



City of Nanaimo Home-Based Business Survey FINAL REPORT

July 2018



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *Home-Based Business Survey* was undertaken by the City of Nanaimo's Economic Development office in order to gather information about the operations of home-based businesses in Nanaimo and their needs. City of Nanaimo Council and the Economic Development office wish to acknowledge and thank Nanaimo residents who participated in the survey for their valuable time and feedback.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2018, City of Nanaimo's Economic Development department conducted a Home-Based Business Survey. The home-based businesses are a significant contributor to Nanaimo's economy. Many business owners use the home as a business incubator, moving out when the business concept is proven or when they begin to grow beyond a certain size. The survey aimed to gather information about the needs and the challenges of home-based businesses. The intent is to ensure that home-based businesses have the same access as any other business to public sector business support.

Objectives

The objectives of the Home-Based Business Survey 2018 were to:

- Obtain general information about home-based businesses operating in Nanaimo.
- Identify the use of information technology and communication tools by home-based businesses.
- Gather information about growth and development goals of home-based businesses.
- Feedback on community as a place to do business.
- Identify the support needs and challenges facing home-based businesses.
- Identify information that businesses would like to receive.

The Survey questionnaire was directly e-mailed to the majority of the 2,264 home-based businesses within the City of Nanaimo. Further awareness regarding the survey was created through a City of Nanaimo media release, Chamber of Commerce newsletter and radio talk show interview. A total of 442 questionnaires were returned. This is a 19% return rate, representing nearly 1 in 5 businesses completing the survey.

This report presents the findings of the *Home-Based Business Survey*. The key findings are as follows:

Profile of Businesses

- Almost one-fifth of home-based business owners surveyed are classified as 'Professional Scientific and Technical', followed closely by construction related business at 17.7%.
- The largest portion of home-based business owners (32.2%) have been operating their current business between 1-4 years. 42% of the home-based businesses are less than four years old. Nearly 16% of business owners have been in operation for 20 years or more.
- The vast majority (68%) of the home-based businesses are sole proprietorships, followed by one in four being registered as a corporation.
- 85% of home-based business owners have completed some form of post-secondary education and/or training. The highest level of educational attainment achieved by any of the principle owners of the home-based businesses surveyed is a University Degree or higher (44%).
- Seven out of ten (70%) business owners surveyed reported their home-based business is their primary source of income.
- On average one-third (32.9%) of home-based business owners work between 35 to 50 hours each week. Nearly half (49.1%) of the home-based businesses work less than 35 hours per week.
- The vast majority of the home-based businesses (64.2%) serve the local market, followed by 16.1% serving the regional market.
- Slightly over one in four (26.3%) home-based business owners state their top reason for starting a home-based business was to realize a lifelong dream or to turn a hobby into a business. 17%

of the business owners saw an opportunity or a gap in the market place as an inspiration for starting a home-based business. 16.7% state their top reason for starting a home-based business was the ability to earn more money versus other forms of employment.

- 26% of the home-based businesses outsource work.

Technology & Communications

- Seven in ten home-based businesses have access to either wireless (55.2%), DSL/ADSL (9.4%) or fibre optic (4.8%) internet connections. Less than two percent (1.6%) of home-based businesses have no internet connection.
- Nearly two thirds (64%) of home-based businesses have a company website.
- The three prevailing uses of business internet for the home-based business owners surveyed are:
 - E-mail (96.8%)
 - Internet banking (84.3%)
 - Research (77.2%)
- 42.5% of home-based businesses engage in online trade and sales. A further 5.5% are interested in exploring opportunities to do online trade and sales. One in every ten home-based business is conducting between 76-100% of their sales through the internet.

Growth & Development

- Approximately half (49.2%) of the home-based businesses surveyed have sales above \$50,000 per annum. One in every four businesses have sales above \$100,000 per annum and 13.4% of the business make sales above \$200,000 per annum.
- Eight out of every ten home-based businesses surveyed expect sales to grow over the next year. 5.5% of the businesses expect sales to grow by fifty percent or more from current levels. Majority of businesses (35.4%) expect sales to grow between 1 and 9%.
- Sales have been increasing for nearly 55% of the businesses over time. 38.6% report no change in sales trend.
- The vast majority of home-based businesses (45.3%) report status quo as plans for the next five years. 37.6% of the businesses want to increase the size of their businesses over the next five years. 8% of the businesses surveyed plan on reducing the size of their business, while approximately 9% will either sell or close their business. From the home-based businesses that are looking to expand operations 6.7% intend to move into commercial premises.
- When asked which of a list of business operation related activities were completed in the past 12 months, advertising (44.5%) was the top activity engaged in. The next highest activity was direct marketing campaign at 16.2%.
- Six out of ten businesses would prefer to stay small so that they can continue to operate their business from home. A significant portion of the home-based businesses (42.9%) would like to explore opportunities to expand their businesses. 3.1% of these businesses are involved in exporting and a further 4.6% indicate their business has exporting potential.
- The three main issues impacting home-based business owners and the operation of their businesses are:
 - increasing costs (57.3%);
 - time management (41.7%); and
 - competition and sales are tied at third place (28.4%).

- When asked which seminars and workshops home-based business owners would be interested in attending, the top five selected were:
 - Business Planning
 - Time Management
 - Financing/Capital
 - Information and Technology
 - Peer Mentoring and Networking

Community

- Vast majority (73%) of the home-based businesses view Nanaimo as a positive location for their business.
- Nearly half the home-based businesses (46.6%) state the business climate is better today compared to five years ago. 37.8% believe the business climate has not changed while 15.5% believe it is worse today compared to five years ago.
- Nearly six out of ten businesses expect the business climate to improve over the next five years, while three out of ten expect conditions to remain the same.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The following section outlines the findings from the *Home-Based Business Survey*. The profile of survey respondents is examined first and is followed by an analysis.

Profile of Businesses

Business Classification

Based on North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) respondents were asked to specify which industry sector their business represented.

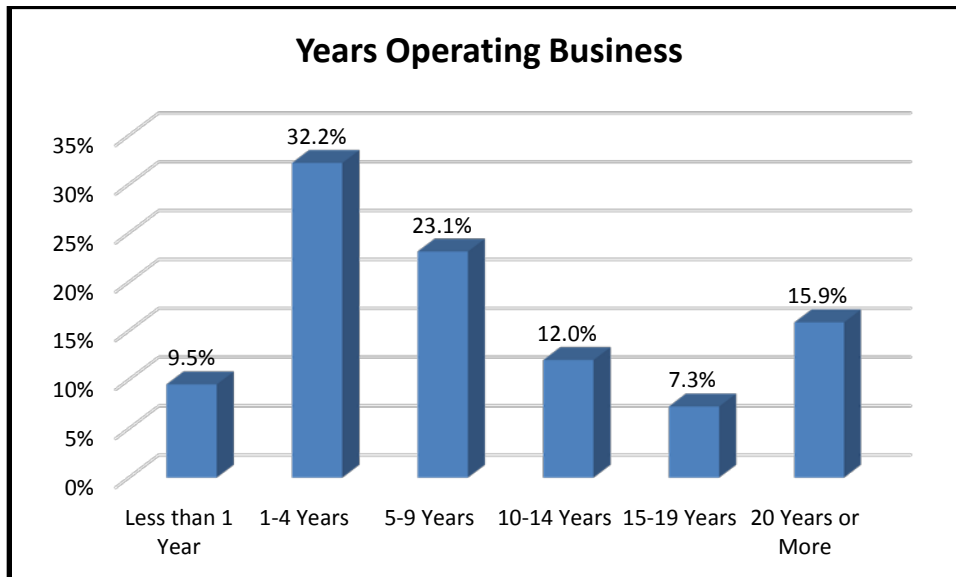
Home-based businesses in Nanaimo span virtually all sectors of the economy with very few exceptions such as retail and utilities sectors (prohibited uses). In terms of main concentration of home-based businesses the top four sectors are "Professional Scientific & Technical", "Construction", "Repair Maintenance & Personal Services", and "Healthcare Social Services and Child Daycares".

Almost one fifth of home-based business owners surveyed are classified as 'Professional Scientific and Technical', followed closely by Construction related business at 17.7%. "Professional Scientific and Technical" sector includes businesses such as accounting, bookkeeping, architectural, computer system design, management consulting, advertising, and photography etc. A significant portion of the home-based businesses in the construction sector include building contractors and specialty trade contractors for the interior and exterior of buildings.

Industry Sector NAICS Classification	Count	Percent
Professional Scientific and Technical	85	19.3%
Construction	78	17.7%
Repair, Maintenance and Personal Services	72	16.3%
Health Care & Social Services & Child Daycares	63	14.3%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	39	8.8%
Educational & Training Services	20	4.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	19	4.3%
Wholesale Trade	16	3.6%
Manufacturing	16	3.6%
Administration, Support, Waste Remediation	10	2.3%
Transportation, Warehousing & Storage	8	1.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	7	1.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	4	0.9%
Information & Cultural Industries	4	0.9%
Total	441	100.0%

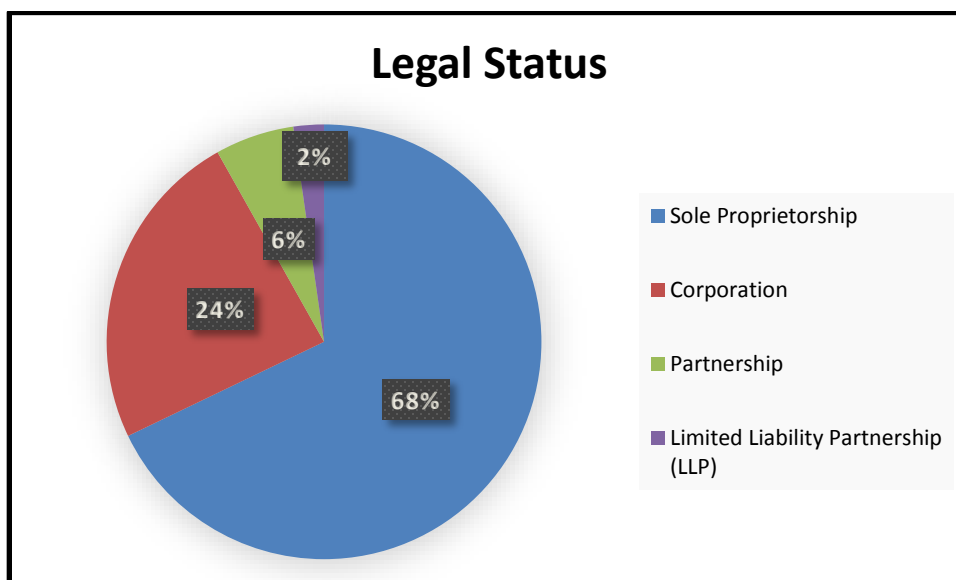
Years' Operating Current Business

The largest portion of home-based business owners (32.2%) have been operating their current business for 1-4 years. 42% of the homebased businesses are less than four years old. Nearly 16% of business owners have been in operation for 20 years or more.



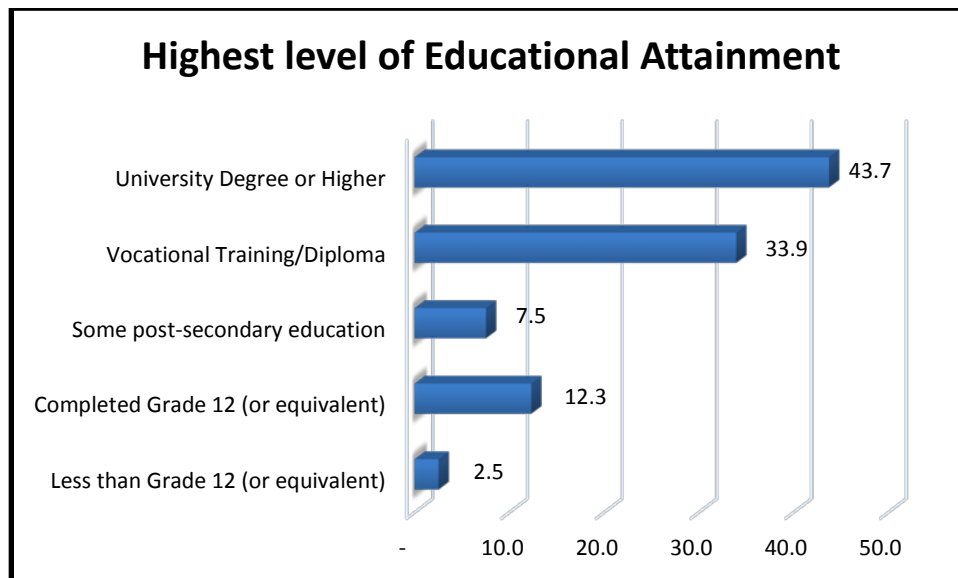
Legal Status

A vast majority (68%) of the home-based businesses are sole proprietorships, followed by one in four being registered as a corporation.



