

CEDAR RAPIDS

# BUSINESS SURVEY

2016



**CEDAR RAPIDS**  
City of Five Seasons®

# STAFF CONTACT

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# LETTER FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Dear Cedar Rapids Supporters,

Between the public and private sectors, we share a vision for a bright and prosperous economic future in Cedar Rapids. Every day we see evidence this great potential is becoming reality with new development taking shape all around us.

To help keep pace with an increasing rate of positive change, the City of Cedar Rapids has undertaken a major new initiative to further implementation of the City's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan for Economic Development. For the first time, in 2016, City staff has worked to complete a business survey project focusing on priorities for existing industry. Ongoing Cedar Rapids Business Survey efforts will form an important part of our business retention program. Survey information will help staff continue to improve responsiveness to business community needs.

Cedar Rapids is a truly exceptional place to live and work, but great places do not simply happen. Instead, they are the result of hard work. City residents, business leaders, volunteers, elected officials and staff all pull together to create a place that leverages all of its assets to consistently outperform expectations.

I am pleased to share this report with you, and it is my sincere hope that current progress in economic development is only a sign of still better things yet to come. Thank you for taking an interest in our community and for your collaboration in the City of Cedar Rapids' 2016 Business Survey. It is your support that makes the continued growth of Cedar Rapids possible.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Pomeranz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jeff Pomeranz**

City Manager



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Since 2015, the City of Cedar Rapids has notably increased its capacity in the area of business retention. The enhancement of retention capabilities marks an expansion in the range of economic development services offered to local industry in Cedar Rapids.

Guidance for the retention program is provided by the City's strategic plan for economic development, which covers a time frame from 2015 to 2018. In keeping with the strategic plan's goals and objectives, a survey of existing industry in Cedar Rapids was undertaken by City staff for the first time in 2016.

As a concept, business retention intends to positively influence the conditions under which businesses currently located in Cedar Rapids operate. The City's business retention initiative attempts to help minimize hurdles and challenges to growth facing a company, but it also assists companies in realizing opportunities to expand their enterprise. Such efforts start with the premise that both the public and private sectors share many of the same long-term needs—adequate public facilities and services, sustainable population trends, physical development that is both high-quality and competitive, as well as a healthy local economy. As a result, business retention represents a collaborative exercise toward the common goal of an improving business climate.

Specifically, business retention programs work by initiating a regular cycle of communication with existing industry. Business retention visits identify how the economic development process can best address needs and priorities for small and medium sized enterprises as well as major employers. Retention activity encompasses direct, often face-to-face, communication by City economic development staff with local industry. Typically, these meetings involve senior management and focus on identifying barriers to growth or expansion opportunities. After initial meetings, that connection is maintained by staff through follow-up visits to business establishments, marketing communications, and other touchpoints with individual companies.

A retention visit may commonly find a business has one or more unmet needs. For example, a company may be considering whether to expand physically, investing new capital in property, plant and equipment, and then hiring additional employees. Upon discovery of a possible business expansion, City staff would share this information with an extended network of economic development partners. This course of action ensures Cedar Rapids businesses have access to the best available information regarding options for economic development assistance programs.

Alternately, a business located in Cedar Rapids may be operating with a constraint that impacts its current site and/or facilities, limiting growth potential. In this case, retention information can be shared with the City's Development Services Team to ensure effective staff responsiveness to address site conditions. Whatever the issue, a retention program helps local business grow over the shortest possible development schedules by eliminating barriers and helping companies access needed services.

In practice, the process to resolve retention issues is straight-forward: Business retention visits initiate a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) cycle. The initial business survey visit

fulfills a knowledge discovery function. It would, for instance, identify any problems a company must manage resulting from its site, facilities or location, etc. City economic development staff subsequently will work with business owners to select a feasible strategy which mitigates the underlying cause of a problem or risk factors tied to site location.

Once an acceptable solution has been identified, economic development services staff can assist by coordinating action within the City organization to correct the problem. If the issue is broader than one related to public facilities, public services or scope of City economic development programs, then staff will engage collaboratively with an extended network of economic development partners to help provide access to technical and business assistance options. Continued staff contact with the impacted business affirms problem-solving has had the intended, positive outcome.

From a public interest perspective, business retention services offer many tangible benefits to a community. These include maintaining and growing the local tax base, preservation of property values, creation of expanded employment opportunities for community residents, and greater economic diversification. Because business retention helps local businesses maintain or expand operations, it reduces the frequency of adverse fiscal impacts to the tax base. At the same time, retention services support a best case scenario for future economic growth.

As mentioned briefly above, the City of Cedar Rapids has now launched a new, active phase of business retention services. Through the Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016), ninety local businesses were contacted to discuss priorities and options for future expansion. During the current project phase, survey visits occurred from January to April, 2016.

However, retention efforts are planned to be an ongoing initiative. An annual existing industry survey will play a central role in organizing City business retention efforts. In turn, the City's business survey program will communicate information to City staff supporting continuous improvement in the quality of service and responsiveness to business community needs. The same survey information will also be a useful aid to guide future City marketing communications efforts as well as measuring the performance of total economic development program efforts going forward.

Over the long-term, business retention information should play a valuable role in delivery of staff services to implement the City's strategic plan for economic development. Survey data will increase the awareness and visibility for the needs and priorities of existing industry within the City. Incorporating a special consideration of priorities for existing industry into the City's economic development process can only strengthen business advantages offered by locating in Cedar Rapids. Access to retention data thus adds significant value to the City's economic development services, increasing total potential for positive impact. An active program of business retention is an important part of an overall effort to place the City of Cedar Rapids in as strong a competitive position as possible for the years ahead.

A brief outline of business survey results are provided below. Complete results can be found in the full survey report.

## SUMMARY OF CEDAR RAPIDS ECONOMIC PROFILE:

- In 2014, the population of the City of Cedar Rapids was approximately 129,195 persons, according to US Census Data.
- Long-term projections forecast an annual population growth rate of between 0.65% and 1.0%.
- The Cedar Rapids Labor Force numbered 71,500 persons in 2015.
- Labor force participation measures the percentage of the population that is employed or actively looking for work. Since 2010, labor force participation rates for Cedar Rapids have remained stable around 71%.
- Per capita income can be used as a general measure of wealth and prosperity. It results from dividing the total economic output of an area by total population. The 2014 per capita income for Cedar Rapids is \$29,506. This is a value higher than state or national levels. When compared to other US Metropolitan regions, Cedar Rapids ranks in the 80th percentile of all US Cities in per capita income.
- Median family income is a measure of household income distribution identifying the middle point. In 2014, the City of Cedar Rapids had a median family income of \$75,276. Overall, the City of Cedar Rapids is in the 89th percentile for metropolitan median income nationally.
- In the area of educational attainment, Cedar Rapids ranks highly: 94.4% of residents have a high school degree or equivalent, 32.4% have some college or an associate degree, and 29.5% have a college degree or higher.
- Total economic output for the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area was over \$17 billion in 2014, placing the City in the 67th percentile for metropolitan economic output nationally.
- The top three occupational clusters in Cedar Rapids by number of persons employed are manufacturing (17.6%), Information (12.2%) and Retail Trade (10.3%). It is worth noting the percentage of workers employed in manufacturing in Cedar Rapids is twice the national average.<sup>1</sup>
- The City of Cedar Rapids serves as major center of employment in Iowa and the Upper Midwest Region. Over 98,000 jobs are located in the City, and each day 60,559 individuals travel to work in Cedar Rapids. This means, that for every resident of Cedar Rapids that is employed at a job within the City, local industry is also attracting 1.6 workers from outside City boundaries.
- The assessed value of industrial property in Cedar Rapids is projected to increase from \$343.6 million to \$355.9 million between fiscal years 2016 and 2017.
- In 2015, the City of Cedar Rapids Development Services Department issued 254 residential building permits and 54 multifamily building permits. An additional, 754 commercial building permits were issued for office, retail and industrial development.

<sup>1</sup> Scott, Robert E., *The Manufacturing Footprint and the Importance of US Manufacturing Jobs*. January, 2015. Retrieved from the website of the Economic Policy Institute.

**SUMMARY OF BUSINESS RETENTION SURVEY FINDINGS:**

- The Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016) sampled a large, representative cross-section of existing businesses and industry. Approximately 90 firms were visited between January and April of 2016.
- The survey method sought to contact basic industries or those businesses that export a significant percentage of total goods and services produced thereby bringing outside wealth into the community. Additionally, a limited number of anchor institutions were included as well as businesses that had previously expressed interest.
- Sectors most commonly sampled as part of this project were manufacturing, transportation and public utilities, education, technology, tourism, healthcare and wholesale trade.
- Almost 60% of business respondents interviewed owned their facilities in Cedar Rapids. Respondents were about evenly split on the physical quality of facilities with roughly half rating building quality as “excellent” and “good,” respectively. A further 94% of businesses rated company equipment as “excellent” or “good.”
- More than 60% of businesses surveyed indicated they could pursue a physical expansion of current facilities on-site. Approximately 88% of respondents viewed their current facility as “excellent” or “good” with only 12% rating existing facilities in Cedar Rapids as fair.
- About 3 out of 4 businesses indicated no change in ownership in the last 3 years.
- More than 80% of businesses had updated the company’s strategic plan within the last two years, and 60% of responding businesses had developed a succession or exit plan for the firm.
- Around one-third of employers reported some type of difficulty retaining existing workers. Specific workforce retention issues named varied greatly by industry and business type. However, the most commonly named problems included a high demand at competing firms for both skilled workers and experienced professionals making it difficult to keep employees, wage pressures, and a failure of employees to perform at or above employer expectations.
- In comparison, a higher number of employers (around 45%) reported problems in attracting qualified job applicants. Primary issues cited include a shortage of skilled workers (e.g., electro-mechanical maintenance, welders, machinists, CNC operators) as well as a shortage of highly skilled professionals (e.g., engineers, computer programmers & software architects, IT associates & IT field technicians). Beyond shortages in the labor pool, companies consistently identified recruiting individuals without connections to the area as the third most common hurdle to effective talent attraction. Hours of work, promoting diversity in new hires, and attitudes of employees toward work were also listed as key challenges.

- More than half of survey respondents ranked the stability and productivity of their existing workforce in Cedar Rapids as “excellent.”
- Respondents took a strongly positive view of urban core revitalization Downtown and in the NewBo District. Many respondents also desired to see positive growth continue on the south and west sides of Cedar Rapids. There were also many general comments about the need to realize a continuation of positive trends in new development along the edges of the City.
- More than 6 out of 10 businesses responding to the survey did not identify any negative development related trends. But those respondents who did identify development related issues emphasized a desire to focus on increasing the density/intensity of land use through infill development in Cedar Rapids to address what those respondents perceived to be some patterns of urban sprawl.
- Virtually all businesses responded with positive comments about the Eastern Iowa Airport. But comments also identified more direct flights and lower prices as the main areas where improvement should be targeted. Another comment of note raised the question of whether additional investment in precision approach radar systems would further reduce the number of flight delays and improve the ability of the airport to operate during inclement weather.
- More than half of survey respondents identified their lifecycle for primary products and services as growing, and less than half identified lifecycle for products as stable, mature or declining.
- Of the companies surveyed, more than half of firms forecast increasing market share in the near-term.
- A large majority of firms interviewed, around 7 out of 10, do not currently export internationally. A marginally higher number, nearly 8 out of 10 businesses, had no interest in engaging international export-based strategies to increase business growth.
- Over half the businesses surveyed plan to expand their physical footprint, make significant capital investment in facilities/operations or increase employment in Cedar Rapids in the next 3 years. By comparison, a lower percentage, only around one-third are planning an expansion outside of Cedar Rapids.
- Regarding finances, 61% of companies responding to the survey evaluate their fiscal year to date financial position as "excellent", while 33% view theirs as “good.”
- Over half of companies operating in Cedar Rapids are more profitable than they were three years ago, whereas more than 30% have seen no changes in net profit margins and less than 15% are less profitable.
- Only 5% of companies have responded that they experienced a shortage of working capital in the past three years. Among those companies surveyed, a small number (13%) would actively seek equity financing as a means to grow the business.

- A total of more than 70% of survey participants noted a “good” business climate in Cedar Rapids, while about 17% of those surveyed stated a view that the business climate in Cedar Rapids was “excellent.” Around 10% of respondents stated that they found the business climate in Cedar Rapids to be “fair.” Less than 3% of total responded ranked the business climate as “poor” or declined to answer.
- Respondents were evenly split as to whether the company’s view of Cedar Rapids was “excellent” or “good.” Almost no businesses stated a negative attitude toward their location in Cedar Rapids, from a business perspective.
- Survey respondents were asked to give their view on the process to apply for permits and/or licenses in Cedar Rapids. For those respondents with recent experience of the permit process, a positive assessment of the process was given 62% of the time. Specifically, a response of “excellent” was indicated by about 21% of participants, and a further 41% of businesses characterized the process as “good.” Only 25% of responses indicated a view of the permitting process as “fair,” while 10% viewed the process poorly.
- Management representatives were asked to provide an opinion on matters of crime and public safety. Just over half of the businesses participating in the survey viewed crime as a problem impacting their business in some way. Property crimes and the need to take appropriate security measures to address issues are the most common responses by businesses.
- Businesses were asked to choose what they view as the single most importance issue facing the local economy in Cedar Rapids. Job creation was cited most frequently among those firms in the sample, followed by flood control. Public safety received the third highest number of responses.
- A plurality of survey respondents took a positive view of efforts by Paving for Progress to fix and maintain City streets. Of the total, around 40% of respondents evaluated overall efforts to date as “good.” Oppositely, 16% of the survey respondents rated the effort as poor and 25% rated it as “fair.” The smallest number of respondents identified the effort as “excellent” at 3%.



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

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Since 2013, the City of Cedar Rapids has entered a new phase in its ongoing efforts to advance economic development of the community. The following paragraphs summarize background information for the 2016 Cedar Rapids Business Survey. Information presented here introduces business retention as a concept, gives an in depth explanation of how business retention works in practice, as well as explains the current scope of the retention program provided by Cedar Rapids Economic Development Services.

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## **BACKGROUND**

On February 24, 2015, the City of Cedar Rapids adopted a strategic plan to lead economic development activities forward in the 2015 to 2018 period. Adoption of the City's strategic plan for economic development represents a significant commitment by the Cedar Rapids City Council to take all action within its power to support necessary conditions for local economic growth.

Successful implementation of the City's strategic plan for economic development should yield measurable gains to the community. The visible, positive impacts of successful economic development include increasing job creation, preservation of jobs currently located in Cedar Rapids, expansion of existing industry operations, new capital investment, larger firm revenues, and increased entrepreneurial activity.<sup>2</sup> Cedar Rapids Economic Development Services staff works broadly to help administer the City's support structure for strategic plan goals related to economic growth.

Moreover, the City's strategic plan for economic development advances continual improvement in the quality of service provided by the City of Cedar Rapids to the business community. A general focus on public sector service improvement, as part of retention efforts, creates a more positive impression of the City's business climate and the business advantages offered by locating in Cedar Rapids. Information gained as part of the retention survey will help ensure City staff can work toward better sustaining adequate public facilities and infrastructure, which play a central role in promoting the conditions needed for economic growth.

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<sup>2</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Making It Count: Metrics for High Performing EDOs* (Washington DC: 2014), pages 19 -43.

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

As part of an effort to expand the City's existing industrial base, the strategic plan for economic development contains goals and objectives which directly further the capacity to deliver business support services within the City organization. For reference, the strategic plan content is outlined below:

### **GOAL 4: Business Support Services**

This goal focuses on tactics to help grow our existing industry base as well as to improve communication to our businesses through regular surveys and staff communication.

- **Objective 1:**  
Formalize Economic Development within City's organizational structure
- **Objective 2:**  
Create Business Expansion and Retention program
- **Objective 3:**  
Improve communication with City and corporate leadership
- **Objective 4:**  
Serve as point of contact for business on City services and resources

*Source: City of Cedar Rapids Economic Development Strategic Plan, page 4. (2014)*

In 2016, the City of Cedar Rapids has increased the scope of business retention services available. The remainder of this report will share the details of program efforts year-to-date, summarize data collected through the City of Cedar Rapids Business Survey program, and present comments with relevant analysis.



**BUSINESS RETENTION** AS  
**CONCEPT**

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**DEFINITION OF “BUSINESS RETENTION”:**

“An organized program of visitation expressing interests, concern, and effective response toward issues or needs facing local industry.”

Typical business retention programs have the following characteristics:

- Develop industry knowledge
- Build knowledge of firm needs and priorities
- Offer professional customized service
- Function as outcome-oriented
- Seek to promote a favorable business climate
- Coordinate services to business <sup>3</sup>

Business retention has a central role in local economic development. At every level of local to state economic development efforts, business retention serves as a key tactic to attain planned goals.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, how well an organization performs business retention has a large influence on the effectiveness of all types of economic development initiatives. Without the ability to generate meaningful data about specific industries and the marketplace at large via business establishment visits, it is less likely that economic development programs will realize intended outcomes.

This conclusion may come as no surprise, especially given that economic development practice has long since recognized that growing existing industry is a particularly effective strategic approach to increasing local area employment options.<sup>5</sup> In addition, from this perspective, City government is uniquely well positioned to help in business retention because adequate public facilities and services play a foundational role supporting area competitiveness.

The reasons to pursue an active business retention program are sound. Business retention works by helping cities avoid adverse fiscal impact to the tax base through loss of existing business; and, at the same time, retention programs seek to maximize positive, fiscal impacts to increase municipal revenues by helping businesses remain in place and expand.

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<sup>3</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Business Retention and Expansion* (Washington DC: 2011), page 8-9.  
<sup>4</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Business Retention and Expansion* (Washington DC: 2011), page 1-33.  
<sup>5</sup> *Economic Gardening Communities Grow Their Own Job*, retrieved from Atlanta Federal Reserve website.

As outlined, the benefits of business retention are many. What follows is a partial list of reasons frequently cited by communities that prioritize business retention:

- Support of local property values
- Greater economic diversification
- Preserve existing tax revenues generated by local industry
- Maintain and expand local employment options
- Promote a positive (or “business friendly”) perception of a community<sup>6</sup>

Economic Development Services (EDS) coordinates an active business retention program. The Cedar Rapids Business Survey is a primary component of the program, as it organizes business visits over an annual cycle. These business visits yield valuable insight into local barriers and opportunities for business growth.

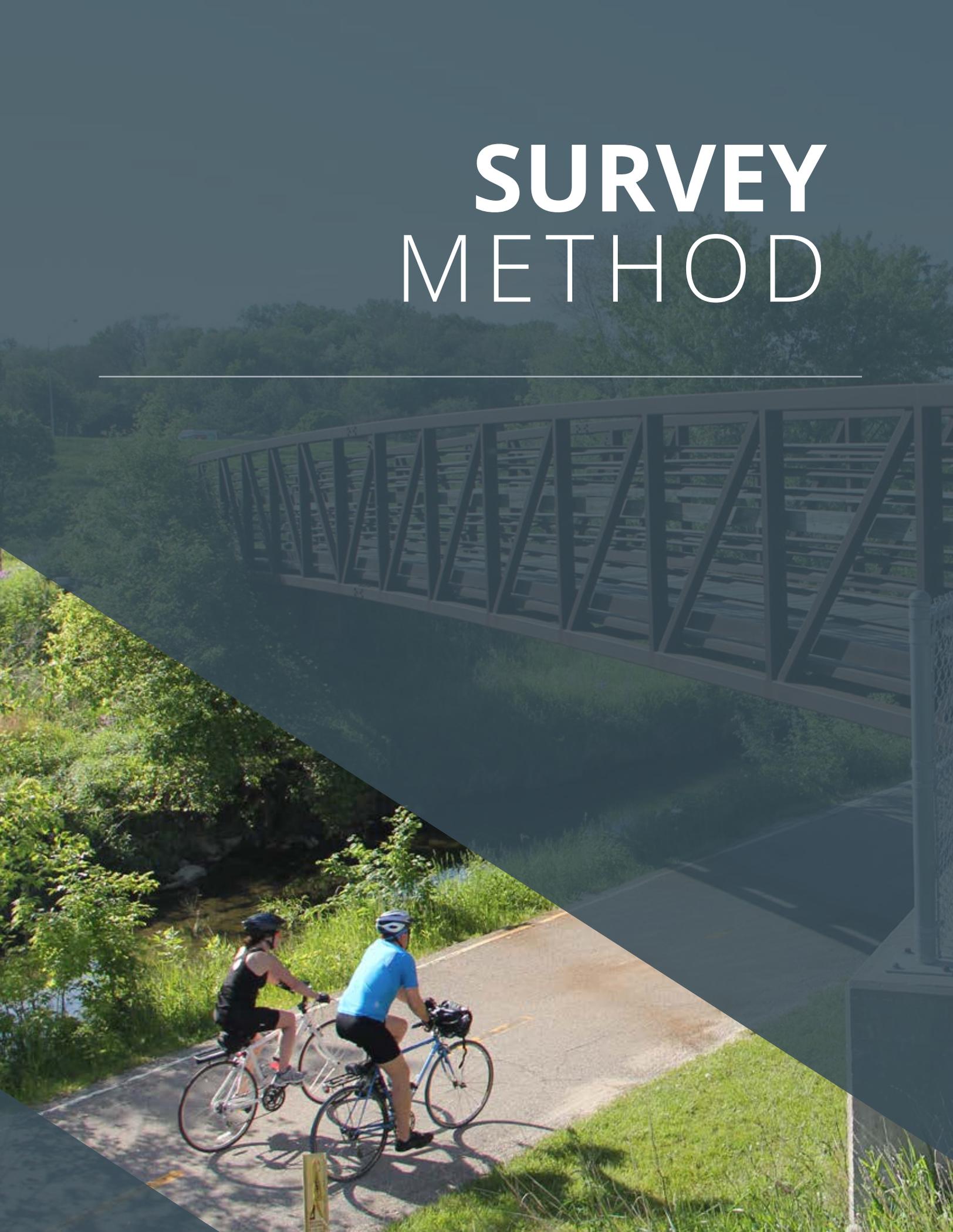
The value of retention information for economic development in Cedar Rapids is magnified as it is shared across the City’s network of economic development partner organizations. Cedar Rapids EDS staff works collaboratively with economic development partner groups to address business retention issues through delivery of valuable technical and business assistance services to local industry. For all economic development initiatives to have a full scale of intended impact, matters of policy and programming must be informed by the best available data on marketplace trends and conditions. Only business retention services can provide the required detail and quality of information necessary.

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<sup>6</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Business Retention and Expansion* (Washington DC: 2011), page 4.

# SURVEY METHOD

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To launch the current phase of business retention services, EDS staff designed a new business survey in 2016. The Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016) complements ongoing economic development services by sampling a representative cross-section of local industry. The survey identifies what are the priority issues for existing industry and how the City of Cedar Rapids may take specific actions as well as move forward as an organization to better serve these needs. (See Appendix B for survey form.)

Specifically, the City retention survey consists of questions covering many topics from site status and location history, to workforce development and overall impressions of the Cedar Rapids business climate. The City's retention survey has been designed with input from City staff department managers to be comprehensive in scope. There are two reasons why this should be the case beyond the obvious benefits of learning more about the specific needs of industry. Economic development best practice holds that the business retention surveys should be relatable to the assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis.<sup>7</sup> It is also true that business retention produces insights useful across all areas of economic development programming.<sup>8</sup> As a consequence, retention programs are designed to gather information over a range of categories relevant to desired economic impacts.

Cedar Rapids Economic Development Services utilizes survey data to update and maintain its Market Information System (MIS). The market information system is the process by which EDS staff identifies, collects, analyzes, accumulates and dispenses key information to other City staff and decision-makers.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly, the Cedar Rapids Business Survey generates a range of data useful for all aspects of economic development. In 2016, a selection of that complete dataset will be migrated to the Energov enterprise asset management software solution for wider use by City staff to improve service to the business community.

In terms of sampling and design, the current City business survey process had the advantage of being able to draw upon a database of existing businesses assembled previously for the 2013 Business Identification Report. That database was updated and revised as part of the business survey project. However, for the purposes of this project, it was also modified to exclude the retail and construction sectors, in keeping with a focus on basic industry. A basic industry is any business whose primary focus is the export of goods and services thereby bringing outside wealth into a local economy. As such, retail sector businesses were not included in the Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016). However, the business survey also included limited anchor institutions within the community that provide services to the basic sector as well as individual businesses that expressed an interest in participating.

Adjusting for all changes, the sample of businesses used as part of the 2016 survey contained two hundred thirty-three (233) records. Of those, one hundred forty-eight (148) businesses were contacted. And approximately ninety (90) business visits were made for a response rate over sixty (60) percent. This sample size equates to a confidence level of ninety (90) percent with a margin of error of +/- seven (7) percent. The survey response rate was greater than sixty (60) percent.

<sup>7</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Business Retention and Expansion* (Washington DC: 2011), page 16.

<sup>8</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Business Retention and Expansion* (Washington DC: 2011), page 5.

<sup>9</sup> Marshall, Greg W. and Johnson, Mark W. *Essentials of Marketing Management* (New York: 2011), page 83.



# **BUSINESS RETENTION SERVICE MODEL**

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Business retention is a highly collaborative activity. Effective teamwork is needed both within and across organizations for retention programs to deliver fully on the promise of helping to support and enhance the competitiveness of existing industry.<sup>10</sup> It is the intent of staff to administer a retention program that is both timely and efficient in its responsiveness.

Business retention visits can frequently identify both short-term and long-term challenges to business growth for individual companies. To help address unmet needs, the City retention program seeks to involve an extended network of partner organizations from the local to state levels, whenever retention issues require problem-solving.

For example, if it is determined a company would benefit from access to state economic development programs; Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance staff is consulted to work one-on-one with businesses providing specialized technical assistance to access Iowa business assistance resources. Likewise, workforce development system stakeholders, such as Kirkwood Community College, may be consulted as labor and training needs among existing industry are better identified. In every case, economic development staff works with partner organizations to monitor improvement to underlying issues.

#### **Cedar Rapids Economic Development Partner Organizations**

- Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance
- Cedar Rapids Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
- Diversity Focus
- East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)
- Entrepreneurial Development Center (EDC)
- Iowa Start-up Accelerator
- Kirkwood Community College

At times, particular business retention issues may be discovered in areas relating to public services and facilities. If a retention issue relates to parameters that can be controlled or influenced by City staff, then the matter is referred to the Development Services Team (DST) or appropriate departmental managers, where it may be possible to take further action to resolve a problem administratively. Past issues may also be covered by DST staff so as to improve service by avoiding repetition of a situation that is less than ideal for individual business.

If no immediate retention issues are identified, then business information for the firm is updated in the economic development services marketing information system. Follow-up with businesses having no immediate retention issues will be performed through future year retention visits and/or as a function of City economic development marketing communications.

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<sup>10</sup> International Economic Development Council, *Business Retention and Expansion* (Washington DC: 2011), pages 7-8.

# BUSINESS RECOGNITION

We want to thank the following companies for their participation in the  
Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016):

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7G Distributing	Designing Moves, LLC.	Midwest3pl
Acme Graphics, Inc.	Diamond V Mills, Inc.	Misca Press
Adidas Group	Donatech	Mt. Mercy University
ADM	DuPont	NewBo City Market
Advanced Manufacturing Services	Eastern Iowa Airport	Nordstrom
Agilon, LLC.	Eco Lips	Ovation Networks, Inc.
Allegra	Gazette Company	PepsiCo (Quaker Foods and Snacks)
Alliant Energy	Genova Technologies	Phelan's Interiors
American Profol, Inc.	Geonetric	Physicians' Clinic of Iowa (PCI)
AmTek Microwaves	GO Cedar Rapids	Pickwick Manufacturing
Aspen Grove Investments	Great America Financial Services Corp.	PMX Industries, Inc.
Auxiant	Guaranty Bank	Raining Rose
Bankers Trust	Hot Shots Nuclear Medicine	Rapid Reproductions, Inc.
Banklowa	ImOn Communications	Red Star Yeast Company, LLC.
BHFO, Inc.	Ingredion, Inc.	RinderKnect Associates, Inc.
Bimm Ridder Sportswear	International Paper	Rockwell Collins
Brucemore	Intertrade Steel Corp.	Ruffalo Noel Levitz
CarePro Health Services	In Tolerance	Saddler Machine Co., Inc.
Cedar Crest Manufacturing, Inc.	Involta	Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.
Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust	Iowa Fluid Power	Specialty Blending Company
Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO)	Iowa Northern Railway Company	TransAmerica Corporation
Circle Computer Resources	Iowa Title Company	TrueNorth
Clarion Hotel & Convention Center	ITC Midwest	Turner Alley Brewing
Clipper Windpower, Inc.	Janda Motor Services	United Fire Group (UFG) Insurance
Coe College	Jet Engineering, Inc.	Unity Point/Saint Luke's Hospital
CRANDIC	Jet There, LLC	U.S. Bank
Croell Redi-Mix	JRS Pharma	Van Meter, Inc.
CRST International, Inc.	J-TEC	VenuWorks
Czech & Slovak Museum	Junge Control, Inc.	Wells Fargo
Czech Village/NewBo Main Street	Lion Bridge Brewing	Worley
	Mercy Medical Center	

# ECONOMIC PROFILE

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Cedar Rapids Economic Development Services tracks market data as it relates to economic development potential in Cedar Rapids. Information contained in this section of the report focuses on these key factors.

Such information can be used by all interested parties—decision-makers, industry, entrepreneurs and the public at large—to assist in detailed understanding of economic development policy matters or as an aid to decision-making. Economic profile data is equally useful to the task of managing strategic plan implementation as well as evaluating questions of policy or future courses of action.

Development of an economic profile is an ongoing process: The Economic Profile report is intended to support the informational needs of the varied stakeholder groups active in the economic development process for the City of Cedar Rapids. Consequently, profile data and analysis will be updated as new information becomes available.

