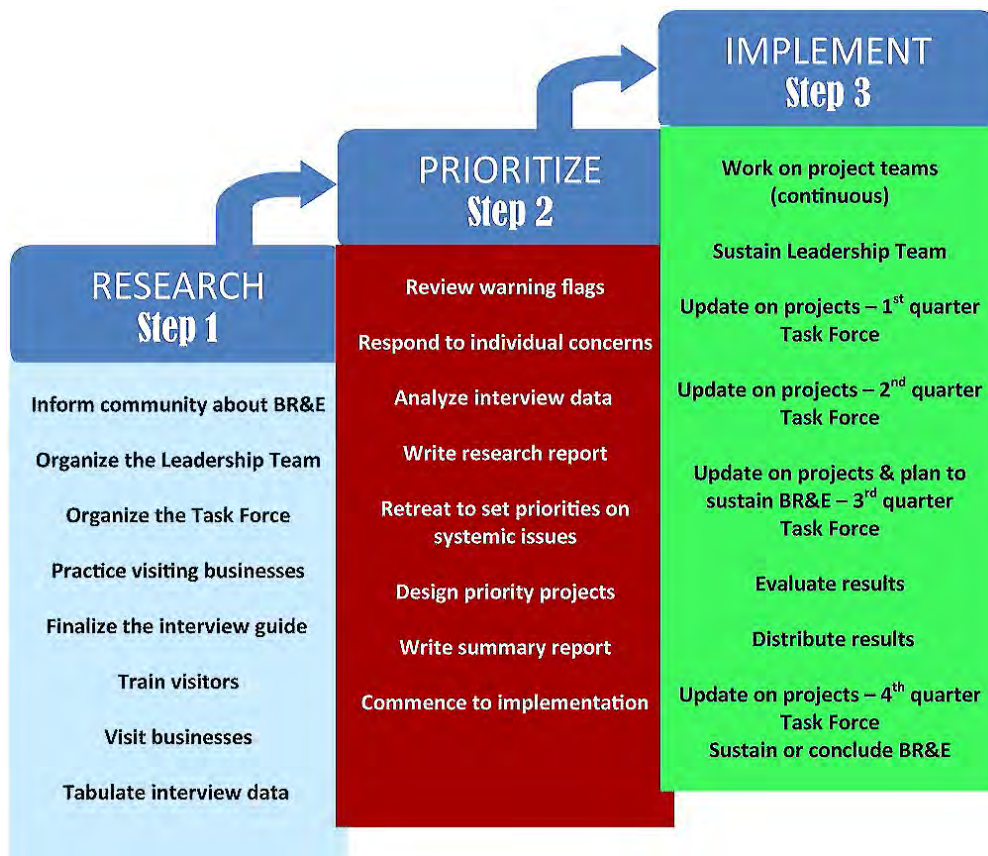
## Chapter 1: Overview and How to use this Report

### Overview of the BRE Strategies Program in San Juan County

In summer of 2020, economic development leaders from Four Corners Economic Development (4CED) convened to discuss business retention and expansion (BRE) in San Juan County, New Mexico by participating in the University of Minnesota (UMN) Extension's online BRE course. Thereafter, it was decided to launch a BRE in San Juan County. A Leadership Team was convened to conduct research on business needs and opportunities in the area. San Juan County businesses were personally interviewed by members of the BRE Leadership Team and/or other volunteers. 4CED decided to contract with the UMN Extension team for BRE data analysis and applied research, including this research report. The report presents findings of their business visits to 100 area businesses and the efforts of the individuals and organizations involved in this significant initiative. 4CED's San Juan County BRE identified five objectives:

1. To demonstrate support for local businesses
2. To help solve immediate business concerns.
3. To increase local businesses' ability to compete in the global economy
4. To implement a strategic plan for economic development.
5. To build community capacity to sustain growth and development.

The chart below depicts the full process of the Business Retention and Expansion program.



## How to Use this Report

This report provides findings from the BRE research in the community, suggests some themes and related project ideas based upon the research findings, and guides the community in making the next steps. With discussion resulting from this report and the task force retreat scheduled for April 9, 2021, the BRE Task Force can decide on which priority projects to implement to maximize BRE success in San Juan County.

Chapter 2 presents the findings from all aspects of this multi-pronged examination of the San Juan County community and its business needs. The results from this chapter can be widely distributed at meetings or through the press to raise support for selected strategies.

Following the findings, we propose possible strategies and project ideas that address the main findings from the study. The strategies and project ideas in Chapter 3 will be input for making action plans at the BRE retreat. However, these ideas may be useful for future reference and later phases of action.

Chapter 4 shows the actual interview guide used by the visitors to businesses and the results of the survey data aggregated from all the visits.

A full overview of the BRE process, people involved, and program are all provided in Chapter 5.

Guidance to the community regarding successful implementation of BRE projects can be found in Chapter 6.

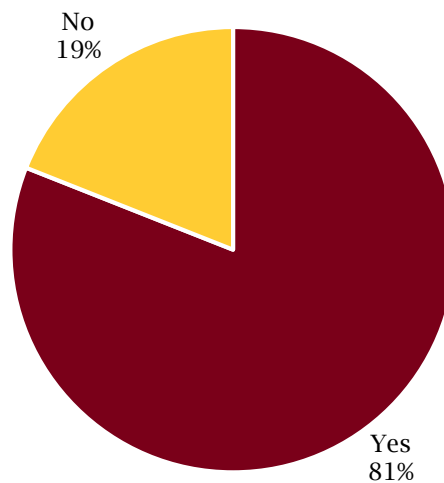
Lastly, appendices are included in Chapter 7.

## Chapter 2: Findings

This chapter presents survey results from the 100 businesses visited by the San Juan County Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Task Force from October to December 2020. The chapter begins by describing the businesses visited and their characteristics. General survey results are then highlighted and discussed. A description of the community's examination of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) is presented.

### Characteristics of Businesses Surveyed

Participants in the San Juan County BRE Program visited 100 businesses. Of the 100 businesses surveyed, 11 were located in Aztec, six in Bloomfield, 73 in Farmington, two in Flora Vista, seven in Kirtland, two in Shiprock, and one in Waterflow. Pages five through ten provide a breakdown of the characteristics of those businesses surveyed.



*Figure 2-1. Did your business begin its operation in this community?*

When surveyed, 81% of San Juan County businesses responded that their business began operating in the community. When asked about the year the business was established, responses ranged from 1910 to 2019. The average of all responses was 1990, meaning the average business age is 31 years. The high number of local businesses suggests that businesses have a strong connection to San Juan County.

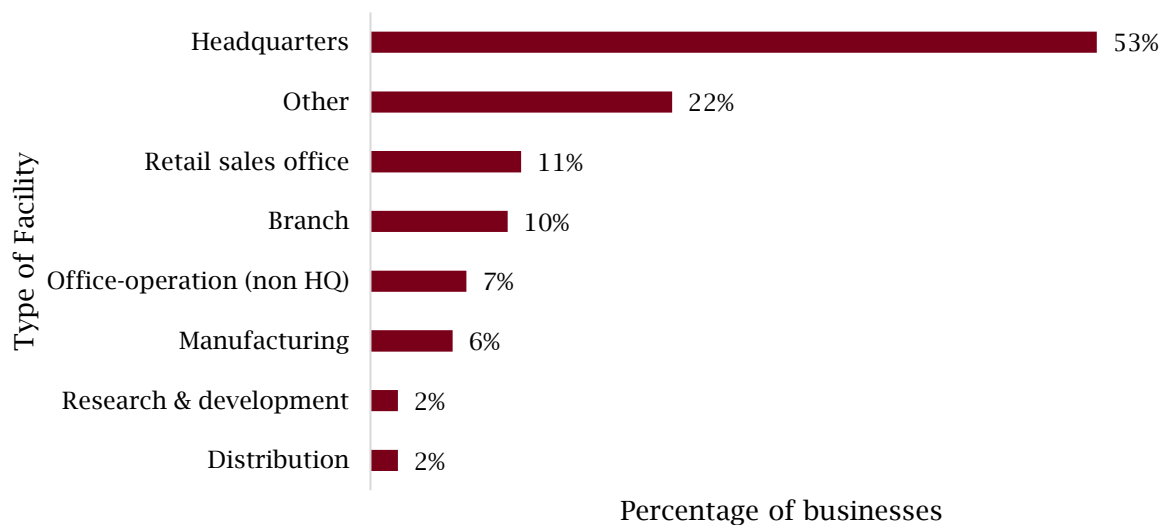


Figure 2-2. What type of facility is this?

Of the surveyed businesses, over half (53%) considered their facility to be a headquarters location. Other common facility types included “other,” which encompasses franchises, agricultural facilities, and childcare (22%), retail sales office (11%), and branches (10%).

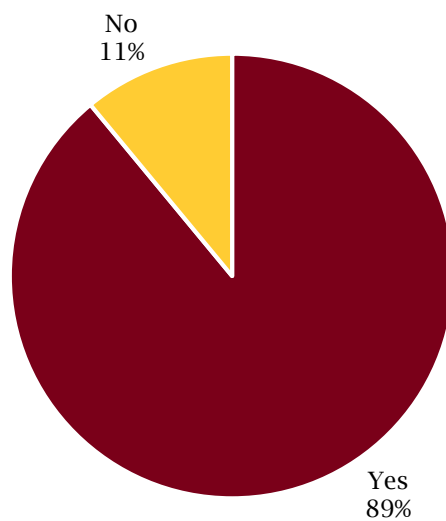


Figure 2-3. Is your business locally owned?

Out of the businesses surveyed, 89% of businesses were locally owned. Roughly one-third of surveyed businesses (35%) reported having another location outside of San Juan County.



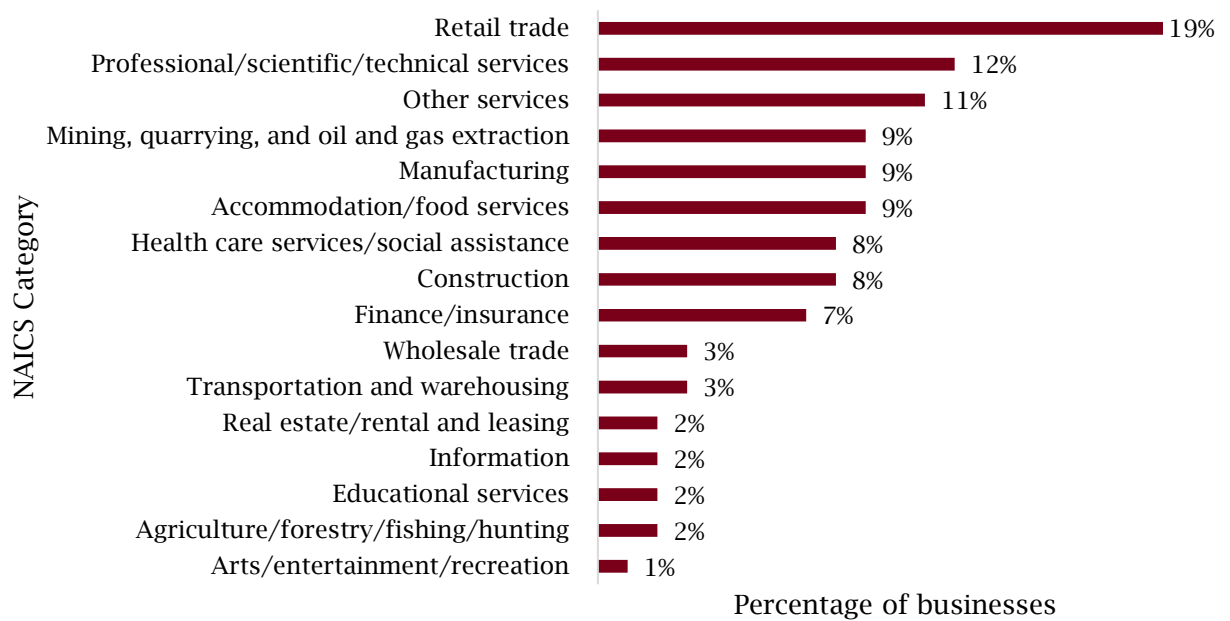


Figure 2-4. Which NAICS categories best describe your business?

Survey participants were also asked to identify which NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) category best describes their business. It is important to note that the sum of all categories shown in Figure 2-3 is equal to 107%, as firms can identify one or more NAICS code. Some of the most common categories selected by San Juan County businesses were retail trade (19%), professional/scientific/technical services (12%), and other services (11%). While it is important to note that the distribution of survey respondents is not a perfect representation of the businesses in the community, the results suggest that *these industries* are important to the San Juan County economy.

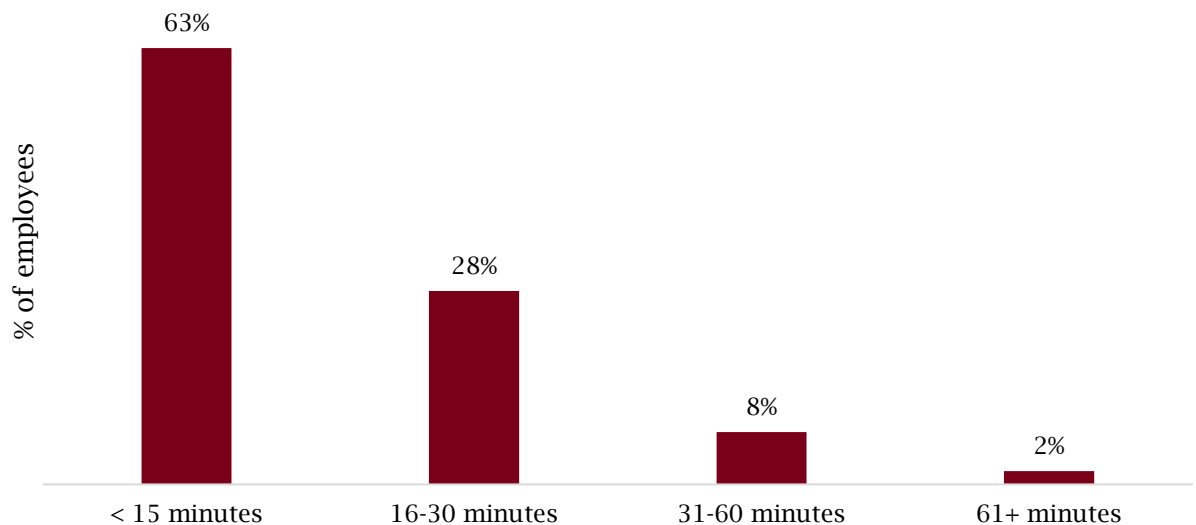


Figure 2-5. Please estimate the commute time for your employees

Figure 2-5 shows the average commute time for employees who work in the San Juan County area. Over 60% of employees have a very short commute, traveling less than 15 minutes to work. In fact, businesses estimated that 91% of workers travel less than 30 minutes to their jobs in San Juan County. This suggests

that county businesses are drawing from a highly localized labor force where most employees live in or immediately surrounding the county.

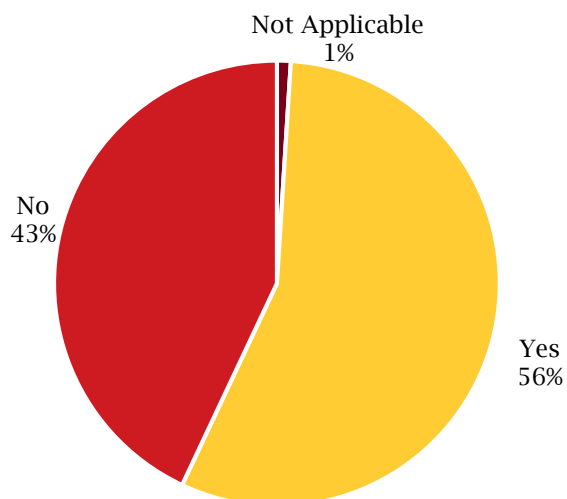


Figure 2-6. Do you have a written business plan?

Surveyed businesses were asked to indicate whether they had written business and transition plans. Of the surveyed businesses in San Juan County, 56% reported having a written businesses plan (see Figure 2-6), 43% did not, and 1% responded “not applicable.” That’s one of the highest rates of written business plans that the UMN BRE program has ever seen although this data point is not in its benchmark database.

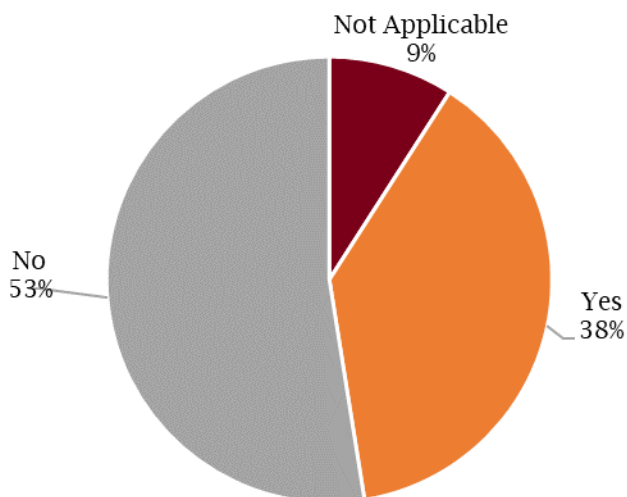


Figure 2-7. Do you have a written transition plan for ownership, leadership, or both?

A smaller portion of surveyed businesses reported having a written transition plan. Of those surveyed, 38% of respondents have a written transition plan while 53% did not, as shown in Figure 2-7.

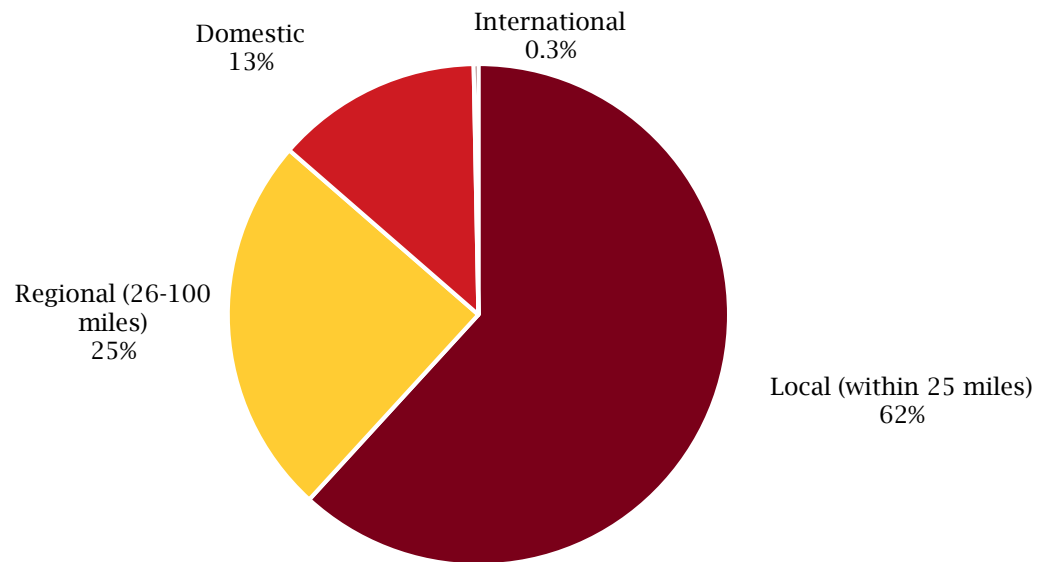


Figure 2-8. Please estimate the percent of your gross sales coming from the following locations

When asked about the location demographics of customers, 62% of San Juan County businesses reported that customers were local, while 25% were from the region, and 13% were either from outside the region or international. Notably, the county's businesses receive a significantly higher amount of business from local customers (62%) than is typical for previous BRE communities in Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, San Juan County businesses attract a lower percentage of customers from domestic and international regions (14%) compared to previous BRE communities (25%).

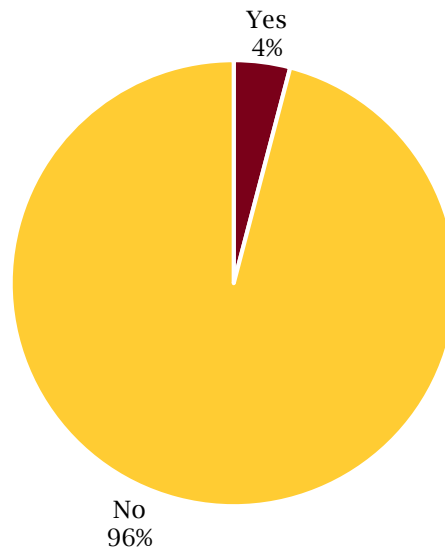


Figure 2-9. Is your business currently exporting internationally?