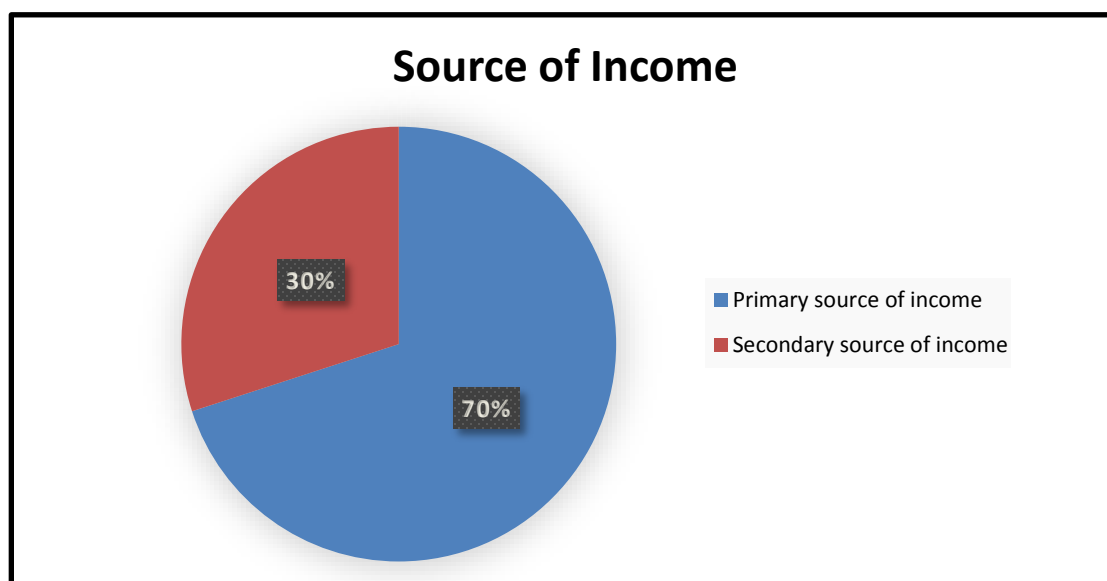
Highest Level of Educational Attainment

85% of home-based business owners have completed some form of post-secondary education and or training. The highest level of educational attainment achieved by any of the principle owners of the home-based businesses surveyed is a University Degree or higher (44%). 34% reported having completed vocational training, or a diploma program as their highest level of education.



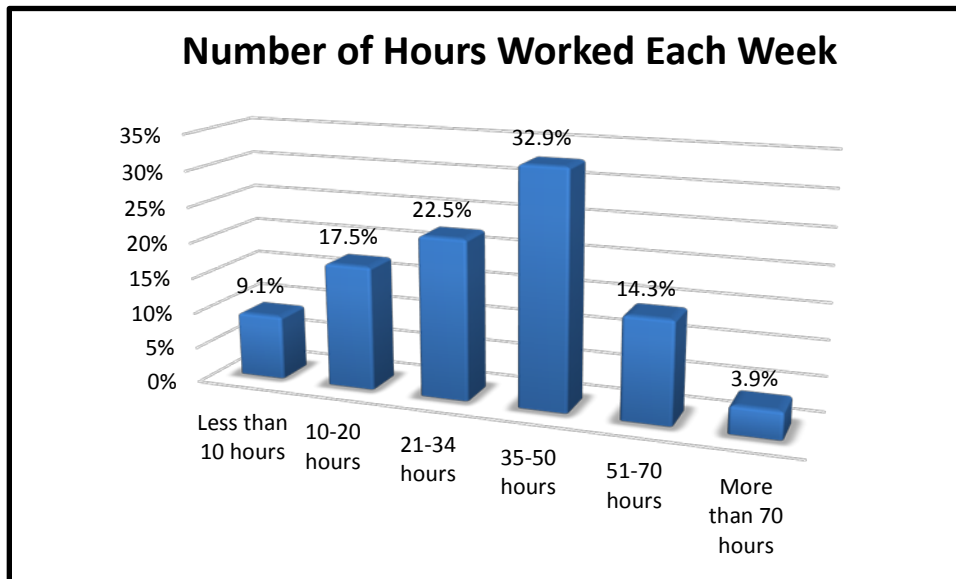
Source of Income

Seven out of ten (70%) business owners surveyed reported their home-based business is their primary source of income.



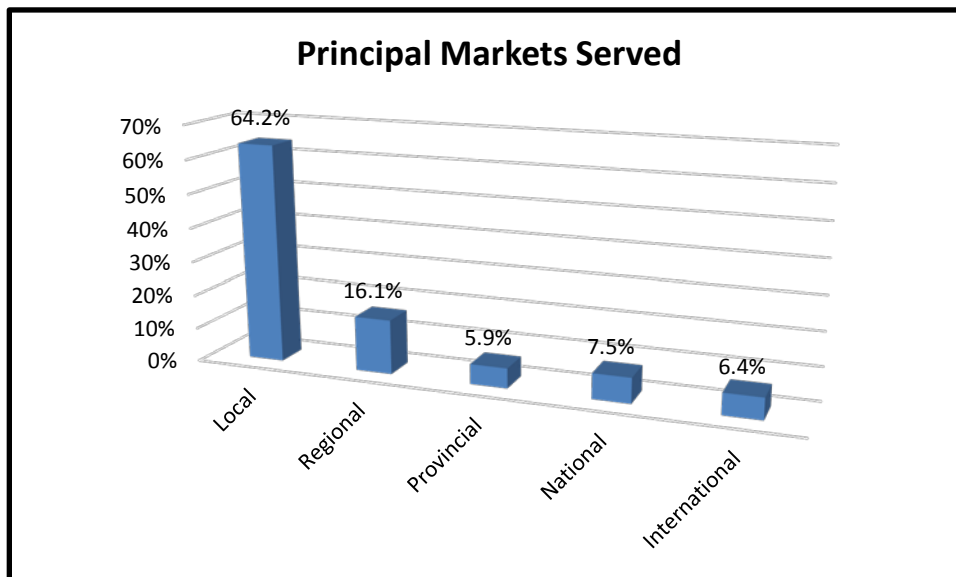
Number of Hours Worked

On average one third (32.9%) of home-based business owners' work between 35 and 50 hours each week. Nearly half (49.1%) of the home-based businesses work less than 35 hours per week. Flexibility around number of hours worked is likely a huge draw for operating a home-based business. Nine percent (9.1%) of owners work less than 10 hours per week.



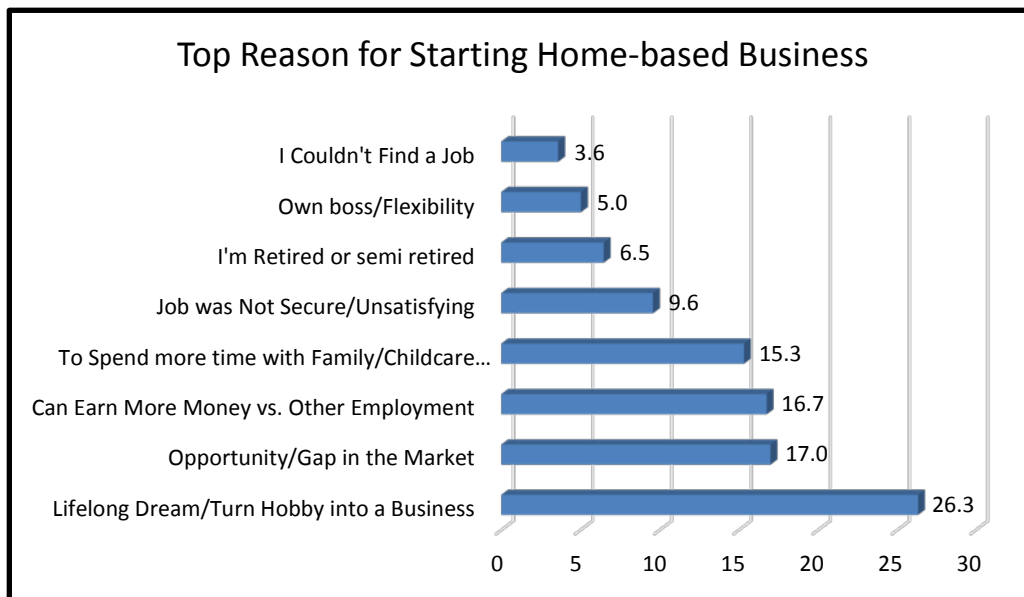
Principal Markets Served

A vast majority of the home-based businesses (64.2%) serve the local market, followed by 16.1% serving the regional market. Approximately 20% of home-based businesses are selling their products and services to clients outside the region.



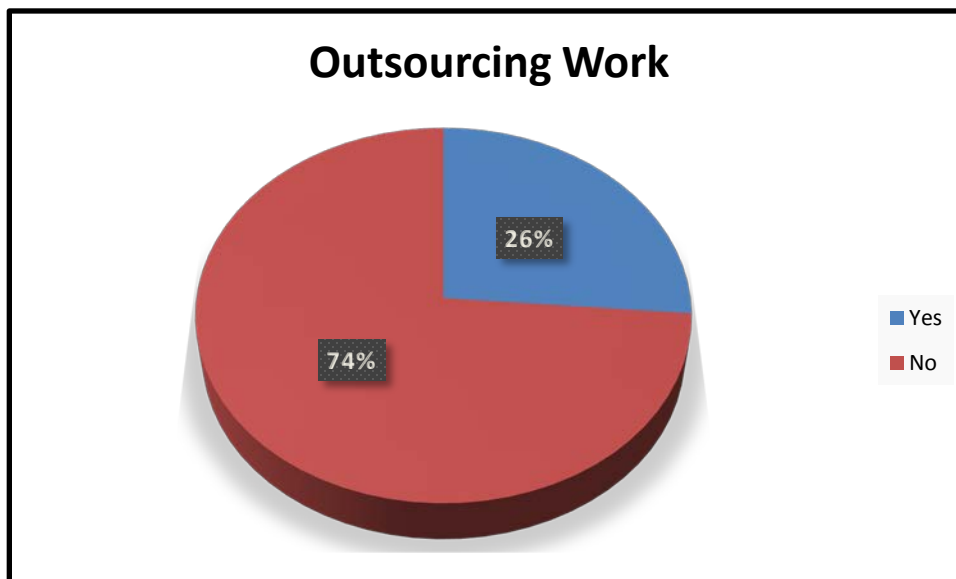
Top Reason for Starting a Home-Based Business

Over one in four (26.3%) home-based business owners state their top reason for starting a home-based business was to realize a lifelong dream or to turn a hobby into a business. 17% of the business owners saw an opportunity or a gap in the market place as an inspiration for starting a home-based business. 16.7% state their top reason for starting a home-based business was the ability to earn more money verses other forms of employment.



Outsourcing Work

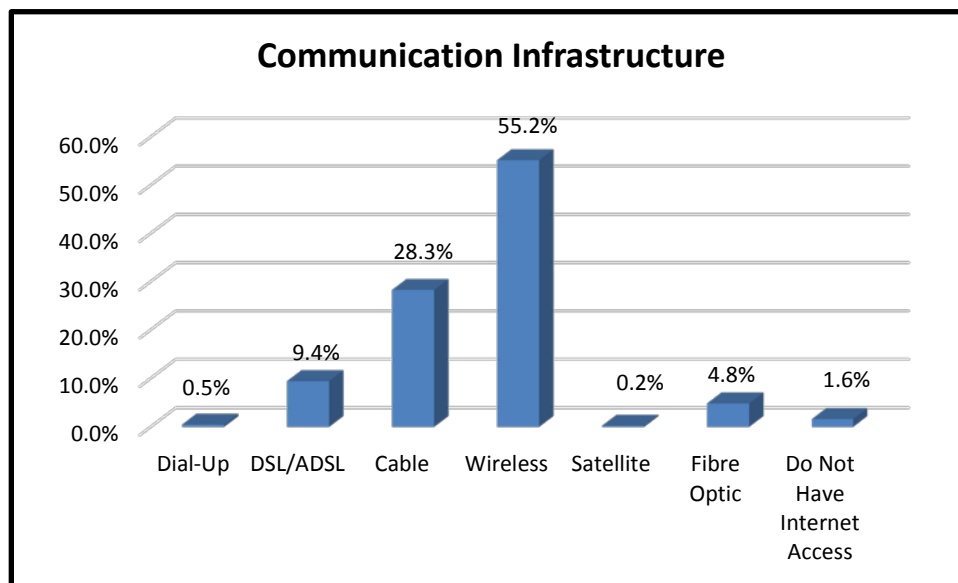
The majority of the businesses do not outsource work (74%).