## **POPULATION**

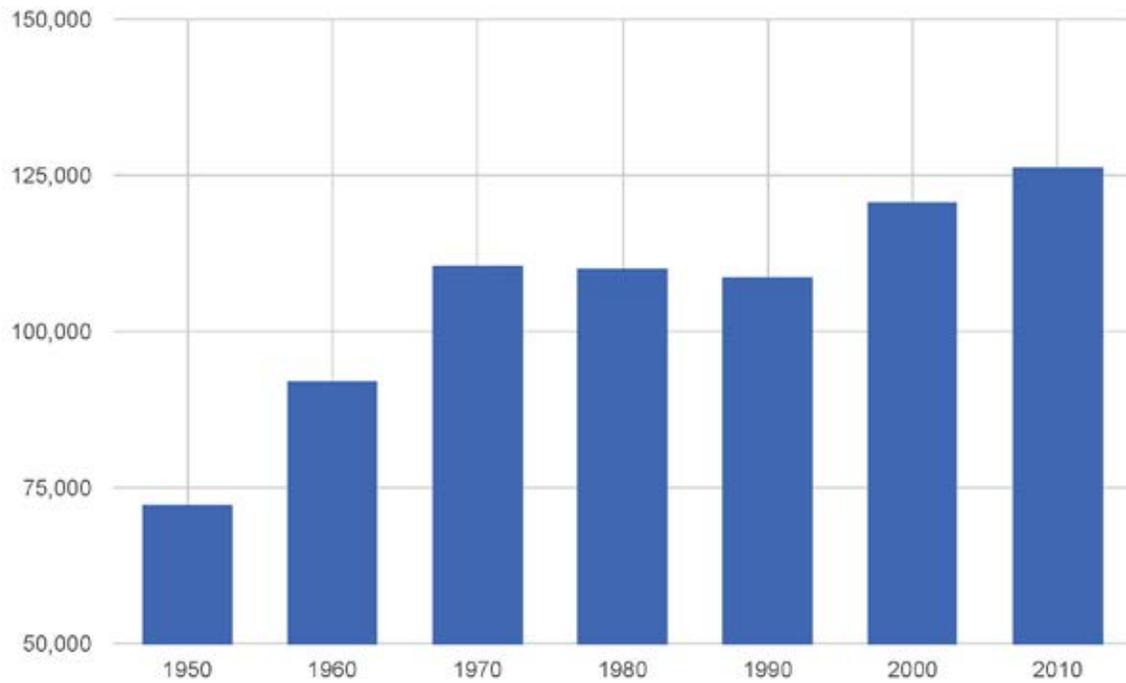
Cities gain population because of powerful economic forces that bring people, goods and services together. As a result, population data can be informative about the underlying structure of the market.

## **HISTORICAL POPULATION**

Population data for local areas is available through the United States Census Bureau's Decennial Census and American Community Survey. The latter provides an annual sample of population to estimate the current size of the Cedar Rapids population. In 2014, the population of the City of Cedar Rapids was approximately 129,195 persons, according to US Census Data.

The following graphs illustrate population change between years since 1950. Both the nominal change in population and the rate of change are featured.

### City of Cedar Rapids Population by Decennial Census Count, 1950 to 2010

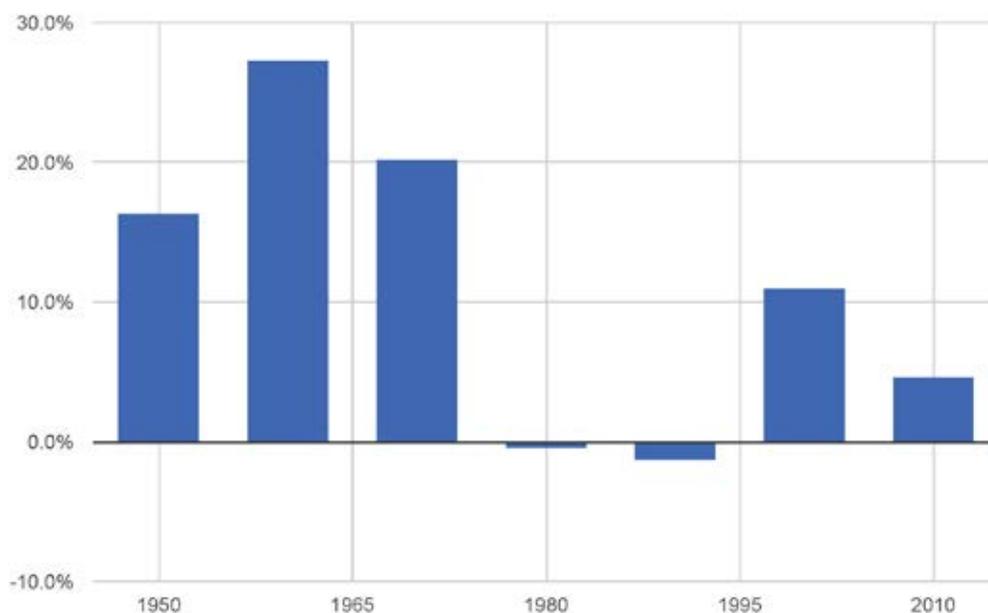


### Census Population Counts

YEAR	POPULATION
1950	72,296
1960	92,035
1970	110,642
1980	110,243
1990	108,772
2000	120,758
2010	126,326

Source: City of Cedar Rapids Community Development Department (2016)

### Historical Population Growth Rates for Cedar Rapids, Iowa between Decennial Census Years, 1950 to 2010



#### Population Growth Rates

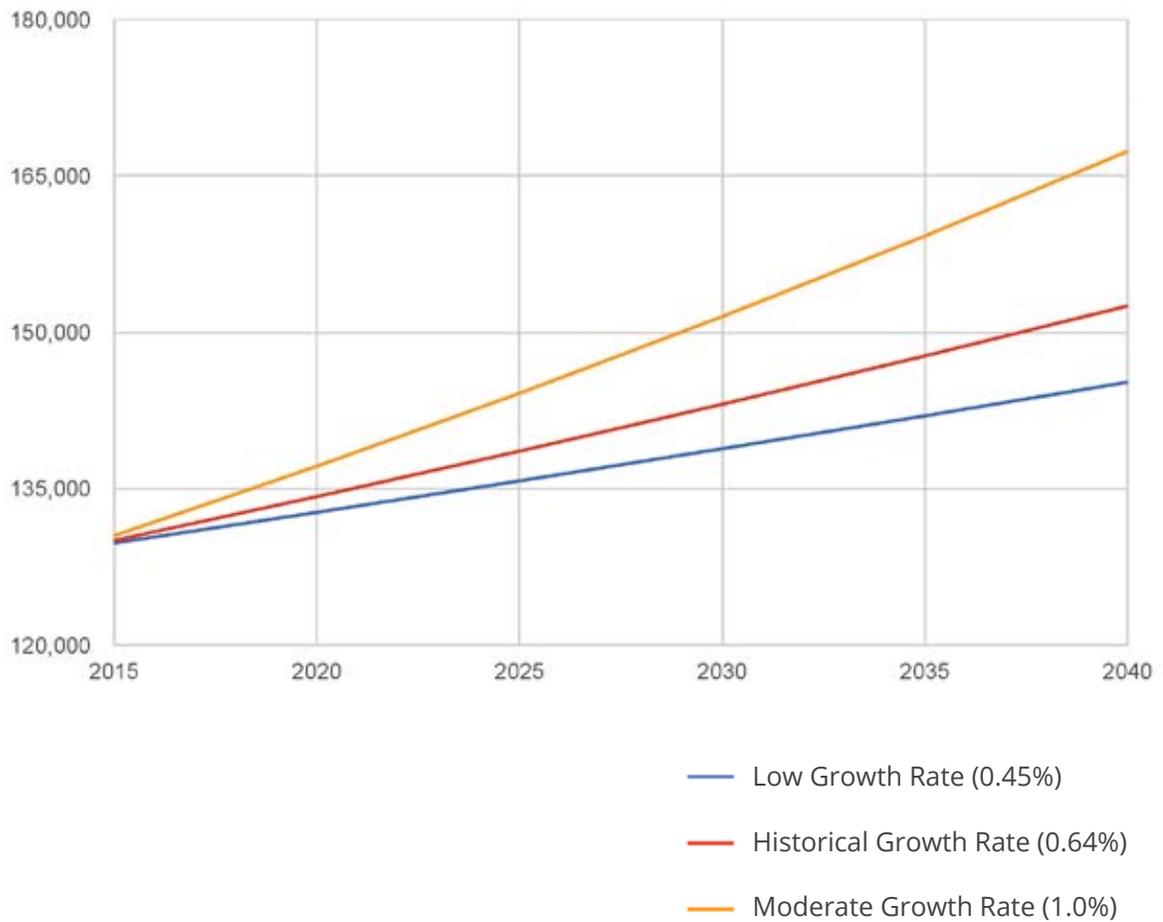
YEAR	PERCENT (%) CHANGE
1940 to 1950	16.4%
1950 to 1960	27.3%
1960 to 1970	20.2%
1970 to 1980	-0.4%
1980 to 1990	-1.3%
1990 to 2000	11.0%
2000 to 2010	4.6%
2010 to 2015	2.3%

Source: City of Cedar Rapids Community Development Department (2016)

## POPULATION GROWTH RATES & PROJECTIONS

The Cedar Rapids Comprehensive Plan, EnvisionCR, explores population growth patterns of the City, and that same data is presented here briefly to show likely patterns of future population change. Analysis of EnvisionCR data would indicate anticipated population growth for the City would fall in between values that are represented by “Historical” and “Moderate” growth rates. These trends are illustrated on the chart at right, while values are found in the table below the chart.

### Population Projections for City of Cedar Rapids from 2015 to 2040



### Population Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
<b>Low (0.45%)</b>	129,777	132,729	135,747	138,834	141,991	145,220
<b>Historical (0.64%)</b>	130,023	134,242	138,598	143,096	147,739	152,532
<b>Moderate (1.0%)</b>	130,488	137,149	144,150	151,509	159,242	167,370

Source: City of Cedar Rapids Community Development Department (2016)

## EMPLOYMENT

Availability of qualified workers serves as a constraint for many businesses. Small businesses, medium-sized companies, or major employers are all equally likely to be affected. As a result, labor market trends play a significant role in understanding the economic opportunities present in a location.

## LABOR FORCE

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) defines the “labor force” as all potential workers who are employed or unemployed in a given area. Figures explaining the size of the Cedar Rapids Labor Force follow.

**Total Workers Employed in Cedar Rapids, Iowa Civilian Labor Force, 2010 to 2015**



**Cedar Rapids Civilian Labor Force**

YEAR	WORKERS
2010	72,200
2011	71,800
2012	71,000
2013	71,500
2014	72,200
2015	71,500

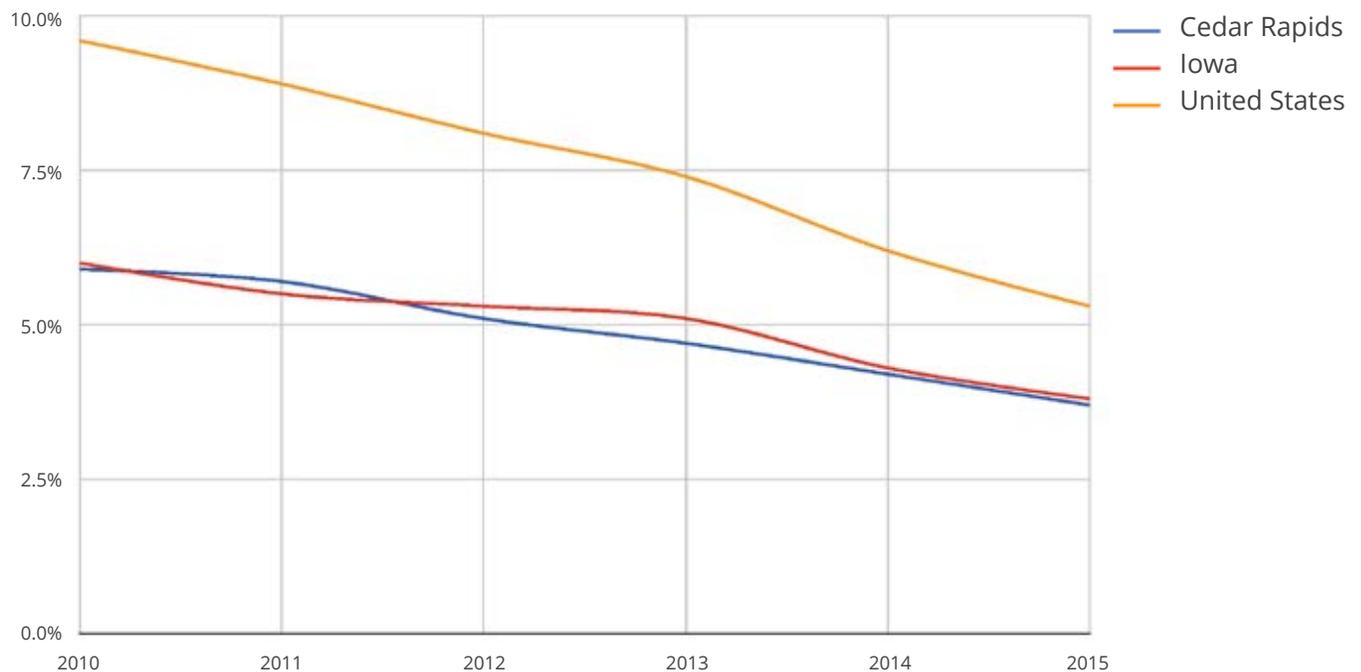
**Source:** Iowa Workforce Development, Labor Market Information Division, retrieved from Iowa One Source Website, 2016

## UNEMPLOYMENT & LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

In the United States, unemployment rates are reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS uses an involved methodology to calculate the unemployment rate, which considers how workers enter and exit the workforce as well as non-participation.<sup>11</sup>

For this reason, it is most informative to look at unemployment in reference to the labor force participation rate. A drop in the unemployment rate accompanied by an increase in labor force participation would be the strongest trend signaling that the number of individuals working is increasing in absolute terms. Likewise, an increase in unemployment seen with a decline in the labor force participation rate would clearly signify a declining number of individuals working in a local area.<sup>12</sup>

### Comparison of Average Annual Unemployment Rates for Cedar Rapids MSA to State of Iowa and United States, 2010 to 2015



### Average Annual Unemployment

	CEDAR RAPIDS	IOWA	UNITED STATES
<b>2010</b>	5.9%	6.0%	9.6%
<b>2011</b>	5.7%	5.5%	8.9%
<b>2012</b>	5.1%	5.3%	8.1%
<b>2013</b>	4.7%	5.1%	7.4%
<b>2014</b>	4.2%	4.3%	6.2%
<b>2015</b>	3.7%	3.8%	5.3%

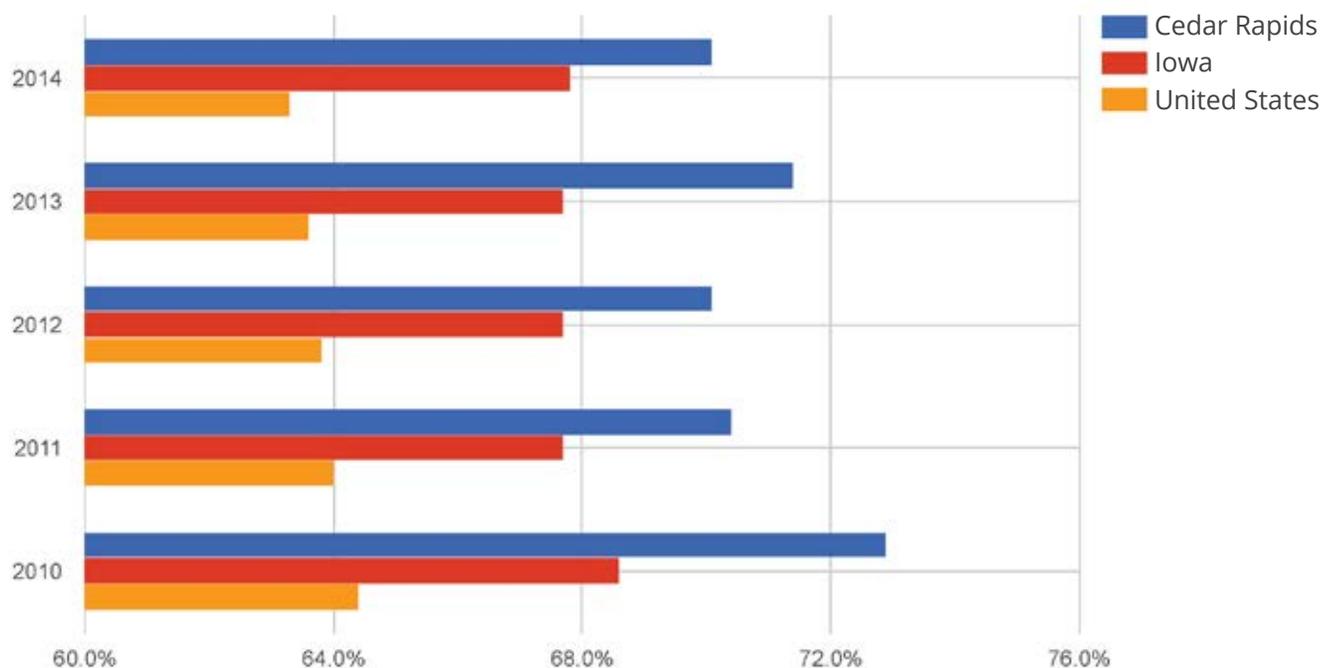
**Source:** Iowa Workforce Development, Labor Market Information Division, retrieved from Iowa One Source Website, 2016

<sup>11</sup> Elmeskov, Jergen and Pichelman, Karl. *Interpreting Unemployment: The Role of Labour-Force Participation*, OECD Economic Studies, No. 21, Winter 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

The City of Cedar Rapids has seen a notable decline in its unemployment rate since 2010. However, the labor force participation rate has been more variable, increasing and decreasing in this same period. The total percent of persons in the labor force has remained within a relatively narrow range of around seventy-one (71) percent but varying as much as three-and-a-half (3.5) percent around the historical mean during this period. The increase and decrease of the labor force participation rate since 2010 would most likely explain why the size of the City labor force has likewise fluctuated over the same period.

### Comparison of Labor Force Participation Rates in Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Iowa and United States, 2010 to 2014



#### Labor Force Participation Rate

	CEDAR RAPIDS	IOWA	UNITED STATES
<b>2010</b>	72.9%	68.6%	64.4%
<b>2011</b>	70.4%	67.7%	64.0%
<b>2012</b>	70.1%	67.7%	63.8%
<b>2013</b>	71.4%	67.7%	63.6%
<b>2014</b>	70.1%	67.8%	63.3%

**Source:** United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Cedar Rapids, State of Iowa, & USA, *Comparative Economic Characteristics*, retrieved from American Fact Finder Website, 2016.

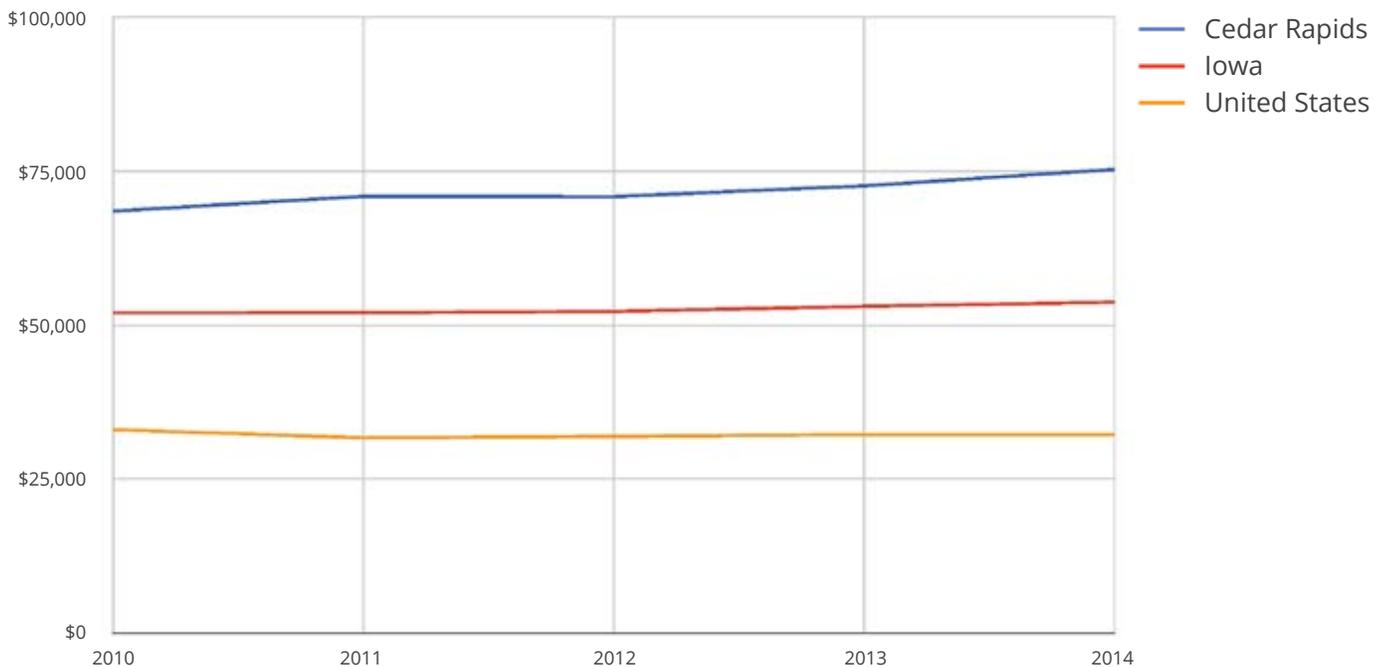
## INCOME & EDUCATION

Research shows an individual's level of education strongly correlates with their ability to generate wealth.<sup>13</sup> Higher levels of educational attainment can also help lower unemployment.<sup>14</sup> Hence, education remains an important aspect of an area's competitiveness and thereby the capacity of a place to generate wealth.

## MEDIAN INCOME

Median income identifies the point where the income distribution in an area is divided into two equal groups. The following compares median income in Cedar Rapids against the State of Iowa and United States as a whole.

### Comparison of Median Family Income in Cedar Rapids MSA to State of Iowa and United States, 2010 to 2014



### Median Family Income

	CEDAR RAPIDS	IOWA	UNITED STATES
<b>2010</b>	\$68,497	\$51,972	\$33,006
<b>2011</b>	\$70,902	\$51,999	\$31,697
<b>2012</b>	\$70,845	\$52,226	\$31,924
<b>2013</b>	\$72,597	\$53,031	\$32,236
<b>2014</b>	\$75,276	\$53,712	\$32,220

**Source:** United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Cedar Rapids, State of Iowa, & USA, *Comparative Economic Characteristics*, retrieved from American Fact Finder Website, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment Projections: Earning and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment*, 2015, retrieved from BLS Website.

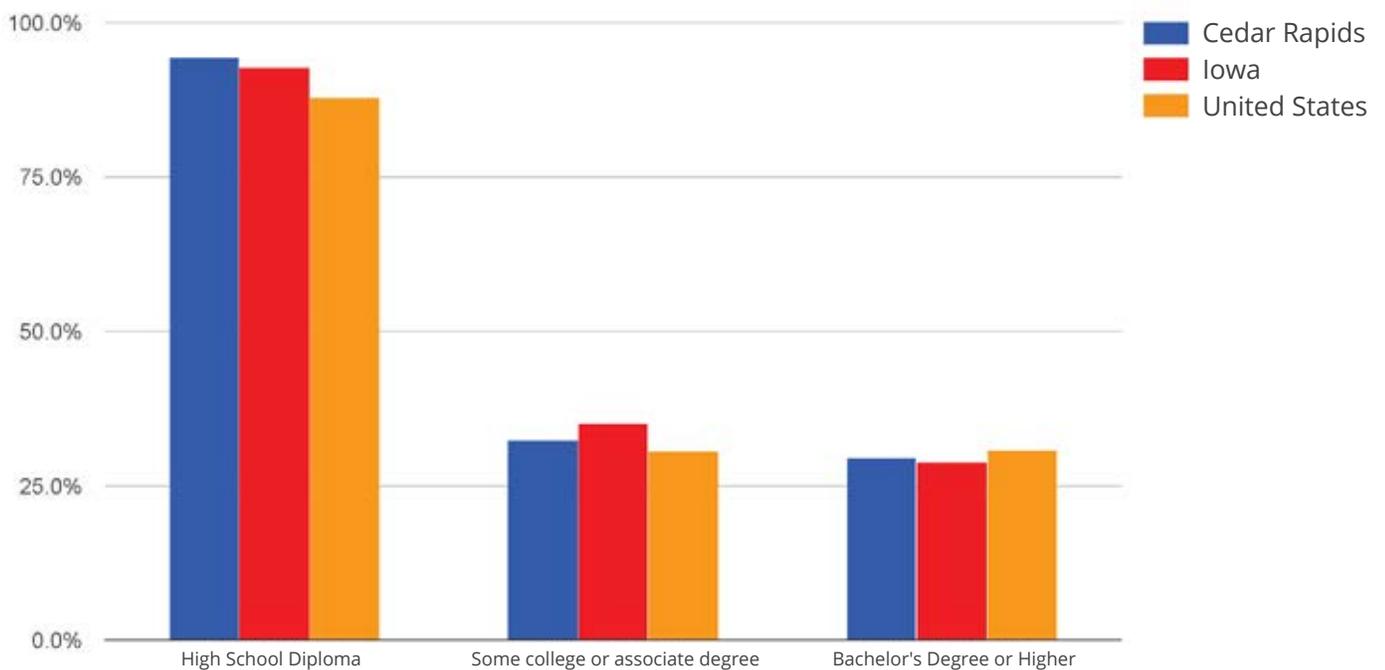
<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

US Department of Housing and Urban Development calculates Median Family Income for metropolitan areas.<sup>15</sup> Analysis of this data for 2015 shows Cedar Rapids ranks at almost the eighty-ninth (89th) percentile of median income for metropolitan regions nationally in the United States.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Education increases the number of options available to workers in the labor market, and the quality of the local labor pool is a central aspect of areas competitiveness. Figures below compare rates of educational attainment in Cedar Rapids against the state and nation.

### Educational Attainment in Cedar Rapids, State of Iowa and United States, 2014



### Educational Attainment

	CEDAR RAPIDS	IOWA	UNITED STATES
<b>High School Diploma</b>	\$68,497	\$51,972	\$33,006
<b>Some college or associate degree</b>	\$70,902	\$51,999	\$31,697
<b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	\$70,845	\$52,226	\$31,924

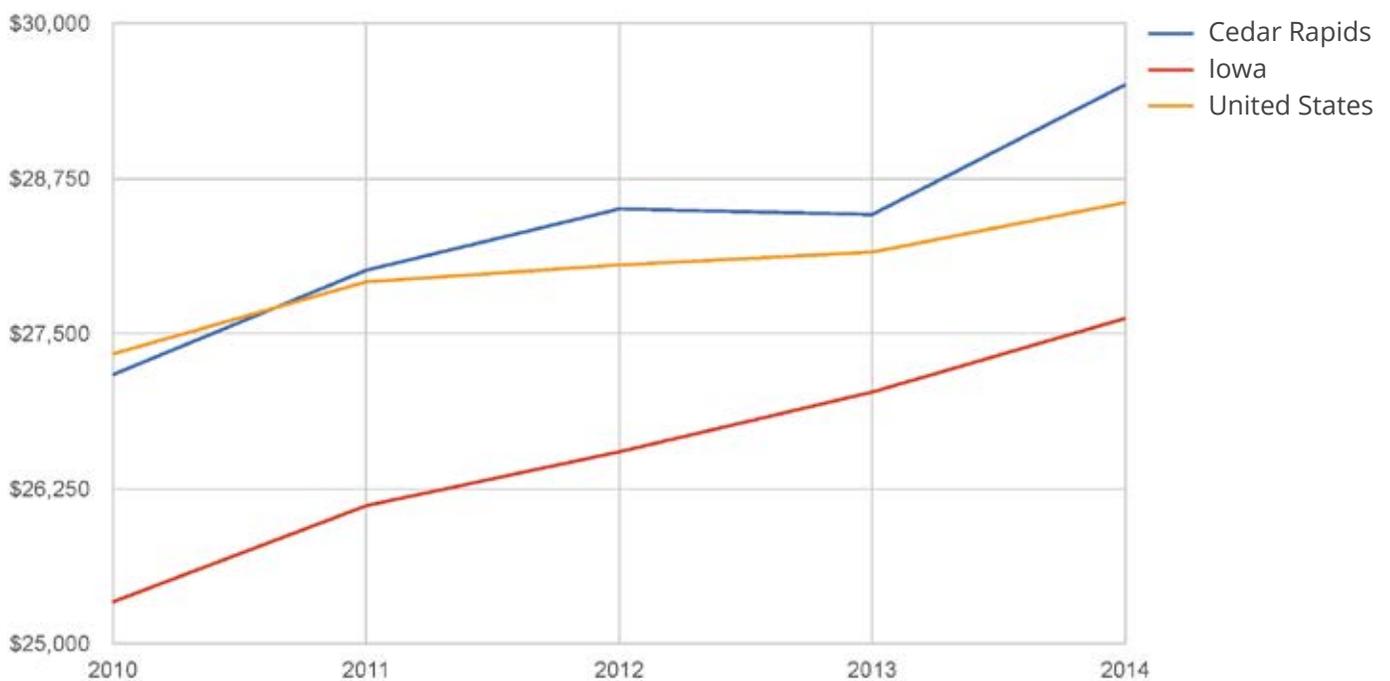
**Source:** United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Cedar Rapids, State of Iowa, & USA, *Comparative Economic Characteristics*, retrieved from American Fact Finder Website, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC), *Median Family Income Report* (2015), retrieved from FFIEC Website.

## PER CAPITA INCOME

The average income earned per person in an area is measured by per capita income. It is often used as a common denominator to compare the prosperity of locations.<sup>16</sup> Information included here evaluates the relationship of Cedar Rapids to both the State of Iowa and nation as a whole. The City of Cedar Rapids compares favorably to the state and nation as a whole. However, it should be noted that metropolitan areas typically outperform national averages.<sup>17</sup>

### Comparison of Per Capita Income in Cedar Rapids versus State of Iowa and United States, 2010 to 2014



#### Per Capita Income

	CEDAR RAPIDS	IOWA	UNITED STATES
<b>2014</b>	\$29,506	\$27,621	\$28,555
<b>2013</b>	\$28,458	\$27,027	\$28,155
<b>2012</b>	\$28,503	\$26,545	\$28,051
<b>2011</b>	\$28,008	\$26,110	\$27,915
<b>2010</b>	\$27,167	\$25,335	\$27,334

<sup>16</sup> Definition: Income Per Capita, retrieved from Investopedia Website.

<sup>17</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *OECD Territorial Reviews: Competitive Cities in the Global Economy*, 2006.