<sup>1</sup> The University of Minnesota Extension maintains a benchmark database of BRE data. These data include BRE surveys from 1993-2019. When referring to the averages for previous communities that have participated in the UMN program, the authors refer to the communities as "previous BRE communities." <http://www.extension.umn.edu/community/business-retention/research-development/benchmarks/>

When asked if they were currently exporting internationally, 4% of surveyed businesses reported that they were exporting their products internationally (see Figure 2-9). This value is significantly lower than what is typical for previous Minnesota BRE communities, where, on average, 13% reported exporting their products.

Businesses that had experience exporting were then asked to identify any problems they had experienced exporting products. Transportation and a lack of knowledge of foreign markets were the primary reasons given.

When asked what prevented them from exporting, 20% of San Juan County businesses reported that their business was designed to serve a specific area, 8% cited a lack of knowledge of foreign countries/markets, and 7% claimed their business was too small.

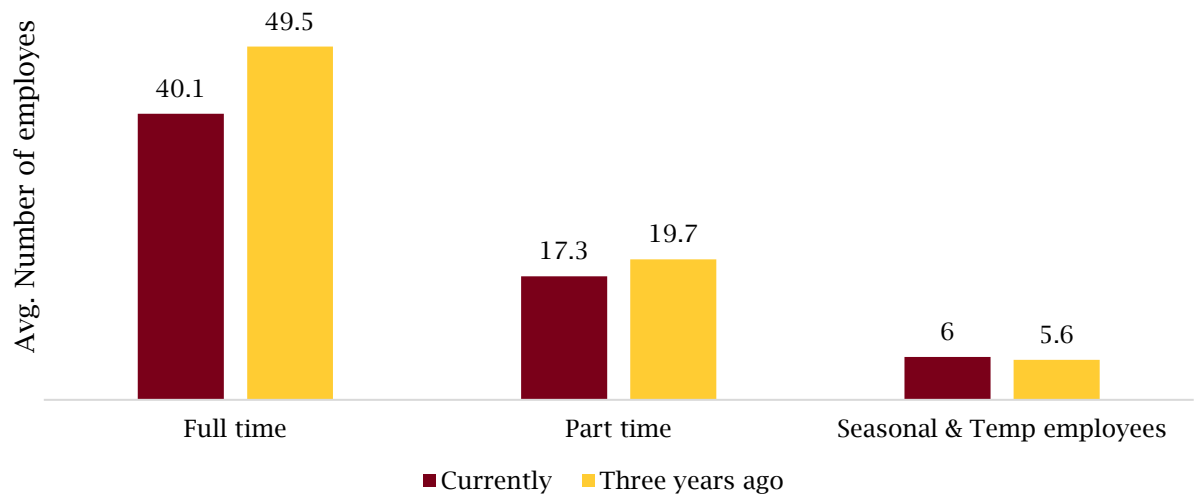
*Table 2-1. What is the average hourly starting wage paid to employees in each category?*

Occupation	Median	Average
Agricultural	\$10.00	\$10.00
Unskilled manufacturing	\$11.50	\$11.44
Unskilled workers	\$10.95	\$12.05
Office and administrative	\$15.50	\$15.66
Construction	\$18.62	\$17.72
Arts, design and other creative occupations	\$17.00	\$17.78
Healthcare related	\$17.50	\$17.97
Transportation	\$18.00	\$18.86
Repair and skilled maintenance	\$18.00	\$19.31
Skilled manufacturing	\$20.26	\$21.08
Information technology	\$25.50	\$25.86
Professional/managerial	\$27.93	\$29.22
Engineers, scientists and technicians	\$30.00	\$31.71

Table 2-1 shows San Juan County businesses' average hourly starting wage paid to employees in each occupation group. The highest wages were paid to engineers, professional/managerial workers, and information technology employees, while the lowest wages were paid to unskilled workers, unskilled manufacturing workers, and agricultural employees. It is notable that San Juan County's starting wages were mostly higher, on average, than the benchmarks for previous BRE communities.

## Recent and Projected Changes for Businesses Surveyed

Many of the survey questions asked businesses about the changes they have made in recent years as well as changes that they are expecting to make in the near future. This section of the report summarizes the responses from the surveyed businesses in San Juan County.



*Figure 2-10. Total Employment, Three Years Ago Compared to Today*

San Juan County businesses were asked to estimate the number of workers employed at their location, both currently and three years prior. As shown in Figure 2-10, county businesses tended to be mid-sized, with about 40 full-time employees on average and appeared to employ more full-time workers than part-time, seasonal, or temporary. In total, the average San Juan County business employed over 60 workers (sum of full-time, part-time, seasonal, and temporary). This average is higher than the average for the previous BRE communities' data from 1993-2019. Among previous BRE communities, the average number of workers was 45. Over the last three years, San Juan County businesses have seen a slight decrease in the number of full-time and part-time employees.

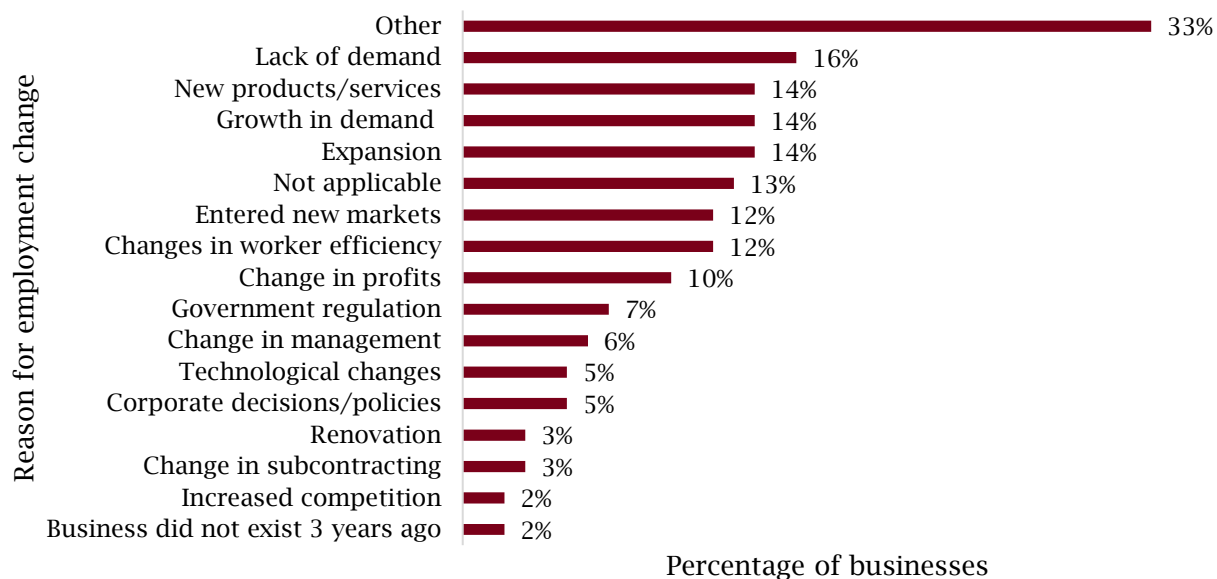


Figure 2-11. If the number of employees changed from three years ago, please identify up to 3 reasons for the employment change.

When asked for reasons why the numbers of employees changed from three years ago, 33% responded “Other.” Most open-ended responses in this category reflected changes due to COVID-19. Other top reasons for the change in employment from three years prior were a lack of demand (16%), new products/services (14%), growth in demand (14%), and expansion (14%).

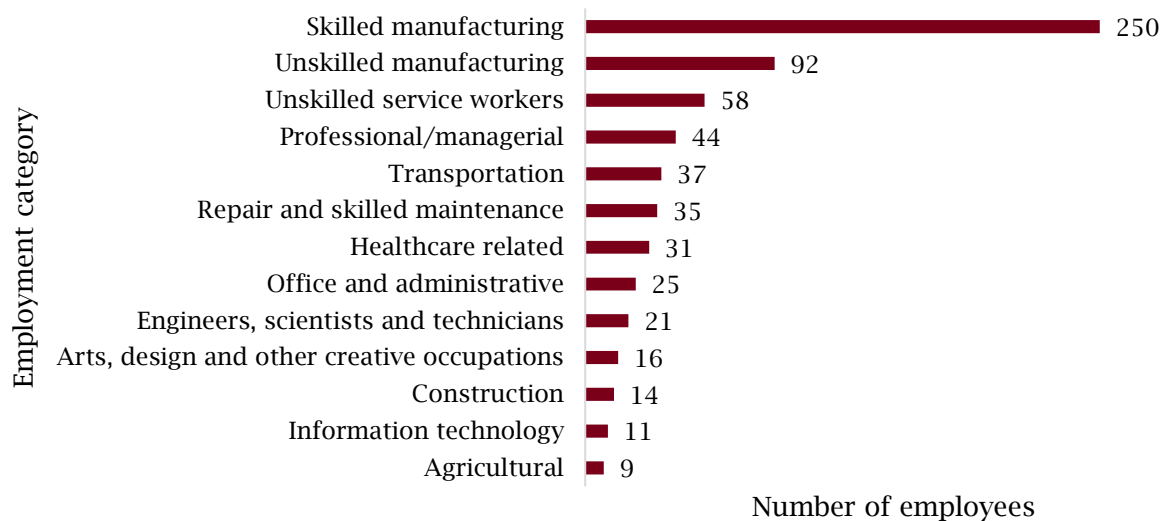


Figure 2-12. Number of employees expected over the next three years by occupation

A related question asked businesses to indicate whether they expect the number of employees in various occupations to increase, decrease, or stay the same. Figure 2-12 shows the sum of the businesses’ responses. The most significant increases appear to be in the category of skilled manufacturing. San Juan County businesses are expecting to add 250 skilled manufacturing jobs over the next three years. Other occupations expected to see increases in employment include unskilled manufacturing, unskilled service

workers, and professional/managerial employees.

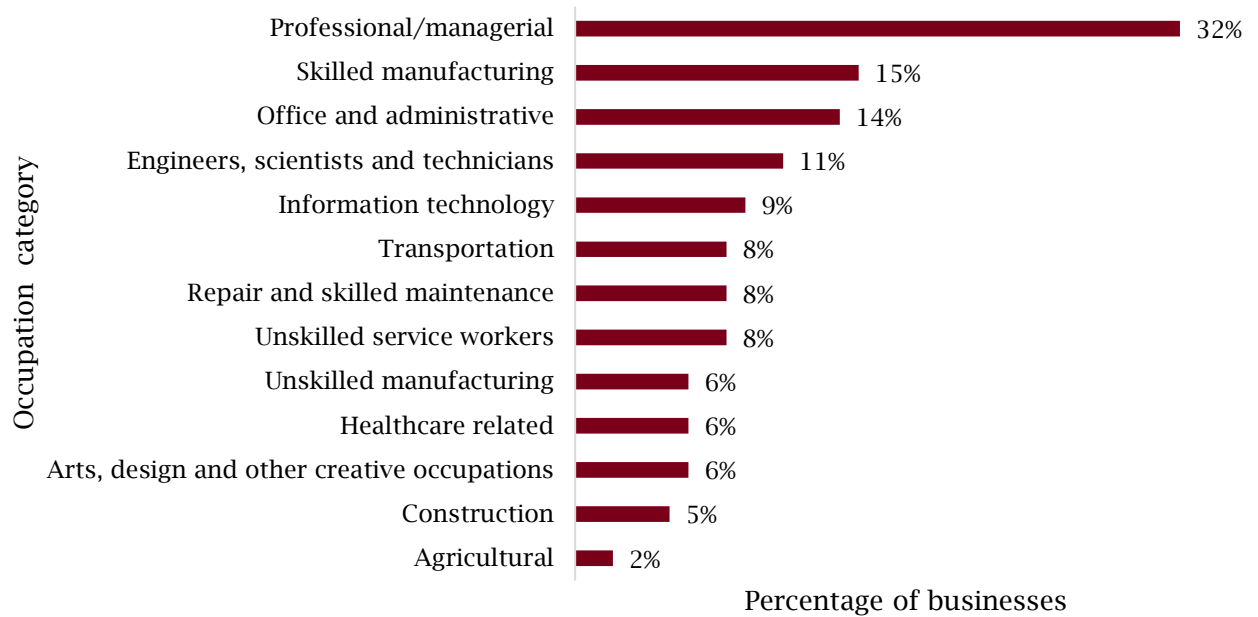


Figure 2-13. Percentage of businesses with problems recruiting employees by occupation category

Many of the occupations that San Juan County businesses expected to add in the next three years are also those the businesses have the most trouble with employee recruiting. Of those businesses surveyed, 32% reported difficulties recruiting professional and managerial workers, followed by skilled manufacturing workers (15%), office and administrative workers (14%), and engineers, scientists, and technicians 11%).

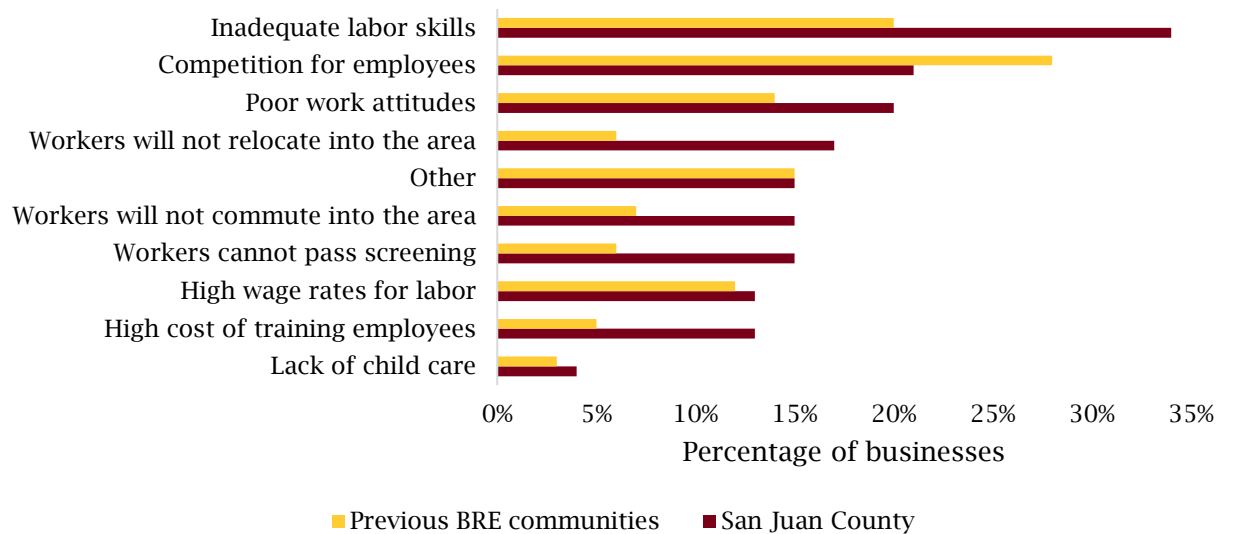


Figure 2-14. Reasons for Recruitment Problems Compared to BRE Benchmark Data

San Juan County businesses reported inadequate labor skills, competition for employees, poor work attitudes, and an unwillingness to relocate as some of their top recruitment challenges (see Figure 2-14). As shown in the figure, San Juan County businesses tended to face greater challenges recruiting workers than is typical for previous BRE communities, especially when it comes to labor skills, work attitudes, willingness to relocate, willingness to commute, ability to pass screenings, and cost of training.

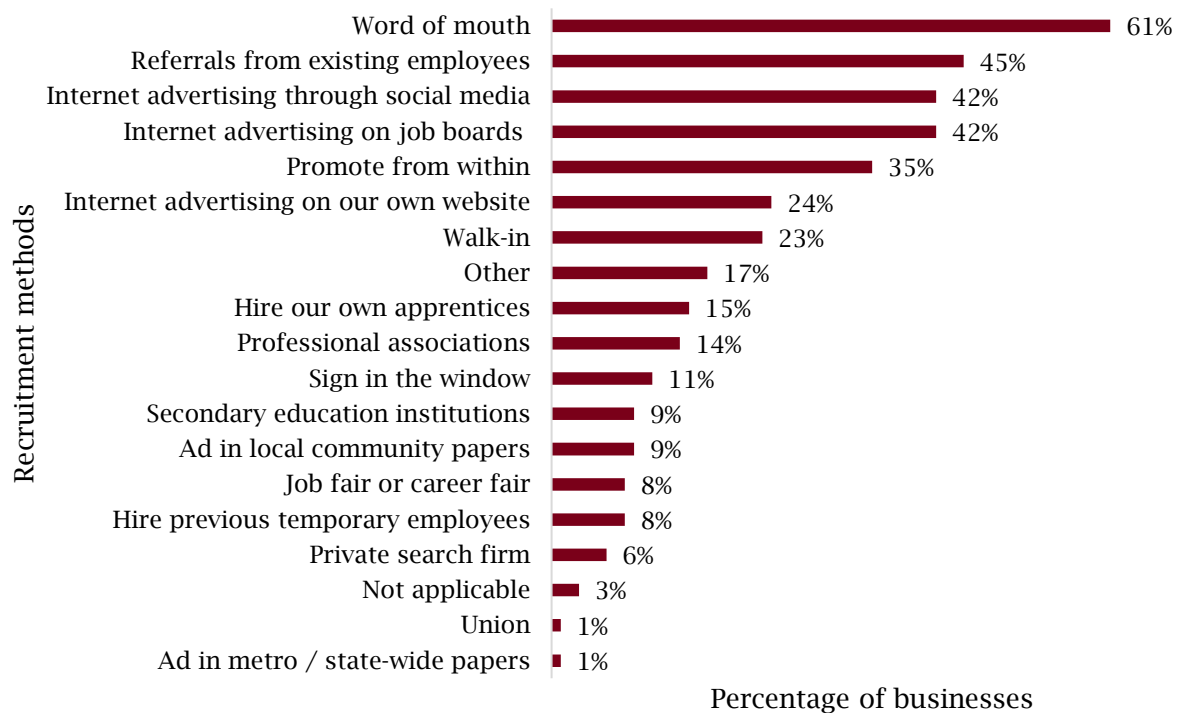
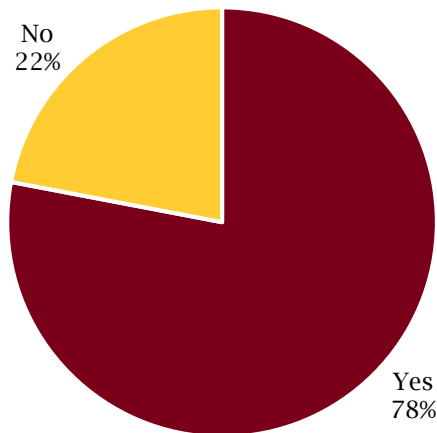


Figure 2-15. What resources are you currently using to locate new employees?

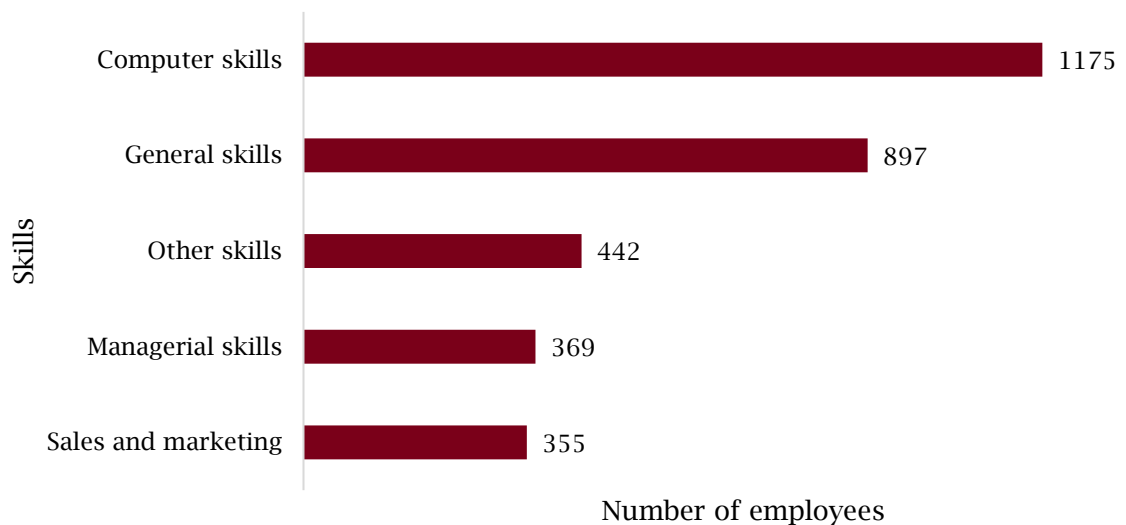
When asked about methods used to recruit new employees, word of mouth (61%), referrals from existing employees (45%), and the internet via job boards and social media (42%) were the primary methods used to find new employees. Compared with previous BRE communities, San Juan County businesses reported using a wide variety of recruitment methods. The businesses were more likely to use word of mouth, internet advertising, promote from within, hire their own apprentices, and professional associations than the average for previous BRE communities. This suggests that San Juan County businesses are open to a wide variety of recruitment methods, depending on the position in need.