Technology & Communication

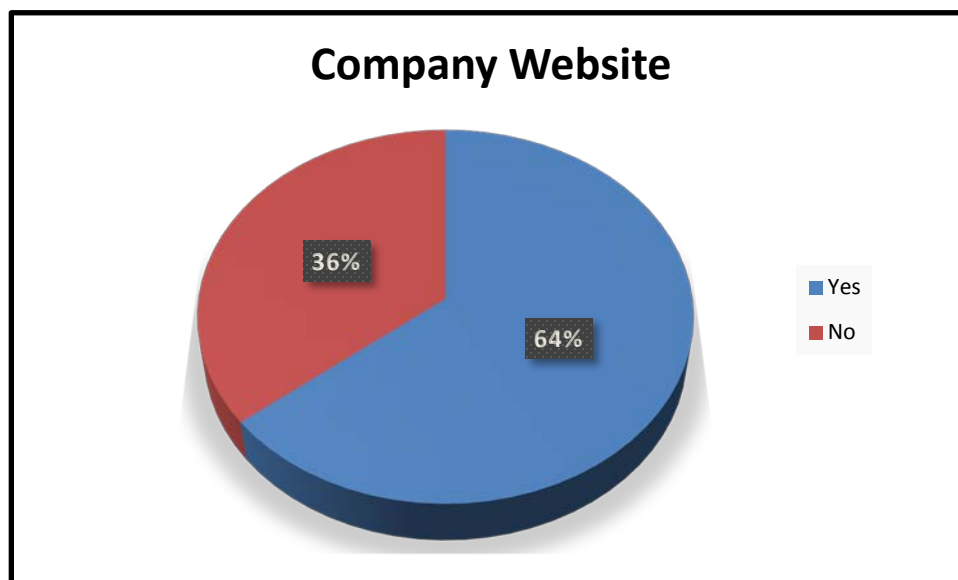
Communication Infrastructure

Seven out of ten home-based businesses have access to either wireless (55.2%), DSL/ADSL (9.4%) or fibre optic (4.8%) internet connections. Less than two percent (1.6%) of home-based businesses have no internet connection.



Company Website

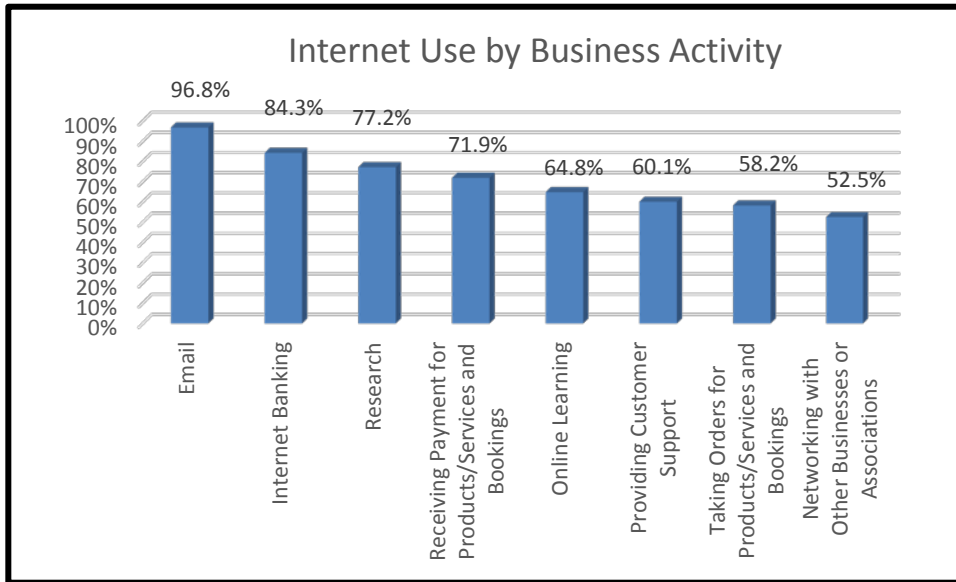
Nearly two thirds (64%) of home-based businesses have a company website.



Use of Internet

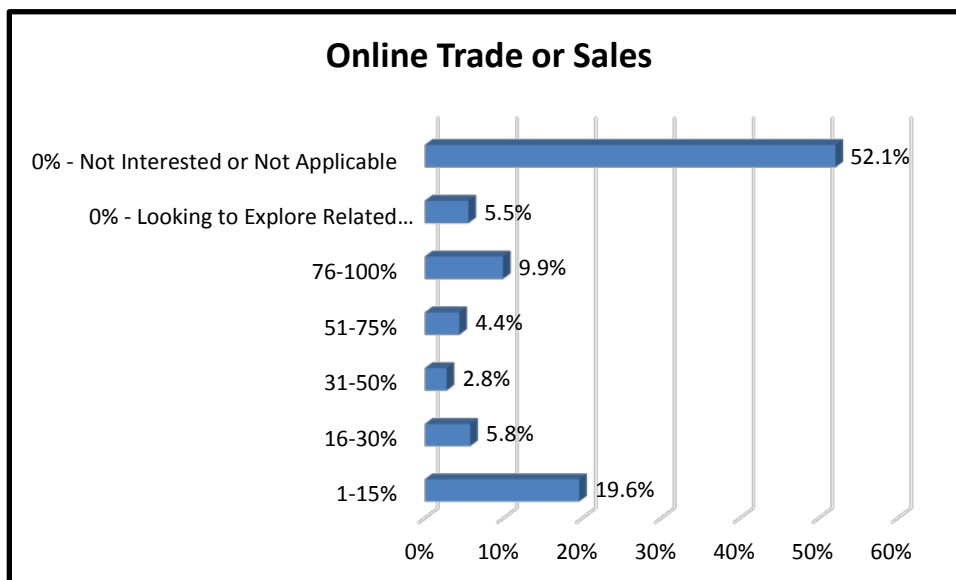
The three prevailing uses of business internet for the home-based business owners surveyed are:

- E-mail (96.8%)
- Internet banking (84.3%)
- Research (77.2%)



Online Trade and Sales

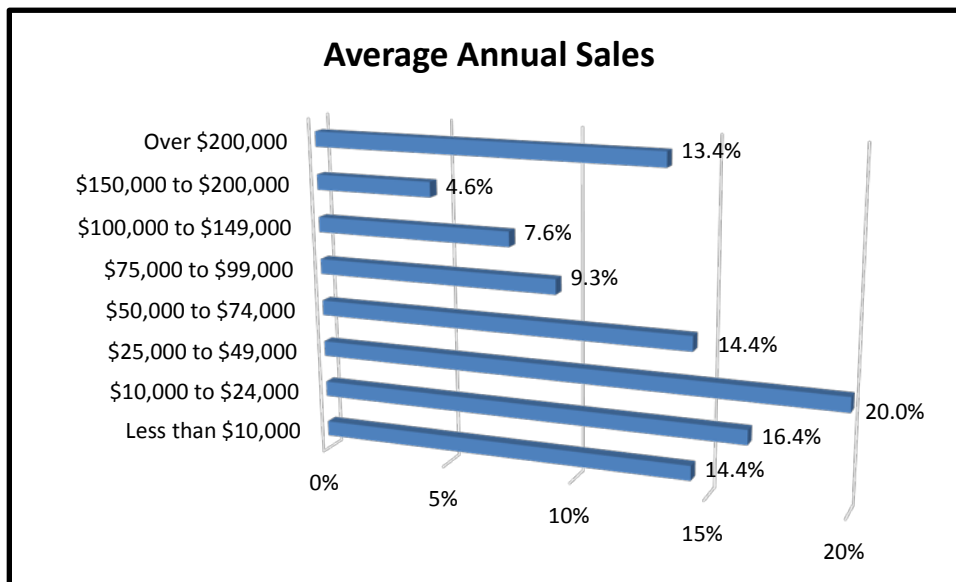
42.5% of home-based businesses engage in online trade and sales. A further, 5.5% are interested in exploring opportunities to do online trade and sales. One in every ten home-based business is conducting between 76-100% of their sales through the internet. Slightly more than half (52.1%) of business owners surveyed are not interested in online trade or sales.



Growth & Development

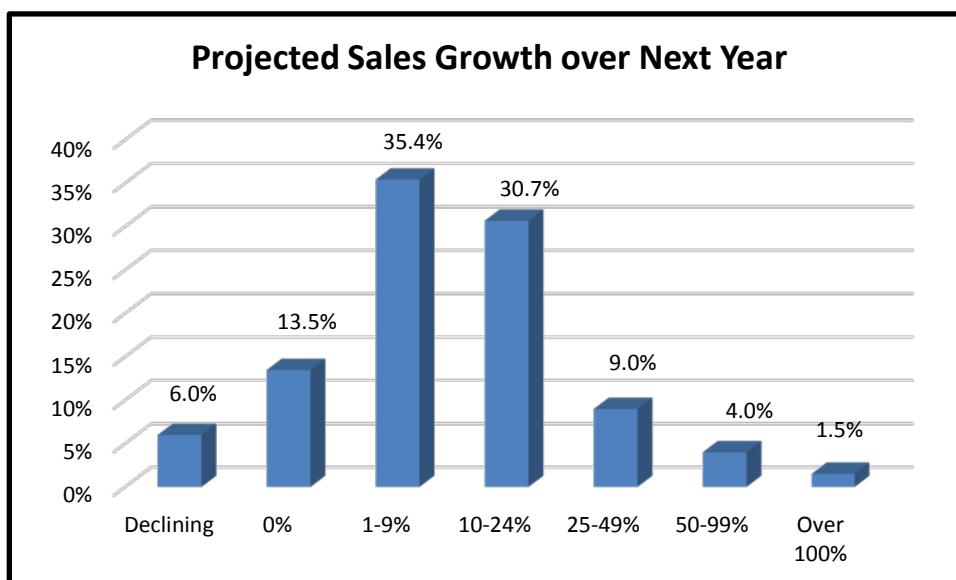
Average Annual Sales

Approximately half (49.2%) of the home-based businesses surveyed have sales above \$50,000 per annum. One in every four businesses have sales above \$100,000 per annum and 13.4% of the business make sales above \$200,000 per annum.



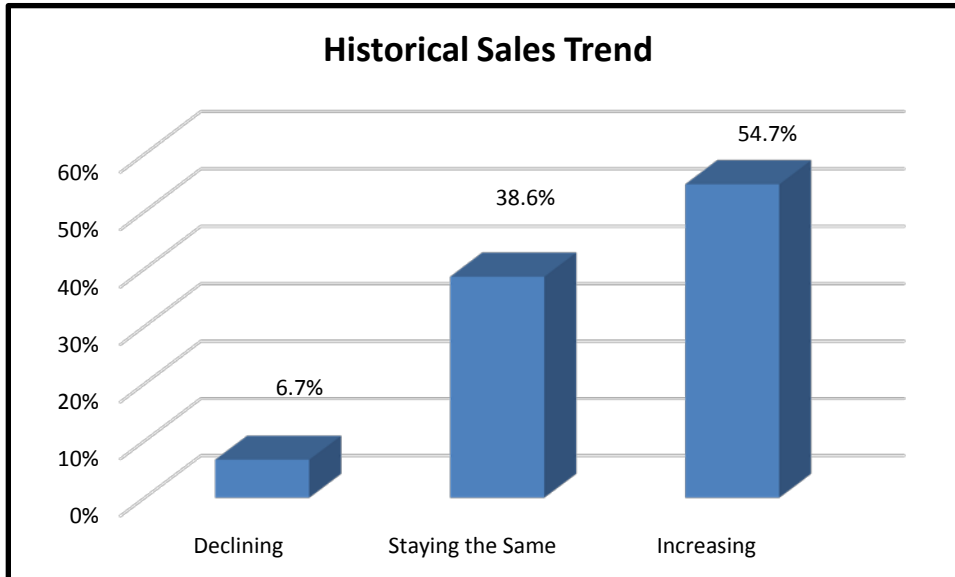
Projected Sales Growth over the Next Year

Eight out of every ten home-based business surveyed expect sales to grow over the next year. 5.5% of the businesses expect sales to grow by fifty percent or more from current levels. Majority of businesses (35.4%) expect sales to grow between 1% and 9% followed by 30.7% expecting sales to grow between 10 to 24%.



Sales Trend

Sales have been increasing for nearly 55% of the businesses over time. 38.6% report no change in sales trend.

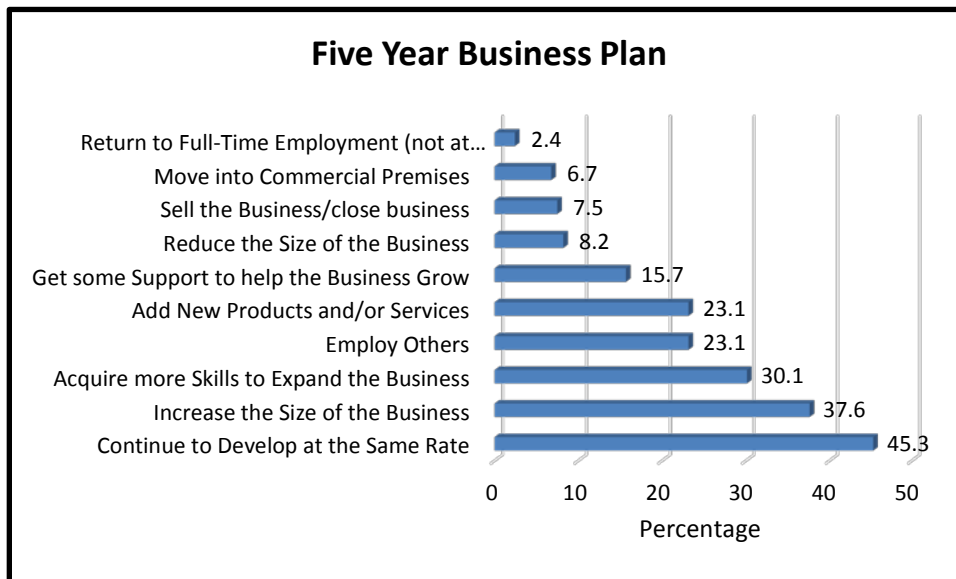


Five Year Business Plan

Respondents were given a list of statements concerning their business intentions over the next five years and were asked to select all applicable. The top five most selected statements were:

- Continue to Develop at the Same Rate
- Increase the Size of the Business
- Acquire more Skills to Expand the Business
- Employ Others
- Add New Products and/or Services

The vast majority of home-based businesses (45.3%) report status quo as plans for the next five years. 37.6% of the businesses want to increase the size of their businesses over the next five years. 8% of the businesses surveyed plan on reducing the size of their business, while approximately 9% will either sell or close their business. From the home-based businesses that are looking to expand operations 6.7% intend to move into commercial premises.