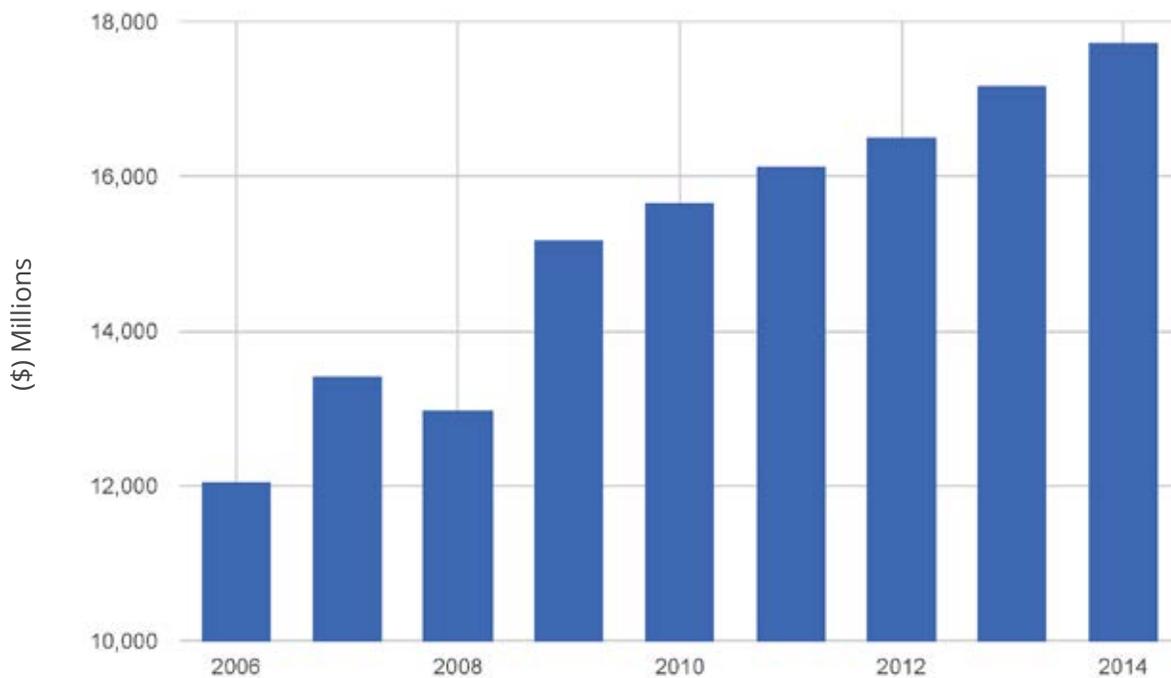
Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) data for per capita income in metropolitan areas show Cedar Rapids has the seventy-third (73rd) highest income of 381 metro areas in the United States. This level of per capita income places Cedar Rapids above the eightieth (80th) percentile in per capita income for metropolitan areas nationally.<sup>18</sup>

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## METRO GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

The United States Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) maintains statistics relating to economic output. BEA data for current dollar Gross Domestic Production (GDP) presented below summarizes the value of all goods and services. Data for Cedar Rapids from 2006 to 2014 is listed.

### Gross Domestic Product of Cedar Rapids Metro Area, 2006 to 2014



**Source:** United State Bureau of Economic Analysis, Metropolitan Area Statistics (2014), retrieved at BEA website.

<sup>18</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income, 2014, retrieved at BEA website.

To place the value of economic input in a clearer context, the 2014 Current Dollar Gross Domestic Product for the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is almost eighteen (18) billion dollars annually. This value ranks at the sixty-seventh (67th) percentile nationally for all US metropolitan regions.<sup>19</sup> Cedar Rapids also ranks one hundred twenty-eighth (128th) largest in the nation out of three hundred eighty-one (381) metropolitan areas in the United States. This places Cedar Rapids between the thirty-third (33rd) and (34th) percentile in population size. Therefore, based on these numbers, it's easy to see that the economic output of Cedar Rapids is twice the size of what might be predicted on the basis of population size alone.

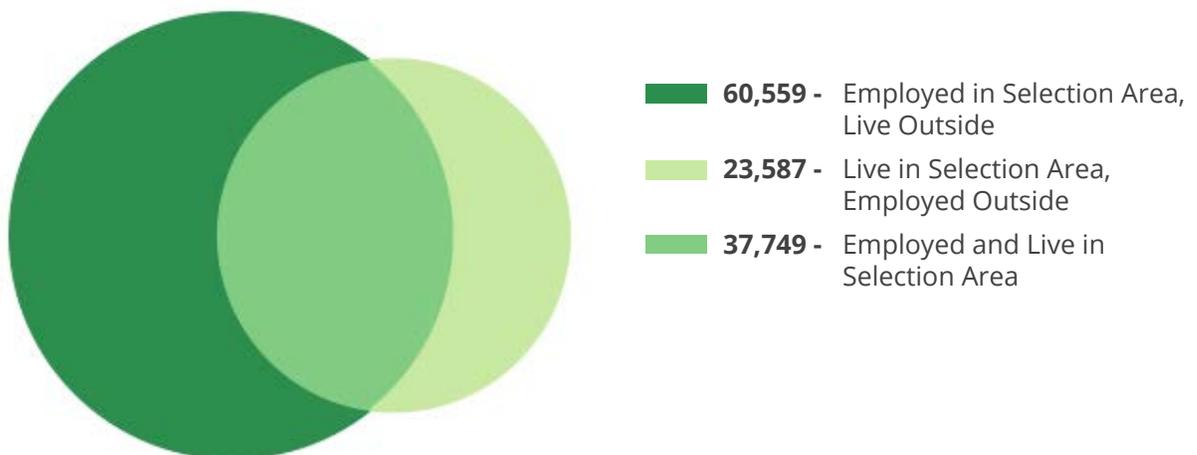
## WORKFORCE

*The United States Department of Commerce helps aggregate and distribute a wide variety of federal statistics for economic development. Data relating to range of workforce characteristics is included here.*

## TRAVEL PATTERNS

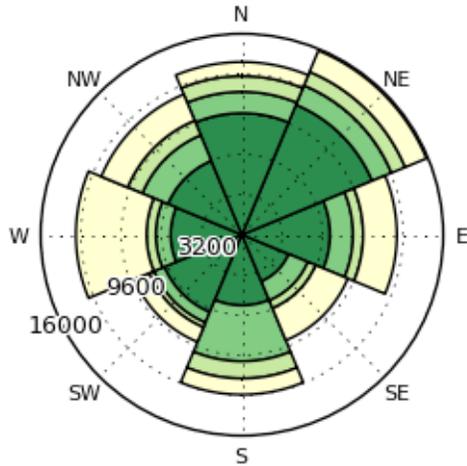
Cedar Rapids occupies a central location in the Upper Midwest. Within eastern Iowa, Cedar Rapids serves as an employment center. Of the total number of persons working in Cedar Rapids, over sixty (60) percent commute to work from a place of residence outside of the City. About forty (40) percent of workers are both employed and reside within the City of Cedar Rapids.

### Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2014



<sup>19</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Regional Economic Accounts, Local Area Personal Income, 2014, retrieved at BEA website.

### Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2014 - All Workers



### Jobs by Distance Work Census Block to Home Census Block (2014)

	COUNT	SHARE
<b>TOTAL PRIMARY JOBS</b>	98,308	100.0%
<b>Less than 10 miles</b>	56,257	57.2%
<b>10 to 24 miles</b>	15,573	15.8%
<b>25 to 50 miles</b>	7,670	7.8%
<b>Greater than 50 miles</b>	18,808	19.1%

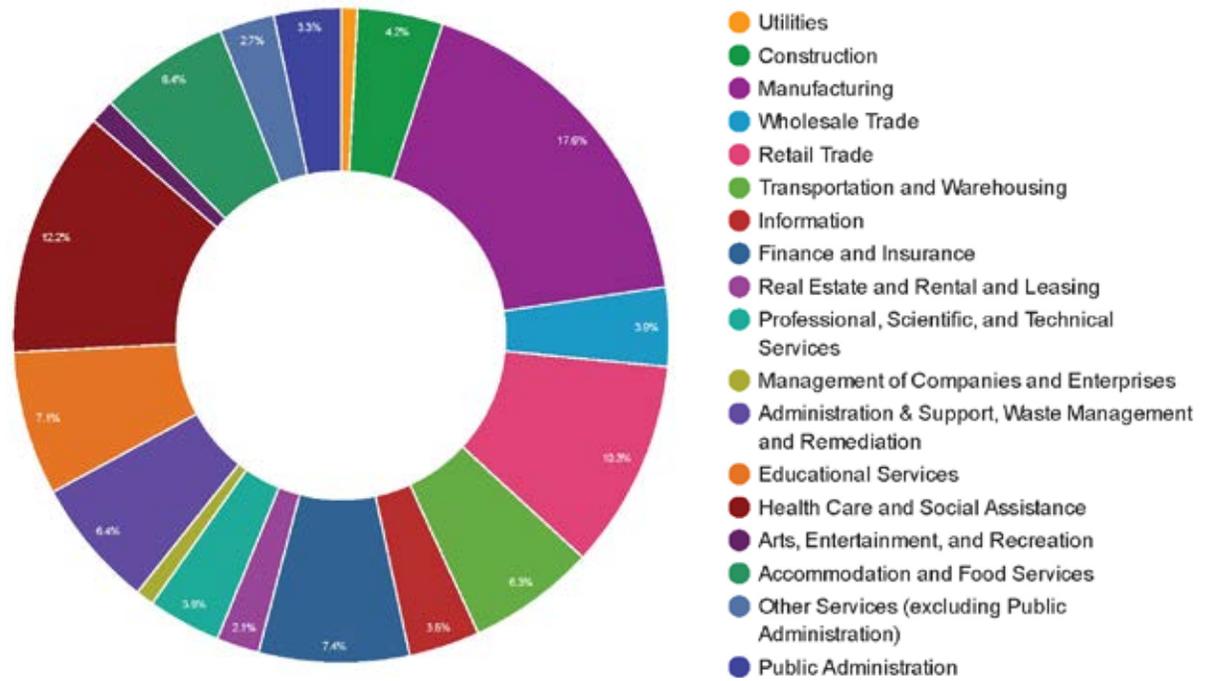
**Source:** United States Census Bureau, *LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)*, retrieved at US Census Bureau On the Map Website.

The chart above illustrates travel from the work place to home in Cedar Rapids. The number of drivers traveling in a given direction is indicated in the chart. A summary table has been provided that shows total distances traveled.

## JOB COUNTY SECTOR

The United States Census Bureau lists almost one hundred thousand (100,000) primary jobs in Cedar Rapids in 2014. A detailed breakdown of workers by occupational classification is included below.

**Jobs Count by NAICS Sector for Cedar Rapids, Iowa (2014)**



**Source:** United States Census Bureau, *LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)*, retrieved at US Census Bureau On the Map Website.

## Total Employment in Cedar Rapids, Iowa by Employment Type, 2014

	COUNT	SHARE
<b>TOTAL PRIMARY JOBS</b>	98,308	100.00%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9	0.00%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0.00%
Utilities	814	0.80%
Construction	4,158	4.20%
Manufacturing	17,343	17.60%
Wholesale Trade	3,880	3.90%
Retail Trade	10,148	10.30%
Transportation and Warehousing	6,149	6.30%
Information	3,453	3.50%
Finance and Insurance	7,312	7.40%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,026	2.10%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3,517	3.60%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	873	0.90%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	6,266	6.40%
Educational Services	6,951	7.10%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,986	12.20%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,185	1.20%
Accommodation and Food Services	6,260	6.40%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	2,684	2.70%
Public Administration	3,293	3.30%

Source: United States Census Bureau, *LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)*, retrieved at US Census Bureau On the Map Website.

Additional insight into the structure of the local economy can be found by understanding which businesses serve as major employers locally. The Iowa Department of Workforce Development provides a summary report on the number workers employed by all businesses in Iowa. The table below presents a summary of the largest employers in Cedar Rapids.

### Largest Cedar Rapids Employers by Number of Employees

EMPLOYER	SECTOR	EMPLOYEES
<b>General Mills, Inc.</b>	Manufacturing	500-999
<b>Toyota Motor Insurance Services</b>	Financial Services	500-999
<b>West Side Transportation</b>	Warehousing & Transportation	500-999
<b>CRST International Inc.</b>	Warehousing & Transportation	1000-4999
<b>Gazette Communications, Inc.</b>	Information	1000-4999
<b>Mercy Hospital</b>	Healthcare	1000-4999
<b>Nordstrom</b>	Warehousing & Transportation	1000-4999
<b>PMX Industries, Inc.</b>	Manufacturing	1000-4999
<b>Ruffalo Noel Levitz</b>	Services	1000-4999
<b>Pepsi Co. (Quaker Food and Snacks)</b>	Manufacturing	1000-4998
<b>Unity Point/Stint Luke's Hospital</b>	Healthcare	1000-4999
<b>Rockwell Collins</b>	Manufacturing	5000-9999+
<b>TransAmerica (AEGON)</b>	Financial Services	5000-9999+

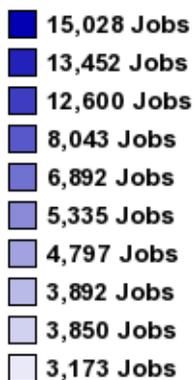
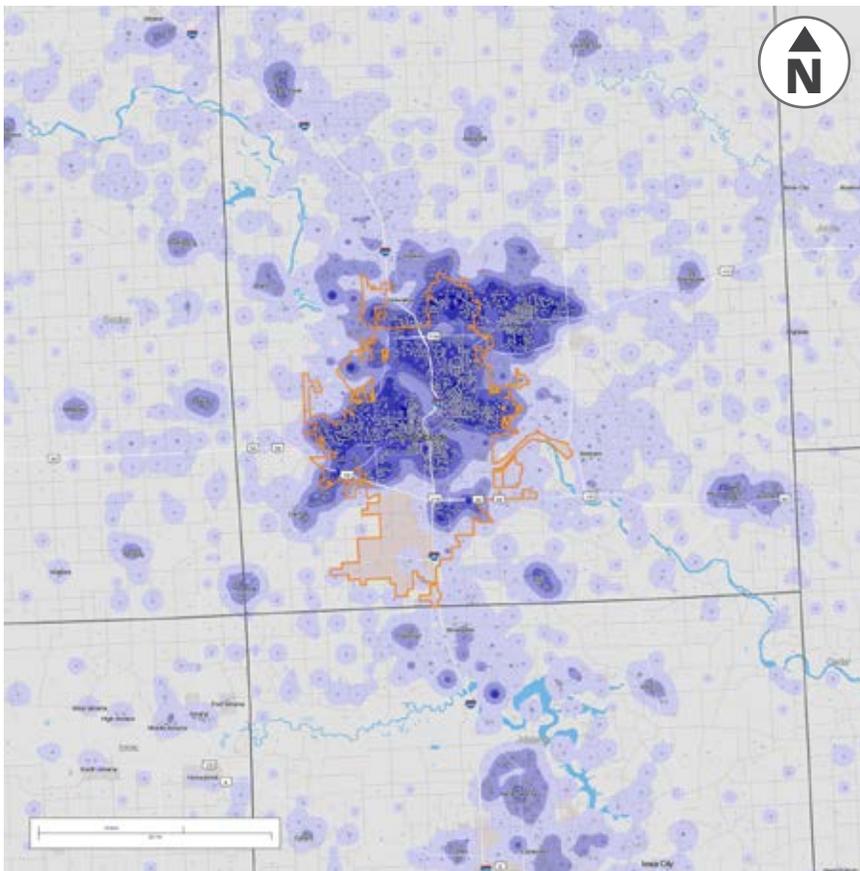
**Source:** Iowa Workforce Development, Labor Market Information Division, retrieved from Iowa One Source Website, 2016

<sup>20</sup> Marley, Mathew and Gardner, Todd K., *Identifying Concentrations of Employment in Metropolitan Areas*, 2010 Annual Meeting of American Sociological Association, (US Census Bureau: Washington DC), retrieved at US Census Bureau Website.

## EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

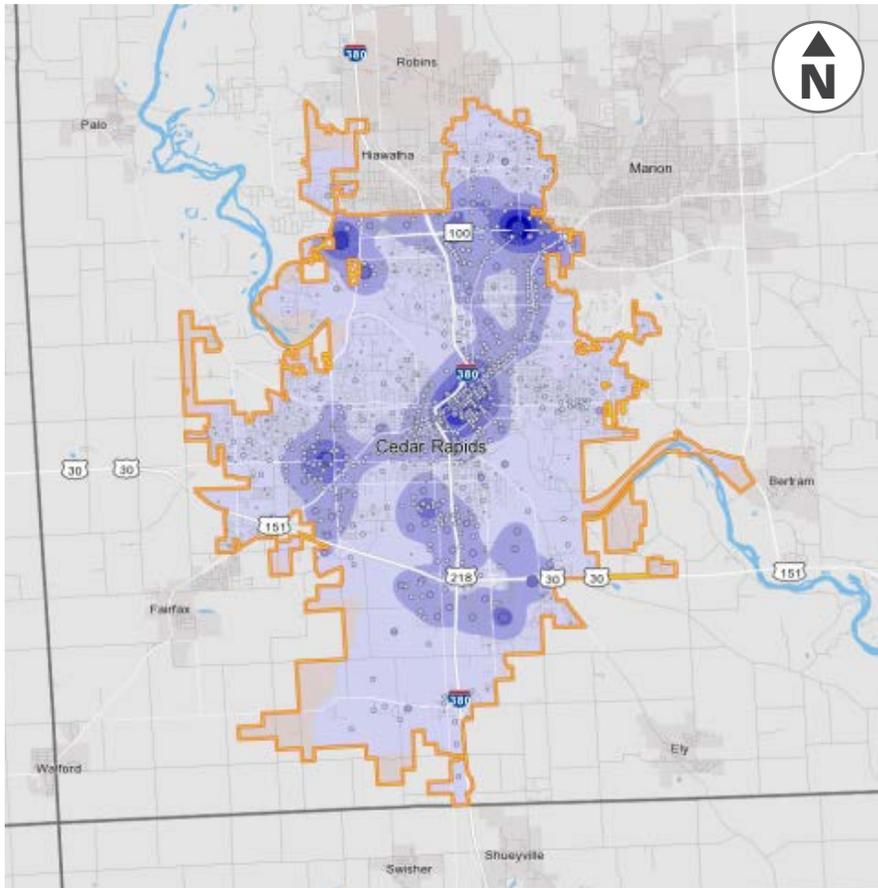
The map above shows relative job density in Cedar Rapids, as depicted in individual Census Tracts. Darker areas indicate a high-employment area. Nationwide, jobs tend to cluster in central business districts, along highway corridors or beltways, and near airports.<sup>20</sup>

### Job Density in City of Cedar Rapids by Census Tract, 2002 to 2014



Source: United States Census Bureau, *LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)*, retrieved at US Census Bureau On the Map Website.

### Job Density in City of Cedar Rapids by Census Block Group (Jobs per Square Mile), 2002 to 2014



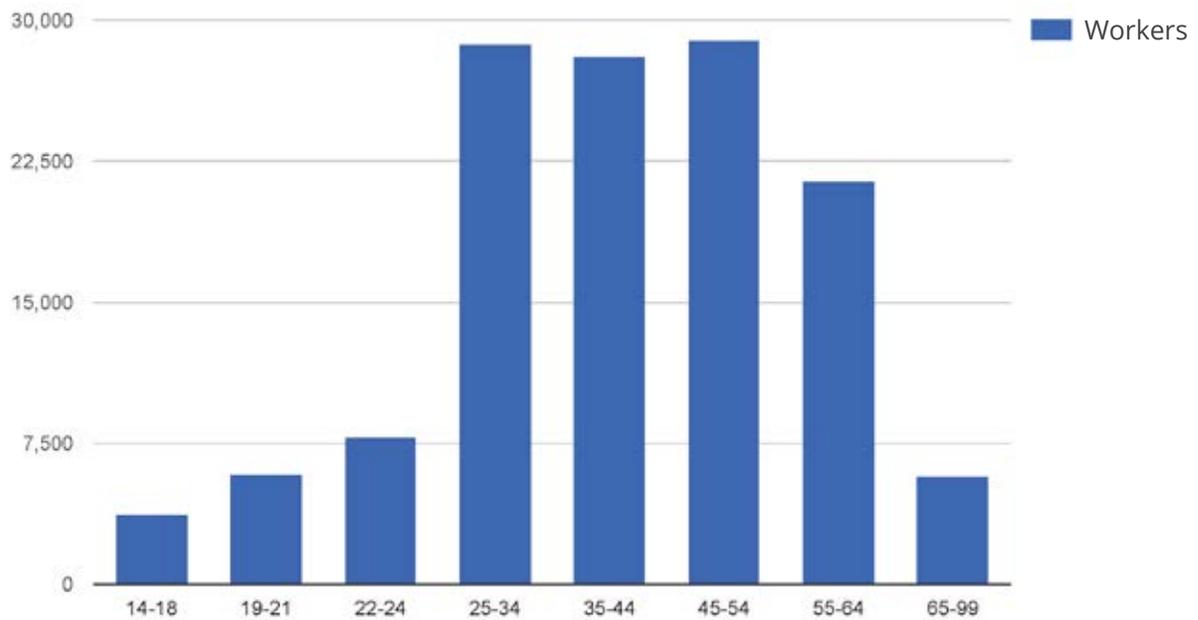
**Source:** United States Census Bureau, *LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2014)*, retrieved at US Census Bureau On the Map Website.

As shown on this page, density of employment in Cedar Rapids is measured as number of jobs per square mile. The United States Census Bureau defines a threshold of about four thousand four hundred (4,400) jobs per square mile as a comparatively higher density jobs area in the United States. Moderate density job areas are found in the range from that value to about two thousand one hundred (2,100) per square mile. The least job dense areas typically have scores of five hundred (500) jobs or less per square mile.<sup>21</sup>

## AGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKFORCE (LINN COUNTY)

In 2014, according to the American Community Survey, the median age of population for the City of Cedar Rapids was about thirty-five (35) years old. This compares to thirty-eight (38) and thirty-seven (37) years old for the State of Iowa and United States, respectively. The following detail shows the distribution of age among the Linn County Workforce.

Age Distribution of Linn County, Iowa Workforce, 2015



**Source:** US Census Bureau, *Quarterly Workforce Indicator (QWI) Explorer*, Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD), retrieved at QWI website.

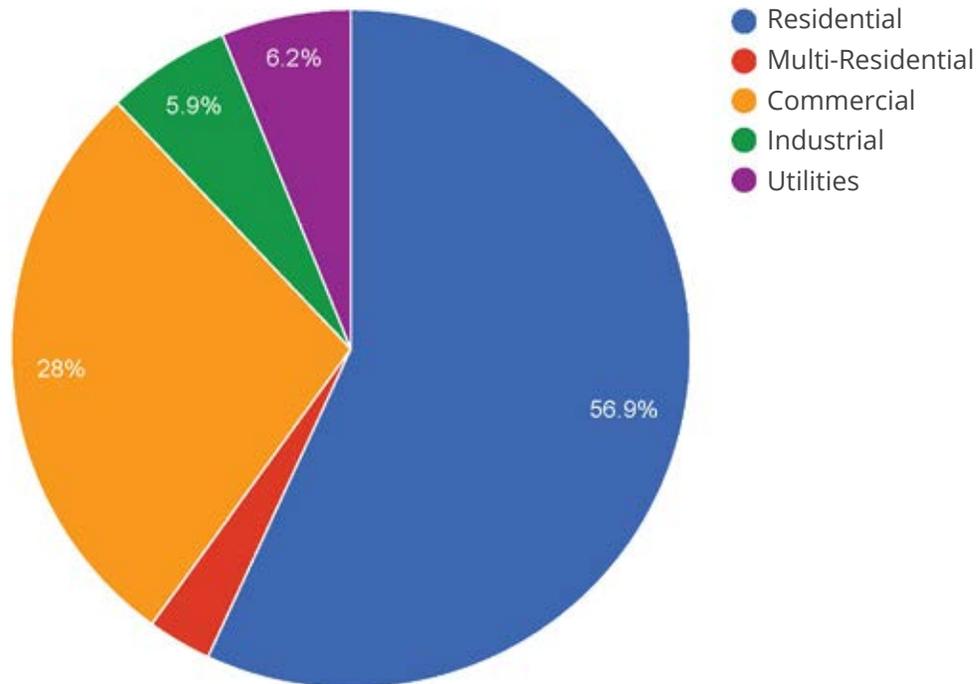
## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Expansion of a local economy is strongly tied to its physical development. Information contained in this portion of the report evaluates factors relating to growth in the Cedar Rapids area.

## PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS TAX BASE

Annually, the City of Cedar Rapids budget presents an in depth analysis of the value of the municipal tax base. Information contained in the chart below utilizes the current City budget to show the breakdown of assessed value along the lines of property classification.

**Total Taxable Value by Property Type for Cedar Rapids Iowa, January 1, 2015**

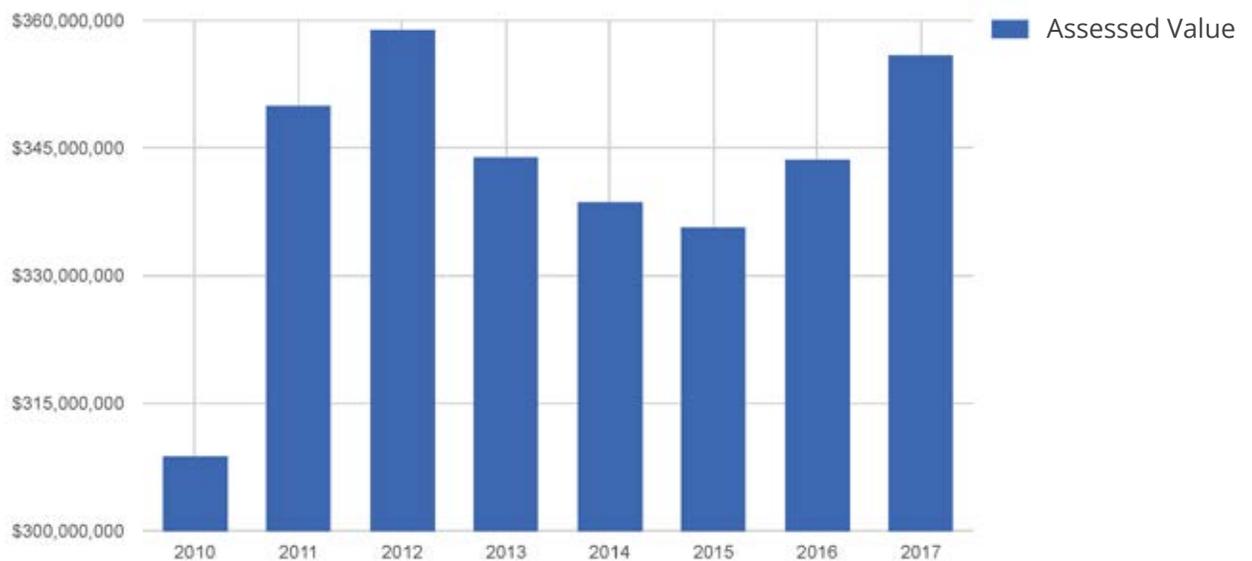


**Source:** City of Cedar Rapids Finance Department, Fiscal Year 2017 Proposed Budget, retrieved at City of Cedar Rapids Website.

## PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE OF INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY IN CEDAR RAPIDS, 2010 TO 2016

Changes to the assessed value of industrial property in Cedar Rapids are detailed in the chart below. Industrial land use typically accounts for a minority of total land area within a community but contributes a large percentage of higher-wage/higher skill employment opportunities. The assessed value of industrial property increased in Cedar Rapids is projected to increase from \$343.6 million to \$355.9 million between fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

### Assessed Value of Industrial Property in Cedar Rapids, FY 2010 to FY 2018

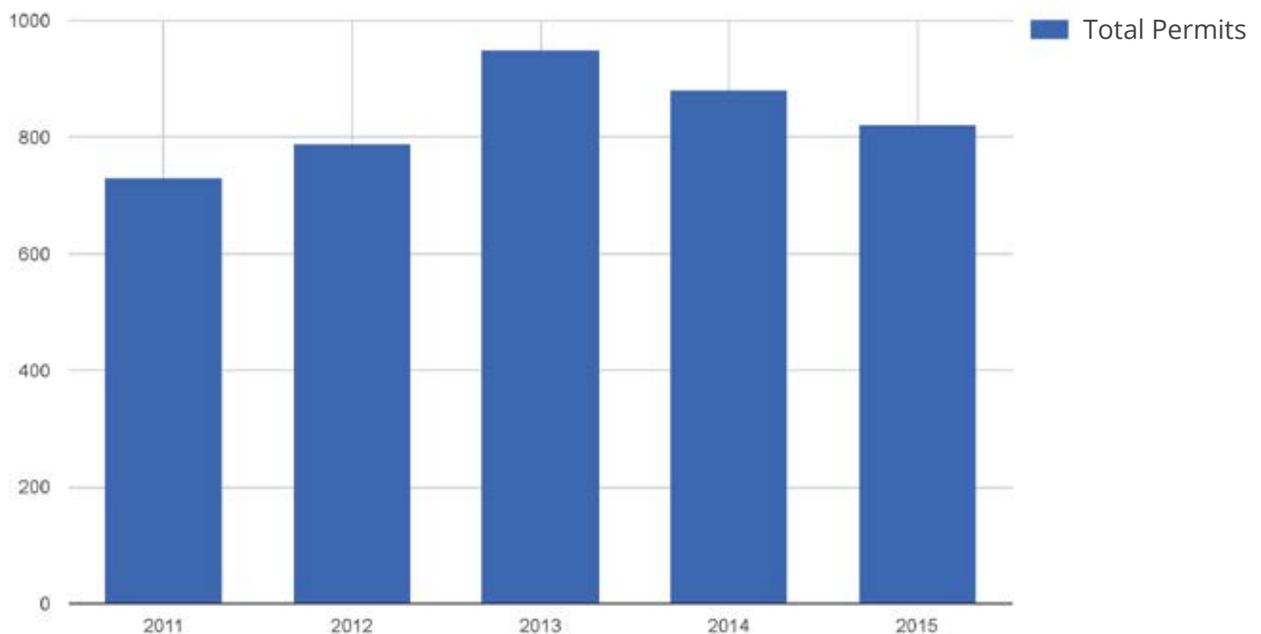


**Source:** City of Cedar Rapids Finance Department, Fiscal Year 2017 Proposed Budget, retrieved at City of Cedar Rapids Website.

## BUILDING PERMIT SUMMARY

In 2015, the City of Cedar Rapids Development Services Department issued 254 residential building permits and 54 multifamily building permits. An additional 754 commercial building permits were issued for office, retail and industrial development. For a regional perspective, the United States Census Bureau tracks building permit data through an active survey program. Data is available on a monthly and annual basis. Summary information for the Cedar Rapids MSA is contained below for reference.