*Figure 2-16. Do you need training for either workers or managers?*

Of the surveyed San Juan County businesses, 78% of businesses stated that training is required for workers or managers. This indicates a broad need for reskilling and upskilling programs throughout the county.



*Figure 2-17. Training Needs by Type of Skill*

When asked how many workers need each type of training, the greatest needs included computer skills (1,175 employees need this type of training), general skills (897), and other skills (442) in which businesses indicated a need specifically for technical, trade, and administrative skills. In total, San Juan County businesses reported that as many as 3,200+ of their workers needed some type of skills training.

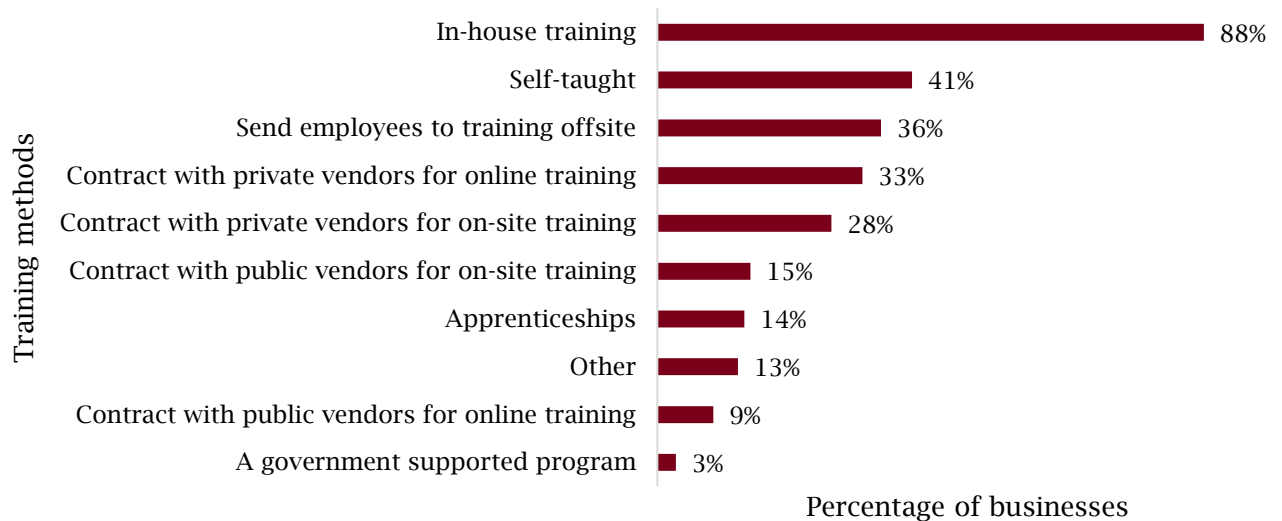


Figure 2-18. Prior to COVID-19, how did you train your employees?

According to responses from San Juan County businesses, the primary training methods in the business community included in-house training (88% of businesses reported using this), self-taught (41%), and offsite training (36%). Compared to previous BRE communities, the county's businesses are more likely to use in-house training (75% of previous BRE communities) and slightly less likely to use offsite training (42%).

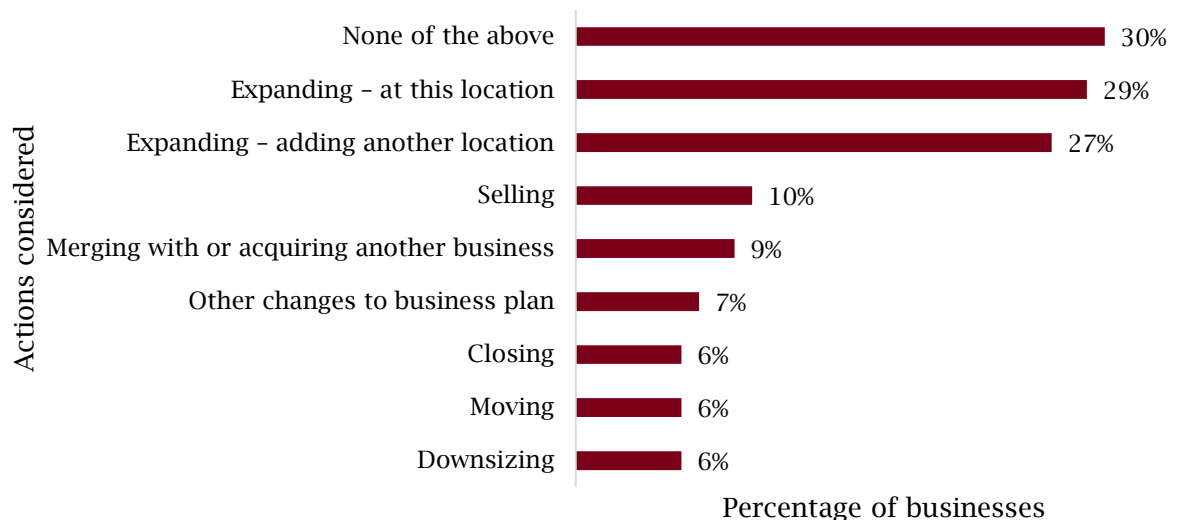


Figure 2-19. Business Considerations for Future Location Decisions

In relation to the current business situations in San Juan County, business conditions were relatively bullish, with 29% of businesses considering expanding at the current location and 27% considering expanding at another location. Only 10% were considering selling, 6% moving, and 6% downsizing. When comparing San Juan County to previous BRE communities, business prospects appeared better in the county with only 21% of previous BRE communities considering expansion at the current location and 15% considering adding another location.

When asked about if businesses owned or rented properties sufficient for expansion, about two thirds

responded “yes,” while one third responded either “no” or “maybe.” In comparison to benchmark data, county businesses were on par with availability of space for expansion

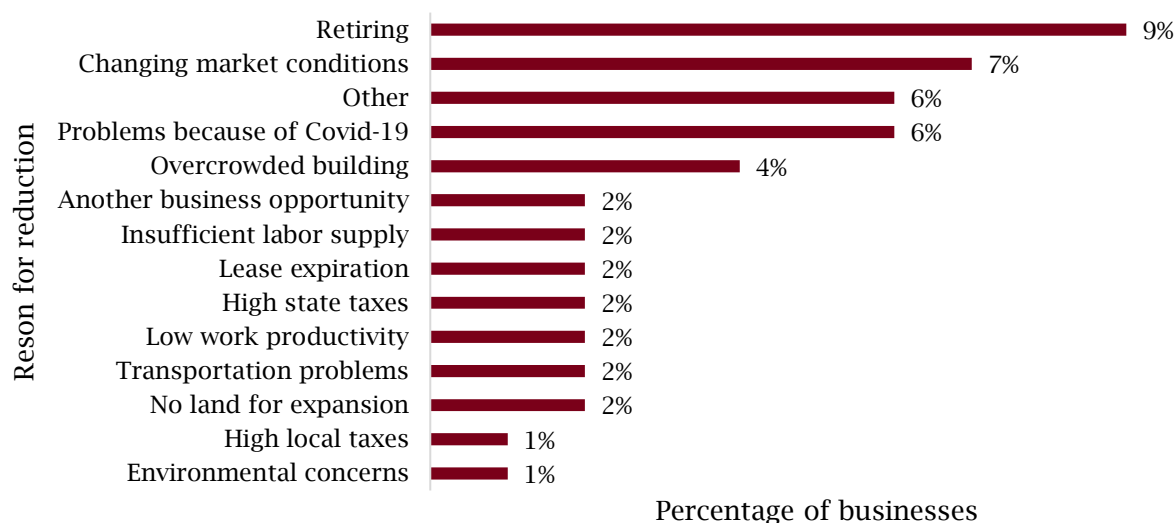


Figure 2-20. Reasons for Downsizing, Selling, Moving, or Closing

Of the San Juan County businesses that responded they were considering downsizing, selling, moving, or closing, major reasons were retirement, changing market conditions, problems stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, and “Other.” San Juan County businesses were almost twice as likely to consider downsizing, selling, moving, or closing due to retirement (~9%) than previous BRE communities (average ~7%).

### Satisfaction Among Businesses Surveyed

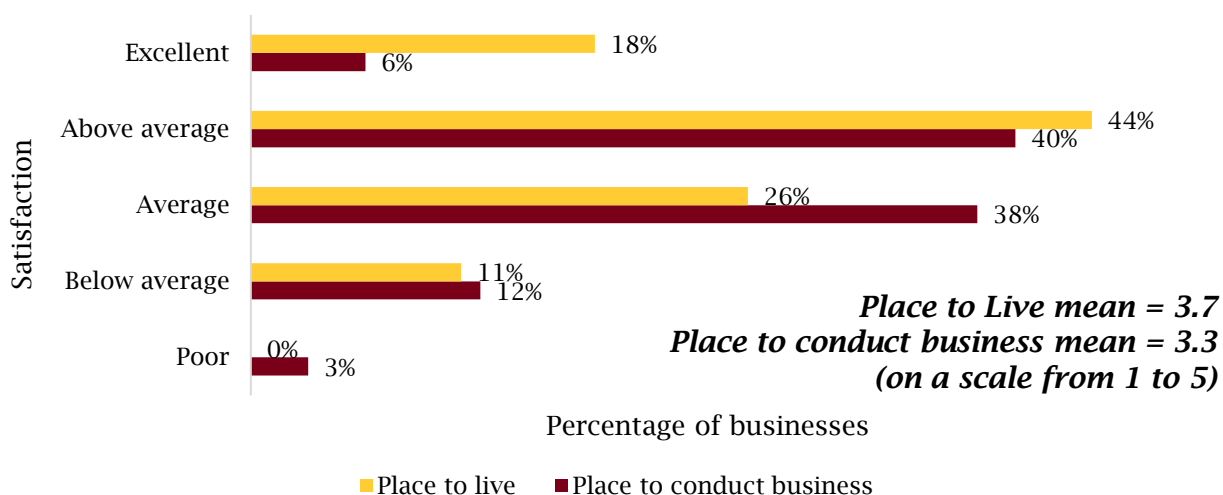


Figure 2-21. What is your overall opinion of your community as a place to live or do business?

Overall, businesses in San Juan County had a positive view of their community as a place to live and a place to do business. As a place to live, 62% of respondents said that their community was either excellent

or above average. As a place to do businesses, about 46% of respondents said that their community was above average or excellent. The mean rating out of 5.0 for San Juan County is 3.7 as a place to live and 3.3 as a place to do business as shown in Figure 2-21. These values are slightly lower than the mean ratings for *previous BRE communities* of 4.1 and 3.8, respectively.

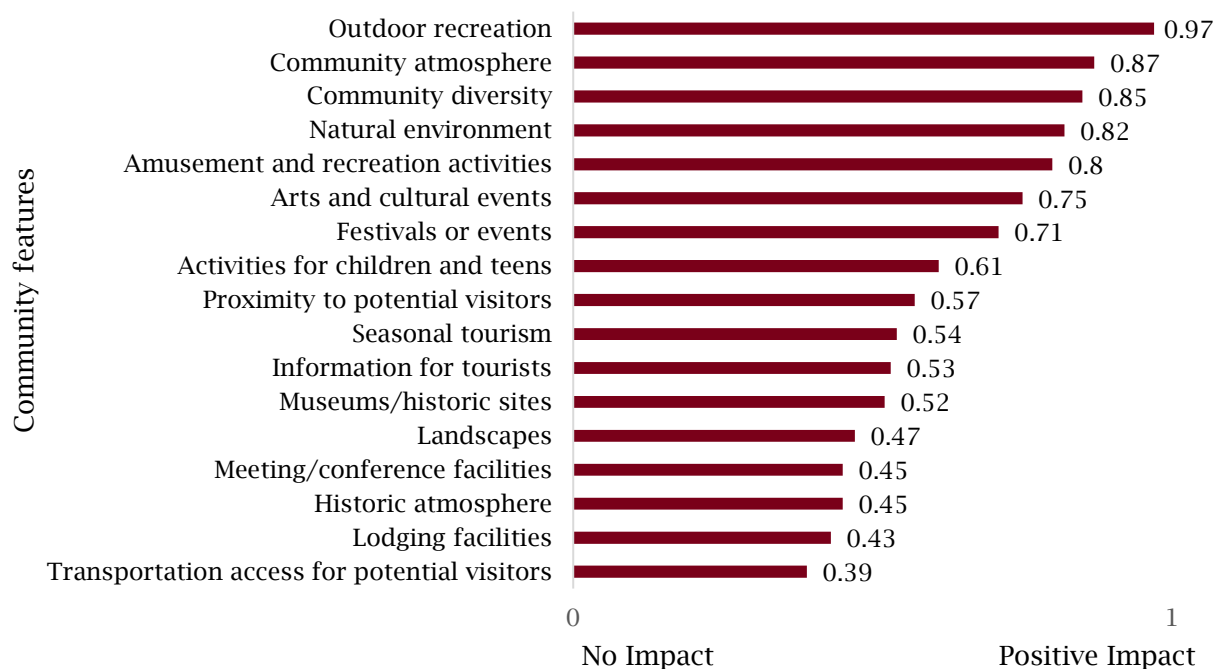


Figure 2-22. Do the following community features related to tourism have a positive impact, no impact, or negative impact on your business?

San Juan County businesses were asked to rate the impact of the following community features on their businesses. There was a prevalent trend in which businesses place a high significance in outdoor oriented issues such as recreation and the environment as well as a significance on community feeling seen in atmosphere, diversity, and recreation events.

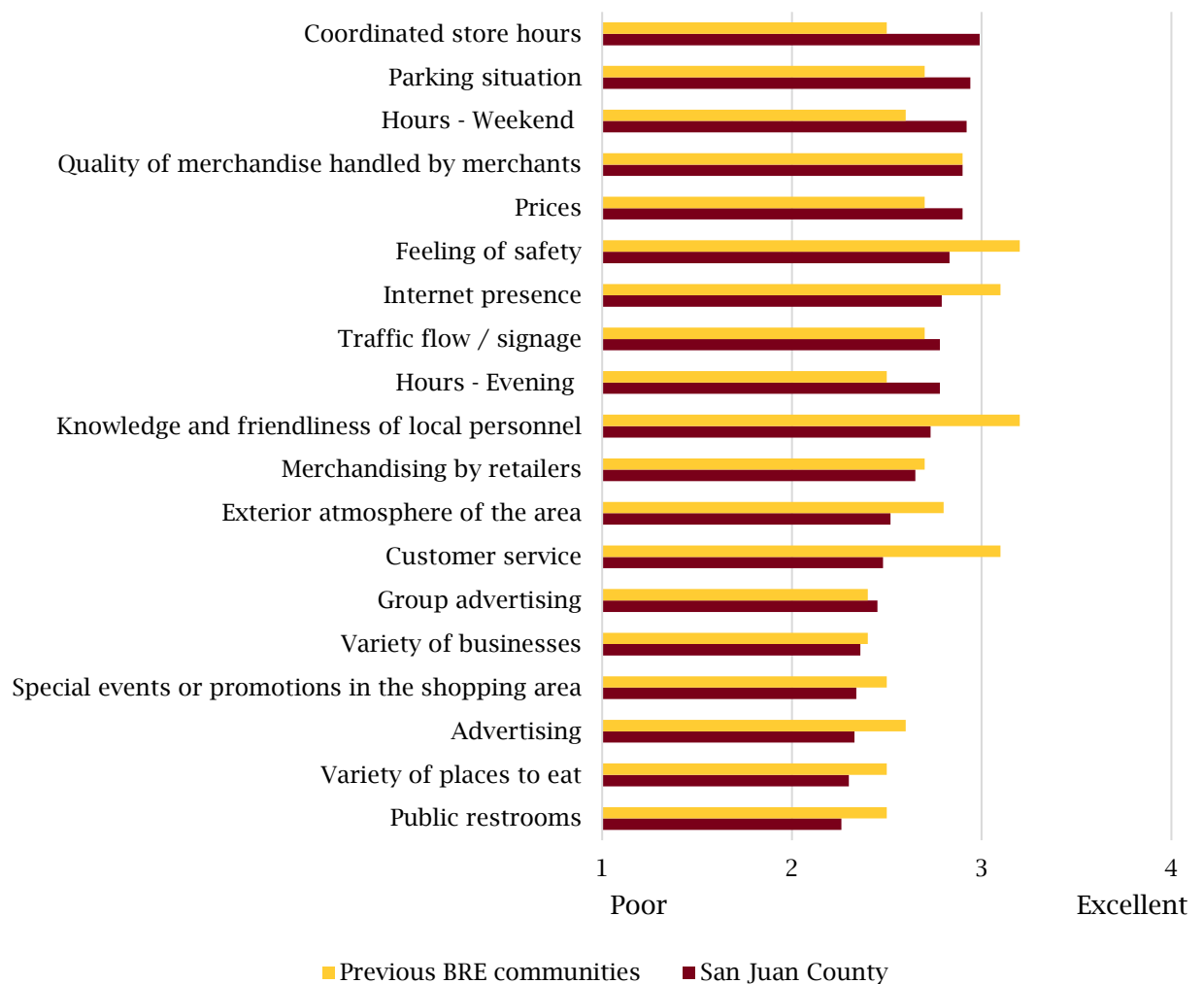


Figure 2-23. Please rate the following factors about retail in this community.

When asked about satisfaction with retail factors in the community, San Juan County businesses rated the following factors from 1 to 4 with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent. San Juan County businesses were the most satisfied with coordinated store hours, parking, and hours on the weekend, while they were least satisfied with public restrooms, the variety of places to eat, and advertising. When comparing the retail factors in the county with those from previous BRE communities, the areas with the largest gap were customer service and knowledge and friendliness of local personnel. Overall, businesses rated the overall atmosphere in their local shopping area an average score of 2.8 out of 4, compared with an average of 3.1 for other previous BRE communities.

**Leave Alone**

(High Satisfaction / Low Importance)

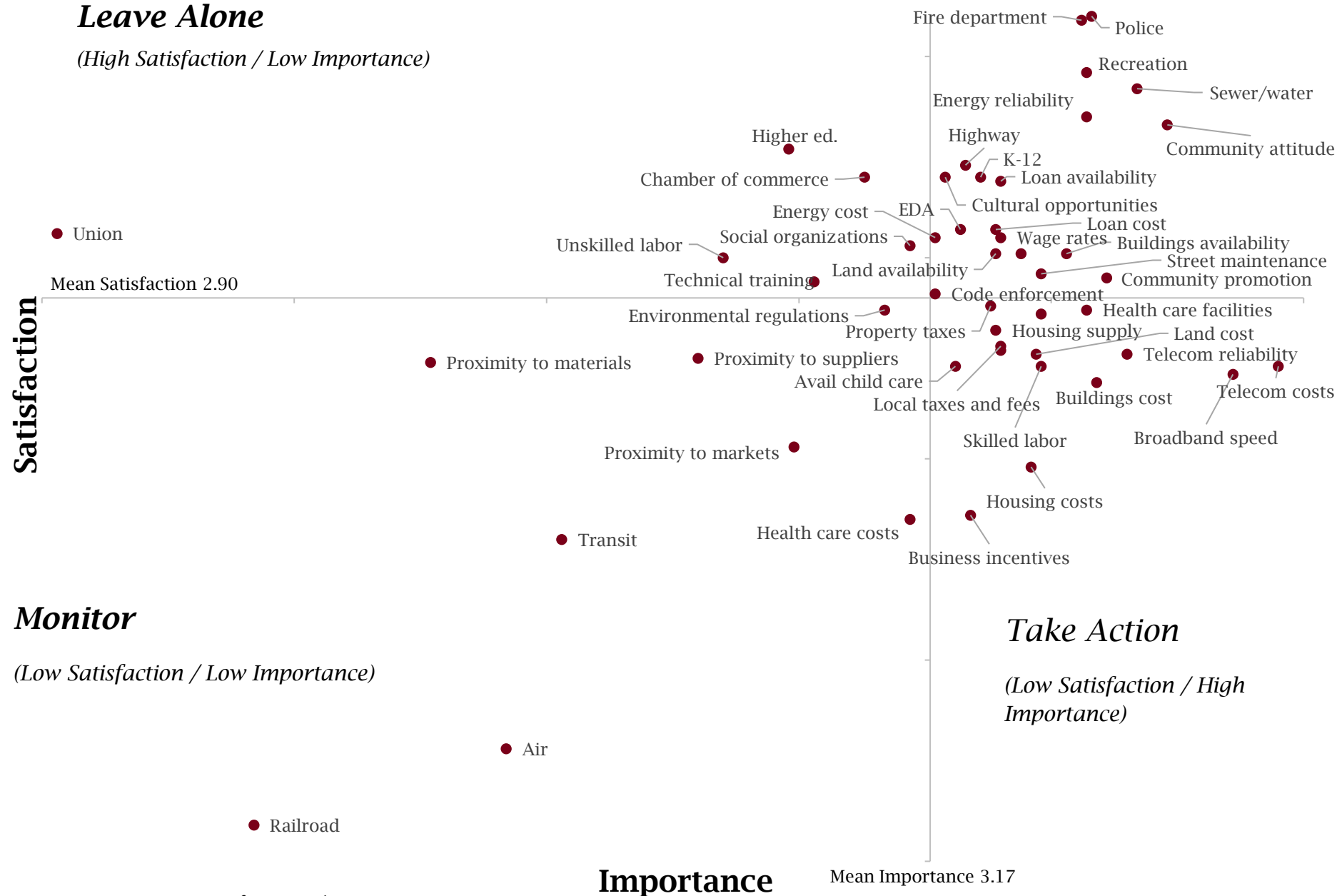


Figure 2-24. Community satisfaction and importance

Questions 35 and 36 in the BRE survey asked businesses to consider 49 community factors. Question 35 asked businesses to rate the hypothetical importance of each factor if the business were to select a new location. Each factor was rated on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 = not at all important and 4 = very important). Likewise, on Question 36, the surveyed businesses were asked to rate these 49 community factors, but this time they focused on their own satisfaction of these factors in their current location (i.e. San Juan County).