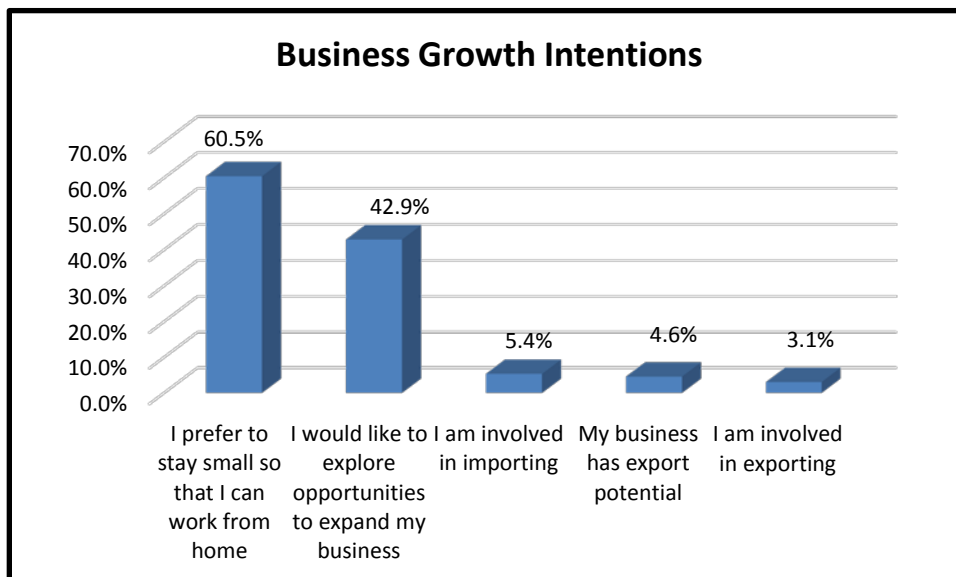
Business Operations

When asked out of a list of business operation related activities were completed in the past 12 months, advertising (44.5%) was the top activity engaged in. The next highest activity was direct marketing campaign at 16.2%.



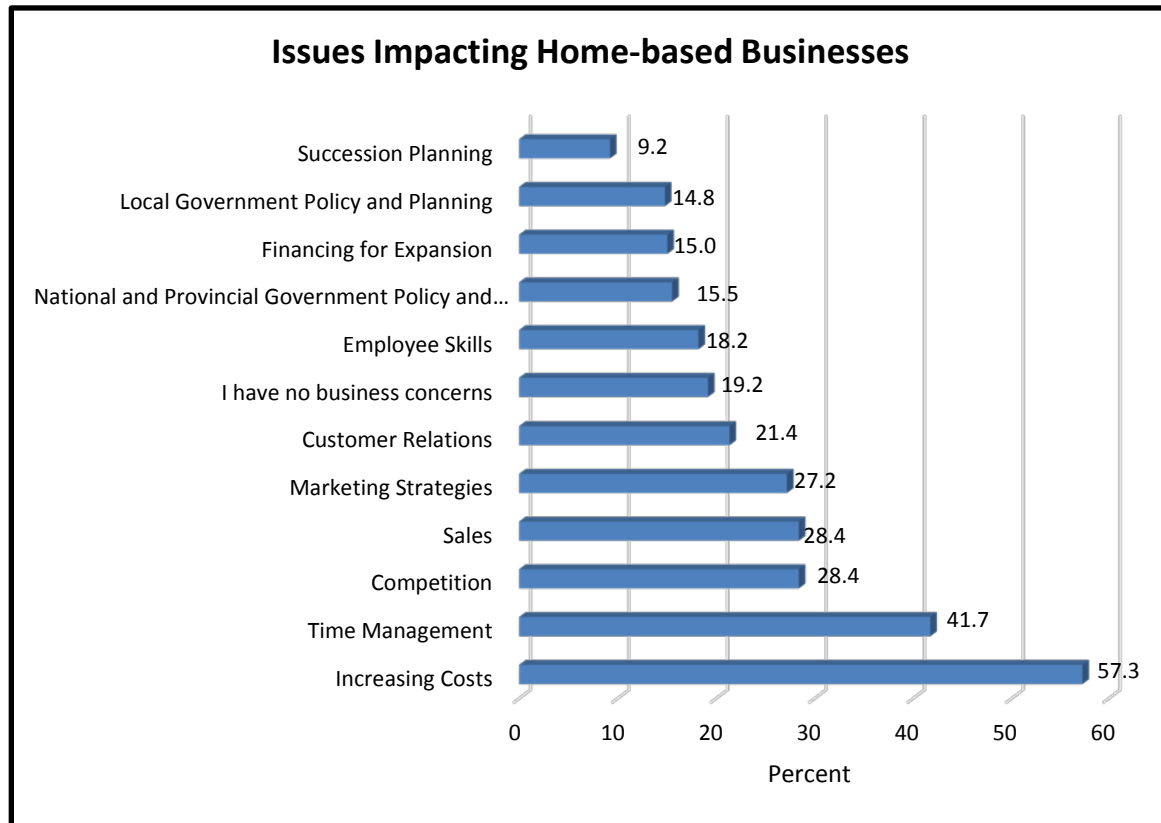
Business Growth Intentions

Further to the five year business plan, respondents were given a list of statements concerning growth intentions for their home-based business. Six out of ten businesses would prefer to stay small so that they can continue to operate their business from home. A significant portion of the home-based businesses (42.9%) would like to explore opportunities to expand their businesses. 3.1% of these businesses are involved in exporting and a further 4.6% indicate their business has exporting potential.



Issues Impacting Home-Based Businesses

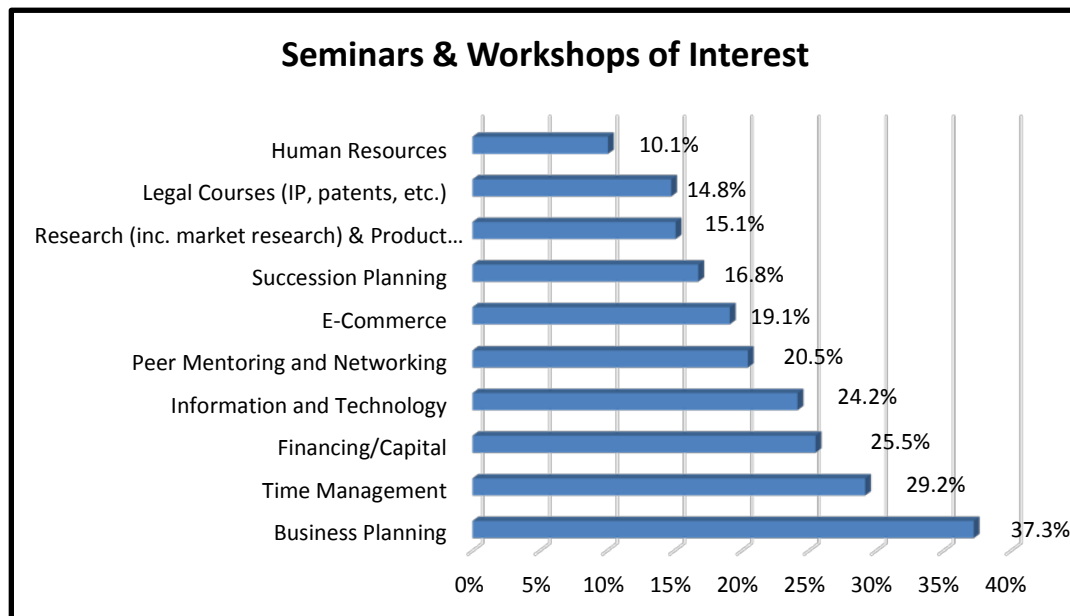
The three main issues impacting home-based business owners and the operation of their businesses are increasing costs (57.3%), time management (41.7%) and competition and sales are tied at third place (28.4%).



Future Seminars and Workshops

When asked which seminars and workshops home-based business owners would be interested in attending, the top five selected included:

- Business Planning
- Time Management
- Financing/Capital
- Information and Technology
- Peer mentoring and networking

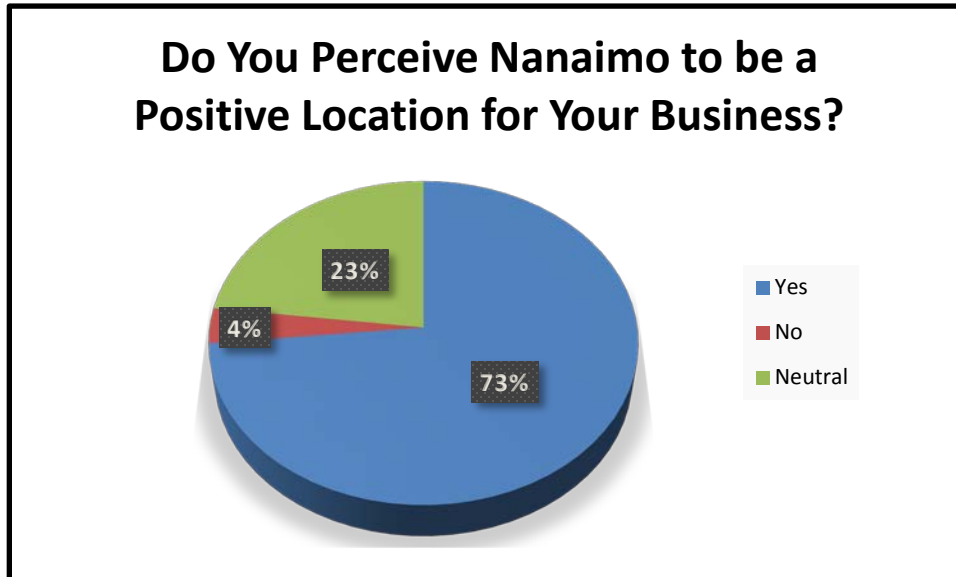


Community

This section of the survey is intended to gather feedback regarding home-based businesses' perceptions about Nanaimo and general business confidence.

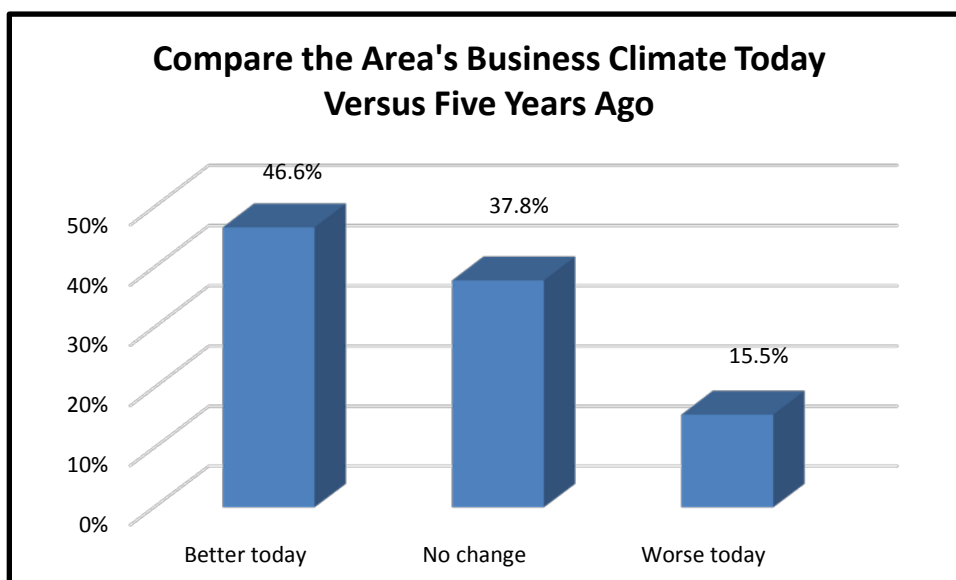
Nanaimo as a Place to do Business

A vast majority (73%) of the home-based business owners view Nanaimo as a positive location for their business.