### New Privately Owned Housing Units Authorized in Cedar Rapids MSA, 2011 to 2015



YEAR	TOTAL PERMITS	1 UNIT	2 UNITS	3 UNITS	4 UNITS	5 OR MORE UNITS
<b>2015</b>	821	489	88	45	199	10
<b>2014</b>	881	664	70	113	54	2
<b>2013</b>	949	625	52	77	195	6
<b>2012</b>	788	617	48	103	20	4
<b>2011</b>	731	577	54	76	24	2

**Source:** United States Census Bureau, Building Permit Survey, Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Statistical Area (2011 to 2015)



**BUSINESS**  
INTERVIEW COMMENTS

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## OVERVIEW OF SURVEY DATA

The Cedar Rapids Business Survey obtained a variety of types of data from the survey's sample of local businesses. Certain survey questions were written to be open-ended. Those solicited general input and comments from businesses. Other questions required businesses to select which answer best applied to their enterprise. As a result, this section summarizes survey responses in two parts. The first section reviews comments received from businesses, while the second section tabulates responses to multiple choice questions.

## OPEN-ENDED QUESTION SUMMARY (COMMENTS)

### Context

Existing industry outreach efforts form a familiar part of the overall approach to economic development. Most business leaders are well acquainted with why and how local economic development can benefit from data obtained directly from the private sector. The main constraint in access to business is limited time both on part of the business owner as well as the fact the 2016 Business Survey had a total project length of less than six months.

### People

A series of interviews were arranged by the Economic Development Services staff with senior management at local companies. Management representatives would typically be senior executives—usually CEO, CFO or those staff members directing local operations such as a plant manager. In the case of small and medium-sized companies, meetings were usually arranged with business owners.

### Interaction

Interviews were scheduled to last for an average duration of around 30 to 40 minutes. Almost all meetings were in-person. The formal survey occupied the middle portion of conversation and business owner comments were noted throughout. Follow-up questions were asked by staff as appropriate. If retention issues were identified, then those issues became the basis for follow-up with company representatives.

The exact type of retention issues encountered during survey visits varied greatly between companies. This fact underscores the importance of how effective customer relationship management should guide all aspects of retention program administration. The conditions under which individual businesses operate are highly individualized. As a consequence, responses taken through a retention program must take all parts of the individual case into account, before advancing any course of action. Even the steps taken to address the same retention issue may differ due to differences among various types of business.

However, it is possible to give an outline of a few types of business retention issues that are commonly encountered and corresponding response. To start, many existing industries operate under site constraints. An existing development site may not be large enough to allow for future expansion, current facilities may not provide adequate floor area for a new production line, or there may be problems with road access. Or an existing business may wish to expand on-site or at a new location in Cedar Rapids. Economic Development Services staff assist local businesses looking at planning an expansion by getting those businesses input from the Development Services Team as to whether a given development concept is feasible under the current City zoning code and whether any other City requirements apply.

Furthermore, a business may be evaluating the question of whether to expand. In those cases, retention visits provide existing industry with information concerning City's economic development programs. On the other hand, for those businesses not currently in a position to expand, retention visits help provide beneficial technical assistance to help address barriers to future growth.

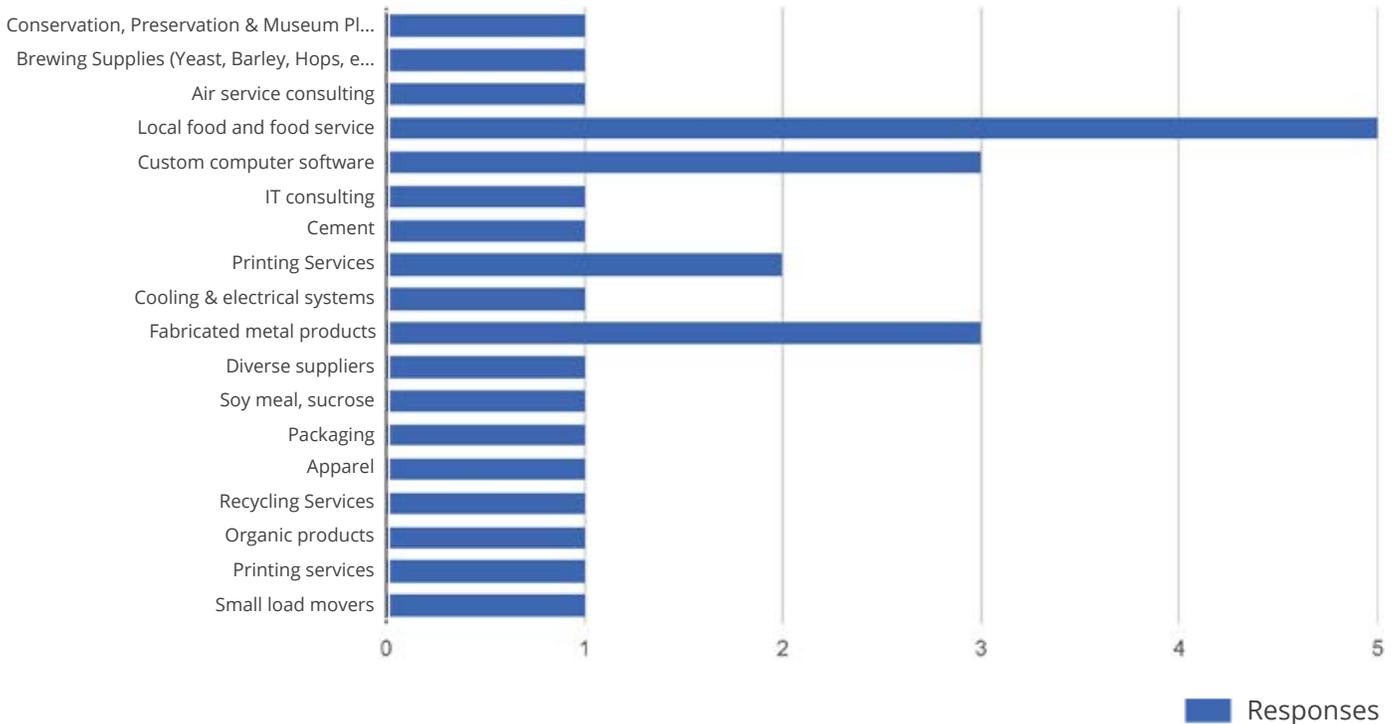
In addition, businesses may have un-met needs or needs that were previously well addressed but have become a problem as conditions in the market change. For example, if a business has solid waste needs as a result of changing conditions impacting the business, then retention staff can make sure the business owner is aware that no cost consulting services are available through the DNR's Iowa Waste Exchange. Another good example of how retention services help provide superior outcomes for businesses can be found in the area of workforce development. Workforce development programs are spread between the regional and state levels. Therefore, it can often be difficult for businesses to navigate how resources may overlap and which specific offices provide appropriate services. In a few specific cases, survey visits uncovered very specific needs for several occupations. Based on those employer needs, follow-up to those retention visits provided the companies information about the Home Base Iowa program which serves to help veterans access job opportunities in Iowa.

### **Survey Results**

Comments generated by business retention survey responses are documented in the following tables. Results are provided in a table or chart format as appropriate. They cover questions that are primarily qualitative in scope.

## NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

**Are there any products or services you purchase from outside the City where you would prefer to find a local supplier?**



The figure above presents a count of the types of comments received in response to the survey question. Of the total number surveyed, only around 3 out of 10 businesses responded in the affirmative that additional products or services available in Cedar Rapids would be a benefit to their company. The vast majority of businesses mentioned they were already adequately supplied by state, national or international markets for all purchasing needs. A number of companies responding also stated their businesses already buy as much locally as is feasible.

Among those businesses that would like to purchase additional products locally, food and food service stands out as the category with the most responses. Fabricated metal products and custom computer software were tied as the second most frequently cited category.

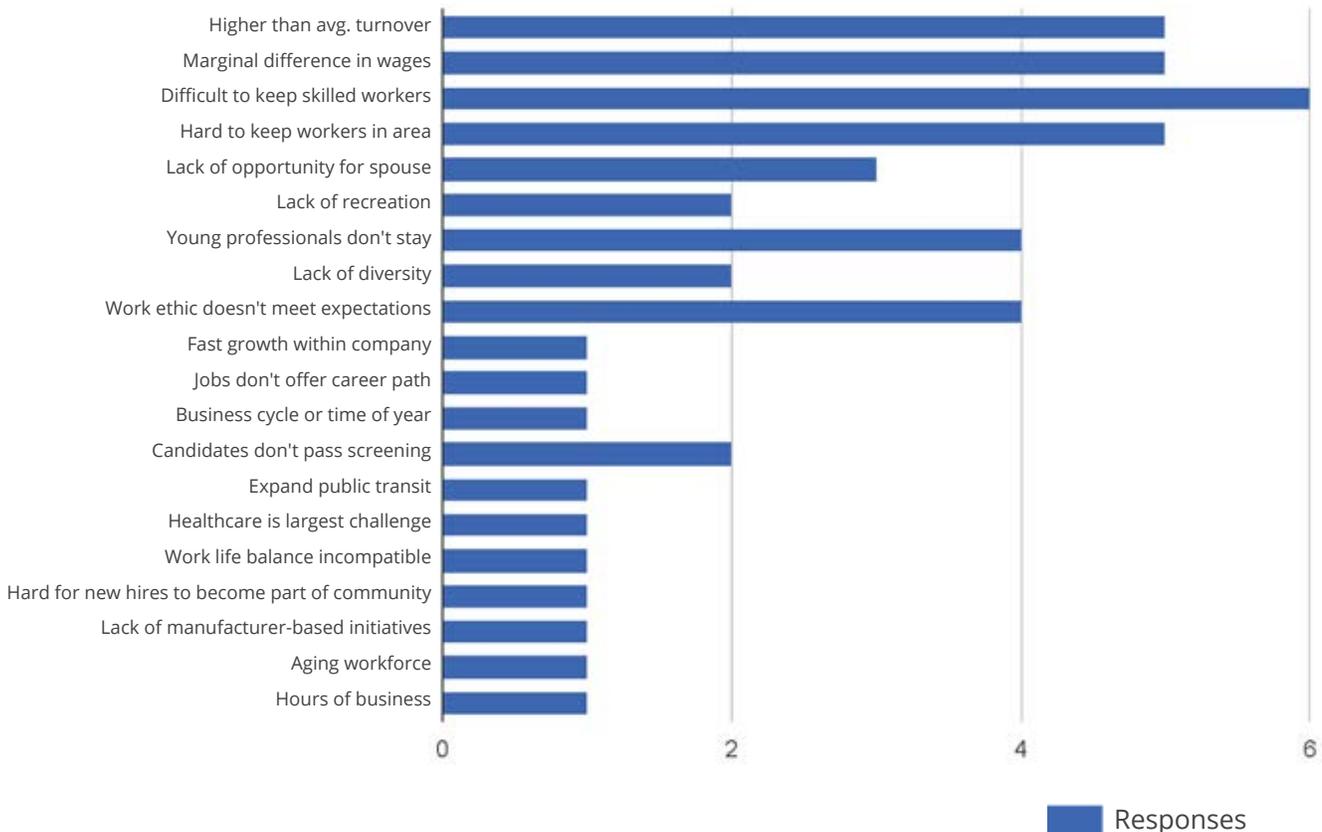
## EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Based on the sample of responses provided in the 2016 business sample survey, about one-third of the respondents indicated some type of challenge present with worker retention. Some trends are present in the data, but it is also true that particular responses varied significantly as a function of business type and size.

The largest number of survey responses identified difficulty retaining skilled labor as the key retention challenge. This was followed closely by a large number of firms stating they faced a number of other challenges. High turnover, differences in wages and difficulty keeping employees in the area were all cited as barriers to employee retention. Lack of diversity in the workforce and a lack of younger employees were also frequently mentioned by companies having retention problems.

Beyond these leading categories of response, the particular issues cited tended to vary. A number of employers indicated challenges in raising the awareness and visibility of job opportunities in Cedar Rapids with younger employees. Quality of life issues (retail mix, lack of urban attractions found in urban areas like professional sporting events, lack of awareness of the positive aspects of quality of life in Cedar Rapids, train noise downtown), were also cited as a complicating factor in recruiting employees from outside of Iowa.

### What issues has management encountered retaining employees?

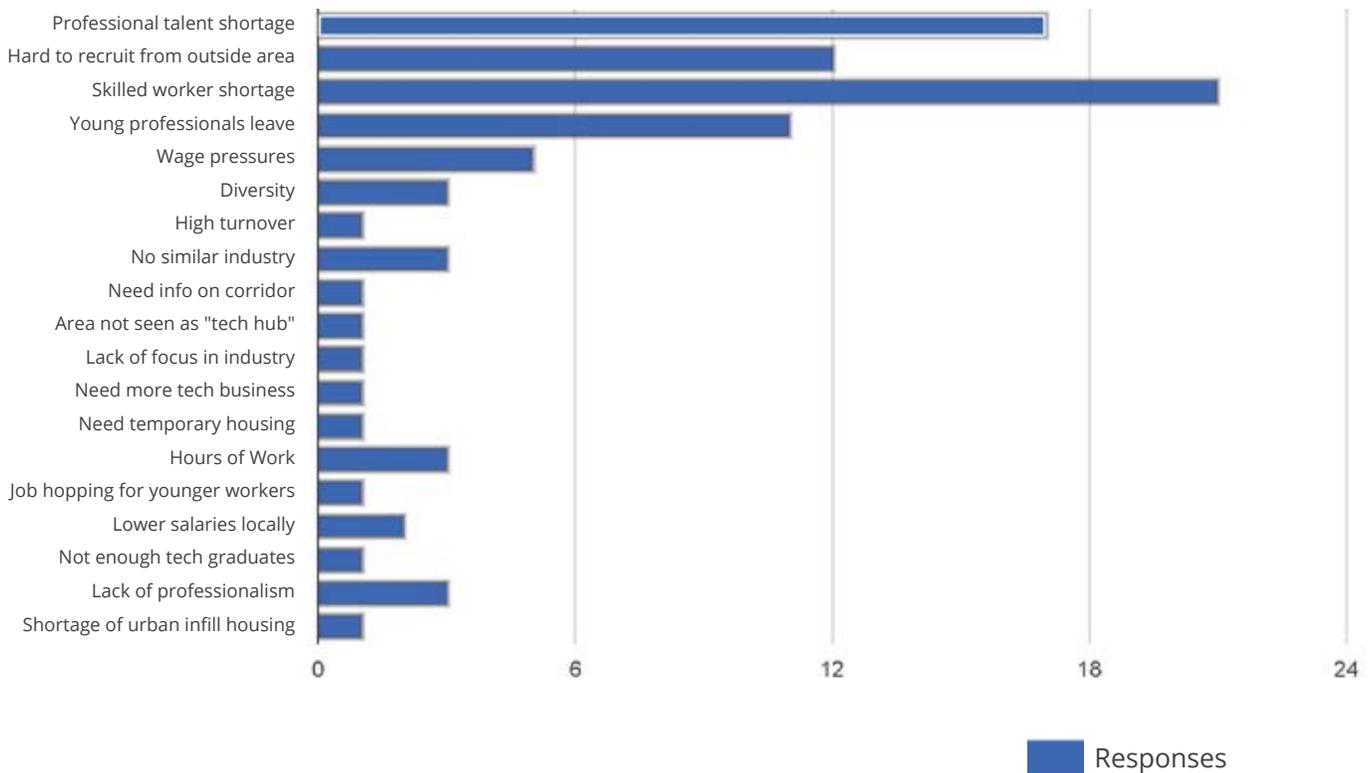


## TALENT ATTRACTION

About half of the companies surveyed indicated some level of difficulty attracting talent. The nature of specific needs vary greatly by industry and firm type. The greatest need was reflected in an overall shortage of skilled workers. Examples of occupational categories where acute shortages were noted include entry level production staff, manual machinists, CNC machinists, production technicians, and electro-mechanical maintenance technicians.

Likewise, a very high number of companies indicated they faced difficulties recruiting experienced professionals. Technology-oriented companies reported a shortage of engineers as well as software programmers with the highest skill sets. IT professionals were also frequently named as being in high demand. Reasons cited for why this was the case tended to vary widely, as the data strongly shows. But, as a generalization, many employers stated that there was severe difficulty bringing employees into Cedar Rapids that did not already have some type of connection to the area. Several businesses reported having difficulties obtaining enough healthcare workers—doctors, nurses and physicians. A number of firms noted difficulty in attracting talent at the highest levels—managers and experienced professionals—for example.

**What issues has management encountered attracting employees?**

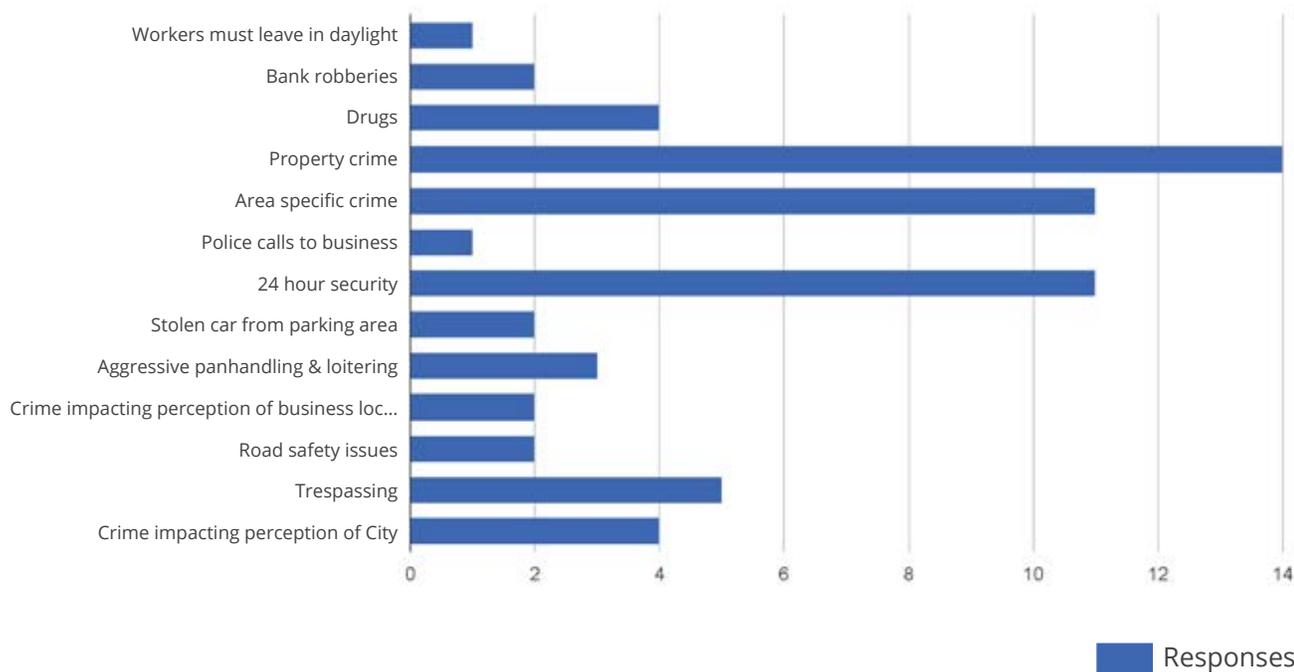


Numerous comments were received concerning the difficulties in attracting younger professionals to jobs in the area. By number, this category of comment functioned as the third most prevalent response. A variety of possible causes were cited from lack of interest in the types of jobs available to a tendency of that group to have greater interest in locating in a large city regardless of the type of employment opportunities available there. A few specific hurdles to attraction in these instances included retail mix, general quality of life not identical to a large urban area, and a need for greater choice in the types of downtown housing options available in Cedar Rapids.

## CRIME AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Slightly over half of business sampled could identify ways in which crime was impacting business at their current location. The most common crime related issue was property crime at-large. Other crime relating factors most prominent among businesses are adequate 24-hour security and higher crime areas within the City of Cedar Rapids being of equal concern.

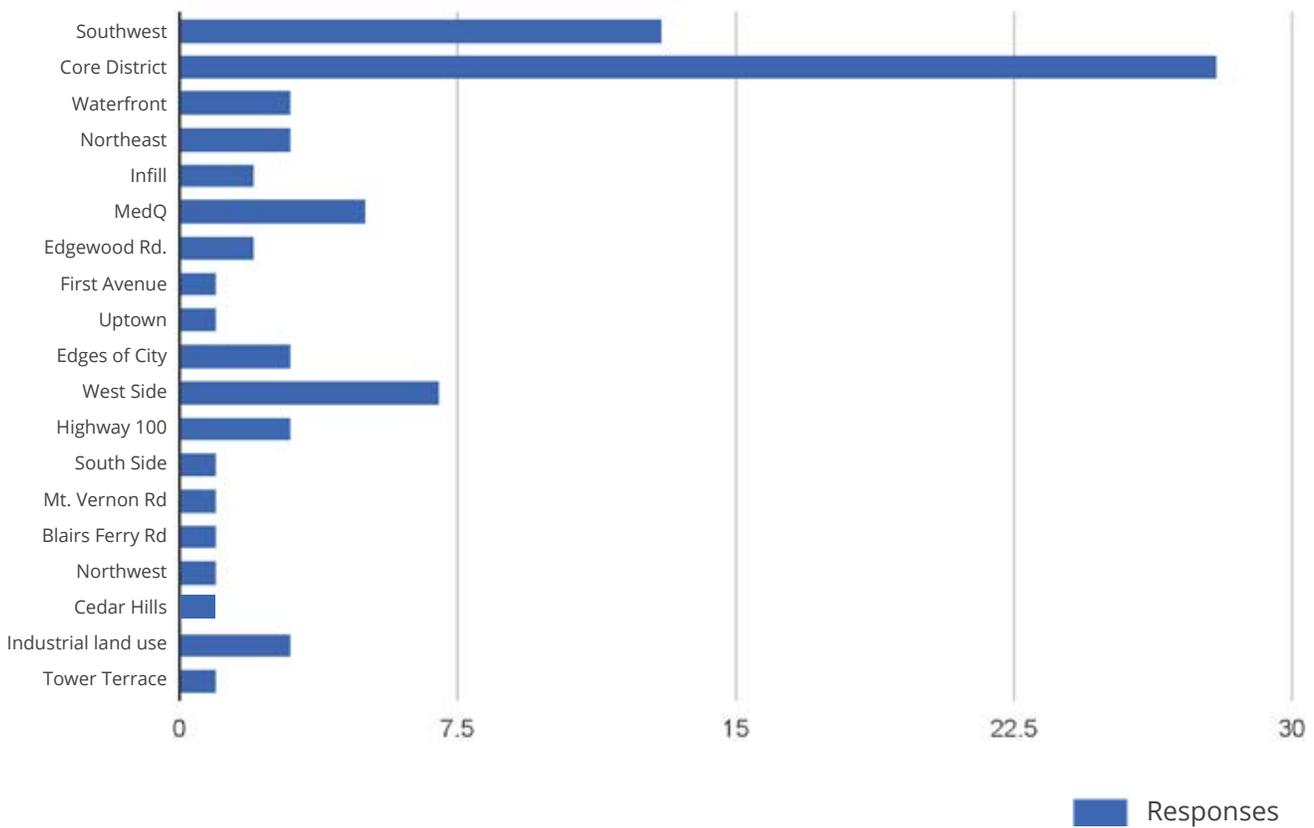
**Are there crime or public safety issues impacting your business? If so, please explain.**



### FUTURE GROWTH

Responses collected through the business survey reflect numerous preferences about the most desirable location(s) for future growth in Cedar Rapids. The clearest trend from the data was continued, strong support for development of the Central Business District in Downtown Cedar Rapids as well as the NewBo District. Other areas where growth was identified as most desirable include Southwest Cedar Rapids, the west side of Cedar Rapids, the MedQ District, and positive trends on the edges of the City.

Where would you prefer to see future commercial/retail growth occur in Cedar Rapids?

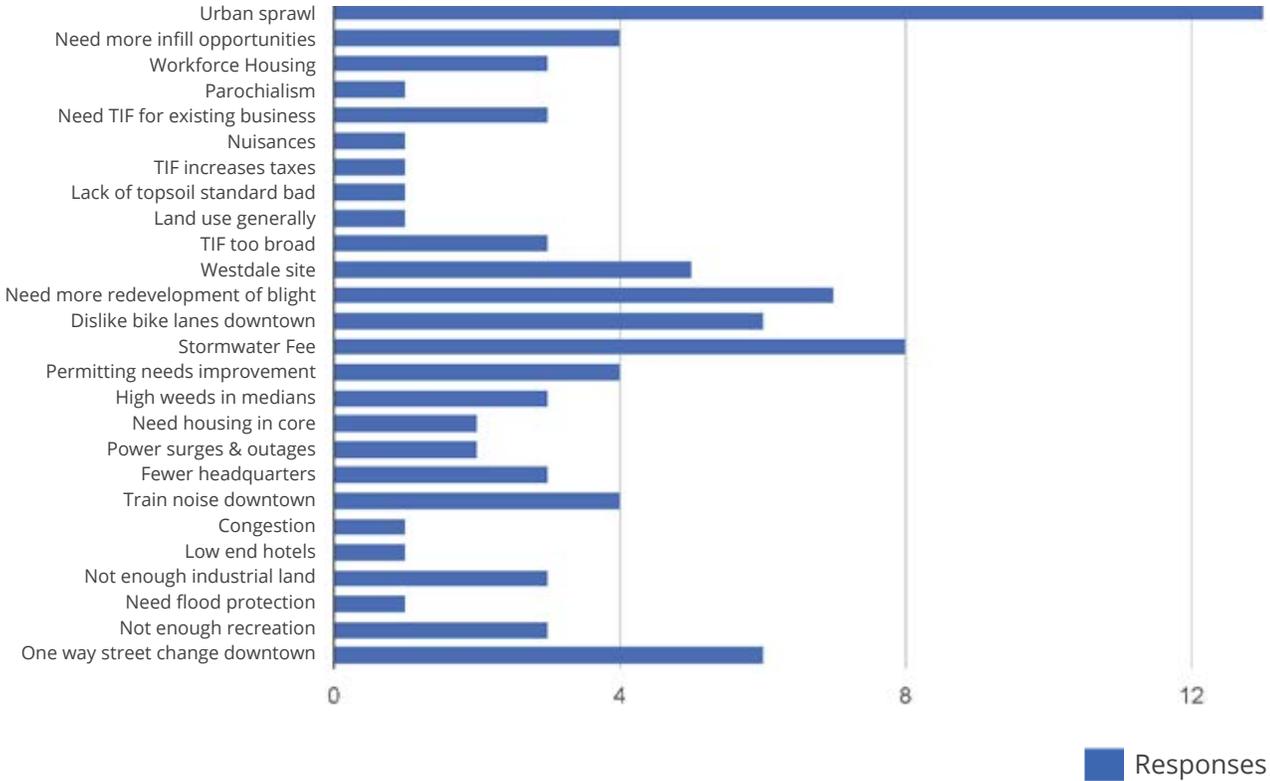


## DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

It is worth noting that a sizable majority of survey respondents did not identify any growth trends as having an adverse impact on Cedar Rapids. More than sixty percent (60) of businesses did not identify development related issues. Of those businesses that did identify negative trends, perceptions of urban sprawl were cited most frequently. Total responses are summarized in the table below.

A number of comments were also received regarding the use of Tax Increment Financing in Economic Development projects. Specific suggestions were also given to streamline certain aspects of permitting. For example, it was suggested the City could eliminate the requirement for a PE signature on building permit plans under a specific dollar threshold when renovating existing facilities. However, the current permitting process must account for state and federal code requirements, which would mandate a PE signature in this instance.

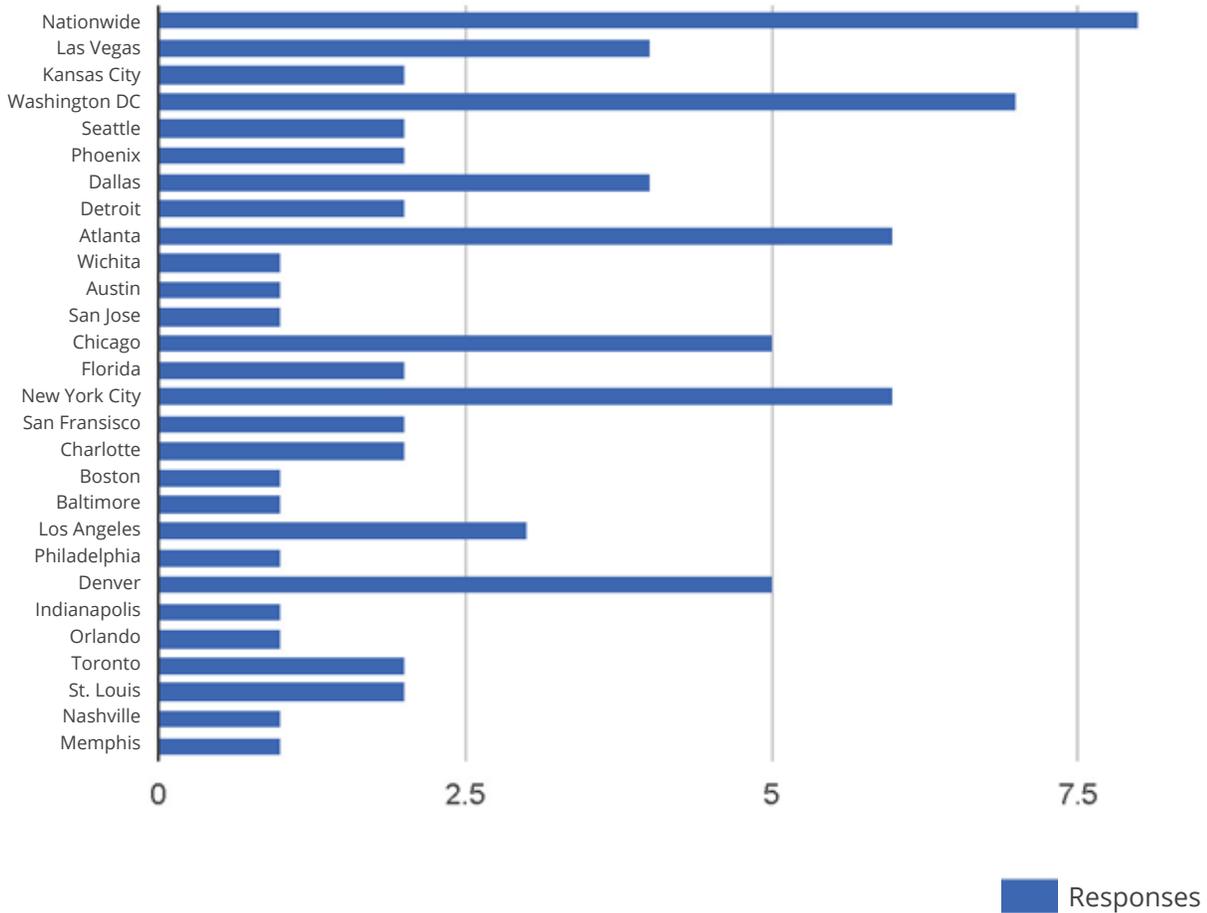
### Are you noticing any development trends that you think are having a negative impact on the City of Cedar Rapids?