Figure 2-24 shows all 49 community factors, though they are not all labeled.<sup>2</sup> Factors on the far right are very important, and factors near the top have high levels of satisfaction. The graph is divided into four quadrants. The upper right quadrant, Celebrate, includes factors that have a higher-than-average importance and higher-than-average satisfaction. The lower right quadrant, Take Action, includes factors that are considered very important but have lower-than-average levels of satisfaction. The upper left quadrant, Leave Alone, includes factors with lower-than-average importance but high satisfaction. Finally, the lower left quadrant, Monitor, includes factors that are considered relatively unimportant and have lower-than-average satisfaction.

When determining which factors might warrant further attention, communities may consider focusing on those with higher-than-average levels of importance. Even if satisfaction levels are fairly low for certain factors, it may not serve a community well to devote time and attention to fixing those if they are not highly important to local businesses.

*Table 2-2. Community Factors with High Importance and High Satisfaction*

	Importance	Satisfaction
Police department	3.48	3.60
Fire department	3.46	3.59
Recreational opportunities	3.47	3.46
Sewer and water	3.57	3.42
Energy reliability (electric, natural gas)	3.47	3.35
Community attitude towards business	3.63	3.33
Highway accessibility	3.23	3.23
K-12	3.26	3.20
Cultural opportunities	3.19	3.2
Availability of loans	3.3	3.19
Cost of loans	3.29	3.07
Economic development authority	3.22	3.07
Wage rates	3.3	3.05
Energy cost (electric, natural gas)	3.17	3.05
Availability of land	3.29	3.01
Availability of buildings	3.43	3.01
Planning and zoning	3.34	3.01
Street maintenance	3.38	2.96
Community promotion of itself and business	3.51	2.95
Code enforcement	3.17	2.91

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed graph of each of the four quadrants, see Appendix A, Community Features Quadrants.

Table 2-2 shows more detail on the community features that had a high importance and a high level of satisfaction. These community factors are shown in order from highest to lowest satisfaction levels. These features can be considered strengths of San Juan County and should be celebrated. Of all the factors, San Juan County businesses rated their police department, fire department, recreational opportunities, sewer and water, and energy reliability as the factors which they felt were important and with which they were the most satisfied.

### Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

A Research Review Meeting was held on March 4, 2021 via Zoom (see Chapter 5 for meeting details). The complete SWOT analysis is shown in Table 2-3

Table 2-3. Results of SWOT Analysis

	Survey Result	Survey Question/Finding
Strengths	Abundance of natural resources	Research Review Meeting
	Local and diverse business community	4a, 38a
	Nature and recreations	38a
	Room for expansion	34a
	Strong business community	41
Weaknesses	Lack of dining options	39a
	Some workers have bad attitudes	13
	Lack of affordable housing	36
	Business hours	39a
	Lack of beautification in the city	36, 38a
	Business regulation	10, 36
	Lack of effective transportation	36, 38a
	Difficulty recruiting due to lack of skills	13
Opportunities	Clean energy	Research Review Meeting
	Retiree haven	45
	More dining options	43, 44
	Tax credits/business incentives	28, 35, 37, 45
	Manufacturing	37, 45
Threats	Fossil fuel reliance	43, 45
	Unnecessary regulations	10, 36
	Lack of infrastructure	21b, 22e, 37, 43, 45
	Businesses closing	29
	Population decline	10p, 32, 45



## Chapter 3: Potential Business Retention and Expansion Strategies and Related Project Ideas

### Business Retention and Expansion Strategies for San Juan County

Each of the following strategies is a theme, supported by data from the business interviews. As such, each strategy provides a way of framing the BRE situation in San Juan County. The four strategies are not mutually exclusive from each other. The strategies are named below and explained in detail in this chapter.

#### Strategy 1: Address Workforce Needs through Partnerships

#### Strategy 2: Beautify and Market San Juan County

#### Strategy 3: Support and Expand Local Businesses

#### Strategy 4: Build on Existing Infrastructure

#### Strategy One: Address Workforce Needs through Partnerships

Finding	Possible Project
<p>Nearly 80% of surveyed San Juan County businesses cited a need for additional training for their employees. Specific training needs included computer skills (1,175 employees need this type of training), general skills (897), and other skills (442). In total, the businesses reported that more than 3,200 of their workers needed some type of skills training.</p> <p>When asked about their current training strategies, businesses' most common training method was in-house (88% report using this method), followed by self-taught (41%), and offsite (36%). Only 9% of businesses contracted with public vendors, such as technical colleges, and only 3% of businesses reported using government-supported programs like New Mexico's Department of Workforce Solutions. When asked about their satisfaction with technical training programs in the area, 58% reported being somewhat or very satisfied with these programs with an average rating of 2.94 on a 4 point scale (4=very satisfied). Another 20% of businesses reported being unfamiliar with these programs.</p>	<p>1.1 Develop shared training programs to meet business needs</p> <p>Considering the significant need for employee training among San Juan County businesses, there seems to be a potential opportunity for the community to offer shared trainings where there is a communal need among local businesses.</p> <p>To address the need for computer skills, the San Juan County task force might consider engaging with New Mexico State University or San Juan College to create customized IT training programs that could be delivered to employees across firms. Similarly, for managerial skills training, the task force could work with New Mexico State University's College of Business<sup>3</sup> to create a customized managerial training program.</p> <p>Depending on businesses' needs in the areas of general and "other" skills, San Juan College's Center for Workforce Development has already developed a number of on-demand training programs in communications, supervisory skills, team building, and leadership.<sup>4</sup> CWD's training programs can be offered off-the-shelf or customized slightly depending on businesses' needs. If needed, the training could be collaboratively developed with input from HR leaders at all participating firms.</p> <p>Finally, the New Mexico's Economic Development Department has its Step Up Program.<sup>5</sup> Qualified</p>

<sup>3</sup> <https://business.nmsu.edu/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sanjuancollege.edu/community/departments/center-for-workforce-development/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://gonm.biz/business-development/edd-programs-for-business/job-training-incentive-program/step-up-program>

	<p>companies in New Mexico that participate in the program are reimbursed up to 75% of the cost to provide training for current employees up to \$2,500 per employee.</p> <p>If the community was interested in pursuing this project idea, the first step would be to use the BRE survey responses to identify businesses with the greatest need for training. Next steps would be to schedule meetings with these businesses and representatives from the local educational institutions (either individually or in groups, based on the type of training needed), identify specific needs and areas of overlap, and then work to identify content, delivery mode, audience, and timeline.</p>
<p>As noted previously, one of the occupations that San Juan County businesses reported the most difficulties recruiting for was skilled manufacturing (e.g. welders, machinists, etc.), with 15% of businesses noting difficulties recruiting employees in that category. In addition, businesses expect to add significant numbers of these workers in the next three years. In total, surveyed businesses predicted that they will need to hire 250 of this type of worker in the next three years.</p> <p>Meanwhile, only 6% of San Juan County businesses noted difficulties recruiting unskilled manufacturing workers.</p> <p>When asked about their current training methods, nearly all San Juan County businesses (88%) use in-house training. Other popular training methods include self-directed training (41%), offsite training (36%), and private vendors (33%). Fewer businesses reported using public vendors, such as technical colleges (15%), apprenticeships (14%), or government supported programs (3%).</p>	<p>1.2 Establish career pathways and apprenticeships for in-demand occupations</p> <p>Those businesses that have the most difficult time recruiting and retaining workers might consider using training and professional development opportunities to attract and keep employees.</p> <p>One example of this could be to establish career pathways for workers in entry-level positions (e.g. unskilled manufacturing or office and administrative). Career pathways give existing employees opportunities to move into more skilled manufacturing or professional/managerial roles through training opportunities and partnerships with local educational institutions. This type of career pathway could be coordinated with input from the local Workforce Connection center<sup>6</sup> located in Farmington or with San Juan College.</p> <p>Apprenticeships can also be an effective way to recruit and train new workers. New Mexico's Department of Workforce Solutions offers apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathway programs for a number of industries, including construction, manufacturing, healthcare, utilities, transportation, and information technology. Apprenticeship sponsors benefit from reduced turnover rates, increased productivity, lower recruitment costs, increased safety, and higher quality employees.</p> <p>If interested in this project idea, one strategy for the BRE task force could be to identify the San Juan County employers (14% of survey respondents) that currently utilize apprenticeships, as well as those that might benefit from an apprenticeship program. The more senior business leaders could then serve as apprenticeship ambassadors for the less experienced business owners, educating them on the ins and outs of using apprenticeships. A representative from New Mexico's Department of Workforce Solutions could work with the ambassadors to provide technical expertise on the</p>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/Office-Locations>

	program requirements.
<p>According to survey findings, 32% of <i>San Juan County businesses reported difficulties recruiting. The occupation that businesses reported having the most difficulty hiring was professional and managerial workers</i>, with 32% of businesses reporting problems recruiting that occupation. Other occupations with reported recruiting difficulties included <i>skilled manufacturing workers (15%), office and administrative workers (14%), and engineers, scientists, and technicians 11%</i>. San Juan County businesses reported inadequate labor skills, competition for employees, poor work attitudes, and an unwillingness to relocate as some of their top recruitment challenges.</p> <p>Looking ahead, businesses expect to hire more employees in the next three years, with the greatest increases expected in the skilled manufacturing category. In total, surveyed businesses are expecting to add 250 skilled manufacturing jobs over the next three years. Other significant recruitment needs will be unskilled manufacturing (92 new workers), unskilled service (58 new workers), and professional and managerial (44 new workers).</p> <p>On a positive note, wages in San Juan County offer attractive compensation. The average hourly starting wage for engineers, scientists, and technicians was \$31.71; professional and managerial occupations earn \$29.22; and information technology occupations earn \$25.86.</p>	<p>1.3 Hands-on career exploration event for youth</p> <p>Developing connections with students early on when they first begin considering their future careers can be a valuable way to ensure the future workforce is meeting local business needs.</p> <p>One idea for how to accomplish this is a hands-on career exploration event where regional high schools students are given information about in-demand careers and have the opportunity to utilize some of the skills they would use in these careers. Minnesota has a similar event called “Construct Tomorrow,” which focuses on construction and building trades that has been very successful.<sup>7</sup> Students who attend a Construct Tomorrow event talk to trades professionals and current apprentices while practicing hands-on learning activities that feature the construction trades. In San Juan County, the focus might be on skilled manufacturing, engineering, or other similar in-demand occupations. Local businesses could set up booths with hands-on activities and information on career opportunities. Students from local high schools as well as neighboring communities would be invited.</p>
<p>San Juan County businesses reported that inadequate labor skills and poor work attitudes were some of their top recruitment challenges. More than one-third of San Juan County businesses cited inadequate labor skills as a recruitment challenge, and 20% mentioned poor work attitudes as a problem. In addition, San Juan County businesses tended to report greater challenges recruiting workers than is typical for past BRE communities, particularly when it comes to inadequate labor skills, poor work attitudes, and workers’ ability to pass screenings.</p> <p>On a related topic, when comparing the retail factors in San Juan County with those from past BRE communities, the areas with the largest gap were customer service (San Juan County received an average rating of 2.5 compared with 3.1 for past BRE communities) and knowledge and friendliness of local personnel (San Juan rating of 2.7 compared with 3.2).</p>	<p>1.4 Soft skills certification</p> <p>San Juan County retail and hospitality businesses or the local Chambers of Commerce or San Juan College might consider developing a “Leadership and Service” soft skills certification program for frontline employees.</p> <p>If interested, the task force could work with one or more local partners to develop or host the program. New Mexico’s Department of Workforce Solutions has a Soft Skills in the Workplace virtual workshop.<sup>8</sup> The University of New Mexico’s Mentoring Institute has a College and Career Readiness Soft-Skills Program for both high schools and individual students.<sup>9</sup> Finally, the American Indian Chamber of Commerce mentions soft skill training on its website<sup>10</sup> and could be a potential partner. The task force could use one of these programs off the shelf or develop a new customized program, depending on needs</p> <p>Participating businesses could have current</p>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.constructtomorrow.org/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.dws.state.nm.us/workshops>

<sup>9</sup> <https://mentor.unm.edu/softskills>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.aiccnm.com/workforce-development/>



<p><i>Finally, when asked which industry best represented their business, the three most popular categories included Retail Trade (19% of respondents), professional, scientific, and technical services (12%), and Other Services (11%). Other industries with fairly strong representation in San Juan County included Accommodation and Food Services (9%) and Health Care Services/Social Assistance. All of these industries demand high quality customer service skills and good inter-personal skills.</i></p>	<p>employees participate in the program, and then the business (and employees) would receive “Leadership and Service” certification. The certification would serve the dual purpose of professional development (for the employee) and marketing (for the business).</p>
<p>As mentioned previously, 32% of San Juan County businesses reported difficulties recruiting. And many of the positions where businesses noted having the most difficulty recruiting (e.g. Professional/managerial, skilled manufacturing) were some of the ones for which businesses expect to add the most workers in the coming years.</p> <p>Inadequate labor skills, competition for employees, poor work attitudes, and an unwillingness to relocate were cited as some of businesses’ top recruitment challenges.</p> <p>The most common recruitment methods currently being used by San Juan County businesses included word of mouth (61%), referrals from existing employees (45%), and internet advertising on social media and job boards (both 42%).</p>	<p>1.5 Human resources toolkit and best practices</p> <p>In partnership with the local Workforce Connection Center and the Four Corners Human Resource Association,<sup>11</sup> the BRE task force might consider developing a “San Juan Careers Start Here” toolkit for employers. The toolkit would be a resource for local HR departments (or business owners who lack a formal HR department). The toolkit could include a variety of resources related to recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention, including sample job postings, recruitment publications, onboarding checklists, and best practices related to employee retention. Ideally, the toolkit would provide recommendations for employers on how to attract and retain employees from diverse backgrounds, including BIPOC communities, older workers, youth, and workers with disabilities, to ensure that employers are reaching a wide pool of applicants when they are hiring, and minimize employee turnover.</p> <p>New Mexico State University Human Resources (NMSU HR) department has already developed its own recruitment and hiring toolkit<sup>12</sup> for hiring faculty, staff, and students, which includes information about hiring foreign nationals, a list of recruitment publications, performance improvement plans, tips for employee recognition, exit interviews and much more. The BRE task force could begin by reaching out to the NMSU HR to discuss if it would assist with the project.</p>
<p>San Juan County’s coal, oil and gas extraction industry has seen large declines in employment over the past decade. In 2014, the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry employed 6,723 workers in San Juan County. By 2019, that number had declined to 4,597, according to the state’s Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Many of the stakeholders present at the March 4 research review meeting mentioned the region’s dependence on coal, oil and gas as a threat during the SWOT analysis (see Table 2-3, page 22).</p>	<p>1.6 Transferable skills analysis for oil and gas workers</p> <p>San Juan County’s energy industry is at risk as the fossil fuel industry declines and society responds to climate change. In partnership with staff from the local Workforce Connection center, 4CED could engage with the soon-to-be displaced energy workers to gauge their long-term workforce needs. Whether this engagement consists of one-on-one interviews, in-person surveys, and/or focus groups, Energy Country needs to know, for example, how many workers are planning to retire? Do they wish to stay in San Juan County, or are they planning to</p>

<sup>11</sup> [https://fchra-nm.shrm.org/?\\_ga=2.262923276.1223833308.1617296308-1215150179.1617296308](https://fchra-nm.shrm.org/?_ga=2.262923276.1223833308.1617296308-1215150179.1617296308)

<sup>12</sup> <https://hr.nmsu.edu/toolkits/>

	<p>move? For employees not ready to retire and who wish to stay, what transferable skills do they have? Are there employees who might consider starting their own businesses? What would they need to start this new chapter in their lives?<sup>13</sup> A resource that 4CED can use in this effort is the Workforce Connection labor market information website,<sup>14</sup> which includes occupational outlooks and allows users to find occupations that match their skills.</p>
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<sup>13</sup> This idea was borrowed from a 2020 BRE Course paper by Becky Bowen, J.D., COAL COUNTRY BRE, North Carolina State Extension

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.jobs.state.nm.us/vosnet/lmi/default.aspx>

## Strategy Two: Beautify and Market San Juan County

Finding	Possible Project
<p>One issue identified in the survey results was a desire to improve the retail atmosphere in San Juan County. Nearly 30% of all surveyed businesses rated the overall atmosphere in San Juan County's shopping area as below average or poor. On average, businesses rated the community's retail atmosphere as 2.8 out of 4, compared with an average of 3.1 for all other BRE communities. The retail qualities where San Juan County is rated lowest, when compared to BRE benchmarks, are public restrooms, variety in eating places, advertising, events or promotions, and variety of businesses.</p> <p>There are a number of strengths that the community could build upon if improving retail is a priority. Nearly 20% of surveyed businesses are classified as retail establishments, and 89% of all surveyed businesses are locally owned. This suggests that San Juan County's retail establishments are an engaged part of the business community and could work together on a project designed to improve the retail atmosphere locally.</p>	<p><b>2.1 Aesthetics task force</b></p> <p>According to stakeholders at the March 4 Research Review Meeting, the communities in San Juan County have done a lot of work over the past few years to improve the aesthetics of the area, particularly in downtown Farmington. However, the survey responses and open-ended comments indicate that there is still much work to be done in that area. Some possible project ideas that the BRE task force might consider to help enhance and beautify the community are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a San Juan County aesthetics task force with champions from each city to help determine and drive policy for community aesthetic standards.</li> <li>• Have the task force review all county zoning ordinances related to aesthetics and build upon the county's work to ensure all ordinances are being followed and enforced. Work with county and local officials to provide incentives for business beautification, particularly those along the Animas River Walk Trails and Park in Farmington.</li> <li>• Develop a county-wide marketing campaign for local businesses, which could be entitled "Beautiful San Juan County." Businesses would be encouraged to purchase a customized, branded banner for their business that has their business name followed by "in Beautiful San Juan County." The campaign could be accompanied by a hashtag, which businesses would use on social media.</li> </ul> <p>While the New Mexico Department of Transportation has authority over maintaining the county's roadways, the aesthetics task force could engage with the DOT and put legislative pressure on them to clean the county's roadways more frequently.</p>
<p>When asked about satisfaction with retail factors in the community, the variety of places to eat received the second lowest rating among all of items listed. On average, San Juan County businesses rated their dining options a score of 2.3, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent, compared to the average rating for previous BRE communities of 2.7.</p> <p>In the open-ended section of the survey, a number of respondents (n=8) noted that the lack of variety of restaurants, combined with the area's local liquor laws are a problem for the community. Some of the comments included, "River walk really needs restaurants, places to eat and drink." "If people want somewhere 'nice' to eat, they go to Durango, CO." "Liquor license reform—to keep restaurants and bars in business," and "Need more beer and wine</p>	<p><b>2.2 Dining needs assessment</b></p> <p>According to stakeholders at the March 4 Research Review Meeting, Farmington has been doing a lot of work to renovate its downtown area. Now, the community is working to add additional housing downtown and encourage more business activity at night.</p> <p>However, a major detriment to improving Farmington's dining scene has been the state's strict liquor laws (which only allow for the sale of beer and wine) and the prohibitive cost of liquor licenses. According to some business owners, a license might cost \$400,000 to \$500,000.</p> <p>Luckily, recent legislation (passed in March 2021) has overhauled the state liquor regulations, legalizing liquor deliveries and expanding alcohol</p>