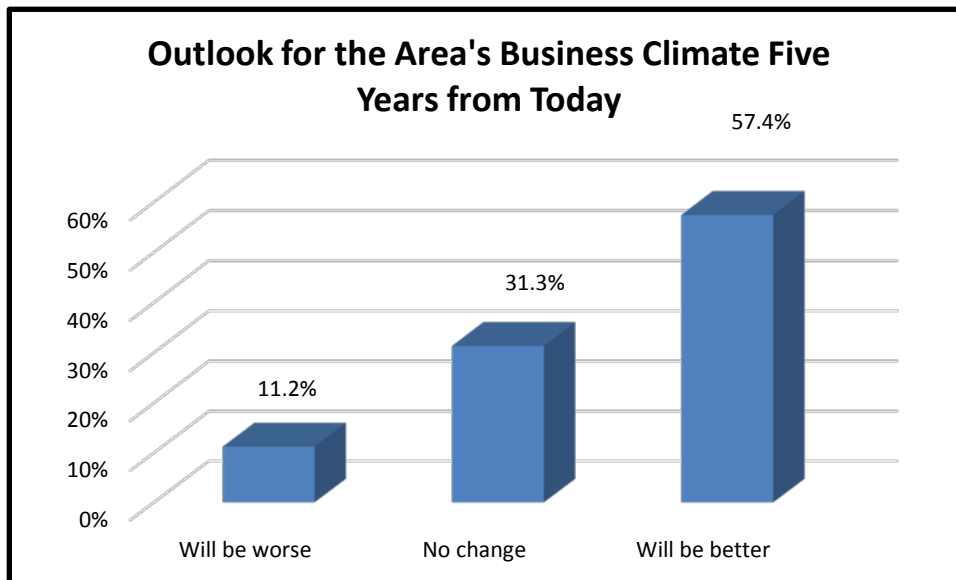
Business Climate

Nearly half the home-based businesses (46.6%) state the business climate is better today than compared to five years ago. 37.8% believe the business climate has not changed while 15.5% believe it is worse today compared to five years ago.



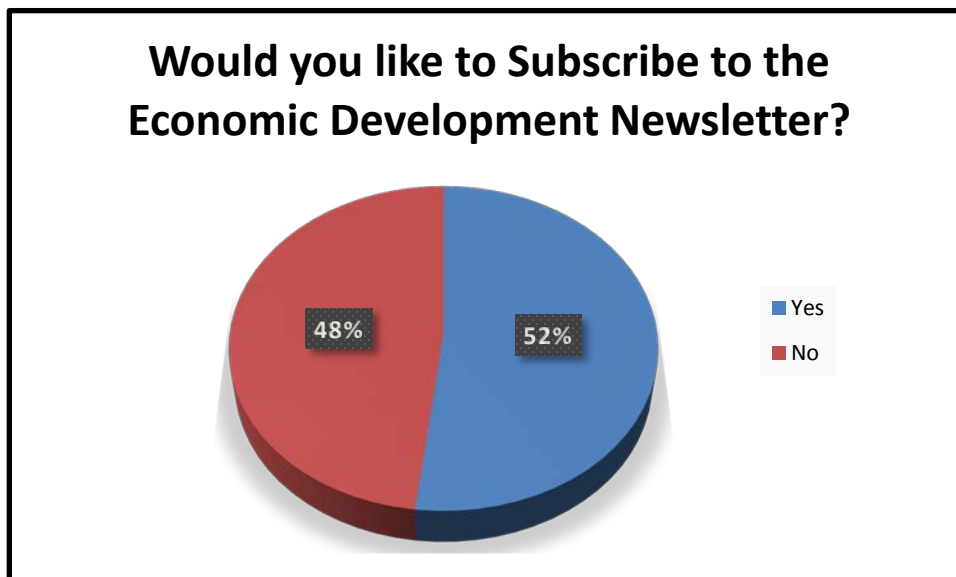
Business Climate Outlook

Nearly six out of ten businesses expect the business climate to improve over the next five years, while three out of ten expect conditions to remain the same.



Economic Development Newsletter

52% of the participants confirmed they would like to subscribe to the Economic Development newsletter which is currently under development.



Invitation to Workshops and Seminars

65% of the home-based businesses would like to receive an invitation to workshops and seminars that are hosted by the Economic Development office.



Open Ended Questions

Business owners were asked the following three open-ended questions. The themes/issues commonly expressed were:

- 1. What are the community's strengths as a place to do business?**
Central Location, Growing Community/Population, Community Support, Strong 'Word of Mouth' Referrals, Small Town Feel, Beautiful Outdoors, Strong Support for Home-Based/Small Businesses, Lots of New Development/Construction, Lower Cost of Living (Compared to Vancouver/Victoria)
- 2. What are the community's weaknesses as a place to do business?**
Homelessness Issues in Downtown Core (Tent City), Lack of Support from Government, High Costs to Lease Commercial Space, High Costs of Doing Business, Government Red Tape, Limited Resources, Lack of Business Networking, Parking Issues, Traffic
- 3. Are there particular businesses or types of business you would like to see locate in Nanaimo?**
Food Trucks, High Tech Companies, IKEA, Independent/Location Restaurants and Shops, Year Round Farmers Markets, More Venues, More Restaurant Choices on Waterfront, Manufacturing

The responses are detailed in appendix 3.1.

APPENDICES

Open Ended Questions

What are the community's strengths as a place to do business?

1. Only if you know a lot of people.
2. new construction, population increase
3. It has a lot of vehicles and motorcycles
4. Diversity.
5. great place to live and raise a family
6. We find the community's strength is the friendly environment and the opportunities online to bid on projects.
7. Numbers are increasing here, so for my field, it is ideal re: starting up a new business
8. New residents moving into region
9. Growing population
10. It is small so word of mouth promotion is easy
11. Growth
12. word of mouth referrals are good, lots of old houses in need of repair.
13. I don't do much local business but don't do much advertising here
14. Central
15. Central on Vancouver Island
16. My location in Departure Bay is central & easy to find.
17. Central Vancouver Island location, good transportation options, quality healthcare, and natural environmental attractiveness.
18. Maintains a small town feel for a larger center, once you get in hard to dislodge (flip side is makes it tough for new business to dislodge existing even if they arent providing)
19. n/a
20. cheaper to live here than the lower mainland
21. Demand
22. Central, growing, great transportation.
23. Lots of new development, growth of families, lots of houses needing renovations
24. Population growth.
25. People here are into health and Natural ways of getting better
26. The need for childcare
27. Nanaimo city provides easy access on business licensing, which makes small business owners to reduce costs and time on admin works.
28. Great small town feel but getting bigger. Older population which is great
29. Location mid-island able to cover whole island, if needed
30. I like the area and it is close to VIU
31. Great local support from the community
32. nothing to compare it to
33. tourists come here locals appreciate art based in their area
34. seems to be growing
35. Good variety of age population.
36. Nanaimo is a small town, everyone seems to know everyone. I've lived here since 2002 and every job I have had I have gotten through word of mouth.
37. Clientele and tourism
38. Fast growing residents

39. Lots of projects and people wanting to build or add on.
40. Location
41. There are a large number of people who quilt here.
42. Increasing population and continued development growth.
43. The most beautiful outdoor locations to conduct fitness bootcamps. cannot beat the scenery.
44. Growing population
45. New building development.
46. not sure
47. Central location on Island. Good access to highway.
48. Location and environment
49. my home is here
50. Very supportive of home based businesses over needing a store front. Many desire the savings passed on to them because of less overhead.
51. supportive community, especially on Protection Island
52. Population Growth
53. Word of mouth
54. Central to my area of coverage
55. Variety of customers, including tourism
56. lots of opportunities
57. Growing as a community
58. Family oriented
59. The location is great, very central for weddings and we have many beautiful locations to use for outdoor photos.
60. City size, & acceptance.
61. Port City. Close to major city center (Vancouver) for expansion. Large/growing market potential.
62. It is central
63. Good word spreads
64. Small enough for good word of mouth to work effectively and large enough to supply new clients through Nanaimo's growth
65. Population
66. Good subtrades, good material suppliers, growing population
67. Positive word of month. I find a lot of self employed business owners help others self employed business owners.
68. For my business.....the growth of Nanaimo is great.
69. Good networking opportunities within my target demographic
70. Good size and growing.
71. It is centrally located on the island.
72. Large enough population to support my business
73. Great local govt support
74. Location
75. beautiful city
76. Loyal customers, small enough town to develop a good reputation but large enough to work through competition.
77. No answer
78. A growIng city for families and in turn more people need photography services.
79. Many businesses that require my services.
80. Supporting local
81. Strong referral base

82. Diversity in Nanaimo - strong community that supports small business and has strong trades in the community.
83. Small town feel. Know lots of people.
84. A need for seniors to come and meet and great
85. proximity to Vancouver and Victoria, excellent airport
86. Tourism /visitors, our demographic and the general income level
87. Strong sense of community
88. Good potential in a regional market
89. word of mouth
90. Centrally located. Not a lot of competition.
91. People tell people about your work easier in small town
92. Not sure
93. Wide open market Service preschool to seniors
94. Population size but income status is not that strong...many living on minimum wage and can't afford housing so this affects what's left for non-essential services and items. If people can't afford to shop then it doesn't matter how many businesses we have...the demand won't match the supply and then you have businesses failing; going bankrupt or closing down
95. Central to Island as I work Victoria to Campbell River
96. Lots of water
97. A lot of people in Nanaimo have dogs, which makes my business run.
98. Nothing really different than anywhere else for me
99. Good family city and the population is growing.
100. Desirable location. Customers like to come here. Perceived as a vacation destination.
101. nanaimo as a beautiful location
102. It continues to grow
103. Very community based
104. Quiet and supportive.
105. Great weather!!
106. Not as expensive as Vancouver (YET) Nice place to live. Short commute times.
107. There are a lot of people with dogs, and being a dog friendly community helps that
108. LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION For Tourism the location in the middle of the island less than an hour travel to dozens of nice beaches/trails and sites to see.
109. Beautiful place to live
110. Friendly and helpful front staff at city hall. Friendly community citizens. Our downtown businesses.
111. Climate; retirees with a comfortable income; educated residents
112. Low cost of living, a lot of medium size businesses - require more than average consumer grade IT services, but less than enterprise - niche market
113. You can get to know more people and customers will refer the people they know to me
114. Small community , so connected but also close to the city for people who want to collaborate close by
115. central to my customer base, good courier access, close to government research facilities
116. allows home-based business (with clients attending) - unlike Vancouver
117. Growth
118. Word gets around
119. community activities
120. People here are in tune to their energy and alternative health solutions.
121. Island central location
122. MUSIC IS NB

123. Policies and regulations supporting small business
124. a beautiful place to live. The lifestyle Nanaimo offers.
125. Tight-knit, good word of mouth
126. Nanaimo's tourism community is very collaborative.
127. low competition in the immediate area
128. Lots of young families moving to the area cause it's affordable and lots of activities in Nanaimo
129. BC Ferry hub
130. roofing is always required
131. Seem to want to support local business/give word of mouth referrals
132. Lots of people move here from all over the country so it is easy to find the types of product I sell.
133. It has a very diverse opportunities in the business community.
134. N/a
135. Large enough community, but not too large, for word of mouth advertising.
136. great climate and place to retire
137. Families
138. Quiet, friendly
139. high need for my service
140. Nanaimo's population is growing
141. Good networking opportunities
142. Desirable retirement location
143. Not applicable
144. Growing population with the potential budget to spend on my services. Small city, so low transportation costs and timeloss. Year round work is possible, in an otherwise seasonal business.
145. variable meeting areas, option for co-op/sharing of office space. Community interest in environmental and social justice issues including social enterprise. The presence of VIU and the effect it has on all residents.
146. I think its still small enough for word of mouth business. Customers are great to work for.
147. willingness to support local initiatives
148. Our climate facilitated a longer landscaping season
149. Anywhere is really a good place for private home or Care Home physiotherapy visits. There are never enough PT's doing this work. Nanaimo has an aging population and many Care Homes.
150. Cost of overhead is high, the cost can be reduced if the type of business will allow it.
151. Nanaimo is central located and growing, has a wide variety of businesses, is easy to get around in, and is a great community
152. People usually like to support home based and local businesses.
153. Quiet and not generally abound with distraction.
154. Recreational opportunities and climate. Some business owners have a preference to support other local businesses, and this is the source of most of our work. The new downtown Thursday night market is fantastic.
155. * Central physical location/access to larger centres * Lifestyle * Great size for diverse networking
156. Know people, word of mouth
157. Central island location
158. This region has welcomed my individual style, especially in traditional print media.
159. Growing diversified population
160. able to purchase most of our supplies locally
161. Population of outdoor enthusiasts
162. People who need a maid
163. mid age population - good "buyers"

164. There are always more children!
165. Government location
166. Loyalty
167. good climate, no traffic jam
168. The interaction of people meeting and talking outside of the downtown core. The homebased business are working well together.
169. Growing
170. lifestyle and relatively inexpensive place to live.
171. central location and access to Vancouver
172. Nanaimo is a growing "little big town," meaning it's got a medium population over a large area that still has room for new, small businesses.
173. POPULATION OF THE REGION; LOCATION ON THE ISLAND; PEACEFUL LIFE STYLE.
174. Many people are happy to support local small businesses.
175. There is a great mixture of large and small business with the right amount of competition.
176. I believe Nanaimo is becoming a very sought after place to live & therefore see growing opportunities in both the residential & commercial markets.
177. lots of people moving here to retire or to afford a home
178. Older clientele require our services
179. Centrally located on Island
180. central, easy access
181. Its big enough to have a word of mouth through customers.
182. Reasonable cost of living, centrally located, good transportation options.
183. All of the families I deal with are friendly and happy to bring business to my company. Nanaimo is a great community to own a small business. I have a park right next door and it allows families to spend time outside while they wait.
184. Lifestyle
185. small good networking social conscience
186. Central island location
187. Large market
188. None
189. Handy to Transportation hub
190. Small town feel so word of mouth is important.
191. Nanaimo has a strong "buy local" support/desires
192. elderly population
193. Good steady customer base
194. Beautiful area, close to ferry/airport
195. Direct Harbor flights to Vancouver
196. Relatively easy access to Victoria and Vancouver where I have most of my clients.
197. Centrally located on Vancouver Island Smaller community with good professional connections
198. Nanaimo is a growing community with great potential.
199. Environment
200. It's central location and tourism.
201. Solid retirement community who want to stay in their homes as long as possible but need to outsource their gardening and yard work.
202. Lack of competition providing excellent service.
203. Growing
204. Lots of new construction and development
205. I think because it's a smaller town I've been able to create a really successful business in a short amount of time. The connections I have in the community have served me.