### AIR TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

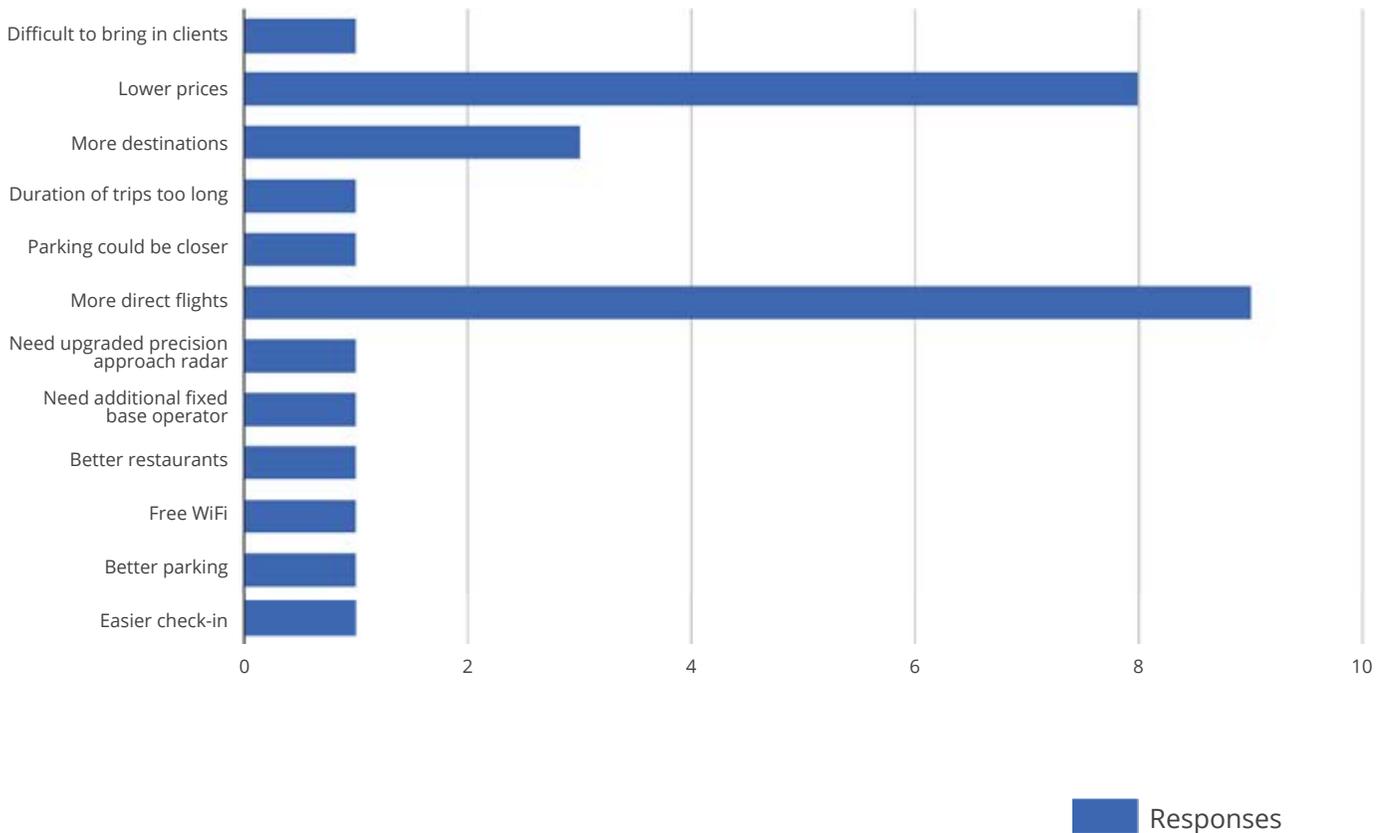
No clear trend emerged concerning business air travel. Many destinations were cited with about the same frequency, and the largest category of response was for nationwide travel. Travel to locations in the Eastern United States occupies the top three positions but other destinations in the west also score highly.

To which cities is your company's staff most frequently flying for business?



## TRAVEL SERVICE AMENITIES

Can you name any amenities or travel service you feel may be missing at the Eastern Iowa Airport?



Based on the comments received from businesses, two areas of air travel service stand out. A desire to see an increase in direct flights at the Eastern Iowa Airport was first on the list. The next most frequently mentioned suggestion was a desire for lower price air fares. In addition, more choice in destinations rounds out the list of the top three suggestions for improvement at the Eastern Iowa Airport. Another comment of note raised the question of whether additional investment in precision approach radar systems would further reduce the number of flight delays and improve the ability of the airport to operate during inclement weather.

# TABULATION OF SURVEY QUESTION RESPONSES

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## CLOSED-ENDED QUESTION SUMMARY (MULTIPLE CHOICE)

### **Aim**

The Cedar Rapids Business Survey sought to sample an adequate number of local businesses to discover relevant information about conditions affecting firms in the marketplace. The value of the survey as a tool ties directly to how well it can identify priorities for existing industry. Specifically, the survey has a role in highlighting what are the barriers and opportunities for business growth in Cedar Rapids.

### **Method/Technique**

Staff took a comprehensive approach to data collection. This was done to ensure that findings may be compared to Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis contained in *Cedar Rapids Targeted Industry Report*. Further analysis will be performed as part of ongoing retention program efforts. All data and analysis generated by the Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016) will be utilized by Economic Development Services staff in coordination efforts to support strategic plan implementation.

Survey design used standard methods. A non-random sampling approach was taken consistent with methodology for voluntary response surveys. Specifically, survey procedure held that businesses would generally only be contacted twice with an invitation to participate in the survey. Senior management was contacted first by email and then by phone. Nonresponse was taken as an indication that a business was unavailable to participate at present. In a limited number of cases, where businesses had past contact with Cedar Rapids EDS staff, additional efforts to communicate with businesses were made in order to secure an interview. Overall, the survey response rate was high with sixty-one (61) percent of businesses contacted choosing to participate in this project.

City staff also had the benefit of data supplied by the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance staff outlining when businesses had last participated in Synchronist through the BEST of Iowa Program. Using this data, it was possible to identify and target companies that had not been contacted by economic developers for more than one year or had never been contacted. Visits to businesses that had never been contacted or had not been contacted recently were prioritized. But a special attempt was also made to contact major employers. Likewise, staff attempted to meet with small businesses and medium-sized companies as well. All such efforts were made to secure a representative cross-section of existing industry in the survey sample.

**Sample Size**

Ninety (90) businesses were interviewed as part of the Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016). Based on the known population size of 233 confirmed businesses, a sample size of this magnitude provides for a minimum confidence interval of ninety (90) percent with a margin of error of plus or minus seven (7) percent.

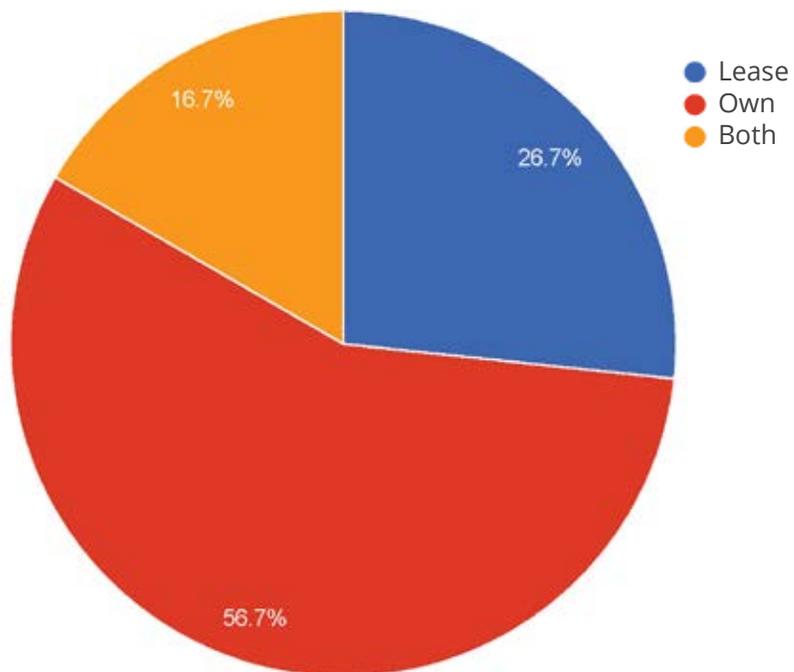
**Results**

Analysis presented in this section functions to document the number of businesses contacted and reports those findings. It presents useful information regarding the frequency, size, scale/magnitude and segmentation of business characteristics. The following summary format provides survey questions with a summary of responses received.

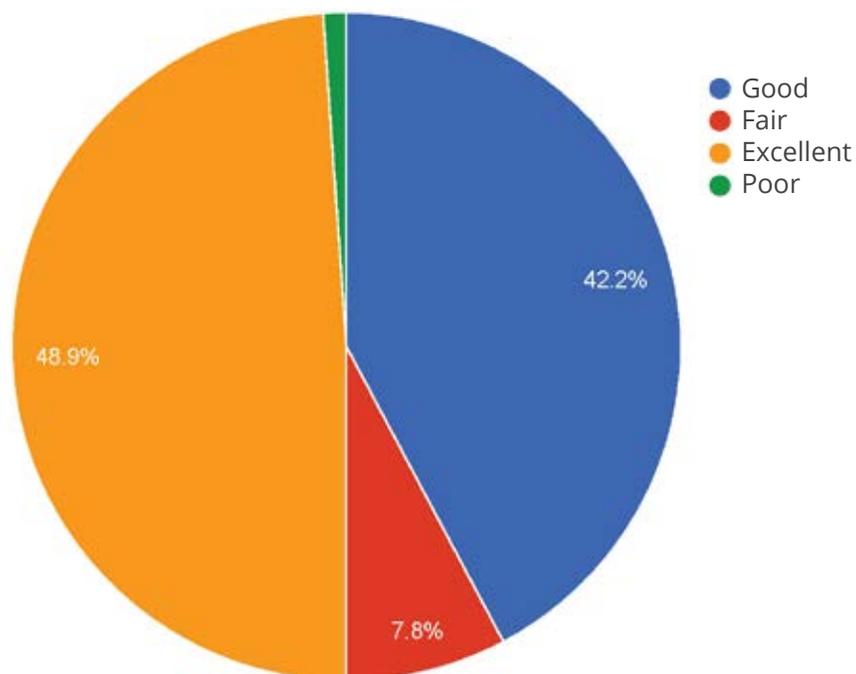
**Section I. Location & Site Status****Section II. Management and Organization****Section III. Markets and Customers****Section IV. Future Plans****Section V. Workforce****Section VI. Financial****Section VII. Overall Impressions**

## SECTION I. LOCATION HISTORY & SITE STATUS

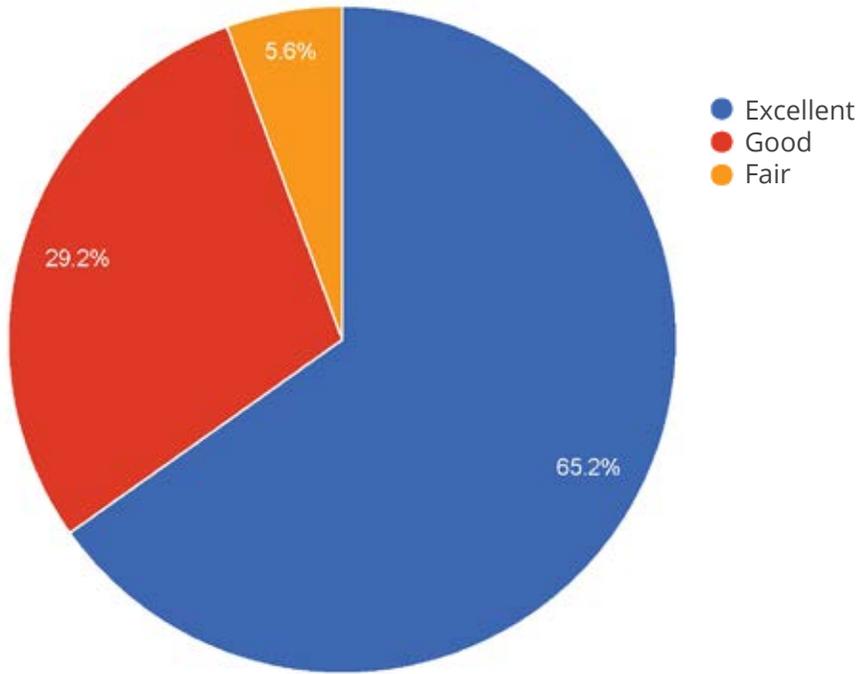
Do you own or lease this facility?



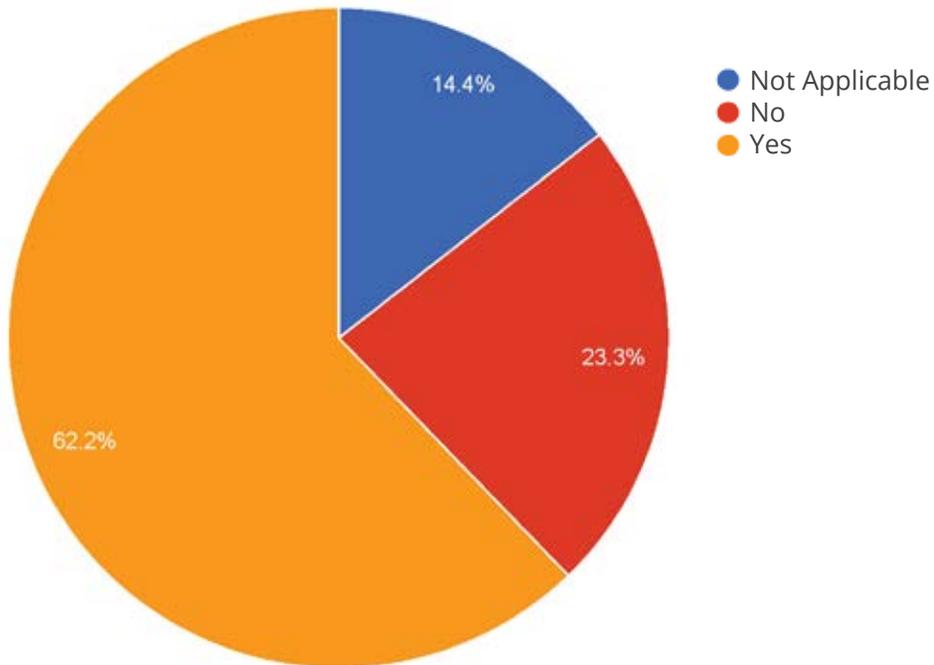
Please rate the condition of your building(s):



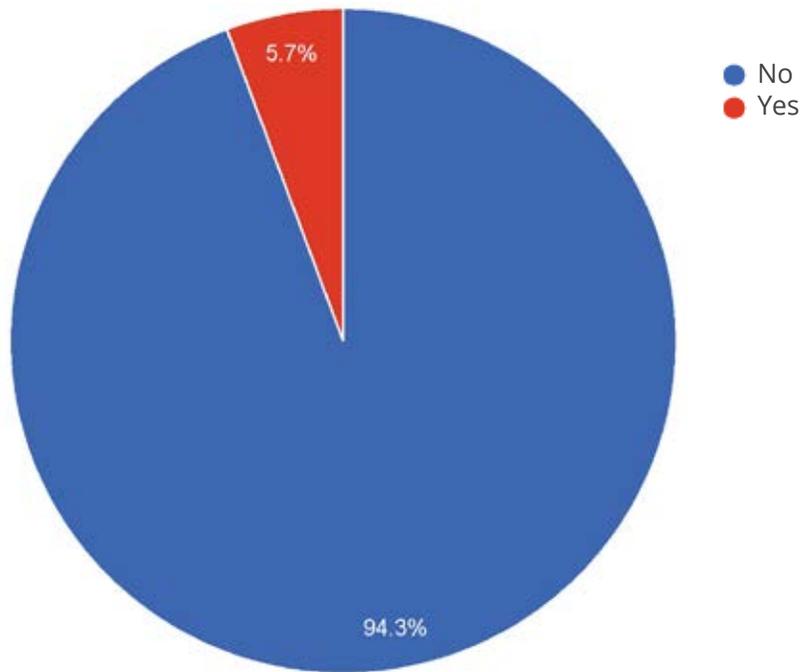
**What is the condition of company equipment?**



**Can you expand your existing facilities on-site?**



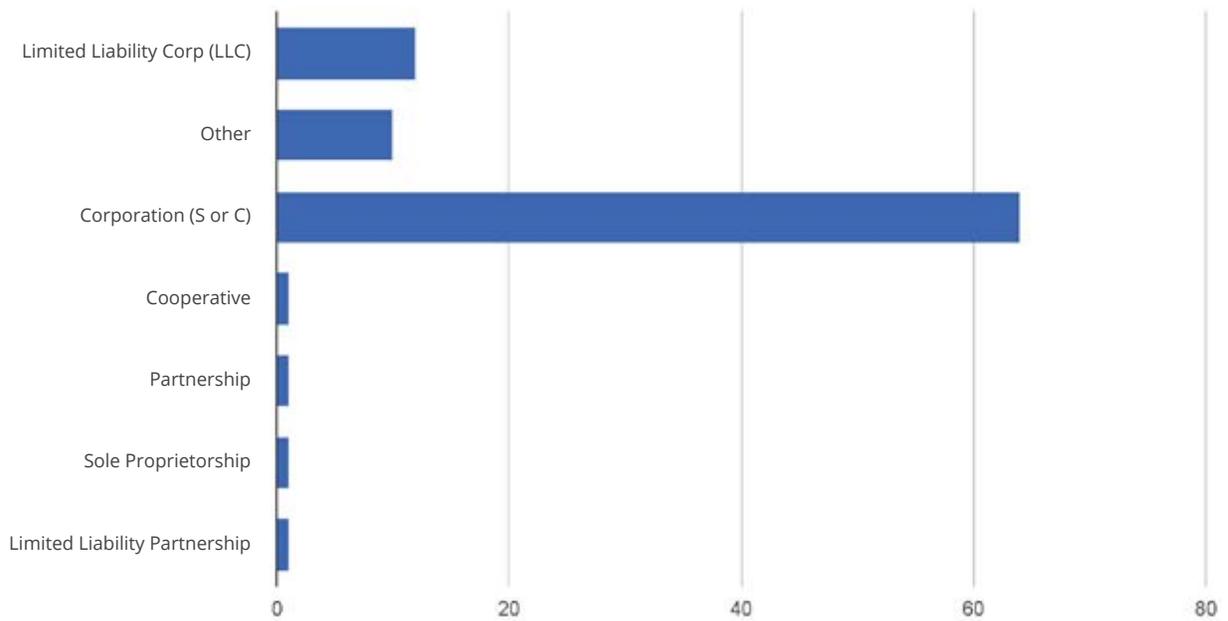
**Do you have surplus space on-site?**



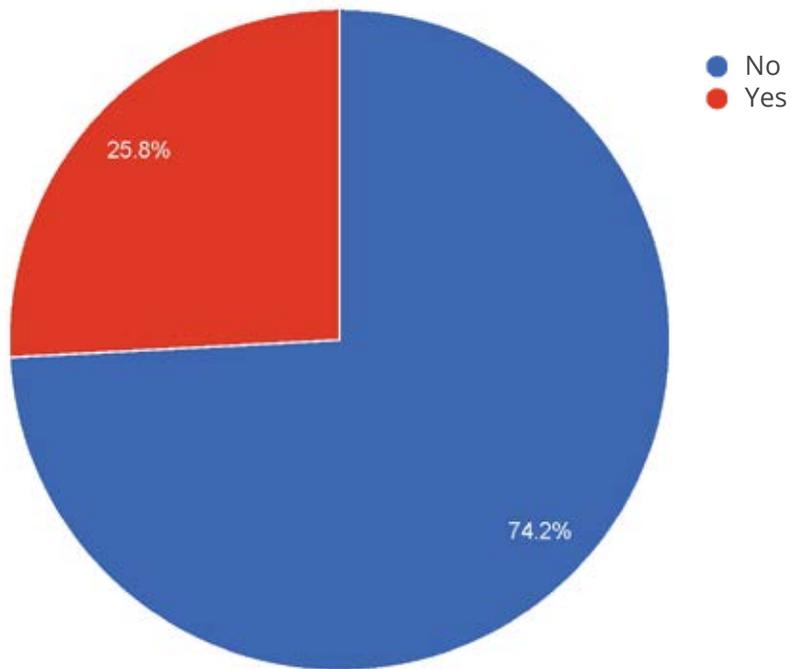
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## **SECTION II. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION**

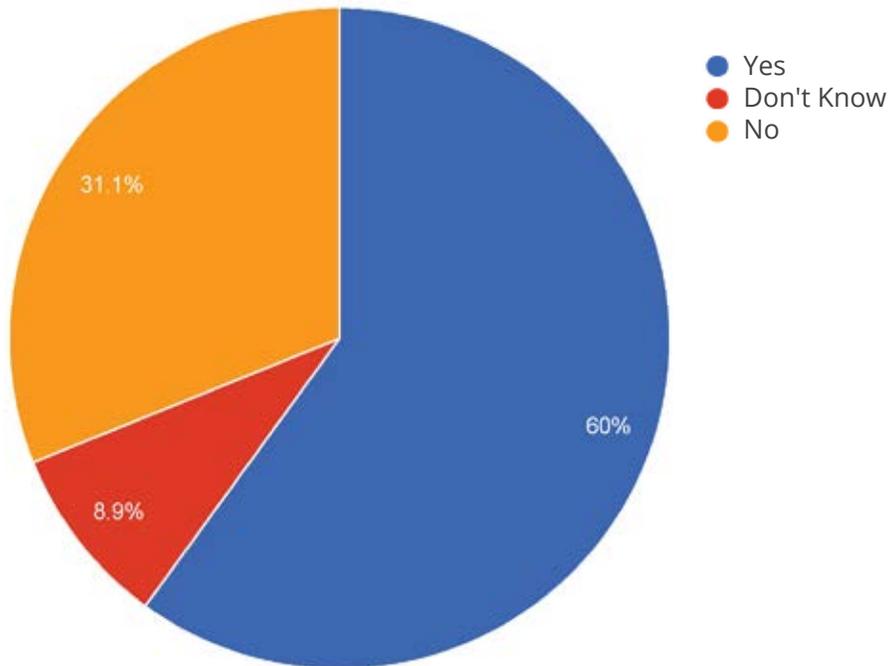
**Please indicate the legal form of organization:**



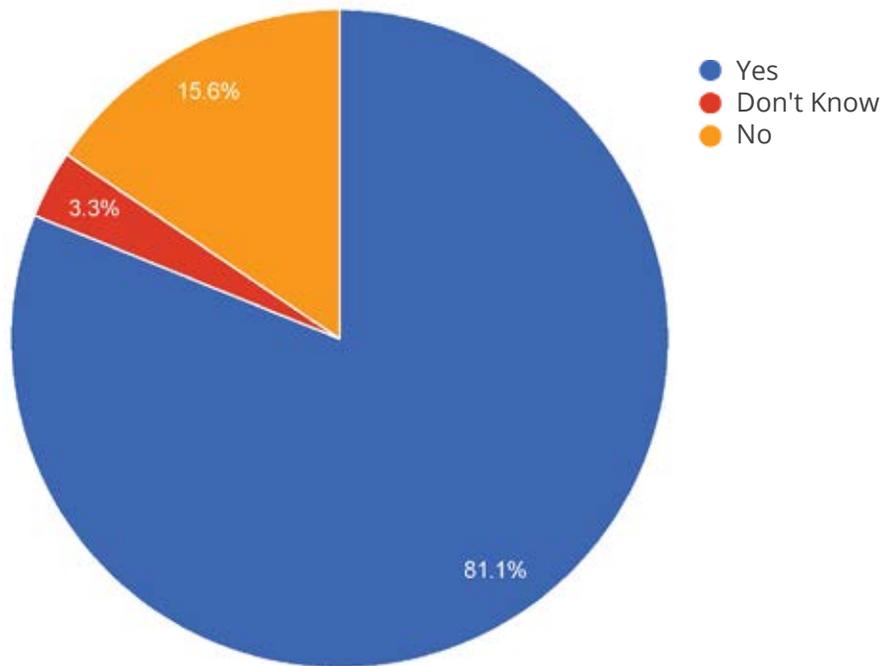
**Has there been a change in ownership in the past three (3) years?**



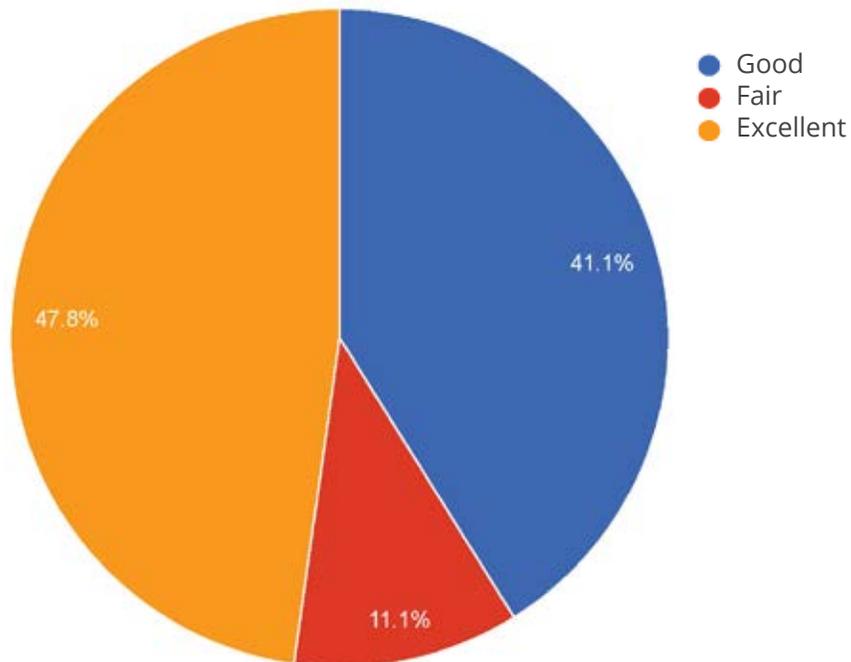
**Does the company have a succession plan in place?**



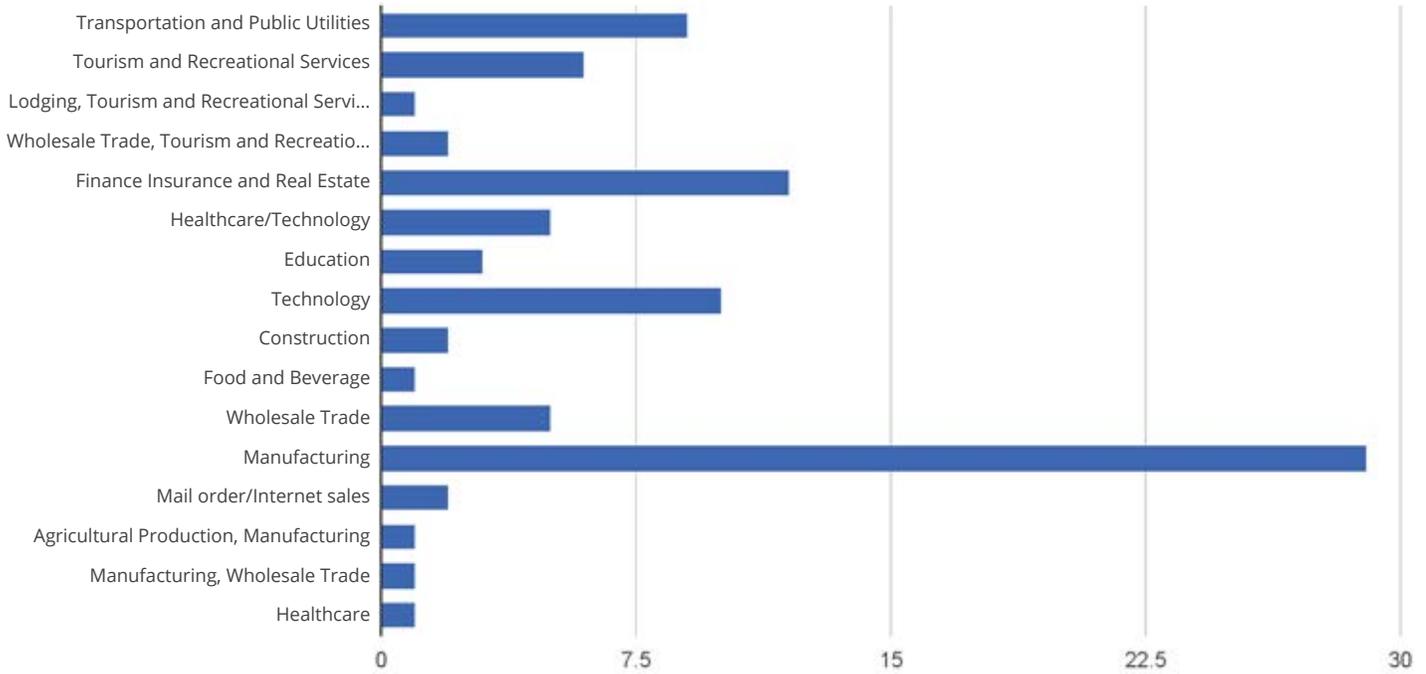
Has the company's strategic plan been updated in the past two (2) years?