<p>liquor licenses for people to be able to go out to eat and drink.”</p>	<p>licenses to include the sale of spirits. These changes provide San Juan County a great opportunity to encourage new restaurants to expand in Farmington and the surrounding communities. To address the issue, the BRE task force might consider a dining needs assessment. A needs assessment could help the task force determine whether new restaurants would be viable by gaining consumer input on location or the types of cuisine that are not being adequately supplied. After conducting a needs assessment, the task force could consider a variety of options. The city of Farmington could look to attract new restaurants through economic incentives. Or, local leaders could provide existing restaurants with consumer input from the needs assessment, which could encourage restaurants to adjust their menus and expand their customer base. Finally, the task force might consider working with the San Juan College Harvest Food Hub<sup>15</sup> to explore interest and/or ability to expand into commercial dining options.</p>
<p>According to the survey results, 62% of businesses felt that San Juan County was above average or excellent as a place to live. This reflects a generally positive attitude about the community among its residents. When businesses were asked about the importance of and satisfaction with various community factors (Q35/36), the county’s recreational opportunities and cultural opportunities were both rated among the highest in terms of importance and satisfaction, suggesting they might be factors to focus upon in a marketing campaign.</p>	<p>2.3 Marketing campaign for San Juan County San Juan County businesses are clearly proud of many aspects of their community, but they may need help marketing the positive aspects to others. The BRE task force may consider getting involved with Marketing Hometown America,<sup>16</sup> which is an educational program that focuses on recruiting and retaining new residents in rural America. The program helps communities discover overlooked assets that people outside the community might find attractive and helps communities create marketing plans. According to the survey results and open-ended comments, a successful marketing campaign would include promotion of the area’s outdoor recreational opportunities, great weather, proximity to adventure, and strong cultural diversity.</p>
<p>According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 40% of San Juan County residents are American Indian or Alaska Native, compared to less than 1% nationwide. And another 20% of the county’s population is Hispanic or Latino, compared to 18% nationwide. San Juan County businesses were asked to rate various community features related to tourism and indicate whether those features had a very positive impact (rating of +2), very negative impact (-2), or no impact (0) on their business. San Juan County businesses listed community diversity (average rating of 0.85), arts and cultural events (0.75), and</p>	<p>2.4 Add cultural events and coordinate efforts county-wide According to a web search, San Juan County boasts numerous events and festivals. Farmington has the Festival of Trees, the Farmington Grower’s Market, Freedom Days, the County Fair and Carnival, the Connie Mack World Series, and Four Corners Week. Nearby Aztec hosts the Aztec Motocross Races, Shiprock has the Shiprock Fair, and Bloomfield has Bloomfield Days and the Balloon Festival. However, despite the rich cultural diversity in the region, there are very few tribal events. The only tribal event listed on the Farmington events</p>

<sup>15</sup> <https://harvestfoodhub.localfoodmarketplace.com/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://communityvitality.unl.edu/marketing-hometown-america-0>



<p>festivals or events (0.71) all among the top items in terms of having the most positive impact on their business. Each of these items had a higher rating than is typical for past BRE communities.</p> <p>As mentioned previously, the county's cultural opportunities were ranked among the highest in terms of importance and satisfaction for questions 35 and 36 in the survey, suggesting they are areas that San Juan County can celebrate and showcase.</p>	<p>page is the Totah Festival Indian Market &amp; Pow Wow.</p> <p>The BRE task force could either work with the region's Latino communities and tribal leaders to incorporate tribal and/or Latino celebrations, foods, or activities into existing events or they might consider adding an additional festival to showcase the area's cultural diversity.</p> <p>On a related note, each of the cities in San Juan County currently appear to have their own websites for their local festivals and events. The city leaders might consider working together on a county-wide events page, a one-stop shop for all of the festivals and events happening throughout the county.</p>
<p>As mentioned previously, San Juan County is a racially and ethnically diverse community, with large American Indian and Hispanic or Latino populations. San Juan County also encompasses several governing bodies: the semi-autonomous Navajo Nation Reservation; the county; and the municipal governments of its largest cities—Farmington, Bloomfield, and the county seat of Aztec.</p> <p>The racial and ethnic diversity of the community, combined with the diversity of governing bodies creates some unique challenges for the community. Some of these challenges (e.g. prejudices and a general lack of cohesiveness between tribal entities, local municipalities, and states) were noted in the survey's open-ended comments section, as well as during the March 4 Research Review Meeting.</p>	<p>2.5 Regional ideas summit</p> <p>One way to increase and improve community engagement and social capital in San Juan County could be an ideas summit where community leaders from all of county's key stakeholder groups could come together to find common ground on economic development opportunities, with the long-term goal of making San Juan County a better place to live, learn, do business, and raise a family. The summit could be jointly organized by 4CED, San Juan County, the Navajo Nation Reservation, the cities, and local civic organizations.</p> <p>The goal of the summit could be to establish a multi-cultural working group, which would then be tasked with implementing the ideas identified at the summit.</p>



### Strategy Three: Support and Expand Local Businesses

Finding	Possible Project
<p>When businesses were asked about the importance of and satisfaction with various community factors (questions 35 and 36), the county's EDA (4CED) was rated among the highest in terms of importance (3.22 out of 4) and received an above average rating for satisfaction (3.07 out of 4), suggesting that the local business community is very satisfied with the economic development services provided in the region. Local higher education, technical training programs, and Chambers of Commerce also received very high marks in terms of business satisfaction.</p> <p>Conversely, "incentives for business investment in facilities, worker skills or more workers" ranked very highly in terms of importance but had lower-than-average satisfaction ratings among survey respondents.</p> <p>The BRE survey also asked businesses whether they would be interested in learning more about twelve local resources, including organizations such as the Women's Economic Self-Sufficiency Team, the Center for Workforce Development, and others. The resources that were selected among the highest numbers of businesses included the Small Business Development Center (31% of businesses), the Job Training Incentive Program (28%), the Local Economic Development Act (28%), and the New Mexico Economic Development Department (26%).</p>	<p><b>3.1 Business trainings and seminars</b></p> <p>The survey results suggest that San Juan County businesses might benefit from monthly or quarterly training workshops, hosted jointly by the local Chambers and 4CED. The purpose of these training workshops would be to offer local businesses the opportunity to learn new skills, network with other local business owners, keep current on new technologies, and share best practices.</p> <p>Some potential ideas for these trainings might include: "What the SBDC can do for you," "How to Write a Business Plan," "Job Training Incentive Program 101," "Using Social Media," and others as needed. Workshops and trainings could be hosted by experts from the community and/or provide education to the businesses on some of the resources listed in the survey.</p> <p>One option for a format would be to alternate between in-person and virtual events to give businesses the flexibility to take advantage of the format they prefer. To ensure participation among businesses throughout the county, event locations could rotate among the cities in San Juan County.</p>
<p>According to the survey findings, only 56% of San Juan County businesses have a written business plan and even fewer (38%) have a transition plan for ownership. Despite this, roughly 70% of surveyed businesses expect changes to their business plan in the next three years, and 28% of businesses stated they were considering downsizing, selling, moving, or closing. In addition, 89% of San Juan County businesses are locally owned, which puts an additional burden on the community to ensure the business remains operational.</p> <p>Research indicates there are two major elements in transferring a business: leadership and ownership. These are overlapping yet separate issues that are crucial to business survival as the original owners/leaders move on.<sup>17</sup> It typically takes 1 to 3 years to find a buyer for a business.</p>	<p><b>3.2 Transition planning workshops</b></p> <p>The loss of a business in a community due to failed transitions can have significant consequences, especially in a smaller communities like those in San Juan County. However, there are actions that communities can take to minimize the negative effects of business succession.</p> <p>In 2016, UMN Extension researched how small rural communities could support business transfer. Its website<sup>18</sup> offers a detailed action plan for communities to follow. If San Juan County's BRE task force were interested in pursuing this project, the first step would be to identify a local champion team to initiate business succession efforts. The team would then be responsible for creating the action plan, which includes promoting business health, successful ownership transition, and successful leadership transition.</p> <p>One step in the action plan could be to work with San Juan County's local Small Business</p>

<sup>17</sup> The silver tsunami and rural small business retention: What can communities do?

Elizabeth Templin, Scott Chazdon, Glenn Muske, Felipe Dyna Barroso, Lillian Osborne, and William Craig  
Community Development Vol. 48, Iss. 2, 2017

<sup>18</sup> <https://extension.umn.edu/community-development/supporting-rural-business-succession>

	<p>Development Center (SBDC).<sup>19</sup> The SBDC recently developed a virtual training designed to help businesses develop a transition plan. The BRE task force could help identify businesses that are considering selling or downsizing and help the SBDC market their training to the businesses that need it most.</p>
<p>According to the survey findings, 85% of San Juan County businesses' customers are within 100 miles or less, and less than 1% are from outside the U.S. This finding mirrors San Juan County businesses' experiences with exporting. When asked about exporting internationally, 94% of the county's businesses reported they were not. While 20% of those gave the reason for their lack of exporting as "business designed to serve specific area," other factors preventing businesses from exporting include a lack of knowledge of foreign countries/markets (8%), the impression that their business is too small to export (7%), and a lack of knowledge/concern about receiving payment (3%). A handful of businesses (4%) stated that they had not considered exporting before but would like to consider it.</p>	<p><b>3.3 Export and expand customer base</b>  San Juan County appears to have businesses that may be interested in the prospect of exporting but lack the expertise or knowledge to do so. To support the city's manufacturing industry and expand its customer base, the BRE task force might consider identifying local businesses that have the potential to export and facilitating conversations between the business owners and New Mexico's Office of International Trade.</p> <p>According to the Office of International Trade, companies that export have reported a 32 percent increase in revenue as opposed to a 19 percent decrease among those companies who only pursue the domestic market.</p> <p>Services provided by the Office of International Trade include one-on-one consultations, funding, workshops and seminars on international market opportunities, trade events, and reverse trade missions.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>Some businesses may feel that they are not quite ready for exporting but want to take some initial steps in that direction. If this is the case, another option could be the New Mexico ISO 9000 certification,<sup>21</sup> which provides industries the tools and training to be more competitive. The certification includes instruction on standard operating procedures, work instructions, process flow diagrams, and much more. In addition, ISO certification is a quality management standard that is recognized by more than 170 countries, which could provide access to new markets in the long-term.</p>
<p>According to the USDA Census of Agriculture for San Juan County, there were 2,965 farms in the county in 2017, totaling more than 2.5 million acres of farmland.</p> <p>The number of farms in the county has increased by 13% since 2012 and by more than 300% since 2002. The most common crops in the area, as measured by sales, include hay, vegetables, cattle, and sheep/goats. Roughly two-thirds of the producers in the county are American Indian, 23% of producers are "new and beginning farmers," and 96% of farms in the county are family-owned.</p>	<p><b>3.4 Focus on San Juan County ag industry</b>  San Juan County's local agriculture industry has been growing and the BRE task force might consider looking for ways to ensure its long-term success. A few possible ideas are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a dialogue between the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI) and local farms on how they could benefit one another.</li> <li>• Work with the San Juan County Cooperative Extension Service, which provides a wide range of services for local producers, including the NWNM New Farmer Network, New Farmer</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.nmsbdc.org/farmington.aspx>

<sup>20</sup> <https://gonm.biz/business-development/edd-programs-for-business/international-trade/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://gonm.biz/business-development/edd-programs-for-business/iso-9001-training-preparation/>

	<p>Grants and Loans, and information for Land-Seekers<sup>22</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options for developing or attracting a USDA certified packing house to process animals</li> <li>• Launch a campaign to promote locally grown products, similar to the statewide campaign, “New Mexico: Taste the Tradition”<sup>23</sup></li> </ul>
<p>Many businesses in San Juan County are looking to expand. According to Figure 2-19, 29% of San Juan County businesses are considering expanding at their current location and another 27% are considering adding another location. These rates are significantly higher than is typical among past BRE communities. On average, 21% of previous BRE communities were considering expansion at the current location, and 15% were considering adding another location.</p> <p>However, when businesses were asked where they intend to expand, 11% indicated they were considering another county in the state and another 16% indicated another state.</p>	<p>3.5 Capitalize on business expansions</p> <p>One option for the BRE task force is to schedule meetings proactively with businesses that are considering expansion. The task force, which could include representatives from 4CED, the local Chambers of Commerce, city council members, and the Department of Workforce Solutions, would be equipped with resources to help the businesses with local expansion plans. The task force could discuss expansion strategies as well as solutions to common barriers that businesses might face as they consider expansion (e.g. funding, land availability, local contractors, workforce needs, and more)</p>
<p>According to the survey results, more than half of all interviewed businesses have plans to modernize or expand their present buildings or equipment, and 27% of businesses are considering adding a new location.</p> <p>However, one-third of all businesses surveyed stated that they do not own or rent/lease sufficient property for expansion.</p> <p>Finally, questions 35 and 36 in the BRE survey asked businesses to consider 49 community factors. Availability of land, availability of buildings, availability of loans, and cost of loans were four factors that businesses rated as very important and also gave relatively high marks in terms of satisfaction. This suggests that there are buildings, land, and loans available for San Juan County businesses that are considering expansion.</p>	<p>3.6 Construction consortium/information sessions</p> <p>It appears that many San Juan County businesses would like to expand but may need assistance finding a suitable location. The BRE task force might consider developing a consortium of contractors and builders willing to do build-to-suit for existing and future businesses in the community. 4CED could then work with the consortium to host informational sessions for businesses on procurement opportunities for construction services and similar building needs.</p>

<sup>22</sup> <https://aces.nmsu.edu/nwnmnfn/index.html>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.nmda.nmsu.edu/2021/01/new-mexico-department-of-agriculture-launches-campaign-to-promote-local-products/>

## Strategy Four: Build on Existing Infrastructure

Finding	Possible Project
<p>Businesses in San Juan County placed very high importance on broadband cost, speed, and reliability. According to Figure 2-24, businesses rated the importance of telecommunications and broadband cost as 3.85, with 1 being not at all important and 4 being very important. In fact, it was the most important community factor of all those listed. Broadband speed and reliability were ranked very high in importance as well, with average scores of 3.76 and 3.55, respectively.</p> <p>However, business satisfaction with those same factors was much lower. Businesses rated their satisfaction with broadband cost in San Juan County as 2.73 on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 4 being very satisfied. Broadband speed was rated lower, at 2.71, and broadband reliability was rated 2.76.</p> <p>All three factors had higher-than-average importance yet lower levels of satisfaction, suggesting the community could take action to address these issues. In addition, a few of the open-ended comments expressed dissatisfaction with internet access and costs.</p> <p>San Juan County businesses, on average, rated their air and rail service as significantly less important to their operations (importance ratings of 1.82 and 2.32, respectively). However, these factors received the lowest satisfaction ratings of all of the 49 community features listed in questions 35 and 36. On average, businesses rated their satisfaction with the local air service as 1.78 out of 4 (on a scale from 1 to 4), and the rail service even lower, at 1.59. Numerous open-ended comments mentioned air and rail as a limiting factor for their business.</p>	<p>4.1 Coordinated effort on broadband/air/rail</p> <p>San Juan County residents and community leaders have been working to improve broadband, rail, and air service in the community for many years. Recently, the county received \$2 million in federal funds to study the feasibility of building a railroad spur connecting Farmington with Gallup. At the same time, the local municipal airport has been in negotiations with major air carriers to reduce costs and bring in service. And while there is broadband infrastructure throughout the county, thanks to past efforts on the part of community leaders, middle mile and last mile projects are still major opportunities. In short, there is a lot of work happening to expand broadband, air, and rail locally, and the BRE task force may want to build upon that work. Considering that there might be significant overlap in the strategies and partners on these three projects, a coordinated effort might have a greater chance of success.</p> <p>4CED might consider scheduling a multi-day planning retreat with all of the key stakeholders, including county officials, the Farmington mayor, leadership from the Navajo Nation, business leaders, the New Mexico governor's office, the New Mexico Department of Economic Development, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, and city leaders. The purpose of the retreat would be to share information on past and current initiatives related to broadband, air, and rail; identify best practices from San Juan County's past efforts or from other neighboring regions; determine potential funding sources; and develop a five-year plan for the three efforts.</p> <p>Below are just a few state and local resources that the task force might consider reaching out to/reviewing as they plan for the retreat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Mexico Opportunity Zone Hub (most of San Juan County qualifies as an Opportunity Zone)<sup>24</sup></li> <li>• Farmington Transportation Improvement Program (planned projects 2020-2025)<sup>25</sup></li> <li>• University of New Mexico's Civil Construction &amp; Engineering program<sup>26</sup> could be a partner for an infrastructure project</li> </ul> <p>New Mexico's State Office of Broadband<sup>27</sup></p>
<p>According to the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) 2019 data, roughly 10% of San</p>	<p>4.2 Use existing infrastructure to attract new businesses</p>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.nmopportunity.com/>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.fmtn.org/370/Transportation-Improvement-Program>

<sup>26</sup> <https://civil.unm.edu/about/index.html>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.doit.state.nm.us/broadband/>

Juan County's workforce was employed in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry. Compare that to roughly 3% of the state's workforce, and less than 1% of the workforce nationwide. Clearly, the coal, oil and gas extraction industry and coal powered electricity are very important to San Juan County's local economy. However, this industry has seen large declines in employment over the past decade. In 2014, the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry employed 6,723 workers in San Juan County. By 2019, that number had declined to 4,597, according to the state's QCEW. This represents a 31% decline in employment for an industry that is very important to the county's economic health. As one example, two of the four units in the San Juan Generating Station (electric plant) shut down and the remaining two units and nearby coal mine may shut down in 2022. Many businesses mentioned the region's dependence on coal, oil and gas as a threat during the SWOT analysis (see Table 2-3, page 22). And in the open-ended comments section, 62 comments mentioned coal, oil and gas in some respect. Some of these comments noted external forces that are negatively impacting the future of the industry. For example, one commenter noted, "Power plants have a bleak horizon with changes to oil and gas. The energy sector has been an economic driver, but these jobs are going away."

According to stakeholders at the research review meeting, the Blanco Hub near Bloomfield is home to one of the largest natural gas refining and transportation hubs in the western US. It contains various operations of several major companies, and transmission lines extend from the hub all across the western part of the country. Transmission lines are a valuable resource to have when it comes to new energy sources. The presence of transmission lines allows for the development of hydroelectric power, batteries, and electric storage opportunities. One potential project idea would be to use the existing infrastructure at the Blanco Hub to attract solar and wind developers. If the BRE task force were interested in pursuing this idea, the first step could be to develop a strategic marketing plan to attract smaller value-added companies and supporting industries to the Hub. 4CED could bring together representatives of the major companies located at the Hub to explore development of this concept.

## Chapter 4: Actual Interview Results

### San Juan County Business Retention and Expansion Interview Guide

For BR&E Coordinator only:

Business ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Also record on pages 1 & 4 of  
survey

BUSINESS NAME:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON INTERVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER KEY OFFICIALS IN THIS ESTABLISHMENT BEING INTERVIEWED:

Owner \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Exec. Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Plant Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Financial Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Human Resources Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Ambassadors:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**San Juan County**  
**Business Retention and Expansion**  
Background

*We believe our existing businesses are our best prospects for future development. The purpose of this program is to see how we can help them succeed.*

- This program is sponsored by Four Corners Economic Development in conjunction with San Juan County, the cities located in San Juan County and numerous organizations in the county.
- The program is a cooperative effort involving volunteers drawn from other businesses, local government, and educational institutions.
- Technical and applied research assistance for this program is provided by the University of Minnesota Extension.

- The objectives of the program are:

To demonstrate support for local businesses

To help solve immediate business concerns.

To increase local businesses' ability to compete in the global economy

To implement a strategic plan for economic development.

To build community capacity to sustain growth and development.

- Confidentiality - Your individual answers to this survey are confidential and will not be released except as required by law. Your response will be summarized with those of others to produce an overall result in percentages or averages. **If we find an issue in your survey response in which a certain individual or individuals may be able to respond to your concern in a beneficial way, we will come back to you and offer you those resources.**
- The "Skip It Rule" - If there is a question that you feel might be best to skip, we will do that; just let us know. There is no need to explain your reasons.
- Copy of Summary Report - Copies of the summary will be provided to all businesses that participate in this survey.