206. Small town feel where the community supports local business.
207. I believe many people here like to work with local people. The population of Nanaimo is growing, and aging.
208. Diversity
209. There is an abundance of locally owned businesses that work together to support each other locally crafted beer companies are a good example - they support each other by sharing equipment - making Nanaimo a "craft beer" capital...
210. Climate
211. Lots of Seniors requiring support
212. Optimal size to expand businesses but not too large as to have the in inconveniences of a large city (ie. traffic & crime)
213. Economic centre of Vancouver Island
214. The amount of 55+ residents creates more jobs as they are unable to do the work themselves.
215. Supports the idea of local-based business
216. Easy access
217. Being located in center of Island makes access to customers convenient
218. I think the city council have crushed a lot of any positives for growth and we need some change fast
219. Supporting local
220. Loyal customers, word of mouth spreads great
221. accessibility to transportation, central location, moderate property costs, support for home based businesses,
222. Mid island location allows to travel the Island for business
223. lots of people that are interested in their own health
224. smaller network of people who "know someone who knows someone".. like a friend of a friend
225. Good shipping hub. Good shopping for a small size city. Still easy to get around.
226. Good music teachers and support of music within the community. Great access to outdoor entertainment venues and support of the city festivals, community bands, jazz fest, blues fest, bathtub races etc.
227. Growth
228. Close to the US Border for Travel and Business development.
229. Nanaimo has a good network of service based business to draw from.
230. Small town, people spread the word. Word of mouth is what makes my business grow.
231. The people of Nanaimo actively support artists and local businesses.
232. Networking yet I provide my services island wide and intent to extent throughout the province
233. SMALL ENOUGH FOR NETWORKING, LARGE ENOUGH FOR OPPORTUNITY
234. My family is located here. Without there assistance both financial and emotional none of this would be possible. Nanaimo is a very difficult place to do business.
235. Growth
236. Locals are great at word of mouth advertising for local businesses they like.
237. City staff very helpful with questions and problems one might have
238. pro- home based businesses
239. Central location on the Island, solid infrastructure(ferry, airport etc)
240. For my DJ business, a lot of repeat customers; not applicable for my consulting business as most of my customers are national
241. Many union benefits to encourage people to get massage..
242. The professional photographer community here is open and welcoming. We are centrally located
243. VIU students as a supply of future skilled employees and/or business owners.
244. net working referral work

245. old people hire painters
246. Location
247. Diverse
248. Reasonable expenses, access to transportation, natural beauty, vibrant community
249. Centrally Located on Island
250. It's easy to get out and see customers.
251. lots of potential as a city.
252. cheaper than Vancouver
253. Central location and access to mainland
254. Close to family and community, Good labour pool for basic entry positions
255. Lots of people looking for childcare
256. Central for my market
257. Growing community
258. Low cost of living (advantage is declining fast)
259. Nanaimo has the benefits of a City but with small town networking and support (in the construction industry)
260. Size/population/family-oriented
261. it's status as a transportation hub makes it easier for me to travel elsewhere in the province/country, the low cost of real estate enabled me to buy a home early and keep my personal costs low, and the broad range of businesses enables me to purchase business supplies/services locally
262. Due to the nature of the people that live here it is one where face to face marketing is the best way for us to gain new clients
263. There is lots of opportunity to expand with a growing city.
264. Older homes means more renovations
265. Demand for the job is high and the city is growing
266. Outdoor settings
267. size, and variety in population and broad areas for businesses
268. Referrals, lots of senior clients
269. Word of mouth helps with getting customers
270. Well Known in the community and established customers are very loyal
271. Laws on home based business make it easy to be successful at home.
272. Lifestyle & community
273. Construction residential/commercial continues to be strong
274. The people are healthy oriented
275. As a tourist location the influx of visitors gives us a greater opportunity to offer our services to a wide audience.
276. Central island Perfect size community with access to everything a person could need!
277. Lower cost of living compared to Vancouver.
278. There is plenty or work in my industry
279. Growing as a city.
280. High concentration of retired seniors.
281. Population growth, and economic growth.
282. Good, long-standing relationships with clients
283. Strengths are that Nanaimo supports in home businesses ...
284. Nothing
285. Nice people, mild climate makes gardening an almost year round job
286. SIZE
287. Very personal and community oriented

- 288. Affordable cost of living
- 289. close to Vancouver, airport, float plane service, good highway to north Island
- 290. Lots of creative and talented people
- 291. It's not too big
- 292. Lots of house building in this area.and construction.
- 293. Strong support for home-based businesses
- 294. The community is an ideal size because there are a decent number of people who fit into my target market, but the costs of doing business (ie. rent) isn't overwhelming.
- 295. Word of mouth, small town so people talk
- 296. We love Nanaimo as a place to live and we love the people
- 297. It is less expensive to purchase real estate here than in the larger cities
- 298. Willingness to work with new companies. Many associations and opportunities to network.
Homebased business friendly.
- 299. Close to all amenities
- 300. Weather and locale.
- 301. Growth
- 302. Not sure
- 303. N/A
- 304. Larger city. Possibility of more people who need/ want my services.
- 305. Most like to support local, small town feel
- 306. A large enough customer base.
- 307. central location
- 308. People support hand made, lots of craft fairs to vend at.
- 309. Low cost with good internet infrastructure and ease of access to an airport
- 310. Word of mouth from customers has seemed to drive more business
- 311. Central island location City is growing up
- 312. large enough to support business, small enough to provide a balanced lifestyle.
- 313. A busy construction industry
- 314. Great Location near ocean
- 315. Low traffic issues

What are the community's weaknesses as a place to do business?

1. The discontent of our community, tent city, homelessness and addiction causes many barriers to doing business in the downtown core including cleanliness, people feeling safe and comfortable to come downtown to do business, limited support from city council and provincial government for businesses in the downtown nanimo region, parking is minimal and difficult to secure.
2. Can't think of any
3. I have found none that pertain to my business.
4. Referring services.
5. it is a little less open to new ideas, and few larger businesses or head office
6. Sometimes it takes to much time to receive answers to question from city hall.
7. Lacking in decent downtown core and overall lack of interesting things to draw more people here.
8. People with limited discretionary resources
9. Costs of things going up causes a lot of small businesses to close
10. Small community with many options for people to seek counselling help. Competition.
11. High cost of living
12. rampant thievery of materials and equipment, high volume of drug and alcohol abuse makes it difficult to find good employees who are not addicted to drugs/alcohol. Not many affordable places for seasonal construction workers to live also makes it hard to find qualified employees.
13. Not willing to pay prices
14. Commercial space
15. Nothing I can think of
16. Lack of parking in subdivisions.
17. Difficulty getting off Vancouver Island to reach mainland work sites.
18. People dont see the value in services and how they benefit them, always seem to be looking for lowest cost vs quality. Time and Time again peers and other business professions talk about how they struggled to get people to use their services or see the need / value and then they go down to Victoria and people are instantly receptive to their services and open to working with them, they tend to be more open and interested in having the right person for the job doing helping them and understanding the value of that service vs i find here, people more often are trying to save a buck even if it will help them. its a mental approach thing, that sometimes comes with the small town attitude feel. both a blessing and a curse as a business.
19. n/a
20. don't value design services and/or seem to want to pay well for professional services.
21. cannot afford
22. Nanaimo is very spread out. Hard to market to, takes more time
23. Perception as a retirement community.
24. It's smaller
25. The lack of support from the local government
26. Lack of small business networking. People seems working on their own a lot and being isolated somehow.
27. Not may people are to concerned about food sustainability and growing gardens
28. None
29. Terrible transportation by bus unless you are in exactly the right area. Mind numbingly bad city leadership.
30. There are some poor quality trades in the community.
31. i have no idea
32. not always easy to get supplies locally (envelopes, frames)
33. seems to be aging
34. Not enough popular commercial areas for businesses to thrive.
35. Expensive electricity, leasing commercial space is expensive, fuel price is extremely expensive.

36. The difficulty to obtain builders licence for a small one or two person team. No time to take all their courses etc. Out of reach so can't get into next bracket of building, such as houses. I understand reasoning but don't deem it fair and holds the small guy out.
37. Govt red tape and the inability to do anything
38. When making quilts to sell it's hard to sell at a good price.
39. People can rent their rooms in their houses but NOT provided parking for their business. And yes , it is a business with 6 renters' cars from their house.
40. Expensive real estate, leasing spaces to try and move the business into a commercial space of any kind.
41. Competitive market.
42. too much red tape
43. Traffic congestion is increasing, taking more of our time from being creative.
44. Local government
45. public transit
46. They are very frugal. You must give them an amazing product at a price comparable or lower than they could do it for themselves.
47. small base - not a lot of people wanting to come to Protection from Nanaimo
48. Current Mayor and City Council
49. Over loaded building inspectors
50. None
51. Could never understand why Nanaimo does not do more to promote tourism and bring some more cruise ships to Nanaimo
52. building permits/process slow and cumbersome
53. Many people do not value the service I offer or do not want to pay for it.
54. Currently a very over saturated market leading to lower average pricing.
55. For me, it's tent city. I am always a little nervous parting around downtown. I worry that my car will be broken into. Given the nature of my business, I have to be able to park safely in the downtown area.
56. Lack of affordable commercial space. Lack of assistance for startups.
57. I have heard from others hat the city is not always easy or efficient to deal with if you expand/ change your business but so far it's been ok for me.
58. Many people settle for average/poor service due to lack of option
59. A fluctuating source of skilled labour
60. In my profession, Nanaimo is just flooded with "photographers". Keeping a good price point and clientele base helps me. I find compared to Alberta, everyone in Nanaimo is so financially stressed, people expect luxury at a next to nothing cost!
61. No weaknesses in my view. As a health care practitioner with a home based practice, Nanaimo is great.
62. Racial discrimination for clients
63. Local mindset is not as flexible with regards to our business model. Often the concerns that I hear are that our products are too expensive but are comparably listed to other companies which are opporating in the area but are bigger and not health orientated.
64. Cyclical, and city typically stalls in decision making and loses construction projects
65. People tend to do everything last minute
66. N/A
67. As a caterer, the conference centre made a huge impact on my business. We lost at least 50% of our bookings and income right from the start.
68. No answer
69. People don't want to pay for services.
70. Not sure
71. Lack of parking downtown. Topography of Nanaimo - very spread out community.
72. Fixed mindset towards athletic culture at times.
73. Too much smoking around the area but it is what it is

74. current municipal governance
75. Not alot of support from local government or incentives for business owners
76. Not enough "incubator" style places & spaces to allow a business the ability to grow to a point where tax bills, etc don't wipe out the ability to survive and get their "heads above water".
Example: Just as it looked like we might have a bit extra to improve our business... we get hit with almost a \$10,000 tax bill.
77. lack of potential to markets that I would like to access--only in vancouver, Victoria
78. Bylaws limit where we can do business. The divide between north Nanaimo & the downtown.
79. Not sure
80. Competition for clients
81. High taxes for businesses make it a challenge to succeed Poor city decision making for allowing same type of businesses to run next door to each other
82. Thieves and junkies
83. Community can be bias to certain training types, which can have a negative impact on my business.
84. Very spread out causeingvtravel costs
85. Travel required to Vancouver for some things, can be time cosuming.
86. increasing bank interest rate
87. A lack of customers.
88. Bureaucracy!! Also poor government and local decision makers. No consistency in decision making!!
89. The cost of commercial property, The changing of Zoning to force types of businesses to move. And even the corruption in city office!
90. the current state of our local government
91. General appearance and lack of security patrols in downtown core. Current homeless issue and constant panhandling is forcing our tourists to go outside our downtown core.
92. High commercial property taxes
93. The elimination of the Downtown Business Improvement Association grant by city counsel; dysfunction and hostility of city coounsellors, city hall manager and CAO resulting in a lack of focus on co-operative buisness climate enhancement
94. Entry/exit to and from shopping plazas; parking
95. discrepancies in opportunity; civic politics/city leadership
96. Low wages, limited employment opportunities, lackluster downtown core, limited activities and night life. Our weakness is our City Council and entrenched strangleholds on certain business sectors
97. needs to work very hard to fit in the circle
98. People are not willing to spend a lot on the service I provide. Think they can do it themselves.
99. none that I know of
100. Crime
101. Word gets around...
102. garbage on the streets, beaches and parks
103. Affordable locations to hold seminars, and training sessions.
104. I do not see any that relate to my business.
105. NA
106. Instability with council!!!
107. I have no complaint.
108. Relatively low income
109. City council has been very unprofessional and is a laughing stock of the island. This has led to some people not necessarily thinking that Nanaimo is a good place to do business.
110. limited wedding venues so have to travel more out of town for events
111. Everything is very spread to so have to travel a bit. Roads coming out of Chase River are to conjested for the population growth
112. Under developed waterfront