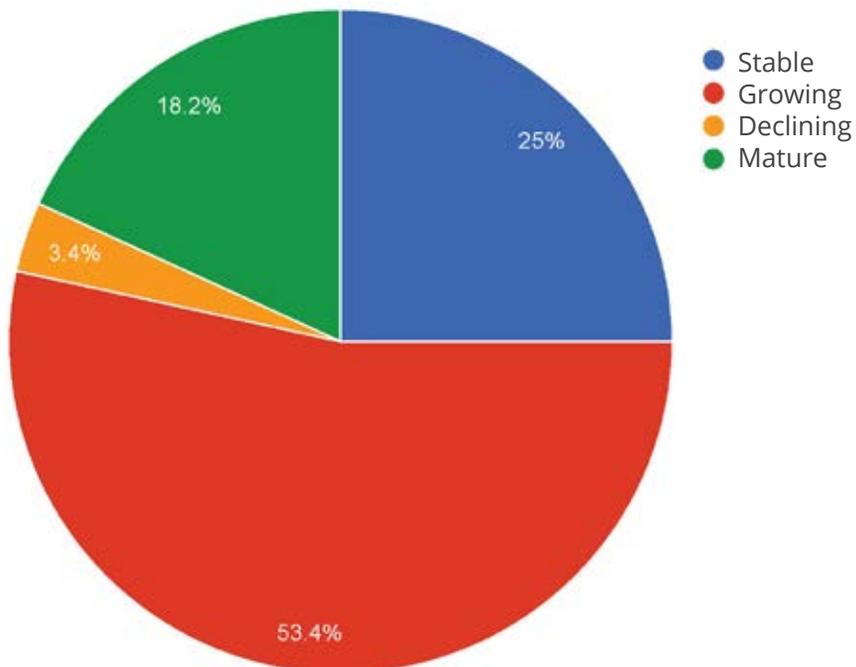
What is the company's attitude toward this facility?



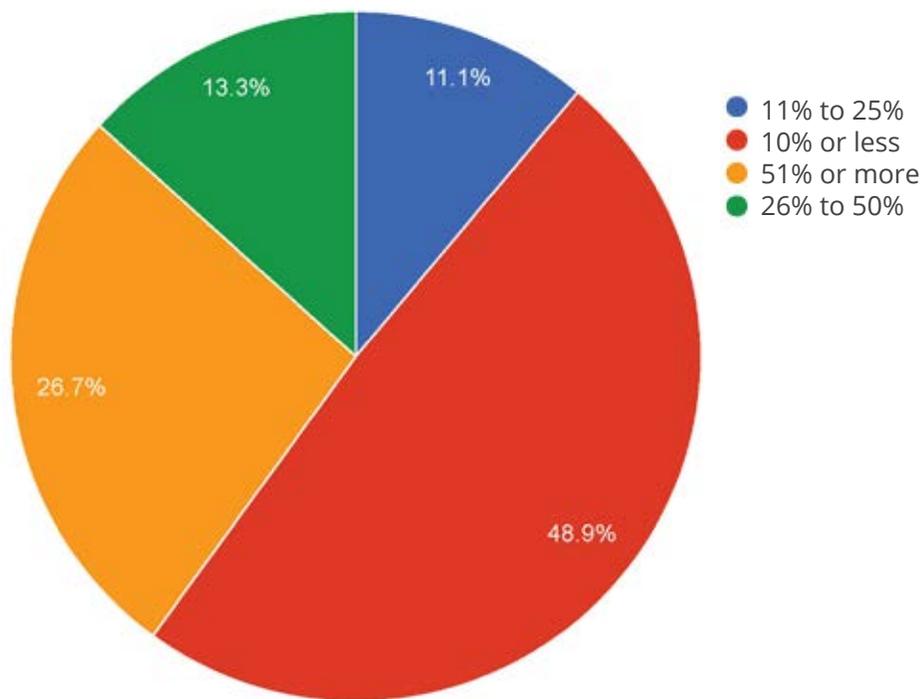
**Please note business specific activity at this facility:**



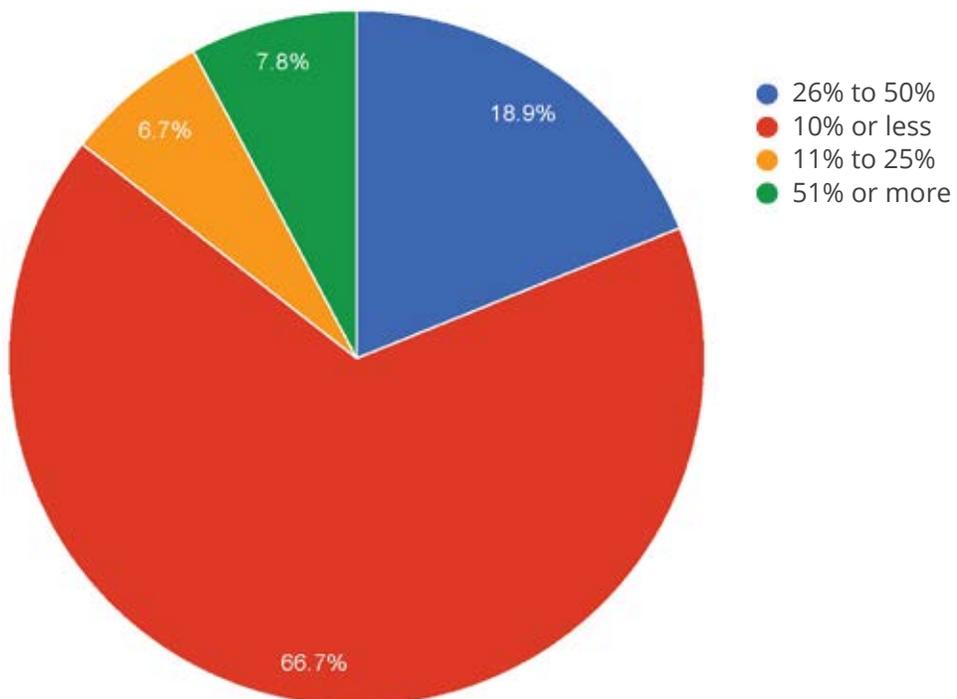
**Describe the life cycle stage of your primary product/service:**



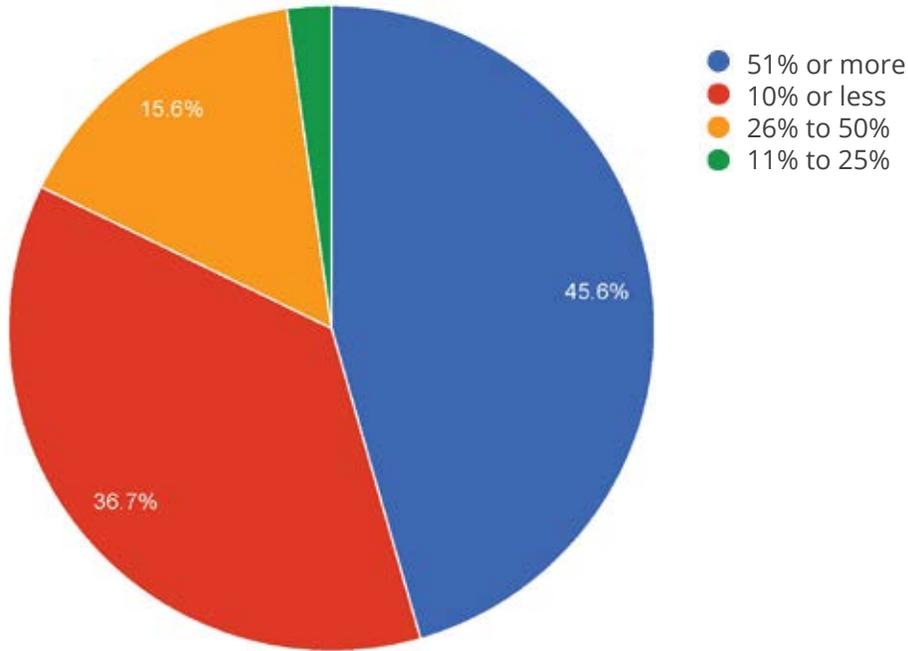
**What percentage of raw materials or supplies are sourced from Cedar Rapids?**



**What percentage of raw materials or supplies are sourced in Iowa but outside Cedar Rapids?**

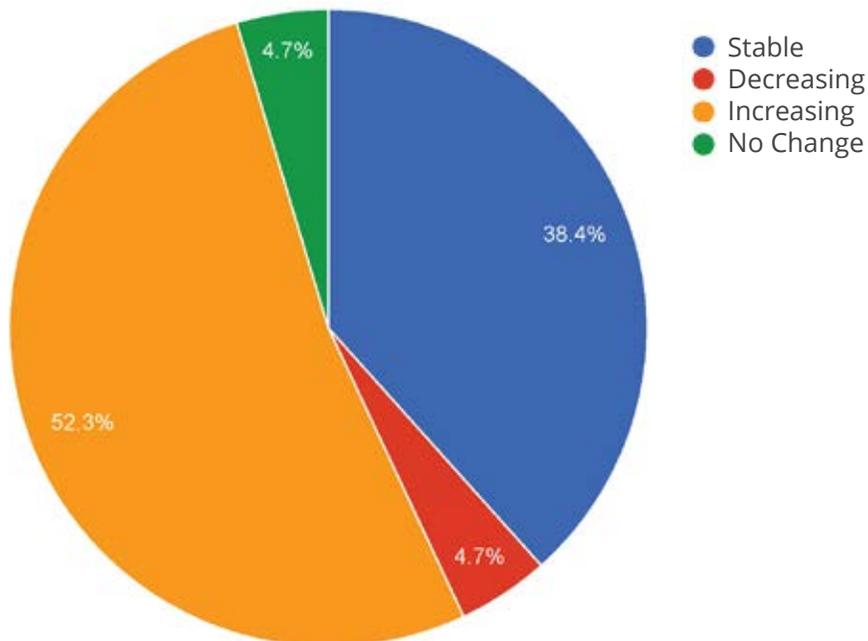


**What percentage of raw materials or supplies are sourced nationally but outside Iowa?**

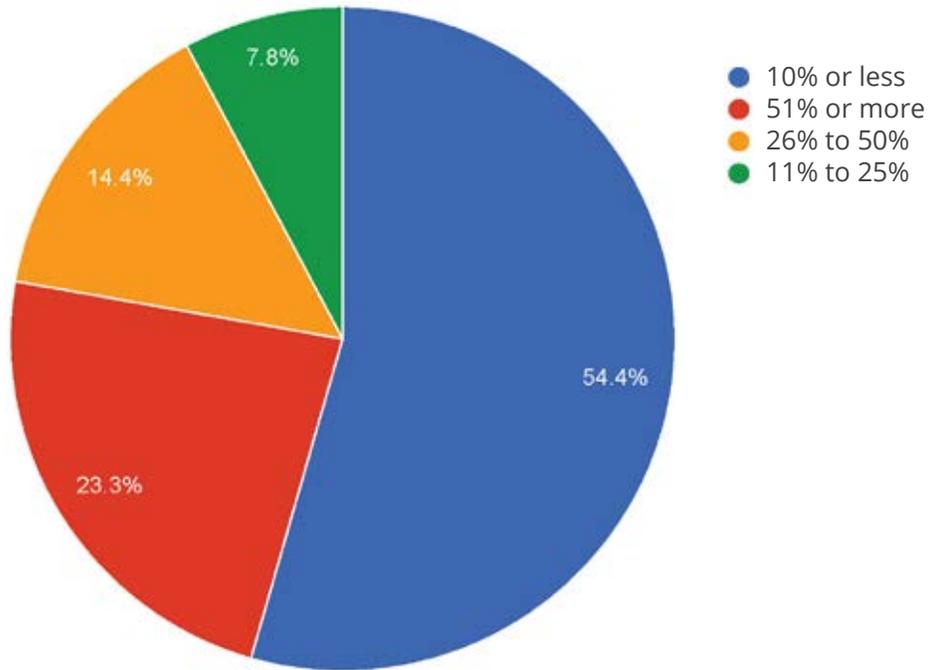


### SECTION III. MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS

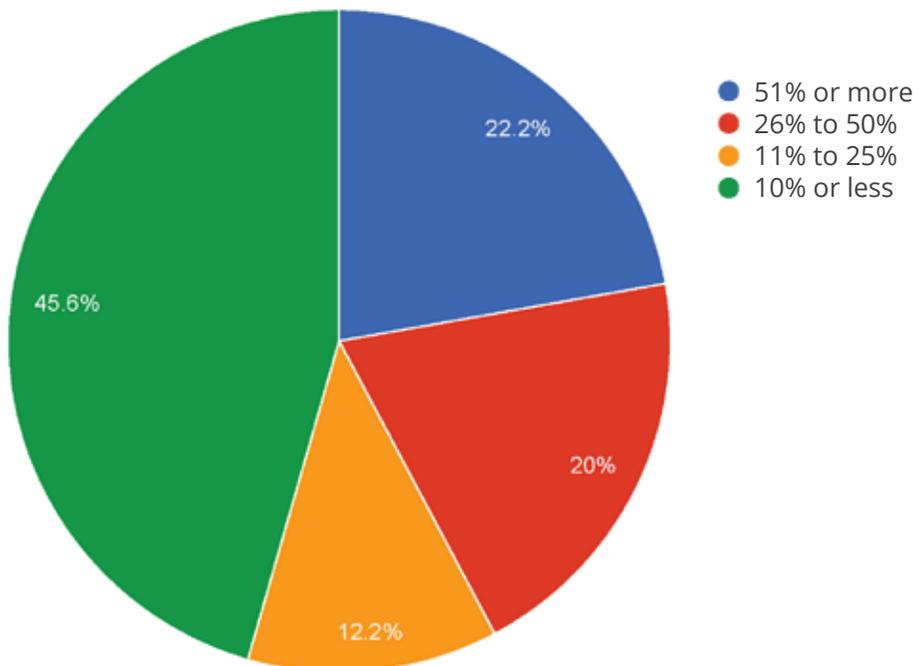
**How would you characterize your company's market share?**



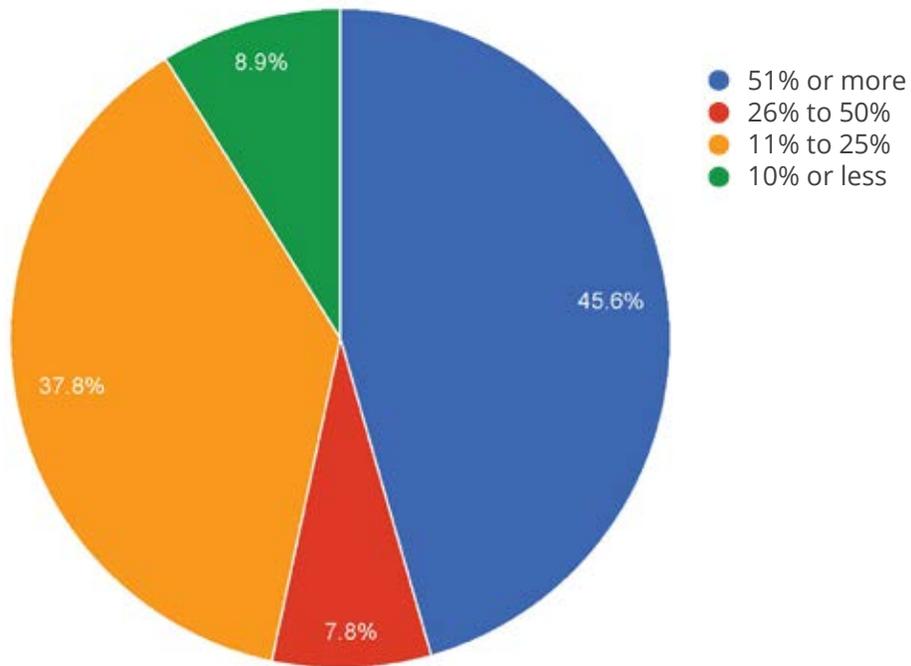
What percentage of your customers are located in Cedar Rapids?



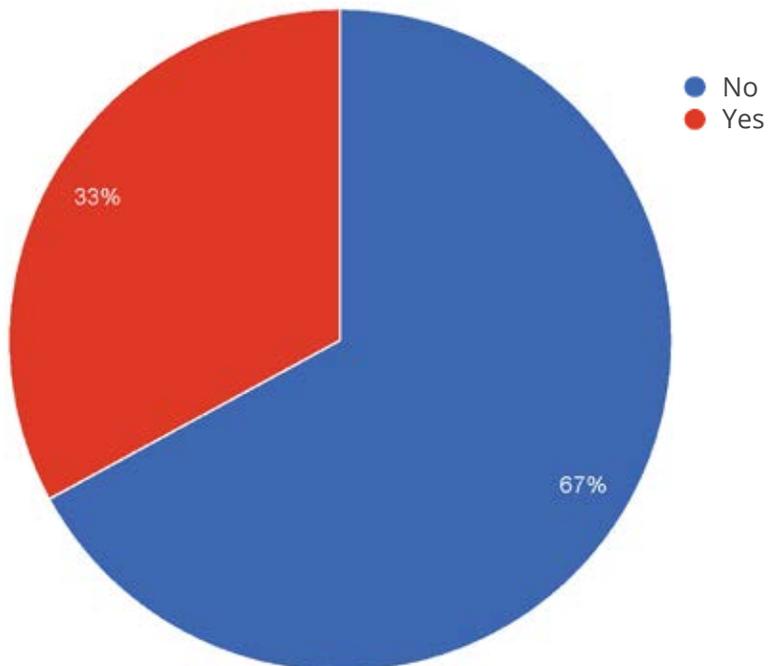
What percentage of your customers are located in Iowa but outside Cedar Rapids?



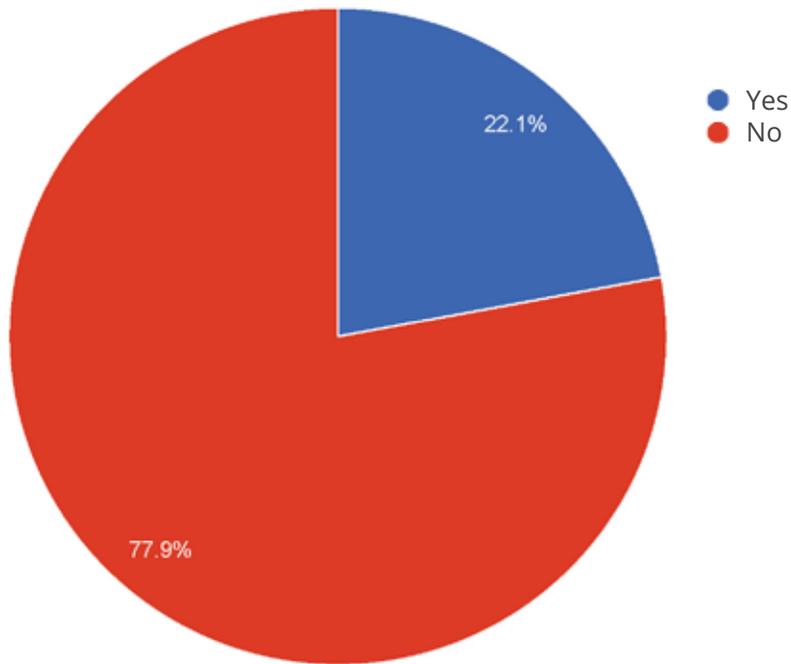
**What percentage of customers are located in the United States but outside Iowa?**



**Does your company currently export?**



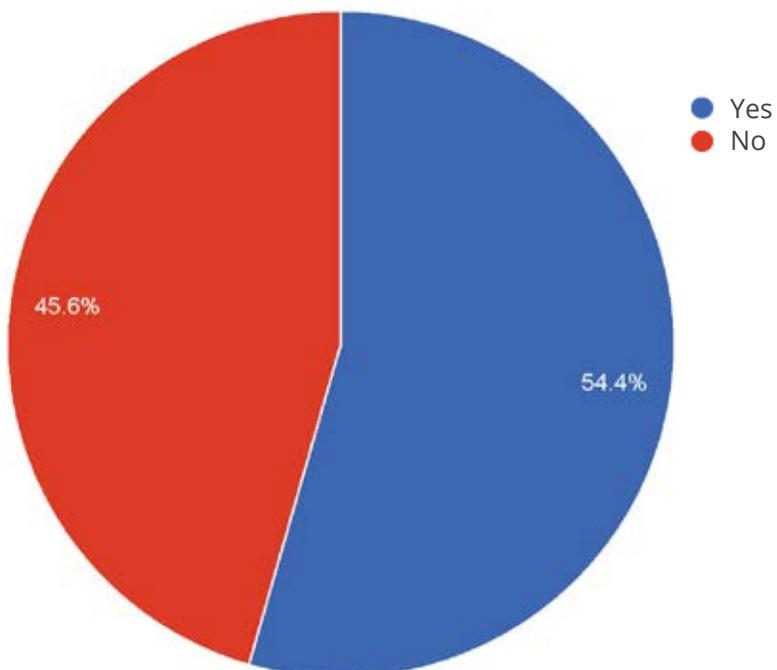
Is your company interested in growing exports?



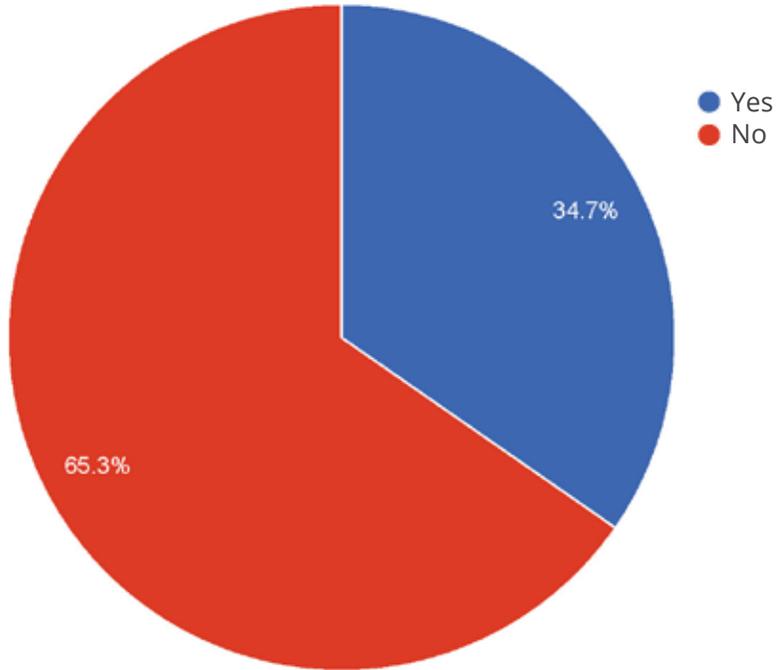
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#### SECTION IV. FUTURE PLANS

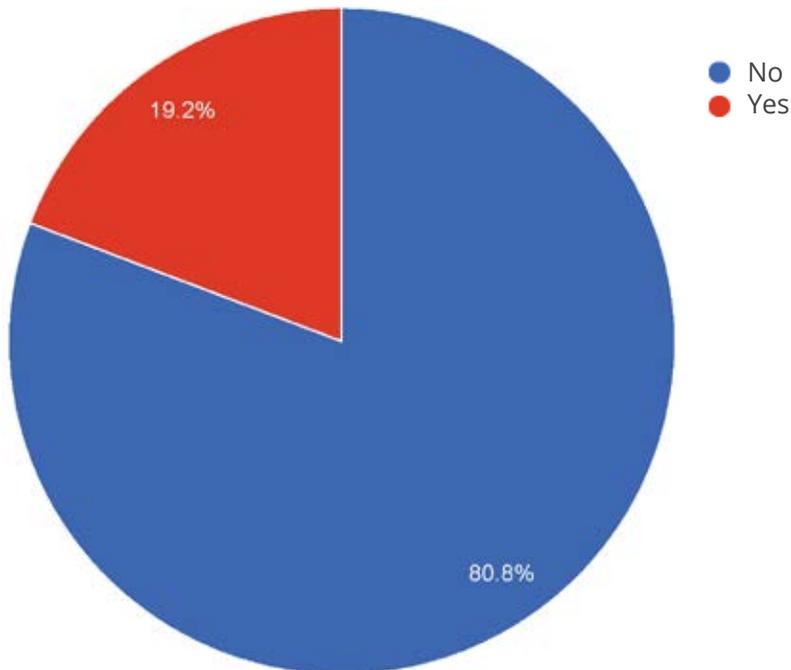
Does the company plan to expand in Cedar Rapids during the next three (3) years?



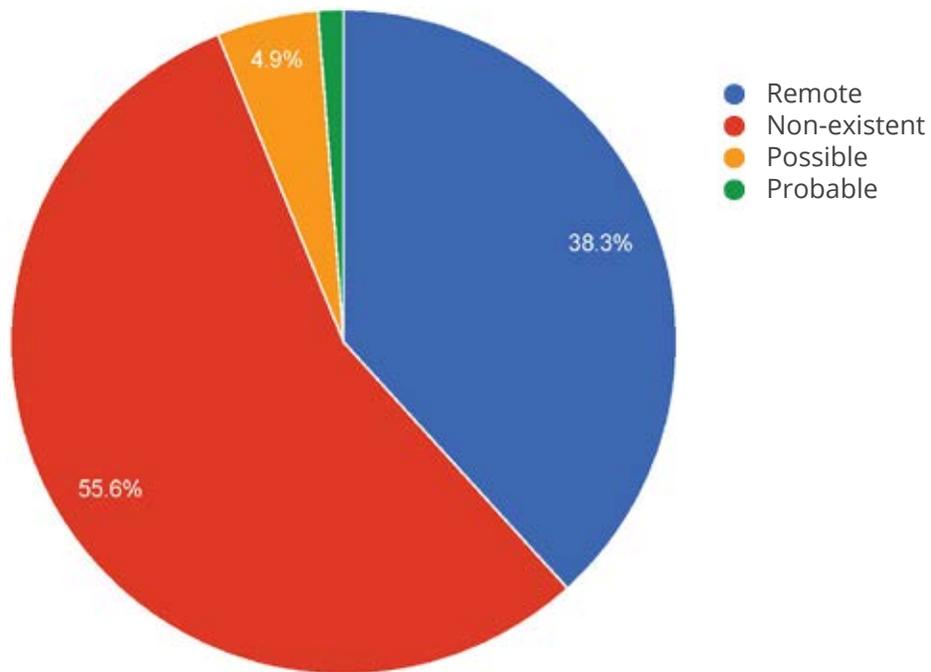
**Does your firm have plans to expand outside of Cedar Rapids in the next three (3) years?**



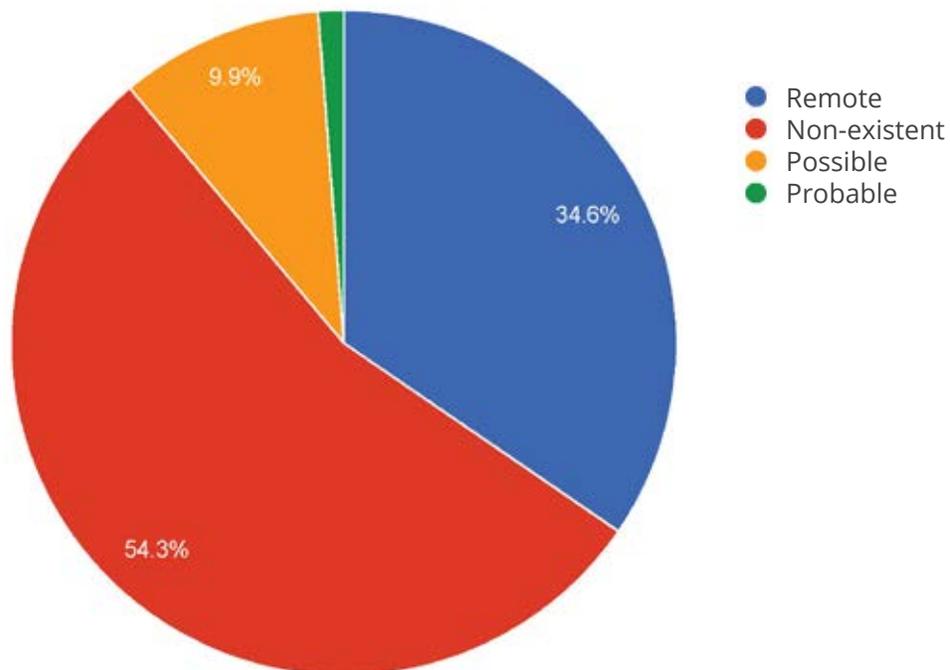
**Does the company plan to sell this facility, move or make acquisitions that might adversely impact the current operation in the next three (3) years?**



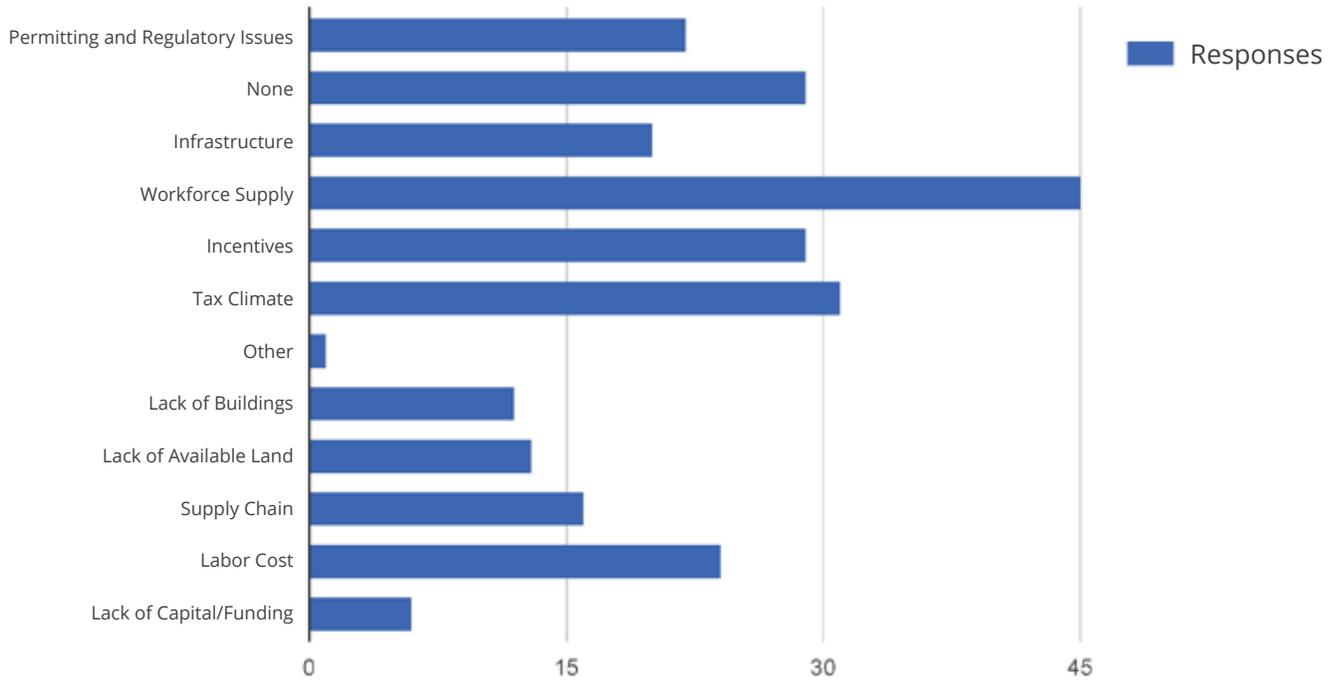
**What is the likelihood of phasing out or shutting down this operation in the next three (3) years?**