**San Juan County  
Business Retention and Expansion  
Interview Guide  
Data Tabulation, March 1, 2021.**

For BR&E Coordinator only:

Business ID: \_\_\_\_\_

**Unless noted, all percentages indicate the percent of the total respondents (N=100), not the percent of those answering the question. This is the actual survey that was used, with the numeric data results.**

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Aztec: 11; Bloomfield: 6; Farmington: 73; Flora Vista: 2; Kirtland: 7; Shiprock: 2; Waterflow: 1

**1a. Is all the information on the cover sheet complete and correct? (Circle ONE answer)**

99% Yes 0% No → **1b. If No, make the necessary corrections.**

**2a. Did your business begin its operation in this community? (Circle ONE answer)**

81% Yes 19% No → **2b. If No, where did you move from and when?**

<u>Community</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Year</u>
_____	_____	_____

→ **2c. If Yes, what year?** Average = 1990, Range = 1910-2019

**3. What type of facility is this? (Circle all that apply)**

10% Branch  
2% Distribution  
53% Headquarters  
0% Home-based business  
6% Manufacturing  
7% Office-operation (non HQ)  
2% Research & Development  
11% Retail Sales Office  
22% Other

**4a. Is your business locally owned? (Circle ONE answer)**

89% Yes 11% No → **4b. If No, where is your corporate headquarters located?**  
(Please identify city, state, & country) \_\_\_\_\_

**5a. Do you have multiple locations? (Circle ONE answer)**

35% Yes 65% No

→ **5b. If Yes, where are they located?** \_\_\_\_\_



6. Which of the following North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories best describes your business? (*Circle ONE answer*)

(note: some chose more than one category, adds up to 107%)

0%	Administration/Support/Waste Management/Remediation Services	9%	Manufacturing
2%	Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting	9%	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
9%	Accommodation/Food Services	11%	Other Services
1%	Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	12%	Professional/Scientific/Technical Services
8%	Construction	0%	Public Administration
2%	Educational Services	2%	Real Estate/Rental and Leasing
7%	Finance/Insurance	19%	Retail Trade
8%	Health Care Services/Social Assistance	3%	Transportation and Warehousing
2%	Information	0%	Utilities
0%	Management of Companies & Enterprises	3%	Wholesale Trade

**Your product / service**

7. We are interested in learning about your primary products and services.

a. Name the major products or services offered by this establishment	b. What percentage of your total sales comes from each? ( <i>Total should equal 100%</i> )	c. Are sales of this product or service? ( <i>Circle ONE answer</i> )
(1) <b>Data for local use only</b>	%	(1)Increasing (2)Stable (3)Decreasing
(2)	%	(1)Increasing (2)Stable (3)Decreasing
(3)	%	(1)Increasing (2)Stable (3)Decreasing
(4) Other products or services (specify)	%	(1)Increasing (2)Stable (3)Decreasing
<i>Check total (should equal 100%)</i>	100 %	

8a. What is special or unique about your major products or services? (*Ambassador: Please take detailed notes here.*)

**Data for local use only**

8b. What are the one or two most important reasons that customers might choose your competitors over you?

**Data for local use only**

## Labor Force

9. Please estimate how many workers (including yourself) are employed by you at this location? We'd like you to break this out between full-time and part-time for the two time periods shown. (N=96 that answered the question; \* = average excluding top 5% and bottom 5%)

	a. Full time	b. Part time (as defined by the business)	c. Seasonal (hired by the business)	d. Temp agency employees
Currently	40.1 average 23.8 TrimMean* (3851 total)	17.3 average 6.6 TrimMean* (1226 total)	5.9 average 1.8 TrimMean* (175.5 total)	0.1 average 0.0 TrimMean* (2 total)
Three years ago	49.5 average 26.6 TrimMean* (4749 total)	19.7 average 6.2 TrimMean* (1278 total)	5.4 average 1.2 TrimMean* (151.5 total)	0.2 average 0.1 TrimMean* (5 total)

10. If the number of employees changed from three years ago, please identify up to 3 reasons for the employment change. (Circle **UP TO THREE** reasons)

2%	Business did not exist 3 years ago
6%	Change in management
10%	Change in profits
3%	Change in subcontracting
12%	Changes in worker efficiency
5%	Corporate decisions/policies
12%	Entered new markets
14%	Expansion
7%	Government regulation
14%	Growth in demand
2%	Increased competition
16%	Lack of demand
14%	New products/services
3%	Renovation
5%	Technological changes
33%	Other – please specify _____
13%	Not applicable

11. What is the average hourly STARTING wage paid to employees in each category? (If you do not have employees in that category, write *Not Applicable* or *NA*)

		Average	Median
a)	Professional/Managerial (managers, accountants, HR professionals, etc.)	\$29.22	\$27.93
b)	Information Technology	\$25.86	\$25.50
c)	Engineers, Scientists and Technicians	\$31.71	\$30.00
d)	Arts, Design and other Creative Occupations	\$17.78	\$17.00
e)	Healthcare Related	\$17.97	\$17.50
f)	Office and Administrative (secretaries, office clerks, receptionists, etc.)	\$15.66	\$15.50
g)	Unskilled Workers (food prep., retail sales, housekeeping, etc.)	\$12.05	\$10.95
h)	Agricultural	\$10.00	\$10.00
i)	Construction	\$17.72	\$18.62
j)	Repair and Skilled Maintenance (not janitorial)	\$19.31	\$18.00
k)	Unskilled Manufacturing (assembly, production helpers, etc.)	\$11.44	\$11.50
l)	Skilled Manufacturing (welders, machinists, etc.)	\$21.08	\$20.26
m)	Transportation	\$18.86	\$18.00

For BR&E staff only

Business ID: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Does your company have problems recruiting employees in the following categories? (Circle ONE answer per line)**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b><u>Not</u> Applicable</b>
(a)	Professional/Managerial (managers, accountants, HR professionals etc.)	32.0%	42.0%	2.0%	5.0%
(b)	Information Technology	9.0%	11.0%	0.0%	5.0%
(c)	Engineers, Scientists and Technicians	11.0%	8.0%	1.0%	7.0%
(d)	Arts, Design and other Creative Occupations	6.0%	8.0%	1.0%	7.0%
(e)	Healthcare Related	6.0%	5.0%	0.0%	10.0%
(f)	Office and Administrative (secretaries, office clerks, receptionists, etc.)	14.0%	48.0%	2.0%	2.0%
(g)	Unskilled Service Workers (food prep, retail sales, housekeeping, etc.)	8.0%	20.0%	1.0%	10.0%
(h)	Agricultural	2.0%	2.0%	0.0%	11.0%
(i)	Construction	5.0%	8.0%	0.0%	9.0%
(j)	Repair and Skilled Maintenance (not janitorial)	8.0%	15.0%	0.0%	6.0%
(k)	Unskilled Manufacturing (assembly, production helpers, etc.)	6.0%	10.0%	0.0%	9.0%
(l)	Skilled Manufacturing (welders, machinists, etc.)	15.0%	10.0%	1.0%	5.0%
(m)	Transportation	8.0%	6.0%	1.0%	8.0%

(Some answered all above categories, all but 12 businesses assessed at least one category)

**13. If you answered "yes" for any category in question 12 above, identify up to 3 of the most important reasons for your recruiting problem. (Circle UP TO THREE.)**

21.0% Competition for employees  
 13.0% High cost of training employees  
 13.0% High wage rates for labor  
 34.0% Inadequate labor skills  
 4.0% Lack of child care  
 20.0% Poor work attitudes  
 15.0% Workers cannot pass screening (drug, criminal record check, etc.) please specify  
 0.0% Workers lack documentation of legal work status  
 15.0% Workers will not commute into the area  
 17.0% Workers will not relocate into the area  
 15.0% Other

**14. Please estimate the commute time for your employees.**

(a)	Within a 15 minute drive one way	62.7%
(b)	16-30 minute drive one way	27.8%
(c)	31-60 minute drive one way	7.5%
(d)	61+ minute drive one way	1.9%
<b>Check total (should equal 100%)</b>		<b>99.9%</b>

□

**15. What resources are you currently using to locate new employees? (Circle ALL that apply)**

- 9% Ad in local community papers
- 1% Ad in metro / state-wide papers
- 15% Hire our own apprentices
- 8% Hire people who were initially temporary employees
- 42% Internet advertising on job boards (e.g. Craig's List, Indeed, Monster, etc.)
- 24% Internet advertising on our own website
- 42% Internet advertising through social media (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)
- 8% Job Fair or career fair
- 9% Placement office of four-year, community and / or technical colleges
- 6% Private search firm
- 14% Professional associations
- 35% Promote from within
- 45% Referrals from existing employees
- 11% Sign in the window
- 1% Union
- 23% Walk-in
- 61% Word of mouth
- 17% Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 3% Not Applicable

**16a. Do you expect the number of employees you have in each of the following categories to increase, decrease or stay the same over the next three years? (Circle 1, 2 or 3 for each category)**

**b. If you expect a change, how many employees will be added or subtracted? (Indicate by how many)**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Stay Same</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>How Many?</u>	<u>Average</u>
(a) Professional/Managerial (managers, accountants, HR professionals etc.)	24.0%	52.0%	7.0%	44.0	0.4
(b) Information Technology	7.0%	13.0%	2.0%	11.0	0.1
(c) Engineers, Scientists and Technicians	10.0%	13.0%	2.0%	21.0	0.2
(d) Arts, Design and other Creative Occupations	6.0%	9.0%	1.0%	16.0	0.2
(e) Healthcare Related	5.0%	8.0%	1.0%	31.0	0.3
(f) Office and Administrative (secretaries, office clerks, receptionists, etc.)	16.0%	46.0%	4.0%	24.5	0.2
(g) Unskilled Service Workers (food prep., retail sales, housekeeping, etc.)	19.0%	19.0%	1.0%	58.0	0.6
(h) Agricultural	1.0%	6.0%	1.0%	9.0	0.1
(i) Construction	4.0%	10.0%	2.0%	14.0	0.1
(j) Repair and Skilled Maintenance (not janitorial)	6.0%	15.0%	3.0%	35.0	0.4
(k) Unskilled Manufacturing (assembly, production helpers, etc.)	5.0%	11.0%	4.0%	92.0	0.9
(l) Skilled Manufacturing (welders, machinists, etc.)	10.0%	16.0%	1.0%	250.0	2.5
(m) Transportation	7.0%	10.0%	1.0%	37.0	0.4

**17. Overall, how do you rate your employees with respect to their attitude toward work and their productivity? (Circle ONE answer per line)**

Average			Poor	Below Average	Fair	Above Average	Excellent
4.33	(a)	Attitude toward work	0%	3%	6%	45%	45%
4.15	(b)	Productivity	1%	1%	13%	51%	33%

**18. Employees and owners often need additional training.**

**(a) Do you need training for either workers or managers?**

78% Yes 22% No

**(b) If yes, circle the categories below and please estimate the number of employees**

Average			Number of people needing this training
27%	(a)	General Skills	897
44%	(b)	Managerial Skills	369
39%	(c)	Sales and Marketing	355
35%	(d)	Computer Skills	1175
47%	(e)	Other Skills (please list)	442

**19. Prior to Covid-19, how did you train your employees? (Circle ALL that apply.)**

3%	A government supported program (e.g. Minnesota Job Skills Partnership or similar program)
14%	Apprenticeships
33%	Contract with private vendors for online training
28%	Contract with private vendors for on-site training
9%	Contract with public vendors (technical colleges, etc.) for online training
15%	Contract with public vendors (technical colleges, etc.) for on-site training
1%	Do not provide any employee training
88%	In-house training (one-on-one by supervisor or co-worker, training department classes, etc.)
41%	Self-taught (manuals, videos, training materials)
36%	Send employees to training offsite
13%	Other (Please list) _____

**Customers**

**20. We are interested in the location of your customers. Please estimate the percent of your gross sales coming from the following locations:**

a. Local (within 25 miles)?	61.3%
b. Regional (26-100 miles)?	24.4%
c. Outside the region but in the United States?	13.2%
d. Outside of the U.S.?	0.3%
	99.2% TOTAL



**21a. Is your business currently exporting internationally? (Circle ONE answer)**

2% Yes, we export directly from our business

2% Yes, but we sell our product internationally through another company which exports it  
(ex: US parent company, etc.)

94% No

**21b. What prevents you from exporting your product? (Circle ALL that apply.)**

20%	Business designed to serve specific area
7%	Business is too small
3%	Concerns about receiving payment
0%	Costs / risks are too high
8%	Lack of knowledge of foreign countries/markets
3%	Lack of specific export knowledge
3%	Language barrier
4%	Never fully considered it before – but I would like to consider it
2%	Restrictive state and or federal regulations
1%	Starting plans to export
0%	Tough competition
24%	Other

**22. If you export now, or previously exported, please identify problems, if any, that you have exporting your product(s)? (Circle ALL that apply)**

4%	Transportation of product
0%	Lack of export financing
1%	Restrictive state and/or federal regulations
3%	Inadequate knowledge of foreign countries/markets
4%	Other
1%	I do not have problems exporting my product(s)
89%	Not applicable

**Changes**

**23a. Are there any major technological innovations on the horizon in your industry that might affect your company? (Circle ONE answer)**

Yes    No    Not Sure  
50%    44%    6%

→ 23b. If No or Not Sure, skip to question 24.

→ 23c. If Yes, what are these?

Data for local use only

→ 23d. If Yes, will these new technologies require retraining of your labor force?

(Circle **ONE** answer)

38% Yes 6% No

24. Does this business have a written transition plan for ownership, leadership, or both?

38% Yes 52% No 9% Not applicable

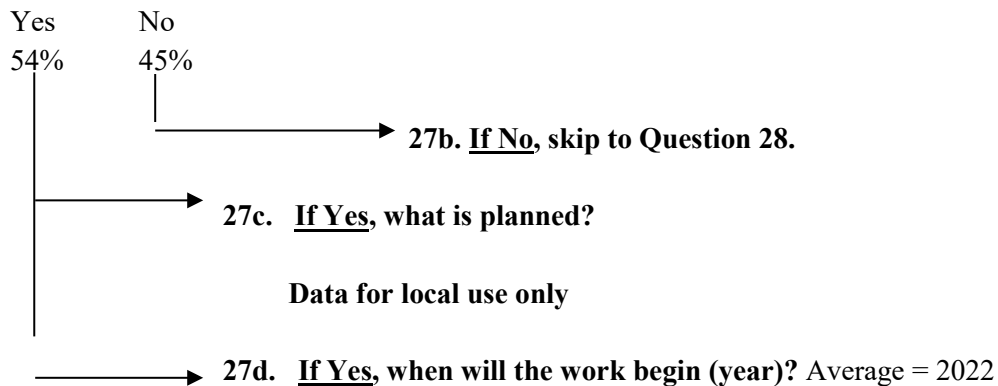
25. Do you have a written business plan?

56% Yes 43% No 1% Not applicable

26. Are there changes in your business plan for the next three years? (Circle **ALL** that apply)

30%	No change in operations
19%	Change in mix of goods/services
17%	Add or subtract product lines
15%	Change production technology or other technology
30%	Other

27a. Do you have any plans to modernize or expand your present buildings(s) or equipment? (Circle **ONE** answer)



28. Which of the following resources would you like to know more about?

26%	New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD)
28%	Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)
28%	Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP)
7%	State Trade Expansion Program (STEP)
12%	New Mexico Manufacturing Partnership (NMMEP)
31%	Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
8%	Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
5%	International Business Accelerator (IBA)
10%	Women's Economic Self Sufficiency Team (WESST)
13%	Center for Workforce Development (CWD)
6%	Farmington Chamber of Commerce
9%	Four Corners Economic Development (4CED)

## **Future Location Decisions**

**29. Are you currently considering? (Circle ALL that apply)**

6%	Downsizing
10%	Selling
9%	Merging with or acquiring another business
6%	Moving
6%	Closing
29%	Expanding – at this location
27%	Expanding – adding another location
7%	Other changes to business plan
30%	None of the above

**30. If you said in Question 29 that you are considering downsizing, selling, moving or closing, what are the reasons? (Circle ALL that apply)**

7%	Changing market conditions
4%	Overcrowded building
2%	No land for expansion
2%	Transportation problems
0%	Crime/vandalism
2%	Low work productivity
1%	Environmental concerns
0%	Rigid code enforcement (including ordinances and building codes)
1%	High local taxes
2%	High state taxes
2%	Lease expiration
0%	Poor telecommunications/internet
2%	Insufficient labor supply
9%	Retiring
2%	Another business opportunity
0%	Business incentives from other jurisdiction(s)
0%	Trying to sell business but unable to sell it
6%	Problems because of Covid-19
6%	Other (specify)

**31. If moving or expanding at another location (Yes to Question 29d or 29g), where are you considering? (Circle ALL that apply)**

21%	In same city as currently located
9%	Another city in this county (specify city)
11%	Another county in the state (specify county and city)
16%	Another state (specify city and state)
0%	Outside of the United States (specify city and country)
0%	Undecided

**32. If not expanding your business, what is the single biggest factor or issue preventing you?**

**Data for local use only**



**33a. Do you rent / lease or does this business own this facility? (Circle ONE answer)**

36% Rent /Lease                  62% Own

└───→ **33b. If Rent / Lease, when does the current rental agreement expire?**

**34a. Does your company currently own or rent / lease sufficient property to allow for expansion if necessary?  
(Circle ONE answer)**

Yes	Maybe	No
64%	5%	27%

└───→ **34b. If Maybe or No, what type of land, buildings,  
and space needs do you foresee?**

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**Remainder of page intentionally left blank, data continues on next page**

## Community Factors

35. If your business had **to select a new location in the near future, how important** would each of the following factors be in the decision-making process?

Average		Not at all Important 1	2	3	Very Important 4	Don't know DK
	<b><u>A. Workforce</u></b>					
3.38	1) Availability of skilled labor	8%	9%	13%	58%	8%
2.75	2) Availability of unskilled labor	18%	12%	21%	28%	17%
3.30	3) Wage rates	7%	8%	20%	47%	13%
3.12	4) Employee health care cost	11%	8%	18%	39%	20%
1.43	5) Union presence	45%	3%	3%	5%	40%
	<b><u>B. Education and Training</u></b>					
3.26	1) K-12	9%	9%	15%	48%	15%
2.88	2) Higher education within a reasonable drive	13%	15%	24%	31%	13%
2.93	3) Technical training programs	16%	12%	17%	38%	13%
	<b><u>C. Transportation/Location</u></b>					
3.23	1) Highway accessibility	9%	9%	15%	45%	18%
2.32	2) Air service	24%	16%	22%	13%	21%
2.89	3) Proximity to major markets	14%	9%	24%	29%	20%
2.17	4) Proximity to raw materials	24%	18%	13%	11%	30%
2.70	5) Proximity to service suppliers	18%	10%	22%	24%	22%
1.82	6) Railroad service	38%	8%	12%	7%	31%
2.43	7) Transit & local transportation	25%	11%	16%	20%	24%
	<b><u>D. Land, Buildings, and Credit</u></b>					
3.29	1) Availability of land	9%	6%	21%	48%	12%
3.37	2) Cost of land	7%	6%	20%	51%	12%
3.43	3) Availability of buildings	5%	7%	21%	55%	8%
3.49	4) Cost of buildings	5%	4%	21%	56%	10%
3.30	5) Availability of loans	8%	8%	19%	49%	12%
3.29	6) Cost of loans	9%	7%	18%	49%	13%
	<b><u>E. Utilities</u></b>					
3.17	1) Energy cost (electric, natural gas)	8%	10%	31%	41%	5%
3.47	2) Energy reliability (electric, natural gas)	6%	6%	17%	60%	6%
3.55	3) Telecommunications & broadband reliability	4%	7%	15%	65%	4%
3.85	4) Telecommunications & broadband cost	1%	2%	7%	81%	4%
3.76	5) Broadband speed	2%	1%	14%	75%	3%

35. (continued) If your business had **to select a new location in the near future, how important** would each of the following factors be in the decision-making process?

Average		Not at all Important 1	2	3	Very Important 4	Don't know DK
	<b><u>F. Local Business Support</u></b>					
3.63	1) Community attitude towards business	2%	2%	23%	63%	5%
3.51	2) Community promotion of itself and business	4%	4%	24%	57%	5%
3.03	3) Chamber of commerce	6%	17%	32%	32%	8%
3.22	4) Economic development authority	4%	9%	39%	37%	6%
3.24	5) Incentives for business investment in facilities, worker skills or more workers	4%	13%	27%	42%	9%
	<b><u>G. Quality of Life</u></b>					
3.47	1) Recreational opportunities	4%	4%	26%	52%	9%
3.19	2) Cultural opportunities	4%	12%	33%	36%	10%
3.12	3) Social organizations and networks	5%	16%	28%	36%	10%
3.29	4) Housing supply	4%	10%	29%	43%	9%
3.36	5) Housing costs	4%	7%	30%	46%	8%
3.47	6) Health care facilities	3%	3%	31%	50%	8%
3.21	7) Availability of child care	7%	11%	23%	43%	10%
	<b><u>H. Government and Regulation</u></b>					
3.46	1) Fire Department	4%	7%	23%	56%	5%
3.48	2) Police Department	4%	6%	23%	57%	5%
3.57	3) Sewer & Water	4%	4%	19%	63%	5%
3.38	4) Street Maintenance	4%	7%	30%	49%	5%
3.07	5) Environmental regulations	8%	14%	31%	36%	6%
3.34	6) Planning and zoning	6%	7%	27%	49%	6%
3.17	7) Code enforcement	6%	13%	31%	40%	5%
	<b><u>I. Local Government Financial Management</u></b>					
3.28	1) Property Taxes	7%	8%	27%	47%	6%
3.30	2) Other Local Taxes and fees	7%	6%	31%	47%	4%
3.30	3) Spending priorities	6%	9%	26%	47%	6%
3.38	4) Budget process & financial management	5%	6%	27%	49%	7%

36. Based on the following factors, **please rate your satisfaction with your current location** as a place for your company to do business.