113. jobs go up and down depending on economy
114. limited amount of resources. Competition can have a huge effect on success of my business.
115. Not enough high paying jobs , people can't afford to pay for things. To my unablars that don't want the city to develope and create opportunity
116. Too many people that don't have a stable enough housing environment to be able to spend extra money on needed items such as reliable personal transportation.
117. terrible municipal council
118. Not enough child caresn
119. Somewhat reduced amenities compared to a large metropolitan centre like Vancouver; not really a weakness in my case since I do all of my business remotely
120. restrictions on trips per day to and from business. Victoria changed these bylaws and I think Nanaimo should do the same. Especially for those of us who have sufficient parking.
121. More related services are growing in Nanaimo too
122. Current council giving city a bad name
123. lack of consistency from building department ,and building inspectors(ALL INSPECTORS SHOULD BE INSPECTING THE SAME WAY) a code or building question should not be prefaced with "you need to talk to your inspector" (alluding to that each inspector is looking for something different)
124. Not applicable
125. High shipping cost for professional equipment. High house flipping rate, so people often see their garden as a very temporary wallpaper, and want to save money on quality work.
126. Unfortunate situation at City Hall with the majority of current council regarding some of its poor decisions in the past and poor manner of some council members dealing with one another.
127. not aware of any
128. Too early in my business to say
129. It's size. It's just that bit too big. I can spend a lot of time in the car in a work day just driving between clients if they live in the far north and far south.
130. City politics are not business friendly.
131. Road repairs, although required, slow the commuting time from job to job down. Community Volunteers seems to have decreased
132. I usually have to travel off island for trade shows
133. I work predominantly with bands, venues and promoters, and Nanaimo isn't really established in terms of a local music or entertainment "scene".
134. High commercial tax rates, high commercial property costs (rent or own), low labour rates, cheap business owners (and residents) not willing to pay for quality products and services available locally. High cost-of-living coupled with low wages spells poverty for young adults. We have too many wealthy retirees driving up our housing costs, who are "cheap" and do not support local business and are not from here. Big box stores and on-line shopping is hurting local economy. People should value local experiences and local products rather than accumulating cheap "stuff" made by foreign slave labour which hits our garbage dump soon enough.
135. * Our current mayor & council * To small a population for the types of services I offer
136. Need a proactive business attracting attitude from council
137. Awkward time to be doing a survey. Local politics namely civically, the City of Nanaimo itself, is a hot mess and everyone knows it and feels it.
138. Employment rates and wages are low. Decorating doesn't seem to be a priority and something someone here can afford
139. No docks to receive shipments from overseas
140. Nothing in particular.
141. Current council could be a deterrent for moving to Nanaimo
142. shipping rates to mainland BC
143. Remoteness to shipping markets
144. None as far as I'm concerned

145. tough market, people don't really like to spend money
146. Licensing regulations make it hard to expand, finding a commercial space that is approved by both the city and licensing prices to be tricky
147. Many bad IT companies, and its a who you know business.
148. None
149. lack of business networking
150. The downtown business does not interact with homebased business at all. They have a set area and that's it. It could join forces and permute all of Nanaimo as a good place to do business.
151. Narrow minded city council
152. Dealing with BC Ferries during summer tourist season. Business people like myself pay full fare all winter then spend the summer sitting in the parking lot waiting.
153. local government
154. Haven't encountered any yet.
155. Does not promote itself as a place to offer small business a place to survive
156. Divided town in its north and south sections. Population divided, not centred in downtown.
157. AVAILABLE GOOD VACANT LAND FOR COMMERCIAL USAGE.
158. Retail space to lease is extremely expensive which is likely why so many people turn to having home based businesses. I believe this also why more businesses do not locate to Nanaimo and we have a lot of empty retail spaces.
159. There are way to many thefts, homeless druggies and overall crime, The lack of proper policing and the city council needs a complete overhaul.
160. I haven't personally witnessed this yet but I feel there is less disposable income here for example most jobs pay less here than in Alberta I would say. Also it would make sense that there is likely more fixed income customers here as well.
161. 'lower end' of city
162. People dont like to support home base as most people think they will get a better service through store front. Not enough options for promoting ex- having booths at fairs/events. To many salons in one area
163. Distance and accessibility of clients and contracts on mainland of B.C.
164. To be honest, my location is perfect and I love my neighbourhood. I have customers who drive here for my services from Parksville and Nanoose. The one downfall I find when dealing with other businesses is customer service. From restaurants to trades the attitudes can sometimes be off putting.
165. Access to opportunities
166. dysfunctional city hall, mayor and council and, now gone, the CAO
167. Lack of easy and affordable access to mainland for expansion or attending workshops
168. Big companies get monopoly on city contracts because to restricted as to who can apply. ISA is required for tree contracts but big companies rarely have ISA certified workers on the ground doing the city work.
169. None
170. City council
171. Nanaimo Economic Development, Downtown Business Associations, Square One, and Tourism Associations were all disbanded without an effective transition plan. That abrupt attitude and process really hurt the reputation for the City of Nanaimo on where it has placed it's priorities by stripping away the support systems for local small business. Downtown has really suffered at the hands council over the last 4 years choosing to no longer focus on Nanaimo homelessness strategy developed in 2008 and that has mushroomed into a large problem primarily for the downtown core in the last 2 years.
172. Poor leadership, childlike council, choices that don't really benefit the community in a widespread way (cruise ships, new garbage bins etc). City staff have a terrible attitude when it comes to helping citizens
173. Traffic

174. Extremely low vacancy rate, extremely fast rising cost of rent, tons of empty storefronts, lack of commitment to helping the less fortunate/aggressive actions towards less fortunate (not community minded and drives people away), lack of leadership in city council which has led to criticism from other businesses and Chamber of Commerce/not inviting to businesses.
175. Too many parking restrictions; downtown is a nightmare and I avoid it due to parking issues, as do many of my colleagues. Traffic congestion due to poor management of intersections/ traffic lights that do not sync with others on a stretch of road (Departure Bay/Island Hwy/Ferry intersection good example) Lack of foot ferry after all this time
176. High Rents
177. I do most of my business over the Internet or phone so I as long as I have an Internet connection and dial tone, there is no weakness.
178. Transportation options
179. lots of competitions, aging population, low income base
180. Crime and traffic have increased drastically in our community. One of our vehicles got broken into in front of our business. Too many homeless with no where to go is a big concern.
181. Lack of support from City
182. The lack of growth in the downtown area.
183. None
184. Lack of economic growth. Not enough mid to large size businesses (excluding retail).
185. Infrastructure
186. Building bylaws
187. City does not address how the homeless impact the impression of our City, B.C. Ferries costs and delivery costs to the island.
188. Some smaller businesses do not provide good customer service, lack of urgency.
189. how much community you need to do, stigma around downtown, housing crisis, price of houses and rental
190. The community does not seem to have the same support for "street" markets and "artisan" markets that other island communities have.
191. its quite spread out...would like to focus more in my neighbourhood but not at this stage where I can turn business down from the north end of town
192. proper supported Housing for seniors and mental health seniors
193. Public transportation & expensive leasing opportunities
194. City of Nanaimo has always catered to big insider /developers. Then treats the average tax payer like the enemy.
195. None applicable to me
196. Lower price point for local sales - lack of disposable income of Nanaimoites
197. # of vehicular visits per day Hard to make a legal living with these requirements
198. Lack of affordable commercial properties
199. building permit department needs to speed up!! 6 weeks for permit here and 2 days in Langford business trying to move in downtown are not helped out at all - a reno I am trying to start has been waiting 8 weeks
200. Brining community together
201. Marketing, lower income in population,
202. Perceived lack of harmony between City council & admin staff, downtown parking meters have cost many businesses their livelihood,
203. Smaller town.
204. Not a lot of tourism
205. Shipping takes 1 extra day becuae we are on an island.
206. Rent and property prices downtown, well, and the state of downtown at the moment...burnt down buildings and homeless situation. City council and our reputation of course.
207. lack of downtown parking
208. Governance, Rules, Regulations and Red Tape.
209. A lot of our service business need access to more skilled labour

210. Lots of other Acupuncturist's in town. All with various pricing (no Standard). Some have been here for a long time and are known in town. It's harder for new Acupuncturists.
211. Expensive to travel off island for markets and shows.
212. not relevant for my business (but yes, there are lots of weaknesses)
213. NONE I CAN THINK OF
214. Drug addiction and alcoholism is so bad that out of 95000 people I am struggling to find 15 sober men. - Out of control taxation that disrupts my business at every level. - There is a large homeless camp at the end of my street, which the city is doing nothing about. They constantly are aggressive, rude and violent. I waste allot of my time escorting my girlfriend around because Nanaimo is not safe !!!! - The cost of real estate in Nanaimo is insane. Buying a piece of commercial land to expand into Mini Storage and to have a proper office is a pipe dream. My company will do 500,000\$ in sales this year and most if not all the money will be taken by various levels of government making any sort of expansion impossible. - I strongly feel that city council is anti-business.
215. Many businesses do not want to grow and struggle with employees/quality of services
216. For a home based business it is very difficult with the restriction on traffic, however families with multiple vehicles and residences with rental suites do not restrict their traffic.
217. The regional animosity between the north end and the rest of Nanaimo. Downtown is not such a scary place, I wish that more people would realize that and come out to support local instead of shopping at the mall or online.
218. Too long for building permits
219. transit system isn't great
220. Current city council has had its struggles, hopefully this will self correct in October :)
221. Still a lack of affordable venues for weddings and functions
222. In business to many
223. Competition with the mainland, few large businesses are headquartered here
224. Negative, closed culture. Not open to innovation and new ways.
225. None
226. south half of town rarely hires painters
227. Lack of perceived support from local government
228. Nothing major
229. Restrictive, slow and expensive City Council an absolute Joke
230. Lack of digital infrastructure to attract and keep new families here.
231. loads of weaknesses. no common vision, no community goals, too many visible poor people and drug addicts in downtownm.
232. if you haven't spent your whole life here it is difficult to get business from the nanaimo business community even if you provide a very valueable service
233. Local market is challenging
234. Higher costs, hiring challanges with high skilled positions
235. More homeless individuals around
236. Lack of fine dining culture
237. Isolation from markets for management consulting Limited talent pool
238. The balance of market prices and paying good wages
239. general uncertainty due to low-functioning City Council
240. Instability in loca government makes me want to move, the urban design of the city is really uninspiring and forces me to be car dependent, and it doesn't have the feeling that it's growing in a progressive, creative, sustainable way. It feels like a right-wing town and that makes me not want to stay here or raise kids here.
241. The same reason as 24, it is both good and bad
242. As someone who works at a customers location, the traffic in Nanaimo is terrible. Some of the road infrastructure is terrible. For instance why would two highways intersect each other with a set of lights instead of having an over pass?
243. Crime,

244. You have actively driven commercial boats away
245. None
246. Lack of indoor entertainment venues over 200 people Lack of commitment from local festival goers - they express a desire for popular artists to come to Nanaimo and then won't pay to see them...unless it is a fake tribute band at the Port Theatre. Lack of vision. When the festival goer does decide to spend money they head to Vancouver or Victoria to do it. Millions of dollars spent in other communities that could be spent here on hotels, shops and restaurants..
247. I work from home so not sure about that
248. Seminars for my business don't come to small towns.
249. Too many locals are set in their ways and stay with the older large companies even though they are a lot more expensive for the same service
250. The increase of traffic and busy roads which makes it more difficult to be as productive with fuel costs.
251. None perceived
252. Transport expense to mainland
253. None
254. Not a high income community
255. Relatively small community located on an island.
256. N/a
257. Not enough skilled people to employ in my sector (IT)
258. There is also plenty of competition!
259. The discourse and lack of leadership from the current local council.
260. Nanaimo needs to develop more employment to keep our youth here.
261. Poor infrastructure...specifically roads, access.
262. Small population base
263. Unrealistic traffic flow expectation for clients coming and going... unless it's changed from when I had my business in my home over ten years ago
264. Belligerent attitudes of local government and workers.
265. Not as many suppliers to choose from, may need to travel to get products not available locally
266. POLITICAL CLIMATE/LOCALLY AND PROVINCIALLY
267. No comment
268. The City has a limited outlook and a very "small view" of the world.
269. airport is not international, poor highway with too much traffic south of Nanaimo
270. Downtown crime. Saturated market
271. It doesn't have great shopping for this industry
272. There are too many commercial businesses here. It is very hard to compete in my industry
273. The Government putting extra taxes on homes. Then people lose lots of jobs.
274. Many home based businesses do not have the money to buy product
275. There aren't enough community groups and events for my target market at the moment.
276. None
277. Embarrassingly filthy and down trodden city center that has no appeal nor attraction to anyone local or visitor complete with tents, empty dilapidated buildings, excrement, huge holes in the ground, beggars, continuous road maintenance and a void of parking. I could go on
278. The local economy is struggling more compared to many other communities in the province. Small micro businesses like mine are often not considered as part of the economy.
279. Lower value placed on goods/services then in other locations. Can be hard to break into the community - Requires lots of networking and community involvement.
280. n/a
281. Too slow in getting building permits.
282. Driving
283. There is a myth that to find someone really good, you have to go outside the community. It is a very cliché town, women are still considered 2nd class citizens
284. N/A

285. I don't live there and can only work out of an office on Saturdays plus I would like to work out of my home based studio/office more of possible (located in French Creek).
286. Homelessness effects business downtown, city council is a distraction
287. Some what depressed market.
288. Too spread out; small population density; poor public transportation and especially cycling infrastructure
289. multiple layers of government
290. Malls seem more convenient to most for shopping, too expensive for most local places to be there.
291. It is hard to get Nanaimo out to support things like markets. For a population this size there isn't a huge support for shopping local
292. Very weak/non-existent cellular service in North Nanaimo around Piper's (we are located close to there)
293. No weaknesses as of yet
294. Needs more industry.
295. location, being on an island can pose problems
296. expanding infrastructure
297. Population too small

Are there particular businesses or types of businesses you would like to see locate in Nanaimo?