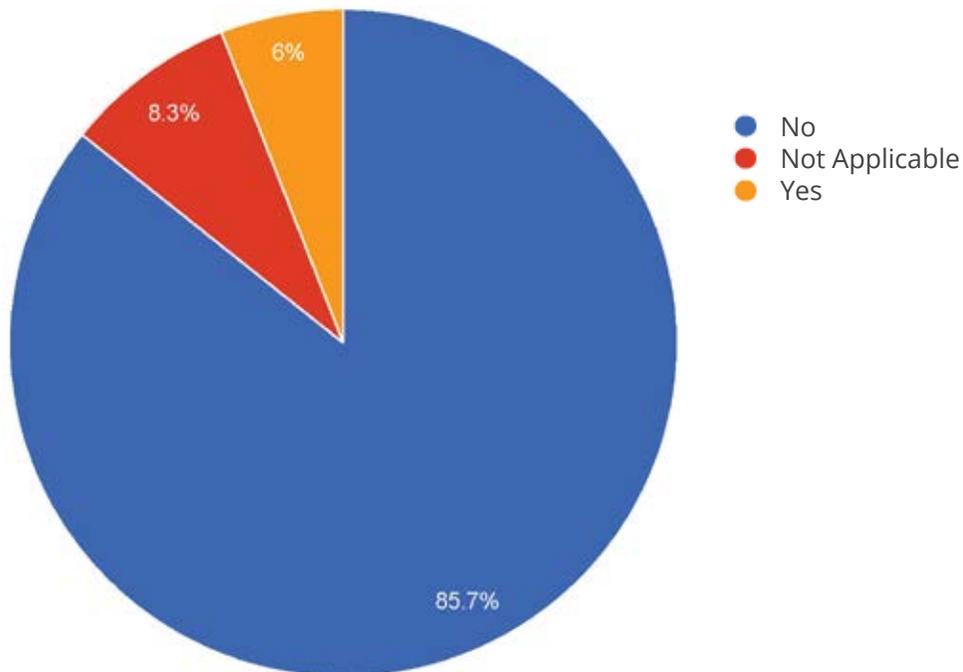
**What is the likelihood of downsizing or outsourcing this operation in the next three (3) years?**



**If considering expansion elsewhere, what factors would cause you to make a decision to invest outside this facility?**

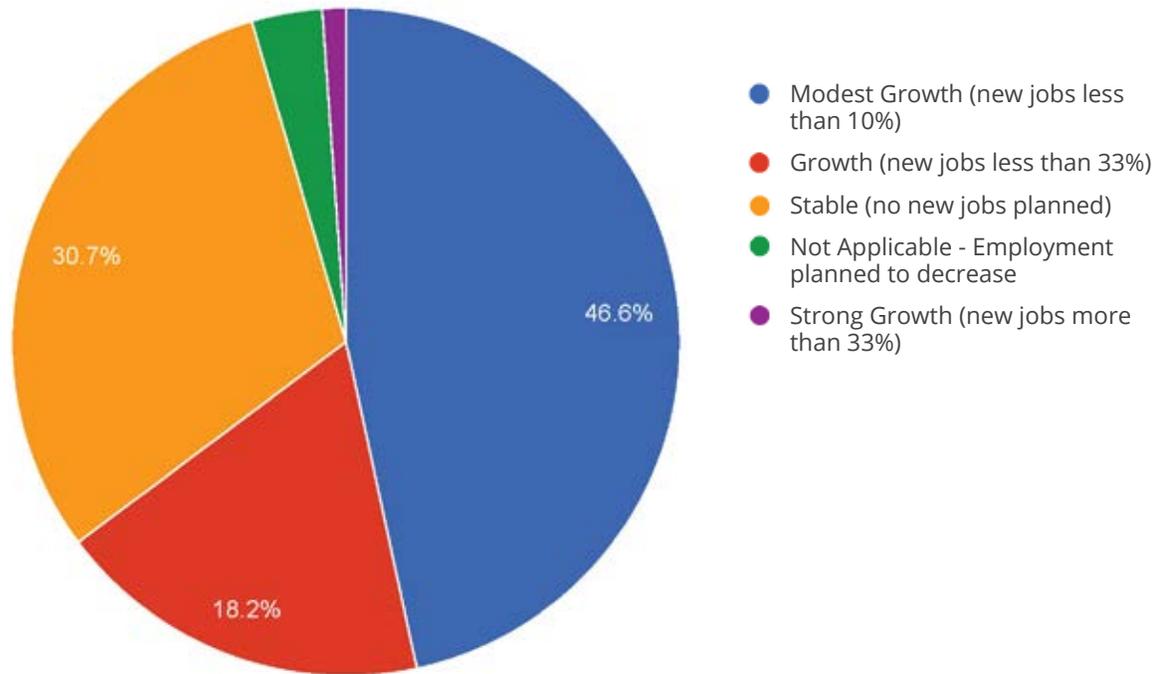


**Are changes to how the company would utilize City utilities being planned?**

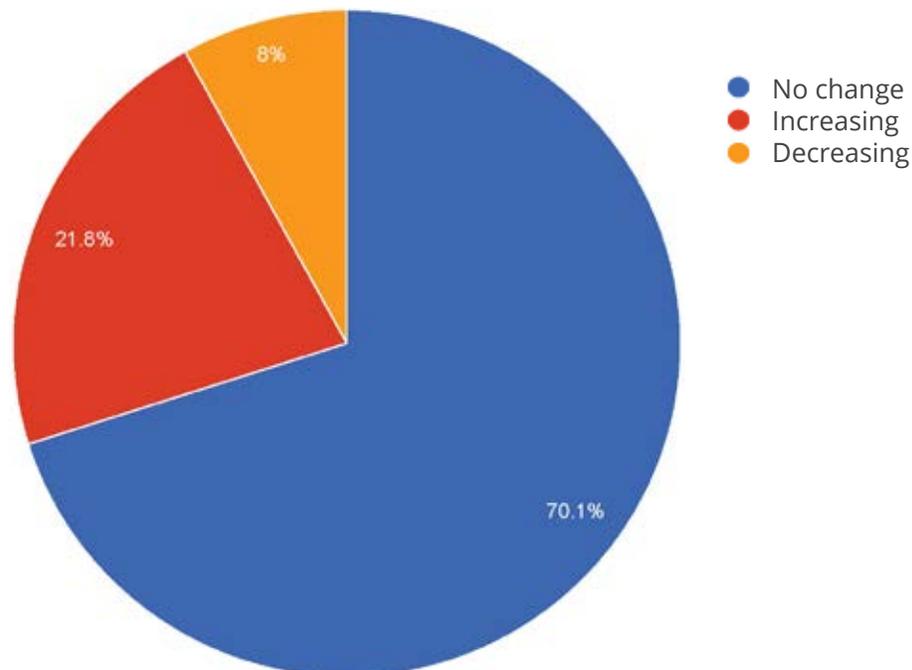


## SECTION V. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

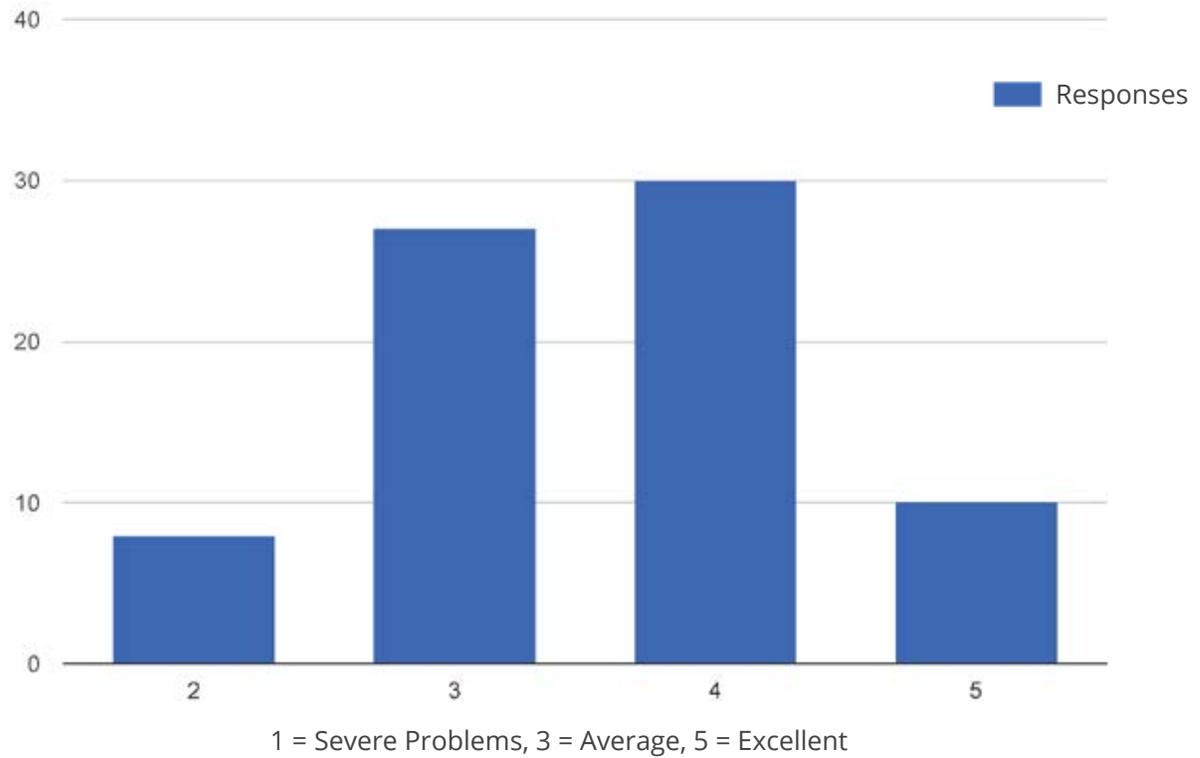
Which of the following statements best characterizes job growth at this location for the next three (3) years?



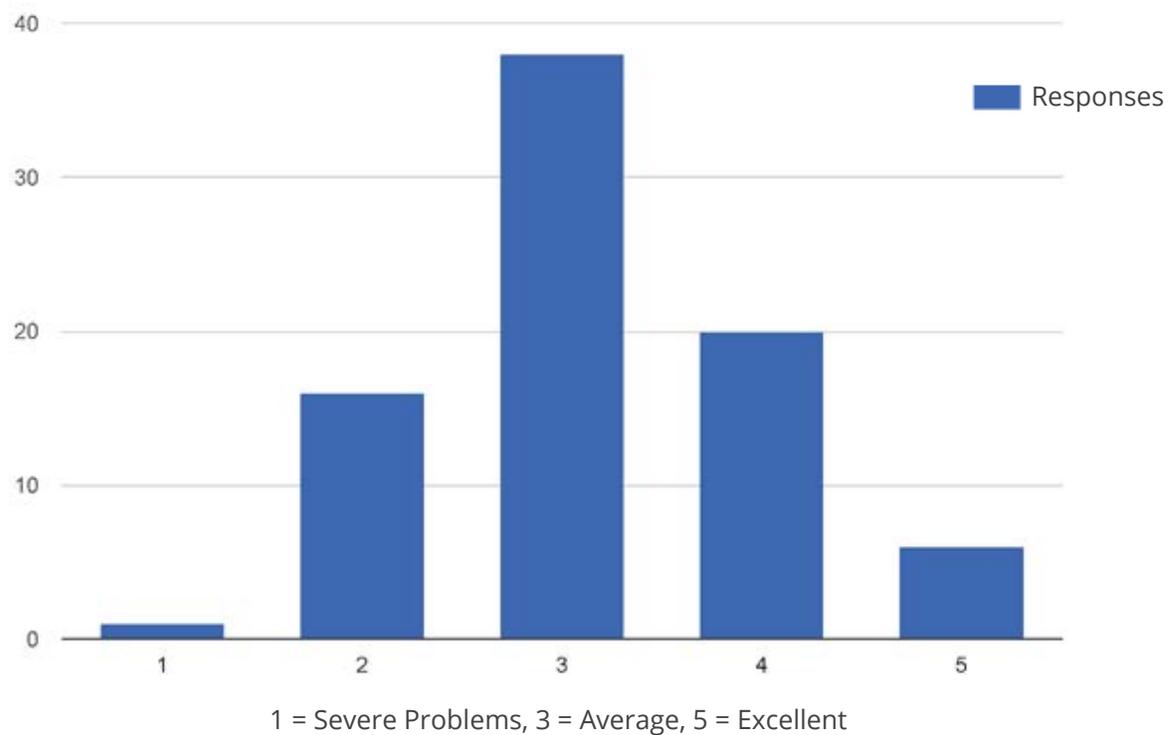
Is the number of unfilled positions in the company:



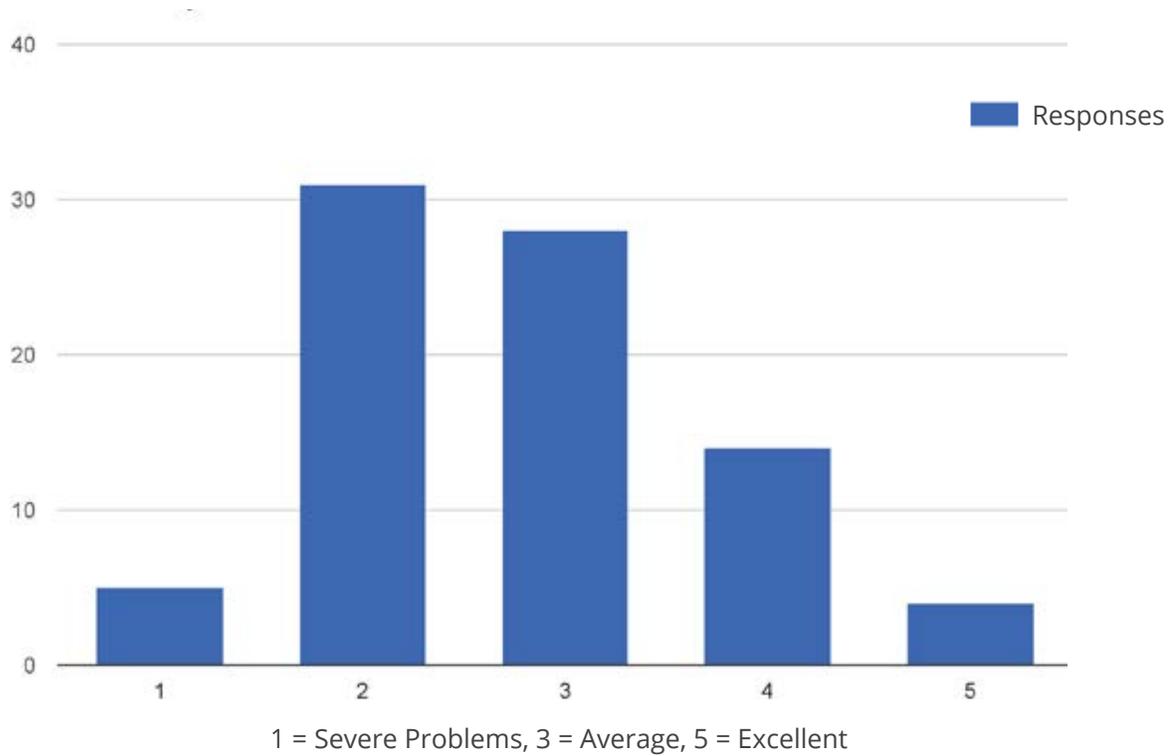
**How easily can firm attract clerical (administrative support) staff?**



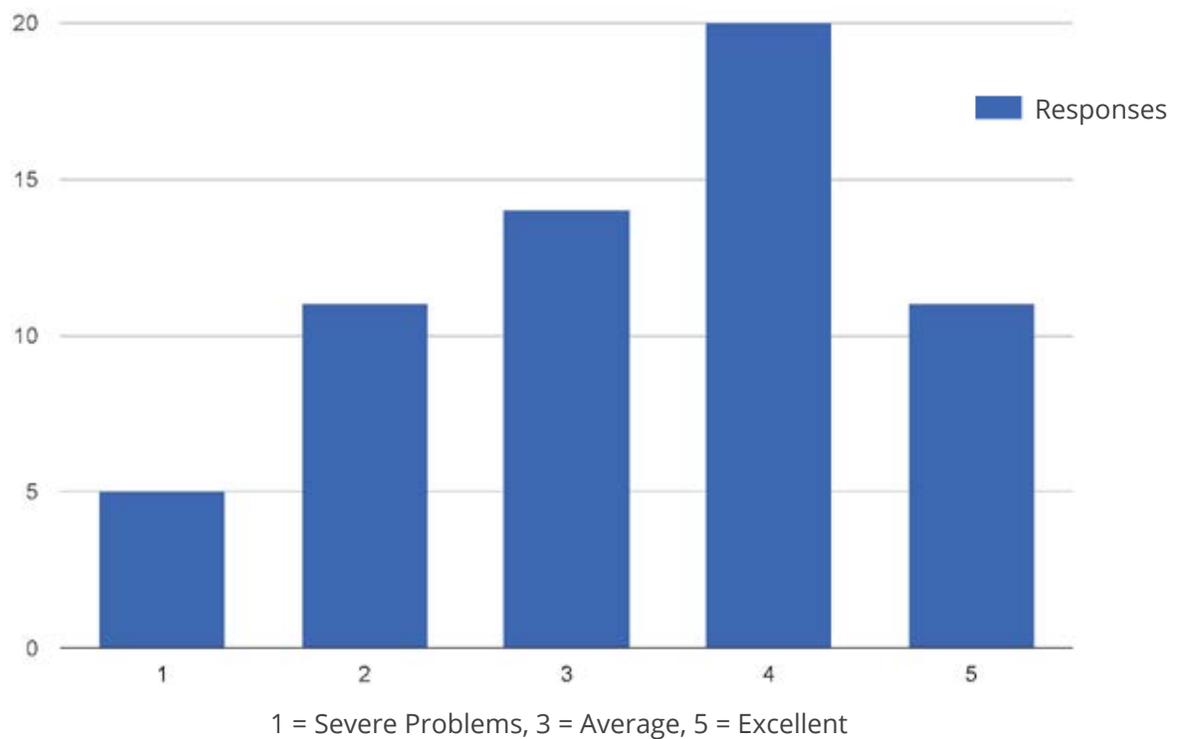
**How easily can firm attract professionals & managers?**



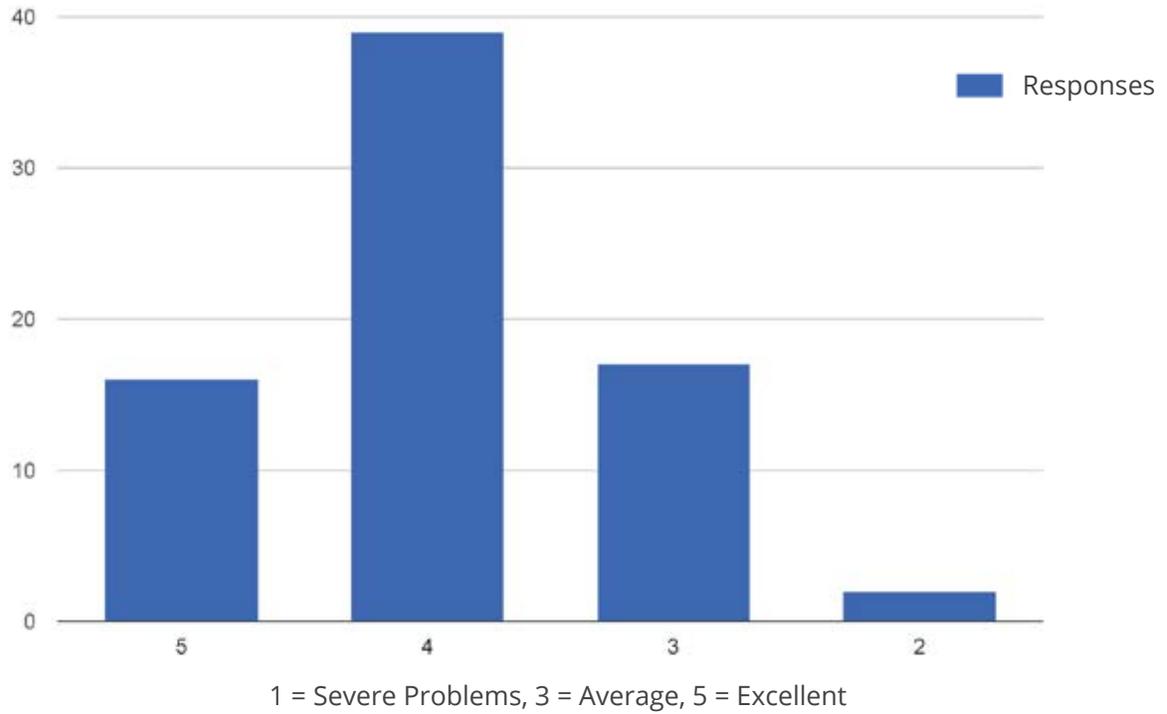
### How easily can firm attract skilled workers?



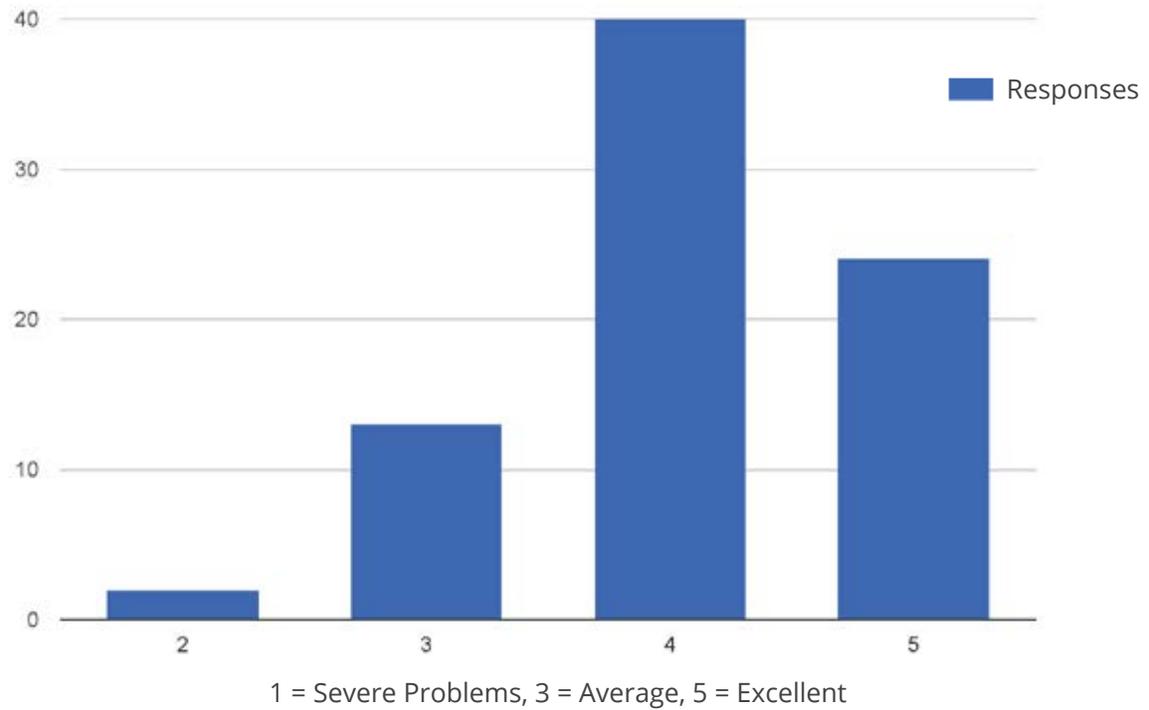
### How easily can firm attract unskilled workers?



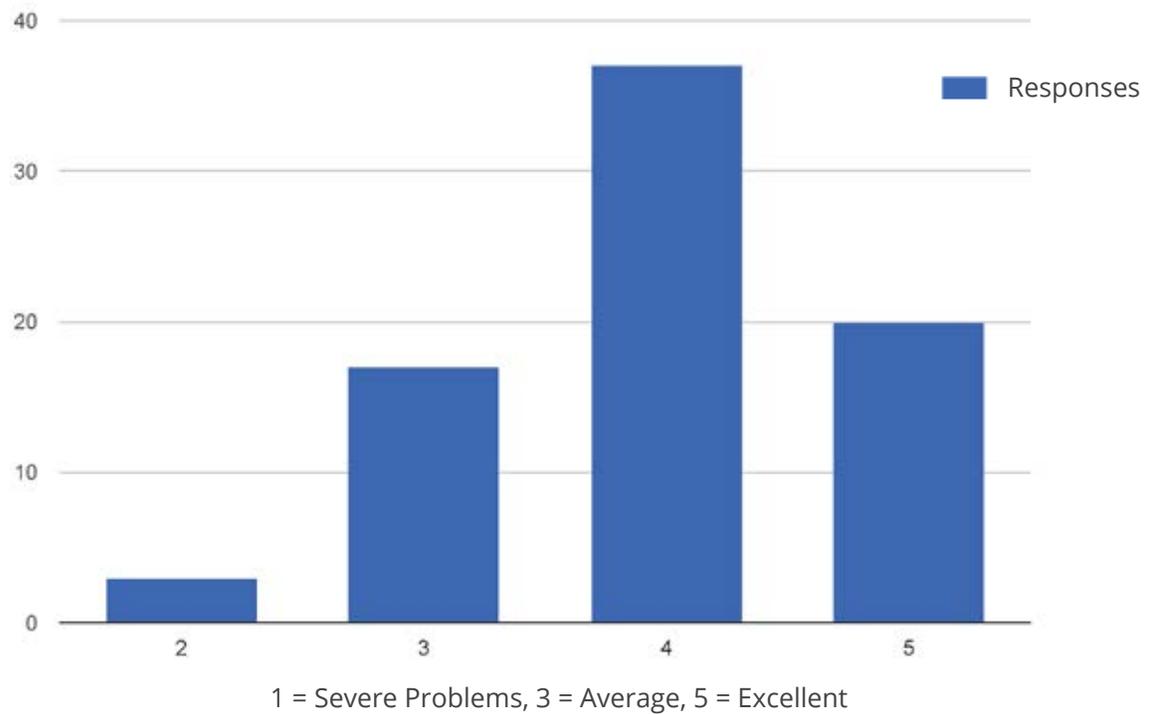
**How well do clerical (administrative support) staff from local labor market perform job duties?**



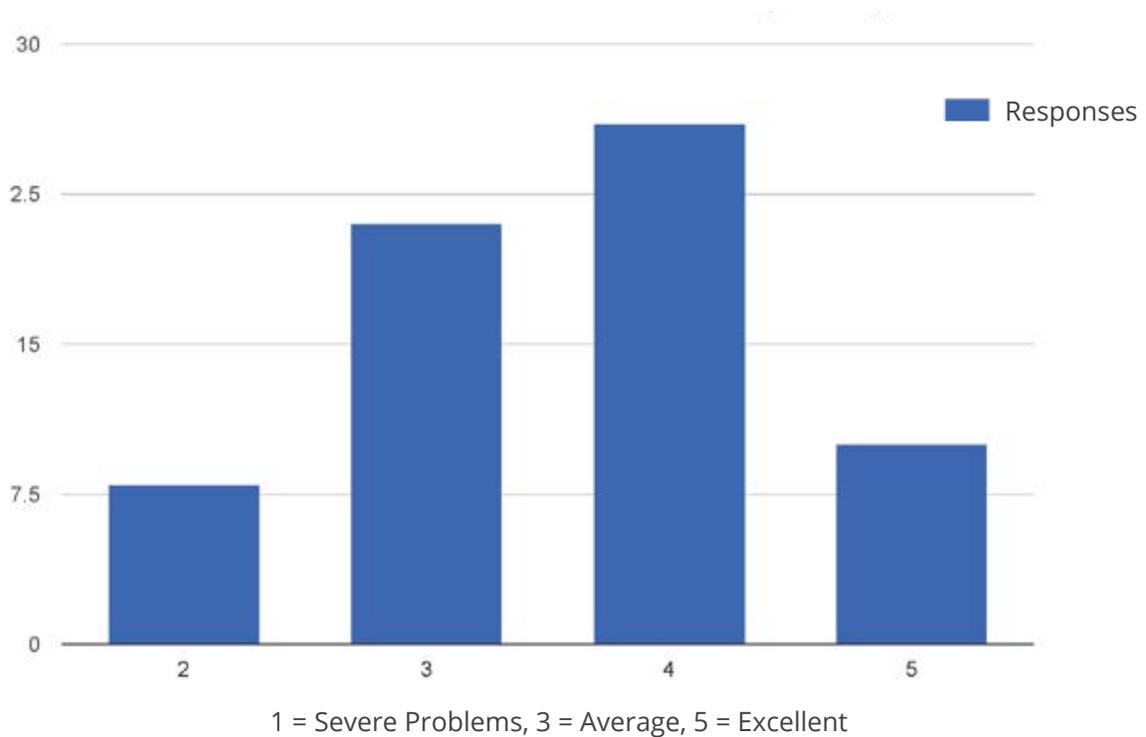
**How well do professionals and managers from local labor market perform job duties?**



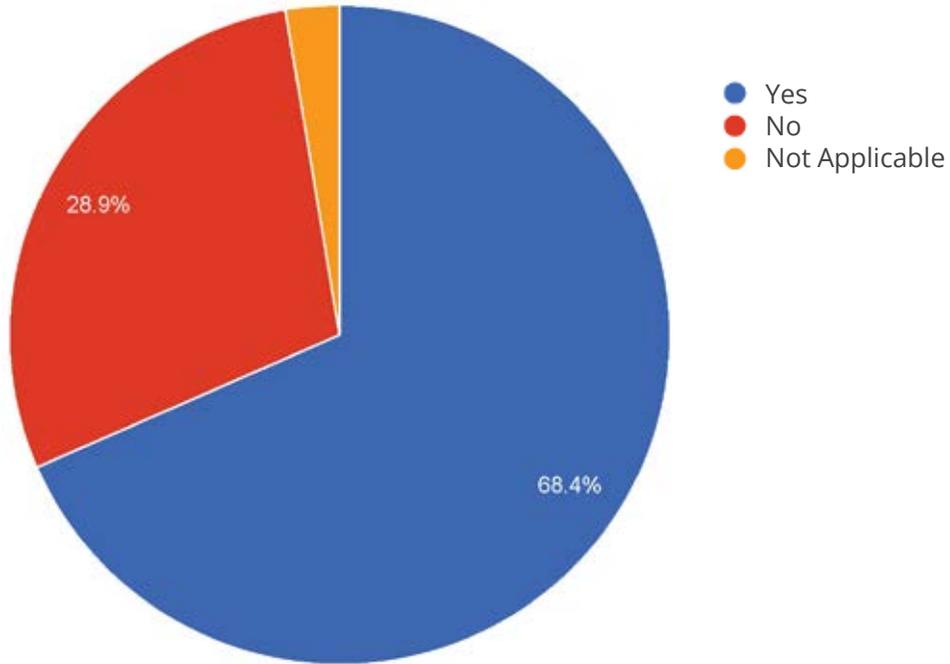
### How well do skilled employees from local labor market perform job duties?