Average		Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	Very Satisfied 4	Don't know DK
	<b><u>A. Workforce</u></b>					
2.73	1) Availability of skilled labor	7%	33%	30%	22%	8%
3.00	2) Availability of unskilled labor	5%	17%	31%	27%	19%
3.05	3) Wage rates	4%	17%	41%	30%	7%
2.35	4) Employee health care cost	23%	20%	18%	16%	22%
3.06	5) Union presence	4%	4%	10%	14%	64%
	<b><u>B. Education and Training</u></b>					
3.20	1) K-12	1%	9%	45%	28%	16%
3.27	2) Higher education within a reasonable drive	1%	10%	39%	35%	14%
2.94	3) Technical training programs	6%	14%	37%	21%	20%
	<b><u>C. Transportation/Location</u></b>					
3.23	1) Highway accessibility	4%	15%	30%	44%	6%
1.78	2) Air service	41%	28%	12%	5%	13%
2.53	3) Proximity to major markets	10%	30%	29%	12%	18%
2.74	4) Proximity to raw materials	7%	16%	20%	15%	41%
2.75	5) Proximity to service suppliers	7%	20%	34%	15%	23%
1.59	6) Railroad service	38%	9%	8%	3%	41%
2.30	7) Transit & local transportation	15%	27%	27%	5%	25%
	<b><u>D. Land, Buildings, and Credit</u></b>					
3.01	1) Availability of land	5%	13%	40%	24%	16%
2.76	2) Cost of land	10%	21%	32%	21%	14%
3.01	3) Availability of buildings	3%	16%	39%	23%	17%
2.69	4) Cost of buildings	9%	25%	29%	18%	17%
3.19	5) Availability of loans	2%	9%	36%	27%	24%
3.07	6) Cost of loans	3%	12%	35%	23%	25%
	<b><u>E. Utilities</u></b>					
3.05	1) Energy cost (electric, natural gas)	4%	14%	50%	27%	4%
3.35	2) Energy reliability (electric, natural gas)	2%	7%	42%	45%	3%
2.76	3) Telecommunications & broadband reliability	10%	23%	44%	20%	2%
2.73	4) Telecommunications & broadband cost	12%	23%	41%	21%	2%
2.71	5) Broadband speed	14%	22%	40%	22%	1%

36. (continued) Based on the following factors, please rate your satisfaction with your current location as a place for your company to do business.

Average		Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	Very Satisfied 4	Don't know DK
	<b><u>F. Local Business Support</u></b>					
3.33	1) Community attitude towards business	3%	13%	30%	51%	3%
2.95	2) Community promotion of itself and business	9%	16%	41%	29%	5%
3.20	3) Chamber of commerce	5%	8%	37%	35%	15%
3.07	4) Economic development authority	4%	15%	36%	29%	16%
2.36	5) Incentives for business investment in facilities, worker skills or more workers	11%	28%	21%	7%	33%
	<b><u>G. Quality of Life</u></b>					
3.46	1) Recreational opportunities	2%	7%	32%	55%	3%
3.20	2) Cultural opportunities	2%	14%	41%	37%	5%
3.03	3) Social organizations and networks	3%	17%	43%	26%	10%
2.82	4) Housing supply	6%	21%	40%	18%	14%
2.48	5) Housing costs	15%	30%	29%	14%	11%
2.87	6) Health care facilities	7%	19%	44%	21%	8%
2.73	7) Availability of child care	5%	18%	28%	11%	37%
	<b><u>H. Government and Regulation</u></b>					
3.59	1) Fire Department	3%	2%	27%	66%	1%
3.60	2) Police Department	1%	2%	32%	63%	1%
3.42	3) Sewer & Water	4%	4%	35%	52%	4%
2.96	4) Street Maintenance	8%	18%	40%	30%	3%
2.87	5) Environmental regulations	10%	14%	35%	23%	17%
3.01	6) Planning and zoning	3%	21%	33%	28%	14%
2.91	7) Code enforcement	5%	20%	31%	23%	20%
	<b><u>I. Local Government Financial Management</u></b>					
2.88	1) Property Taxes	7%	18%	46%	21%	7%
2.78	2) Other Local Taxes and fees	11%	17%	46%	19%	6%
2.77	3) Spending priorities	8%	20%	37%	17%	17%
2.86	4) Budget process & financial management	7%	14%	39%	17%	22%

**37. Do you have any suggestions for improving the items above (in Question 36.) that you gave lower ratings to? If so, please give the item number and your suggestion for each item:**

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**38a. Do the following community features related to tourism have a positive impact, no impact, or negative impact on your business? (Circle ONE answer for each item)**

Average		Very Positive Impact		No Impact		Very Negative Impact
<b>0.61</b>	<b>(a)</b> Activities for children and teens	24%	21%	40%	9%	1%
<b>0.80</b>	<b>(b)</b> Amusement and recreation activities	27%	28%	35%	4%	1%
<b>0.75</b>	<b>(c)</b> Arts and cultural events	24%	28%	39%	3%	1%
<b>0.87</b>	<b>(d)</b> Community atmosphere	36%	24%	24%	9%	2%
<b>0.85</b>	<b>(e)</b> Community diversity	31%	23%	37%	4%	0%
<b>0.71</b>	<b>(f)</b> Festivals or events	27%	20%	42%	3%	2%
<b>0.45</b>	<b>(g)</b> Historic atmosphere (downtown, barns, etc.)	20%	14%	52%	7%	2%
<b>0.53</b>	<b>(h)</b> Information for tourists	18%	20%	53%	2%	2%
<b>0.47</b>	<b>(i)</b> Landscapes (downtown, farm, natural)	19%	22%	42%	6%	5%
<b>0.43</b>	<b>(j)</b> Lodging facilities	18%	20%	46%	7%	4%
<b>0.45</b>	<b>(k)</b> Meeting/conference facilities	20%	19%	44%	8%	4%
<b>0.52</b>	<b>(l)</b> Museums/historic sites	15%	27%	48%	2%	3%
<b>0.82</b>	<b>(m)</b> Natural environment	29%	21%	44%	1%	0%
<b>0.97</b>	<b>(n)</b> Outdoor recreation (including hunting/fishing)	34%	24%	37%	0%	0%
<b>0.57</b>	<b>(o)</b> Proximity to potential visitors	24%	13%	52%	5%	1%
<b>0.54</b>	<b>(p)</b> Seasonal tourism	23%	9%	59%	4%	0%
<b>0.39</b>	<b>(q)</b> Transportation access for potential visitors	19%	11%	55%	8%	2%

**38b. Which of the features listed in Question 38a. do you feel should be the focus of a marketing image for this community? (Please list the LETTERS for UP TO THREE choices)**

**Note: if no number listed after the letter, then response=1; otherwise, response is the number shown**

First choice: a (11), b (7), c (4), d (11), e (3), f (8), g, i (4), j (3), k (2), l, m (4), n (28), o, p (2), q (2)

Second choice: a (4), b (5), c (10), d (4), e (2), f (8), g (6), h (3), i (6), j (5), k (5), l (2), m (8), n (15), p, q (2)

Third choice: a (6), b (5), c (8), d (6), e (4), f (5), g (6), h, i (4), k (3), l (5), m (6), n (10), o, p (6), q (3)

**39a. Please rate the following factors about retail in this community. (Circle ONE for each item)**

Average		Poor 1	2	3	Excellent 4	Don't Know DK
2.33	a) Advertising	11%	43%	33%	4%	9%
2.99	b) Coordinated store hours	3%	15%	57%	20%	5%
2.48	c) Customer service	11%	37%	42%	8%	2%
2.52	d) Exterior atmosphere of the area (e.g. front entrances, rear entrances, landscaping, street trees, store fronts, sidewalks, cleanliness, signage)	9%	36%	46%	7%	1%
2.83	e) Feeling of safety (e.g., lighting, security)	3%	23%	57%	13%	4%
2.45	f) Group advertising	6%	31%	35%	2%	26%
2.78	g) Hours - Evening	5%	24%	49%	14%	8%
2.92	h) Hours - Weekend	1%	22%	52%	17%	8%
2.79	i) Internet presence (i.e., can you find community retailers online?)	6%	22%	47%	15%	10%
2.73	j) Knowledge and friendliness of local personnel	4%	30%	49%	12%	5%
2.65	k) Merchandising by retailers	1%	36%	45%	7%	11%
2.94	l) Parking situation (e.g., number of spaces, location)	7%	10%	60%	18%	5%
2.90	m) Prices	1%	15%	73%	7%	4%
2.26	n) Public restrooms	21%	21%	38%	2%	18%
2.90	o) Quality of merchandise handled by merchants	0%	22%	58%	13%	7%
2.34	p) Special events or promotions in the shopping area	9%	38%	25%	5%	23%
2.78	q) Traffic flow / signage	6%	20%	58%	11%	5%
2.36	r) Variety of businesses	15%	40%	34%	8%	3%
2.30	s) Variety of places to eat	21%	34%	34%	8%	2%
1.50	t) Other (specify)	2%	2%	0%	0%	6%

**39b. What three items from the above list are the most important to be improved (Identify UP TO THREE LETTERS from the above list)**

**Note: if no number listed after the letter, then response=1; otherwise, response is the number shown**

First choice: a (2), b (2), c (19), d (17), e (12), g (2), i (3), j (6), k, l (3), m, n, o, p (4), q (5), r (11),  
s (10)

Second choice: a (6), c (5), d (8), e (18), g (4), h, i (3), j (5), k (3), l (3), m (2), n (3), p, q (7), r (12),  
s (11)

Third choice: a, b (2), c (5), d (6), e (2), f (3), g (3), i (2), j (7), k (3), l (2), m, n (8), o, p (12), q, r (10),  
s (16), t (4)

**40. Considering all the factors in Question 39a., how would you rate the overall atmosphere in your local shopping area? (Circle ONE answer)**

Average = 2.81

3%	Poor	26%	Below Average	56%	Average	13%	Above Average	0%	Excellent
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### **Summary Questions**

**41. What is your overall opinion of your community (i.e. where your business is) as a place to conduct business? (Circle ONE answer)**

Average = 3.34

3%	Poor	12%	Below Average	38%	Average	40%	Above Average	6%	Excellent
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**42. What is your overall opinion of your community (i.e. where your business is) as a place to live? (Circle ONE answer)**

Average = 3.70

0%	Poor	11%	Below Average	26%	Average	44%	Above Average	18%	Excellent
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**43. What state and local policies are of greatest significance to your company?**

**Data for local use only**

**44. What about your business is your greatest accomplishment in the last two years?**

**Data for local use only**

**45. We have covered many issues. Please help us set some priorities on how the Business Retention and Expansion Task Force can help your business or what we should work on to help all of our existing businesses grow and expand. Please give your additional comments.**

**Data for local use only**



**(Ambassador: please note below any comments that you want the Task Force for this project to pay particular attention to as it relates to this business.)**

### Comments:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal black lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

The University of Minnesota shall provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

## Chapter 5: The Business retention and expansion Program – The People and the Process

The purpose of this chapter is to overview the Four Corners Economic Development (4CED) Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program – the people and processes that made the program happen and is making it go forward into project implementation.

### Overview of the Four Corners Economic Development Business Retention and Expansion Program

Economic development leaders and community volunteers have worked together since the summer of 2020 to make the Business Retention and Expansion Program happen in the Four Corners Economic Development region. Four Corners Economic Development provided the funding for the program. The project's purpose is "To ask local businesses their perceptions on what is needed to improve their business's economic position and the economy of this county." Here are the key activities and processes in that timeline. The Four Corners Economic Development Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program is an on-going community effort. This section of the report details important milestones achieved thus far along with future plans of the program.

The Four Corners Economic Development BRE Program has several objectives:

1. To demonstrate support for local businesses
2. To help solve immediate business concerns.
3. To increase local businesses' ability to compete in the global economy
4. To implement a strategic plan for economic development.
5. To build community capacity to sustain growth and development.

## Milestones of the BRE Process in the Four Corners Economic Development

Date(s)	Benchmark	Description of activity
Summer, 2020	Program Education	Four Corners Economic Development leaders participated in a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) online course provided by the UMN Extension. Thereafter, a core group (the BRE Leadership Team) started working on program education and planning.
July - September, 2020	Program Preparations	The BRE Leadership Team met a few times to make the decisions, recruit volunteers, test the interview guide (i.e. survey instrument), and lay the plans for the BRE. They consulted with UMN BRE experts along the way and contracted with UMN for the preparation of this research report.
August, 2020	Business Selection	The BRE Leadership Team established a goal of accomplishing 100 business visits. The business selection process began with a list of over 3,000 businesses in San Juan County. It was divided by municipality and then the BRE Leadership Team, which included people with extensive knowledge of county businesses, examined the list. They noted the businesses they believed were critical to interview because of their importance to the economy of San Juan County, because of their location in the county, because of the type of industry they represented, etc. Roughly 120 business names were agreed on and selected and information on owner names and contact information was gathered.
September, 2020	Volunteer Training	Volunteer visitor training sessions were held. The sessions oriented volunteer visitors to the BRE process and trained them on interviewing businesses. Volunteers then worked in teams of one-two during business interviews with one person holding the primary responsibility for asking the questions while the second person recorded the responses.
October - December, 2020	Business Visits	100 interviews were conducted by 28 interviewers (4CED ambassadors). 49 interviews conducted by one interviewer 51 interviews conducted by two interviewers Averaged one hour in length.
March, 2021	Warning Flag (aka Red Flags) Review	Reviewing the surveys individually for follow-up opportunities is an important community opportunity in a BRE program. This is probably the single most important activity that a BRE initiative can do - responding appropriately and confidentially to businesses on issues such as business relocations, concerns with public

		<p>service, needs for resources, etc. The Red Flag review meeting was held March 19, 2021.</p> <p>The meeting revealed: “Businesses asked for resource information on various topics during the interviews (JTEP, Care Act, SBDC, etc.) The local SBDC director is in the process of addressing those requests on a business-by-business basis. In addition, the staff of 4CED held a meeting to discuss small areas of concern expressed by businesses. These would be items like helping facilitate a community calendar, providing education on economic development, providing training on transition planning. These items could be accomplished in the next 60-90 days (before the priority projects coming out of the BRE study were in full swing) and would provide some up-front momentum for 4CED.”</p>
January-February, 2021	Data Tabulation	<p>The 4CED Leadership Team mailed the completed surveys to the University of Minnesota Extension for tabulation and analysis. Lauren Sorgaard accurately tabulated the surveys and prepared a summary of the data for the Research Review meeting.</p>
March 4, 2021	Online Research Review Meeting	<p>As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the research review meeting was conducted online using various tools and technology. While the Warning Flag Review identifies individual business concerns, the Online Research Review meeting identifies overarching, universal themes in the survey results. Once these are identified through a SWOT analysis, the Online Research Review participants suggest ideas for projects 4CED might undertake to address these themes. Participants typically include members of the BRE Leadership Team, economic development professionals, and university educators/faculty. See roster of participants below.</p>
March-April, 2021	Research Report Development	<p>Following the online Research Review meeting, the UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research &amp; UMN Extension prepared this research report. The goal of the research report is to detail the overarching themes identified by the Research Review team and to suggest potential projects. Potential projects are ideas 4CED might use to address the larger themes identified by the survey. The Research Report also summarizes the survey data, gives a history of the BRE project, provides context</p>

		on the local economy and demographics (if available), and contains the aggregated survey data. This research report was then drafted based on input from the online research review meeting and other ideas.
April, 2021	Online BRE Retreat	At this virtual retreat, the 4CED BRE stakeholders will be presented with the overall results of the survey, overarching strategies for addressing the universal issues identified, and potential projects for addressing these issues. 4CED will then decide on the major projects to implement to maximize BRE success in San Juan County. The group is free to recommend any of the projects listed in this report, to revise and then adopt any of the projects or to develop its own project recommendations. Typically, a community will adopt three to five priority projects in the first phase of implementation.

### Next Steps

Projected April-May, 2021	Online Implementation Resource and Project Design Meeting	As the Four Corners Economic Development team considers how to implement its priority projects it needs to consider the external resources and resource persons needed for successful implementation. Each BRE project team should meet with these external resource people to pose three questions: 1) Is your group doing any work similar to our proposed project that benefits businesses in our area? 2) If yes, what are you doing and to what degree are you reaching businesses in San Juan County? 3) Would you be willing to collaborate with us and/or how could our BRE team help your program? The priority projects might be modified after this meeting to account for additional resources identified.
Projected, May 2021	Community Commencement Meeting	This is a meeting traditionally held to celebrate the accomplishments of the first two phases of a BRE, the Research and Prioritize phases, and signal the beginning of the San Juan County BRE Implementation phase. For the most impact, this should be a community-wide event. In particular, all of the BRE stakeholders including volunteer business visitors, 4CED members, local media, and visited businesses are invited. Other local government, business, and community leaders could be invited, as well as regional and state agency representatives and members of the community. A short report summarizing the BRE program and the priority projects selected for implementation will be provided by University of Minnesota Extension for use at the commencement meeting.

Projected, 2021-22	Implementation Meetings	It is customary to have quarterly or monthly BRE group meetings to continue the forward progress on the BRE priority projects through time. For tips on implementation of BRE strategies, see <i>Next Steps: Hints on Successful Implementation of BRE Projects</i>
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## Organizations and People Involved in the Four Corners Economic Development BRE Program

Conducting a community-wide economic development engagement is a resource intensive and time-consuming task. It's not done overnight, and it's not done with one to two people. Instead, successful groups initiate the process and then work throughout the process to increase the group size. In Business Retention and Expansion projects, there are important teams of people that are involved in making the project successful: the program sponsors, the Leadership Team, the project implementation groups, and the volunteer visitors.

**Program Sponsor:** Four Corners Economic Development (4CED) is sponsoring the BRE program. Many individuals and other organizations have also been involved and will be going forward.

### BRE Leadership Team

This Leadership Team is organizing and planning the BRE. They identified people to serve as volunteer visitors and made contact with those individuals. They visited businesses, responded to warning flags, and will help select and implement the priority projects that emerge from the priority-setting retreat.

Members of the 4CED BRE Leadership Team are:

**Overall Coordinator:** Nancy Shepherd

**Goal Team Leader:** Jeremiah Hayes

**Goal Team Members:** Scott Bird, Carmen Martinez, Eleanor Townsend, and Arvin Trujillo

In addition to the Leadership Team mentioned above, there are other groups of people that are important to the Four Corners Economic Development success in its BRE program. These are the volunteer visitors (ambassadors), participating businesses, the online research review team, and the program consultants.

### BRE Volunteer Visitors (Ambassadors)

These individuals made visits to interview businesses for the BRE program. They also responded to warning flags and will help select and implement the priority projects that emerge. Their affiliation is listed before each ambassador's name. Some individuals made extraordinary contributions with many, or even dozens, of business visits.

Home2 Suites by Hilton  
 San Juan College (School of Energy)  
 Four Corners Economic Development  
 San Juan College (SBDC)  
 Mainstream Mortgage, Inc.  
 Four Corners Economic Development  
 City of Bloomfield  
 Manufacturing Extension Partnership  
 City of Bloomfield  
 City of Aztec Volunteer  
 Farmington Municipal Schools  
 Merrion Oil & Gas  
 Farmington Chamber of Commerce  
 San Juan College (CWD)  
 Jaynes Corporation  
 City of Bloomfield  
 San Juan County  
 PESCO  
 City of Bloomfield,  
 San Juan County  
 Four Corners Economic Development,  
 Four Corners Economic Development  
 Jaynes Corporation  
 Grey, LLC  
 City of Aztec  
 Arizona Public Service  
 Basin Health Companies  
 City of Farmington

Addie Betancourt  
 Alicia Corbell  
 Arvin Trujillo  
 Carmen Martinez  
 Carmie Gay  
 Chris Hunter  
 Crystal Martinez  
 Denise Williams  
 Donica Sharpe  
 Eleanor Townsend  
 Gene Schmidt  
 George Sharpe  
 Jamie Church  
 Jeanne Winchell  
 Jeremiah Hayes  
 Jessica Polatty  
 Jim Cox  
 John Byrom  
 Ken Hare  
 Mike Stark  
 Nancy Shepherd  
 Scott Bird  
 Shay Davis  
 Steve Grey  
 Steven Saavedra  
 Tyler Frazier  
 Vince Moffitt  
 Warren Unsicker

## Businesses Participating in the Four Corners Economic Development BRE Program

The following businesses graciously agreed to be interviewed as part of the BRE visitation process. While survey responses are confidential, it is important to acknowledge the contribution of participating business owners or managers. There were 100 completed and usable surveys.