1. More businesses the better for my business.
2. None come to mind... anything that is Canadian owned and operated I would shop there first.
3. Not sure at this time.
4. Businesses that utilize the water front.
5. More bistro style restaurants, think Portland. Nanaimo needs a make over re: look and could benefit from more centralization of services. Downtown core needs a facelift. We need: A large indoor Farmers market in the Chase River area, more decent pubs in local neighbourhoods, better transit, Out door salt water swimming pool centrally located. We need: Better services re: bike lanes. Make it funkier and more fun to go downtown. Again, think Portland, brewery and tap room/wine tasting like many areas in industrial side Vancouver. So the Highway running through downtown, slow it down, make the buildings that are industrial, become the funky new spot to hang out. We need more Rec centre space for programs like Ballet, dance etc etc. South side, bring it up and make it grow!
6. More high-end specific home decor shops
7. More local & Canadian
8. No
9. More for children
10. Engineering
11. I feel we have what businesses are needed.
12. Lots of Food Trucks!
13. Greater selection of restaurants
14. n/a
15. No
16. Not really
17. High Tech
18. Golf town, bed bath and beyond, more doctors
19. Food trucks
20. International companies who are looking for small business' abilities.
21. Hiking backpacking stores
22. More high tech
23. High tech.

24. Not that I can think of. Maybe an internet shop or more places to sit down and do work from a computer / phone.
25. nothing comes to mind
26. Art
27. No
28. Indoor and outdoor kids activities such as laser tag, arcades, mini golf, etc.
29. IKEA, princess auto, Costco gas station.
30. No
31. Development of a cruise ship market
32. More quality independent restaurants and shops.
33. not at the moment
34. N/A
35. more variety of local restaurants and more local shops in downtown area to enhance more growth and make downtown more appealing for everyone.
36. Green energy resources.
37. high tech
38. A year round Farmer's Market selling local foods.
39. more alternative healthcare
40. Tech;
41. Sports bar / better restaurants on the water front
42. No
43. A nice hotel, A senior community centre, on 10 acres, with pool, hobbies, etc. A better health system, meaning a much bigger hospital .
44. I would love to see More businesses catering to young families.
45. IKEA. If we were the first community to bring IKEA in, we would see an influx of visitors from other Island communities to Nanaimo, bolstering our economy. Several local businesses would benefit. Harvey's & Taco Del Mar.
46. More tech businesses, outdoor recreation shops and activity coordination, boutique shops, I'm sure many more
47. Positive forward thinking businesses are great
48. The Nanaimo arts people need more "cool" available spaces. Like artsy lofts or restored rustic buildings. We could also benefit from more restaurants and social clubs or pubs in southern Nanaimo since we are growing so much and have little choice for meeting with peers or clients
49. Not in terms of my business....but taking this simply as another opportunity to give input - would LOVE to see more coffee places/wine bars/bistro style restaurants that take advantage of our beautiful waterfront. Even Campbell River has done a way better job than Nanaimo in providing this.
50. More independent shops/restaurants, less franchises.
51. Manufacturing, tech.
52. Professional camera shop
53. Clean energy, outdoor education and conservation, hiking amenities
54. More asian groceries
55. Not sure
56. None at this time.
57. Yes more designers
58. Yes, believe it or not, I'd say encourage great chain restaurants to come here. Why doesn't Nanaimo have Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze, Red Lobster, P.F. Changs, Outback Steakhouse, Bonefish Grill, BJ'S Restaurant & Brewhouse, Carrabba's Italian Grill and many more that would attract travelling tourists to stay and actually VISIT our area more. We have heard many rumours that City Councils (past) have deliberately turned away requests from "big restaurant chain competitors" in the MISTAKEN belief that the LOCALS would be put out of business. This is simply NOT TRUE. We have travelled through many states and have seen

- just the opposite in cities of similar sizes to Nanaimo — big chains attract people to stay by “familiarity” and once here for a few days they then explore and try out many LOCAL places!
59. Restaurants, preferable independent. As well as waterfront retail & dining.
 60. N/a
 61. N/A
 62. Nothing in particular
 63. n/a
 64. more brand name clothing stores
 65. More customer attractions, places to stay, and a lot more good restaurants!!
 66. More manufacturing and industrial.
 67. IKEA! Haha. I cannot think of others.
 68. Not really
 69. Definitely NOT a hockey arena! Continue with the Chamber of Commerce organizing the downtown Thursday night market encouraging people to come downtown. Greater promotion of existing and new downtown businesses.
 70. High-end tourism (really nice resort)
 71. more technology and tourism related companies
 72. T&T
 73. More small businesses. Less chains and big companies.
 74. technology , movie industry (we are untapped!)
 75. Restaurant Selections
 76. Ferry alternative(s)
 77. No.
 78. MORE CONCERT VENUES
 79. A YMCA, A Farmers Market on the scale that is in Waterloo, at ST.Jacobs ,perhaps established in Cedar.To establish strip malls that are west coast designed
 80. n/a
 81. more unique venue spaces (indoor and outdoor)
 82. Ikea and a better Costco to accommodate all the new families moving here.
 83. swiss chalet, ikea, kelseys
 84. no
 85. More high rise structures with big companies to create work.
 86. Any type of business that can afford modern day technology
 87. No
 88. No
 89. None that I can think of at the moment.
 90. None
 91. More tech companies
 92. A good, tiny ramen shop, run in the Japanese style.
 93. More social enterprise businesses. More businesses related to alternate energy. More support of and encouragement of our indigenous community and its businesses.
 94. nothing comes to mind
 95. Not sure
 96. Hospitality and Vacation oriented
 97. My wife would like a Red Lobster and a Giant Tiger, I feel that we have adequate businesses at present
 98. Gosh, none that I can think of
 99. Venues in any denomination, maybe an all-purpose rec center; Places that incite excitement and stimulation. Somewhere that feels more like the destination and less like the place you ended up.
 100. We would like to see more local manufacturing, particularly value-added businesses using renewable and recycled resources, working towards a circular economy.

101. * Businesses who see the value in investing in leadership development & executive coaching/facilitation services * If you're looking for facilitators to support the city's economic development initiatives, please keep me in mind, as I have done contract work with the city over the past year. Thanks:)
102. Ones that can pay enough to attract and keep young families here.
103. IKEA, eclectic antique furniture and things to refurbish.
104. More of the tech sector.
105. No
106. Small freight handling / expeditors
107. don't really care one way or another
108. not sure
109. Fat burger.
110. More government agencies..
111. No
112. high tech sectors
113. A another Mall on the west side . More quality restaurants and tourism development to keep visitors here. I think all of the dock area should ne for this type of business.
114. Competitive internet service provider
115. Nanaimo should be happy with what we have and try not to be like Vancouver.
116. It would be nice to see the downtown core have less empty buildings, so maybe more retail or shopping on Commercial.
117. YES. FOOD PROCESS; RESTAURANT; CULINARY COLLEGE; HOTEL.
118. Forever 21, Ikea, Muji, Giant Tiger, more wholesale businesses
119. A central multi purpose facility for recycling and yard waste Disposal businesses that stay open past 5 pm
120. more vegan/ vegetarian businesses
121. Clothing stores for short and curvy people and tall and skinny. More acctivity type stuff. Places for adult to go to other then the clubs or have an actual club thats good. More affordable shopping stores that arent like what we already have
122. Greater selection of restaurants.
123. I prefer the small "mom and pop" shops over the big box stores. More food venues and places that open a bit later would be great (something other than just the bar/pub).
124. Manufacturing, IT
125. IKEA!
126. Healthy food subsidized (restaurants and stores)
127. None
128. not really
129. Food trucks -Permanent farmers market like Grandville Island Market -Passenger ferry to Vancouver -Hotel attached to the conference centre
130. never thought about it.
131. Red Lobster Restaurant Swiss Chalet IMAX-style theatre
132. No thoughts on this.
133. I can't think of any at this time.
134. Nanaimo has endless touristic possibilities, with two ferry entries, the passenger catamaran coming soon, the float planes and our airport. Nanaimo could become a BIG touristic destination if there would be more fun activities to enjoy our beautiful scenery and our beautiful city. More touristic amenities such as cafes and restaurants with outdoor patios to enjoy our beautiful city. More organized nature tours, a permanent waterpark would attract A LOT of visitors in the warm weather months. Nanaimo should also develop more activities all year round for foreigner students residing at VIU. We should become a vibrant university city. Nanaimo should embrace art at a higher level, attracting more artists of all kinds to live and develop their talent in Nanaimo.
135. Welcome all

136. I would like to see more Tech companies in Nanaimo.
137. No
138. Would love to see the city focus on economic development in higher paying industries like technology etc. (see Victoria!) Without higher paying jobs it will be difficult to attract a younger demographic. Not a hard sell when cost of living etc are taken into account. Plenty of young, smart people waiting for a reason to leave Vancouver
139. Theme parks
140. Ikea, Golftown
141. non that I can think of
142. Particular businesses that I don't want to see are big box stores.... we need to support local people - suppliers, farmers, etc....
143. not really, seems to be growing at a pretty good clip
144. no
145. Independent restaurants & physicians
146. But no, all businesses that I need are here already.
147. International faire food trucks, not only hot dogs and burgers - daily in downtown and other areas. Competition with local restaurants is a non issue - diversity and variety is!
148. The event centre would have been awesome !
149. More heavy logging companies.
150. NA
151. Wellness centres, agriculture growth, organic farming
152. would like to see more cruise ships
153. More Hotels and Harbor developments
154. Training/education for youth.
155. More famous restaurants.
156. Nothing comes to mind
157. It would be great if Nanaimo would become kind of a hub for an industry - everything which doesn't require shipping. For example technology.
158. I would like to see the mental institutions and work camps re-opened. Mental institutions for the worst effected by mental illness and work camps for the petty criminals and drugs addicts.
159. I'd love to have a passenger only ferry to Vancouver again.
160. More tourism based businesses.
161. More affordable halls
162. Not sure.
163. More film/tv production. Cheaper gas stations such as Costco Gas, large outlets like IKEA
164. Innovative businesses that would grow the economy - Tech for example. But we would need to change the culture for innovative businesses like this to want to be here.
165. more restraunts
166. No
167. More high tech home based or small businesses.
168. lots and a wide variety.
169. manufacturing businesses
170. No fairly well supported in the community
171. No
172. Less retail and more substantive income generating employers
173. High quality, artisan foods
174. No
175. fast ferry to Mainland
176. I'd love more businesses that celebrate the local foods and products of the region - I miss the easy access to local seafood, mushrooms, berries etc. that I had in my previous small town
177. Wholesale computer part supplier.
178. No
179. We need more hotels or accommodations to encourage tourism!!!

180. Comedy clubs.
181. More night life for families with children
182. Yes a business with those who build new homes that would help teach a trade to those less fortunate in the home building sector.
183. No
184. More software companies
185. N/A
186. Ikea.
187. Can't think of any.
188. More wholesalers, more gardening suppliers
189. MANUFACTURING/TOURISM
190. No
191. More locally owned businesses
192. More Home Decor - we really only have Home Sense, Urban Barn and Pier 1 - everything else is not great
193. No
194. I would love to see more geek-based businesses and events on a regular basis in Nanaimo. I would also love more inclusive markets for non-handmade vendors.
195. Better restaurants, and clothing stores
196. All forms business and industry should be encouraged to come to our city, everything from mom and pops to heavy industry.
197. Professional services such as health care services, design companies, and marketing firms.
198. Nothing comes to mind
199. n/a
200. More IT
201. No
202. Less food franchises and more original international ethnic food restaurants.
203. More restaurant choices, specialty shops and natural choices for groceries.
204. More big box stores to prevent the youth shopping in Victoria and Vancouver or online
205. More restaurants.
206. More local businesses, less chain stores.
207. High tech
208. No
209. Waste to energy. Medium size industry including food production and processing.
210. New Arena
211. Smaller local shops