505 Cycles  
 A Sign Worx  
 A-1 Auto Recyclers  
 Ace Services  
 Air Star, Incorporated  
 Alpha Bioscience Company  
 Animas Environmental  
 Any Event Rental LLC  
 A-Plus Well Service Inc  
 Artifacts Gallery  
 Aspen Leaf Frozen Yogurt  
 Aztec Hardware  
 Aztec Machine & Repair  
 Aztec Massage Clinic  
 Aztec Well Servicing Company  
 Basin Broadcasting Inc.  
 Basin Coordinated Healthcare  
 Basin Printing

Bloomfield Pawn Shop Inc.  
 Bpl Plasma, Inc.  
 Budget Blinds of Farmington  
 Capital Business Systems Inc.  
 Chandler & Company LLP  
 Cloer's Hay Farm  
 Cooper Fire Protection Service  
 DB Tech Inc.  
 Defined Fitness  
 Dugan Production Corporation  
 Durango Joes Coffee  
 Edward Jones  
 Elite Promotional  
 Feat of Clay  
 Firefly MultiMedia Design & Consulting  
 First Presbyterian Church  
 Five Star Cleaning Services, Inc.  
 Four Corners Community Bank

Foutz Trading Company  
 Freight Direct Furniture  
 Full Circle Compression, Inc.  
 Garcia & Co. Jewelers  
 Geomat, Inc.  
 Home2 Suites by Hilton-Farmington  
 Horace Nissan/Hyundai  
 ImageNet Consulting  
 Industrial Mechanical Inc.  
 J. A. Jewelers & Co.  
 Jack's Plastic Welding  
 Jaynes Corporation  
 Jumbo Mini Storage  
 Just Click Printing, Inc.  
 Kare Drug  
 Kentucky Fried Chicken Shiprock  
 Kirtland Realty  
 KOSH Solutions  
 Kysar Millennium Leavitt Insurance Agency  
 La Plata Construction Inc.  
 La Roux Salon & Spa  
 Love the Children Learning Center  
 Manchester Agency LLC - Farmers Insurance  
 Merrion Oil & Gas Corporation  
 Mesa Sand and Gravel  
 Namaste House Assisted Living  
 Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI)  
 Navajo Preparatory School  
 Navajo Transitional Energy Company (NTEC)  
 Nightlight Electric Company  
 Oil & Gas Equipment Corp.  
 On the Spot Cleaning  
 Parker's Workplace Solutions  
 Pelle Spa  
 Pinon Family Pharmacy  
 Polston Development Inc.  
 Presbyterian Medical Services  
 Process Equipment & Service Co. (PESCO)  
 Productive Outcomes, Inc.  
 Ram Studios Inc.  
 Re/Max of Farmington  
 Riley Industrial Services Inc.  
 Rise 'n Grind  
 Rodahl & Hummell Architecture  
 San Juan Country Club  
 San Juan Regional Medical Center  
 Soaps on Main  
 Sonia Lukow CPA. LLC  
 Souder, Miller & Associates  
 State Farm Insurance/Trudy Goldsmith  
 Steve Oldfield, C.P.A., Inc.  
 Subway - Kirtland

Subway - Shiprock  
 T. Ryan Lane, Attorney  
 The Chile Pod  
 The Floor Trader  
 The Learning Circle Kid's Academy  
 The Vintage Mirror Salon  
 Valley Pawn & Laundry  
 Vanilla Moose  
 Walsh Engineering & Production  
 Westmoreland (San Juan Mining)  
 XI Concrete Company  
 Ziems Ford Corners





## Online Research Review Team

The Online Research Review panel was comprised of University of Minnesota faculty and staff, other economic development professionals, and many 4CED area professionals, elected officials, and experts. This group analyzed the survey data to identify both the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) as well as to ideate potential project ideas that address issues emerging from the SWOT analysis. A list of participants in the Online Research Review follows.

## Online Research Review Attendees

### Participants from New Mexico:

Hank Adair	City of Farmington (Electric)
Scott Bird	4CED Consultant (Finances)
John Byrom	PESCO Manufacturing
Jamie Church	Farmington Chamber of Commerce
Alicia Corbell	San Juan College (School of Energy)
Nate Duckett	City of Farmington (Mayor)
Bill Florez	Jaynes Construction
Steve Grey	4CED Board Chairman
Ken Hare	Bloomfield City Council
Jeremiah Hayes	Jaynes Construction
Bonnie Hopkins	New Mexico County Extension
Chris Hunter	4CED Consultant (Marketing)
Mike Lewis	City of Farmington (Airport)
Carmen Martinez	San Juan College (SBDC)
Steve Nelson	Environmental/Ecological Consulting
Lorraine Ruggles	NM Economic Development Department
Nancy Shepherd	4CED Consultant (Organizational Planning)
Mike Stark	San Juan County Manager
Tonya Stinson	Farmington Convention and Visitors Bureau
Tom Taylor	Retired Mayor/Legislator
Eleanor Townsend	Aztec Economic Development Committee
Arvin Trujillo	4CED CEO
Robert Underwood	San Juan Regional Medical Center
Warren Unsicker	City of Farmington (Economic Development)
Kara Wood	Kirtland Realty

### University of Minnesota participants:

Michael Darger, UMN Extension Center for Community Vitality  
Eric King, UMN Extension Center for Community Vitality  
John Bennett, UMN Extension Center for Community Vitality  
Monica Haynes, UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research  
Gina Chiodi Gensing, UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research  
Nathan Brand, UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research  
Haakan Thorsgard, UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research  
Lauren Sorgaard, UMN Extension Cloquet Regional Office

## **Assistance from the University of Minnesota and Other Organizations**

The University of Minnesota Extension is providing the San Juan County BRE Program with technical assistance as noted below:

- Michael Darger, Extension Business Retention program director provided overall leadership to the project for the University of Minnesota consulting team.
- Monica Haynes, Gina Chiodi Gensing, Nathan Brand, and Haakan Thorsgard, UMD Bureau of Business and Economic Research, who authored most of this research report. Darger authored Chapter 5 with lots of input from Nancy Shepherd.
- Extension educators Eric King and John Bennett assisted with the Research Review Meeting technology, facilitation, and idea generating.
- Lauren Sorgaard, data input and tabulation, Extension Cloquet Regional Office.
- Jodie Kaden, Extension Community Vitality Office (St. Paul), assembly of the final version of this report.

## Chapter 6: Planning Tools, Resources

### Next Steps: Hints on Successful Implementation of BRE Projects

The 4CED BRE Task Force Retreat completes the planning and visitation phase of the program. Implementation of the projects selected by the Task Force at the retreat is the next phase. The following tips for successful project implementation come from two sources: 1. the experiences of more than 200 communities that have carried out BRE programs in the past. These tips are reprinted, with permission, from the BRE program booklet entitled “Local Leadership Team Manual”.<sup>28</sup> 2. the experiences of nine Minnesota communities as well as a literature search of published articles about BRE successes (see bibliography below).

The major tips are:

- Follow sound strategic planning processes.
- From the beginning, stress that the BRE Visitation Program is a two or three-year effort.
- Projects that have an economic development professional or other staff person involved with a percentage of their time allocated to it are correlated with greater success.
- At the BRE Task Force Retreat, ask Task Force members to indicate one of the projects on which they will work. Accountability for implementation is correlated with greater success. Even more success is correlated with projects that are done in teams rather than done by an individual.
- Set up a special implementation panel to help the Task Force oversee project implementation progress.
- Meet at least quarterly to monitor implementation progress.
- Set a date for the first quarterly Task Force meeting before the community commencement meeting.
- Plan each quarterly meeting well.
- Contact the priority project teams between quarterly meetings of the Task Force to encourage them to meet regularly and make progress on their projects.
- Elect or appoint a new Leadership Team at the first quarterly Task Force meeting.
- Keep in touch with BRE experts in your state or region.
- Invite regional and state agency, chamber, or other representatives to your quarterly meetings.
- Frequently distribute one page outlines or bulleted lists of projects.
- Keep publicizing the projects, especially the successes.
- Select some priority projects that are easier to accomplish (i.e. “winnable”) among the other more difficult, long-term projects. Sports teams build momentum by having little victories as they move forward. In the same way, the BRE Task Force can build momentum by celebrating its accomplishments as it moves forward toward full implementation of all its priority projects. Thus, picking some “low hanging fruit” among the projects can build the team’s spirit and confidence.
- Ensure that the projects selected do not have major opposition.
- Adequate funding is necessary.

Details on these tips are provided in the “Local Leadership Team Manual” and/or are cited in the bibliography below.

### Continuing BRE Visits

Communities need to continually reach out and communicate with their existing businesses by making in-person BRE visits. The University of Minnesota Extension BRE Program is improving its assistance for BRE work in Minnesota. In the near future, 4CED may wish to do some additional BRE visitation and

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<sup>28</sup> Loveridge, Scott and George Morse, “Local Leadership Team Manual,” in the series entitled *Implementing Local Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Programs*, Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, NERCRD Publication No. 72 (pages 16-18).

follow-up action. Here are other things that Extension is doing that may be of interest.

1. Benchmarking the BRE data to share insights on what has been learned working with many community BRE projects since 1990. Available at: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/community/business-retention/research-development/benchmarks/>
2. Providing free BRE Tools on its website such as a large question database of BRE pertinent questions.
3. Offering a BRE course that includes both in-person learning and online components
4. Continuously evaluating its basic BRE survey instrument.

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce offers the Grow Minnesota program to Minnesota communities through local chamber offices. This is a time-tested BRE resource for communities wishing to do some annual business visits using a B2B (business to business) approach. The Grow Minnesota and University of Minnesota BRE programs cooperate on ways to assist communities to meet their needs.

### **Bibliography of Literature Pertaining to Successful Priority Project Implementation**

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Morse, George and Inhyuck Ha. "How Successful are Business Retention and Expansion Implementation Efforts?" *Economic Development Review*: 1997 pp8-13.

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Phillips, Philip D. "Business Retention and Expansion: Theory and An Example in Practice" *Economic Development Review*. 1996. 14(3) pp. 19-24.

## Chapter 7: Appendices

### Appendix A: Community Features Quadrants

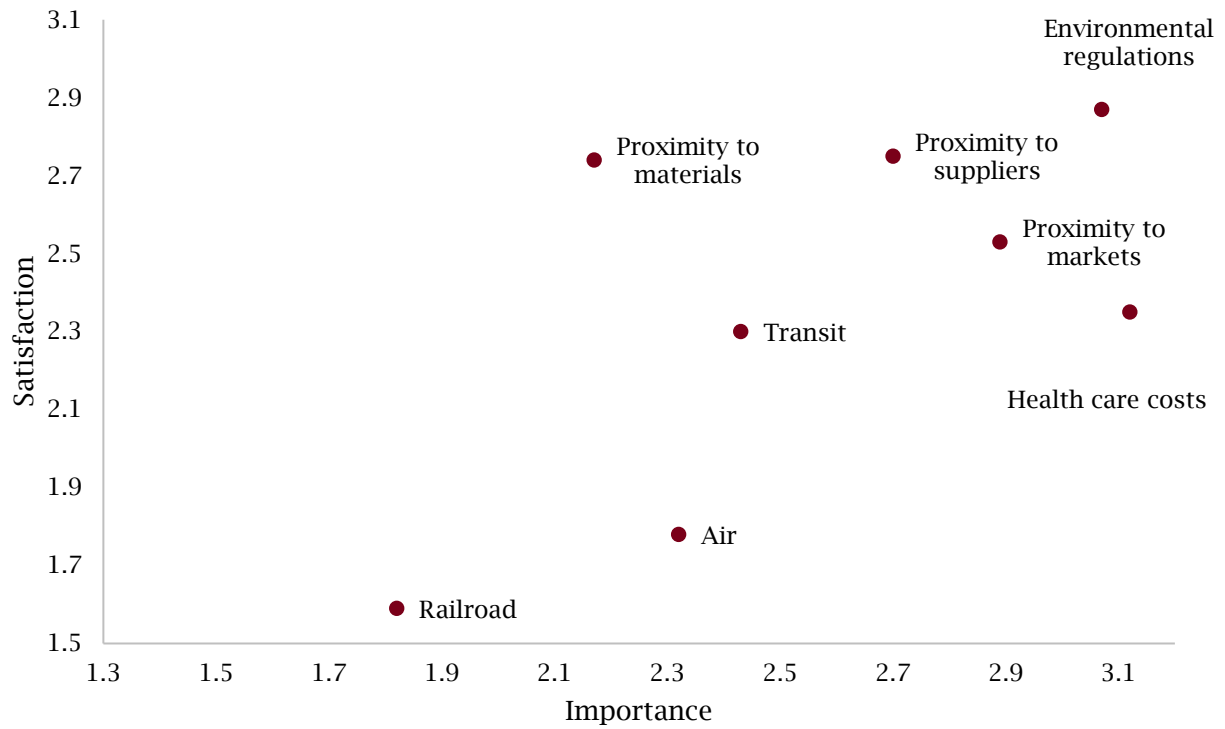


Figure 24. Monitor quadrant

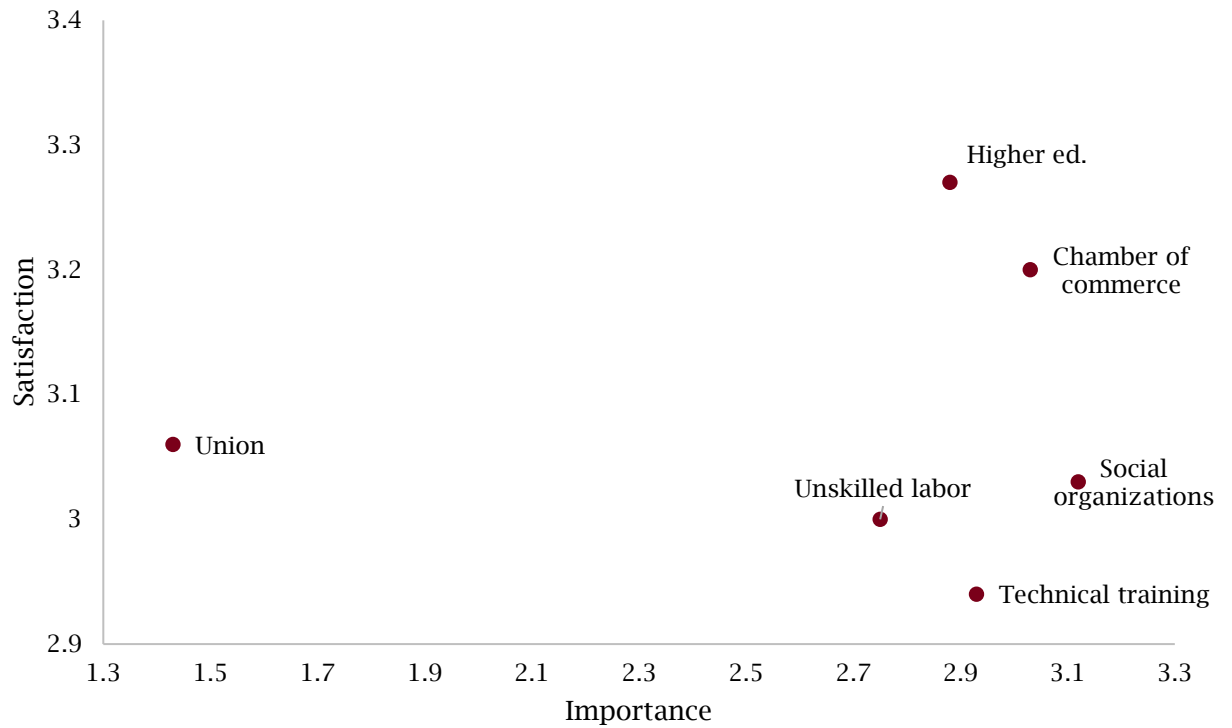


Figure 25. Leave alone quadrant

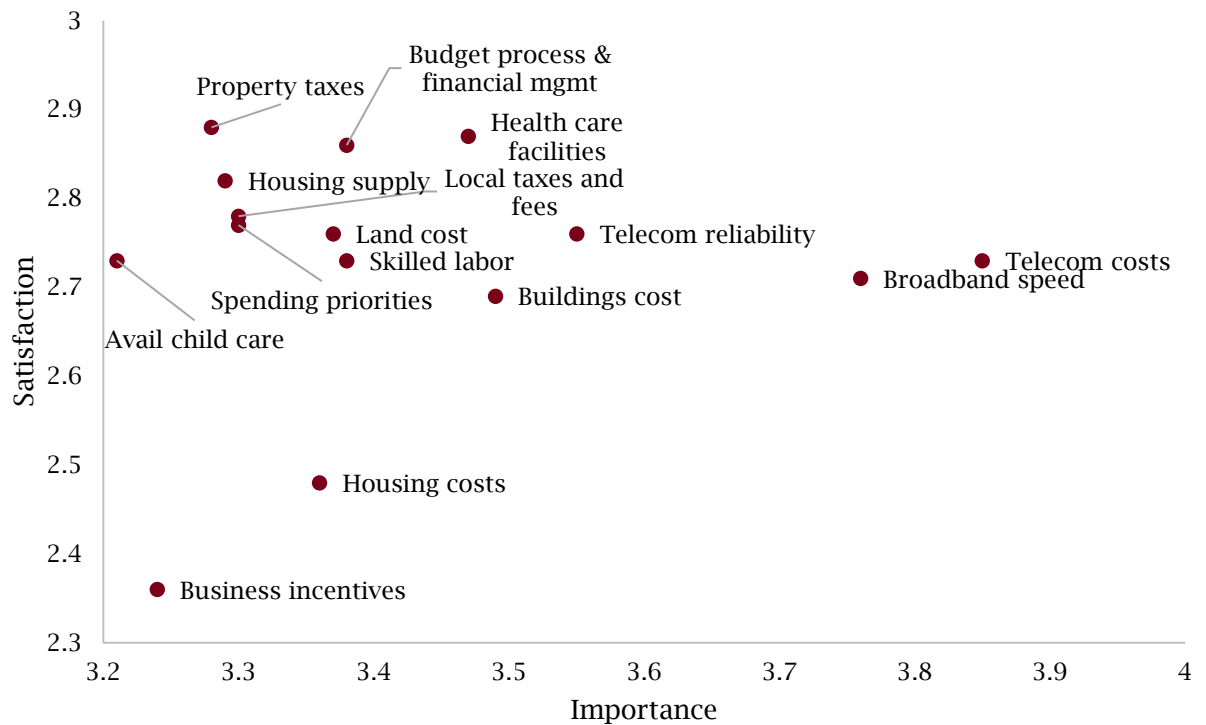


Figure 26. Take action quadrant

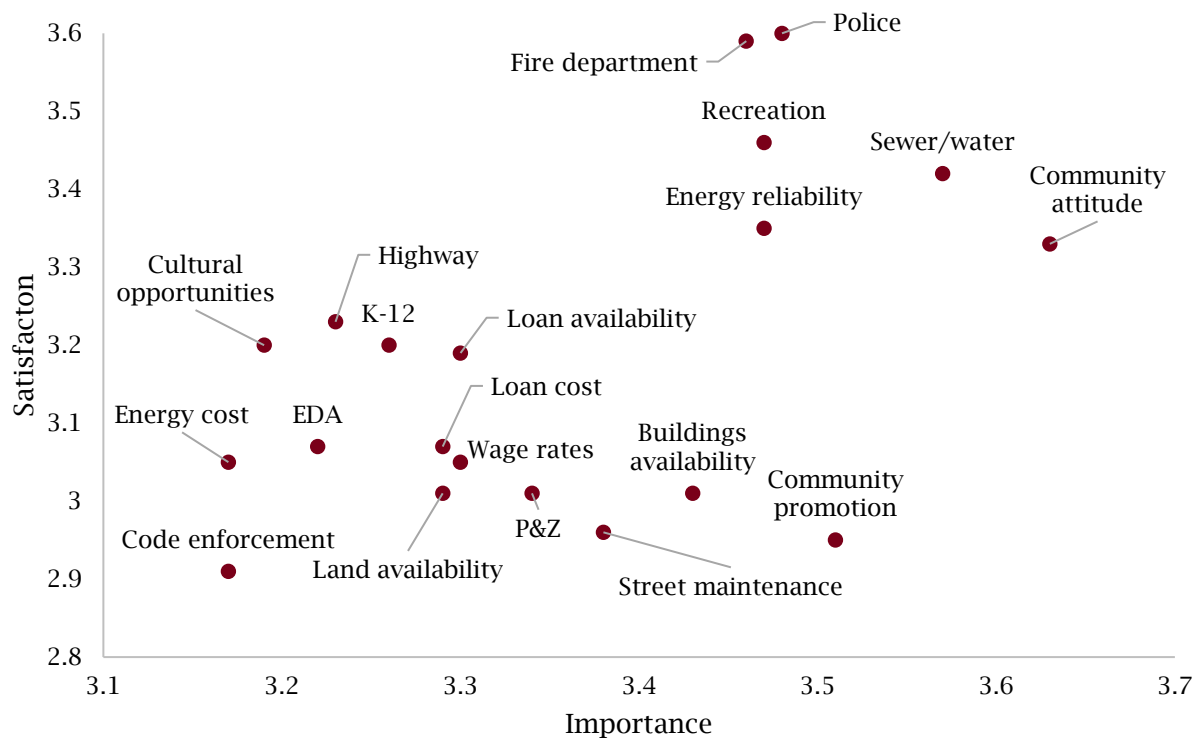


Figure 27. Celebrate quadrant