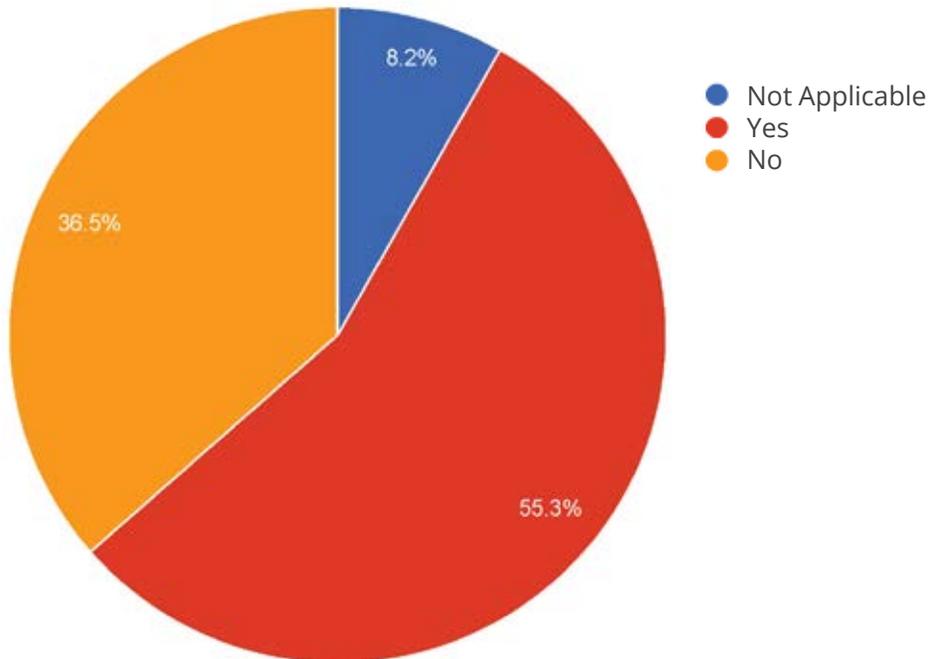
### How well do unskilled workers from local labor market perform job duties?



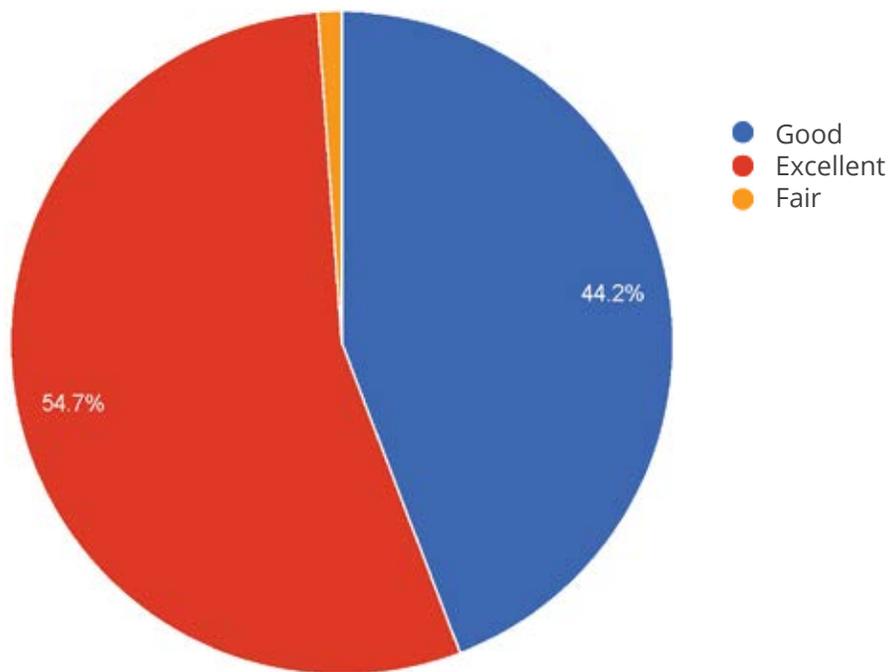
**Are you interested in collaborating with other employers in the region on workforce training and development?**



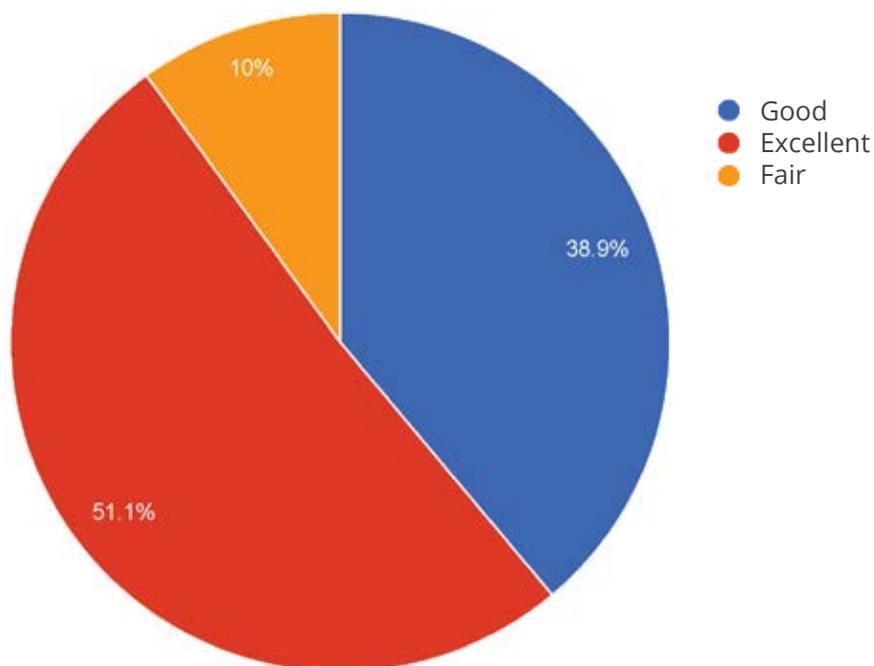
**Are your company's employees generally able to locate housing options in the City of Cedar Rapids?**



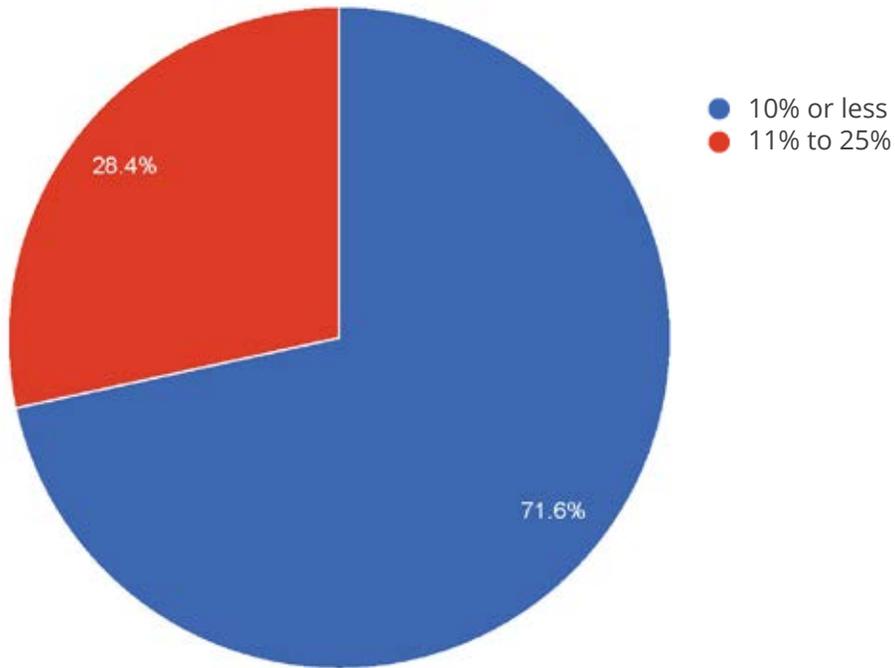
How would you rate the productivity of your company's existing workforce?



How would you rate the stability of your company's existing workforce?

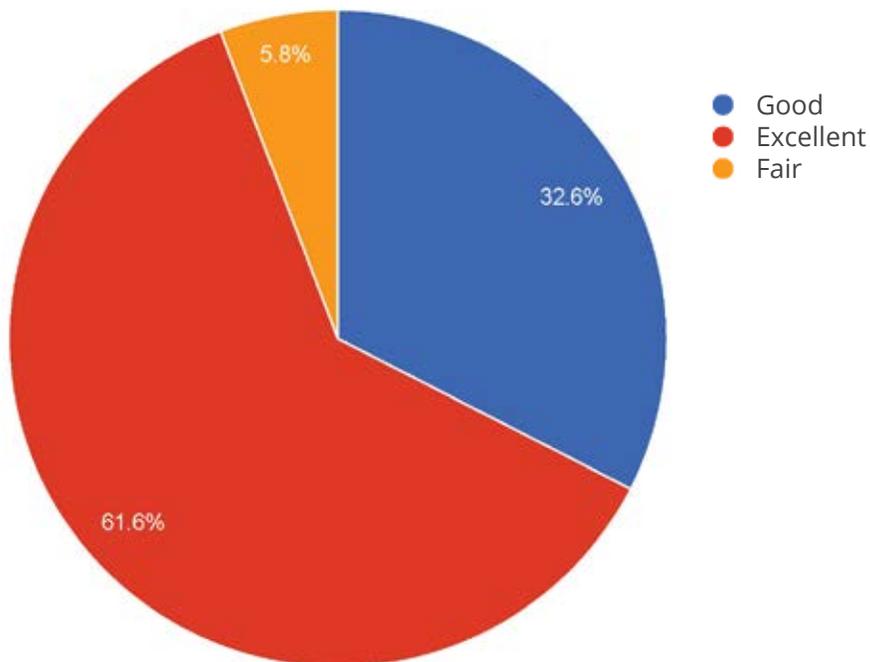


**What percentage of your workforce will retire in the next five (5) years?**

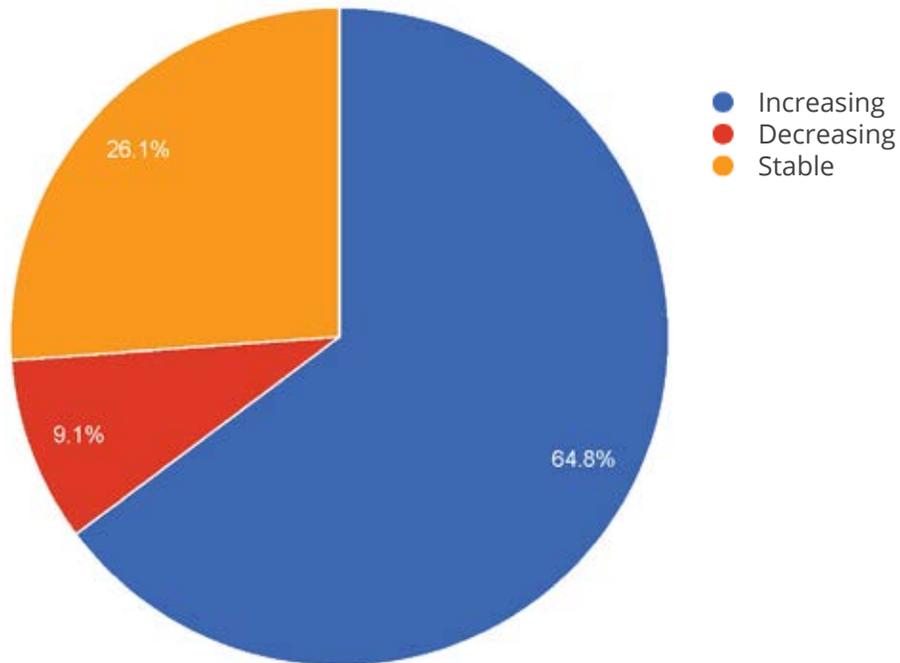


**SECTION VI. FINANCIAL**

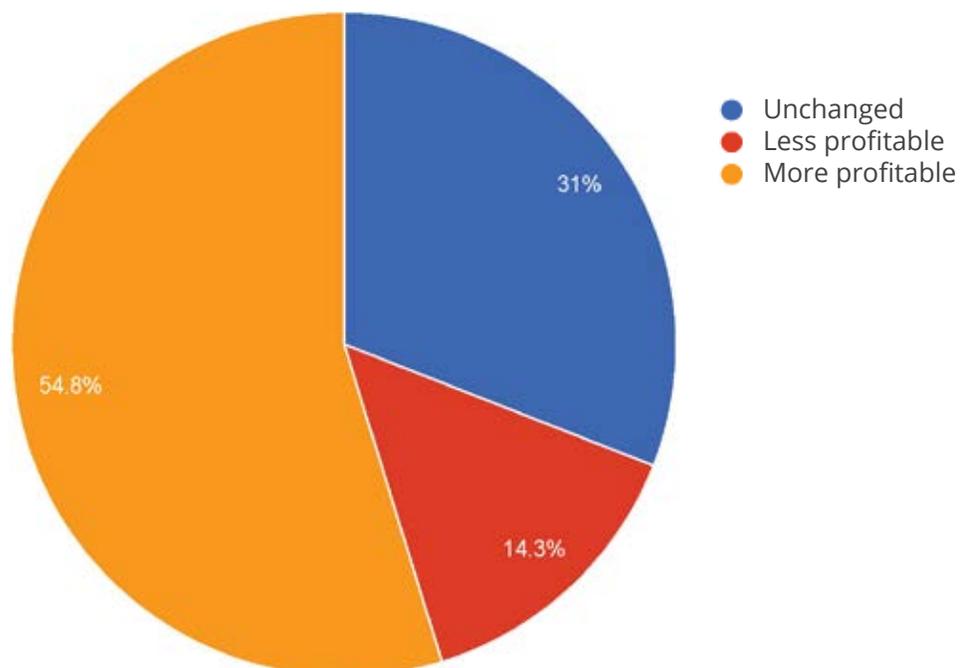
**Rate the financial health of your operation:**



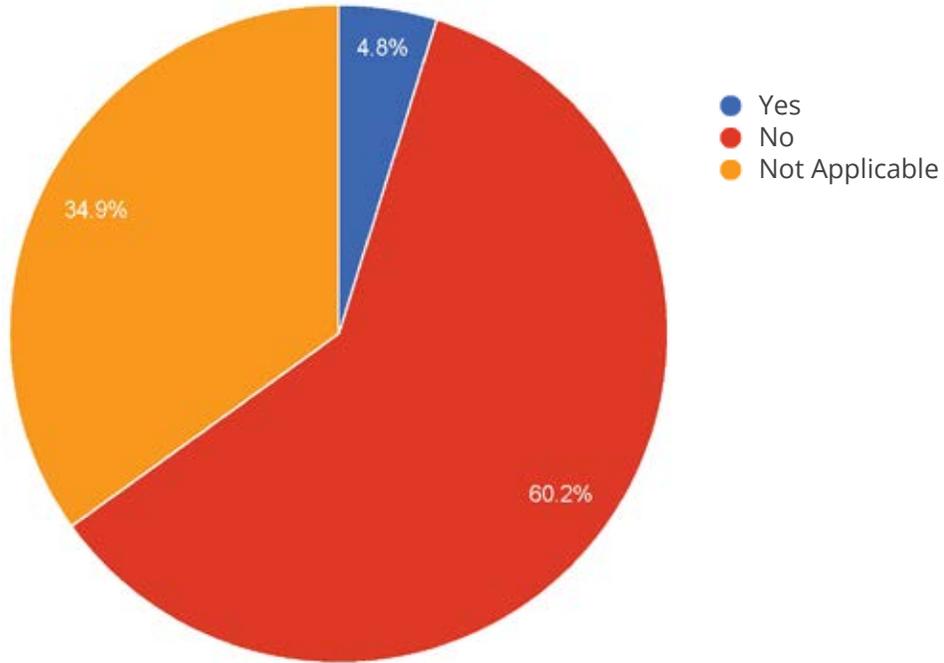
Are your firm's gross sales:



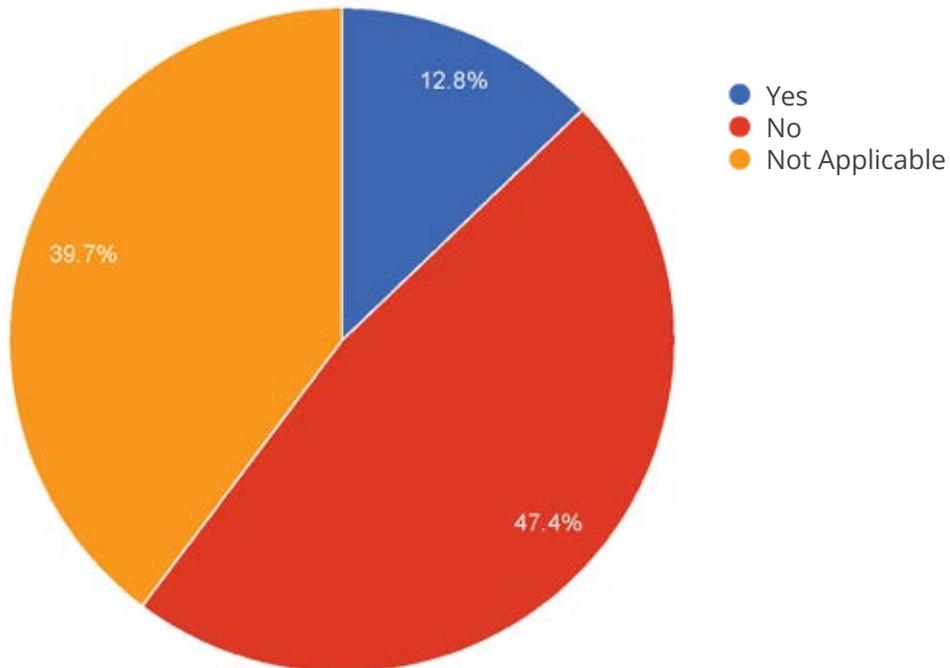
Which statement best captures the trend for this establishment's net profit margins over the past three (3) years?



**Has your company experienced difficulty securing necessary working capital in the last three (3) years?**

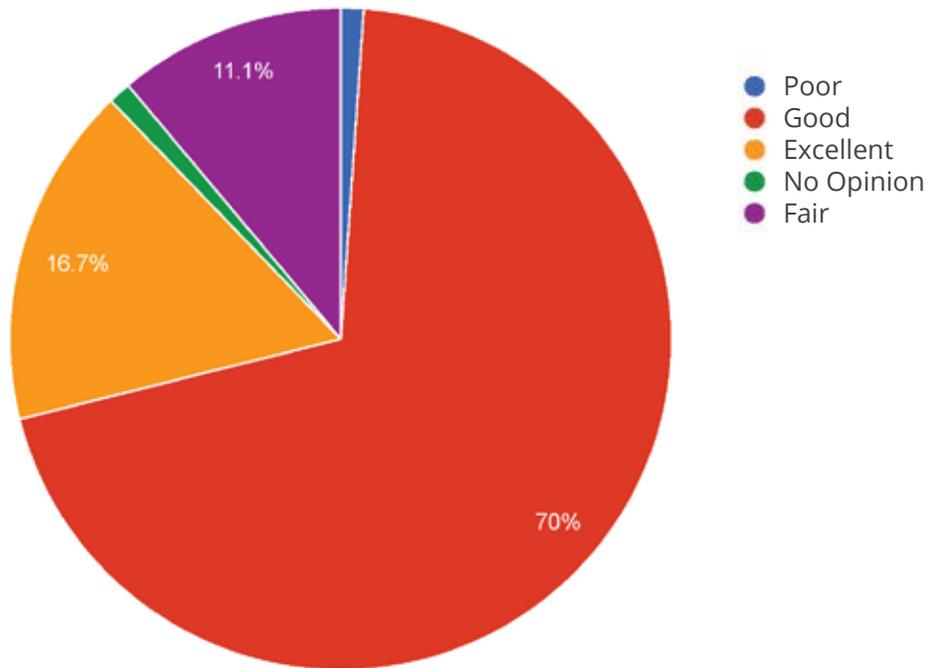


**Would additional equity financing help your business expand?**

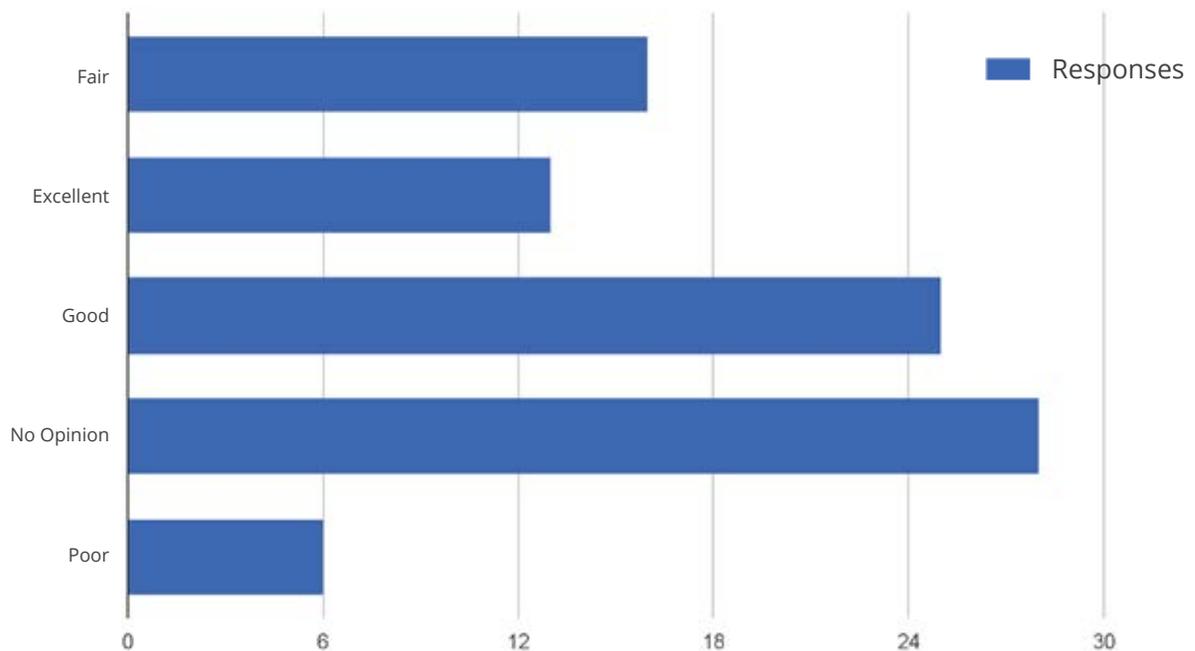


## SECTION VII. OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

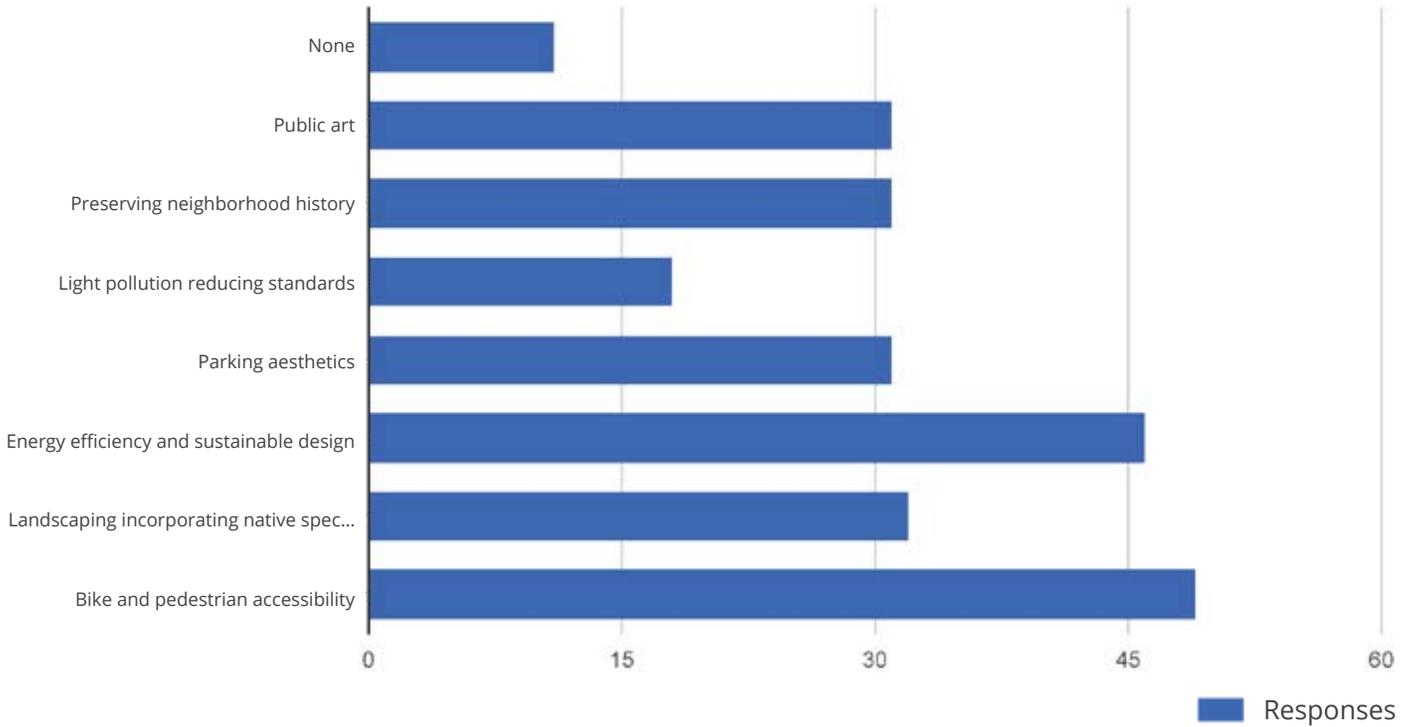
What is your overall opinion of the business climate in Cedar Rapids?



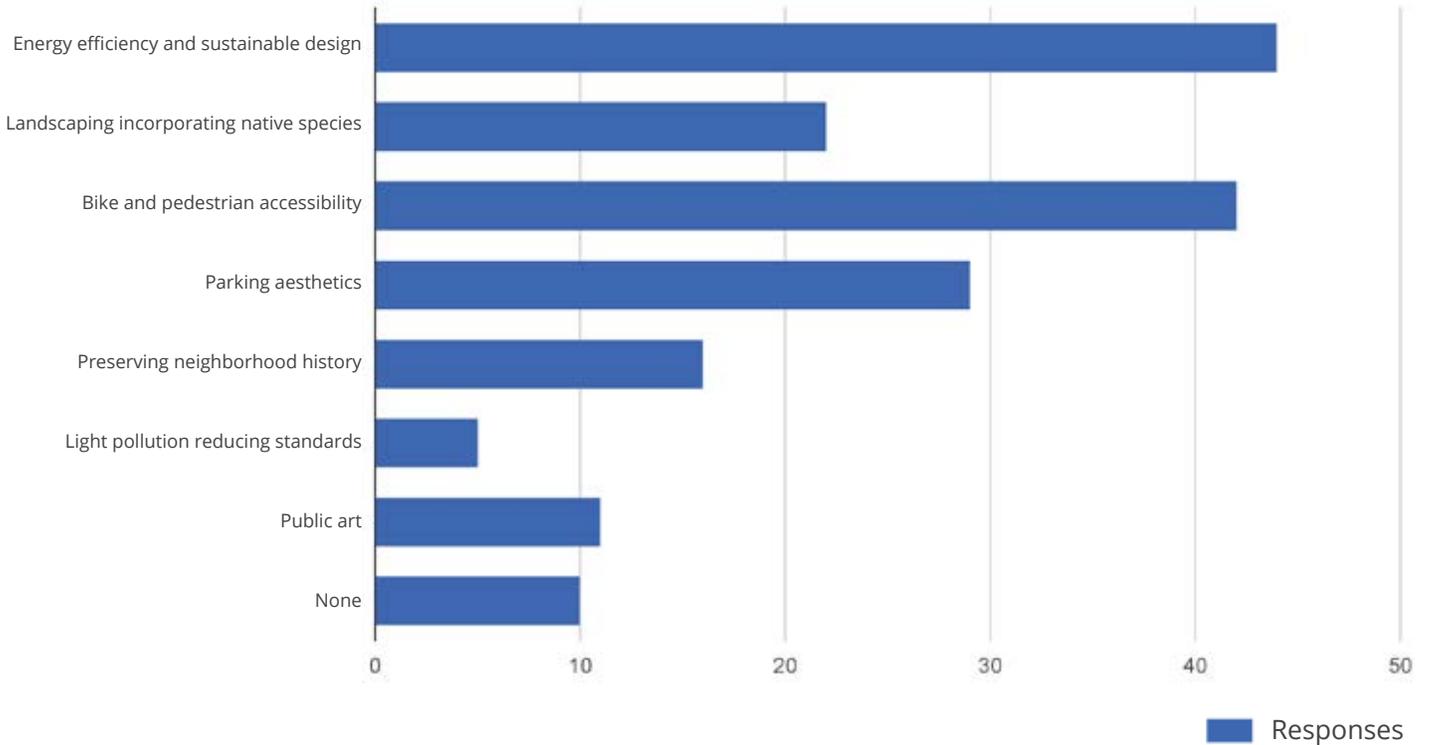
What is your company's view of the process to apply for any City permits or licenses?



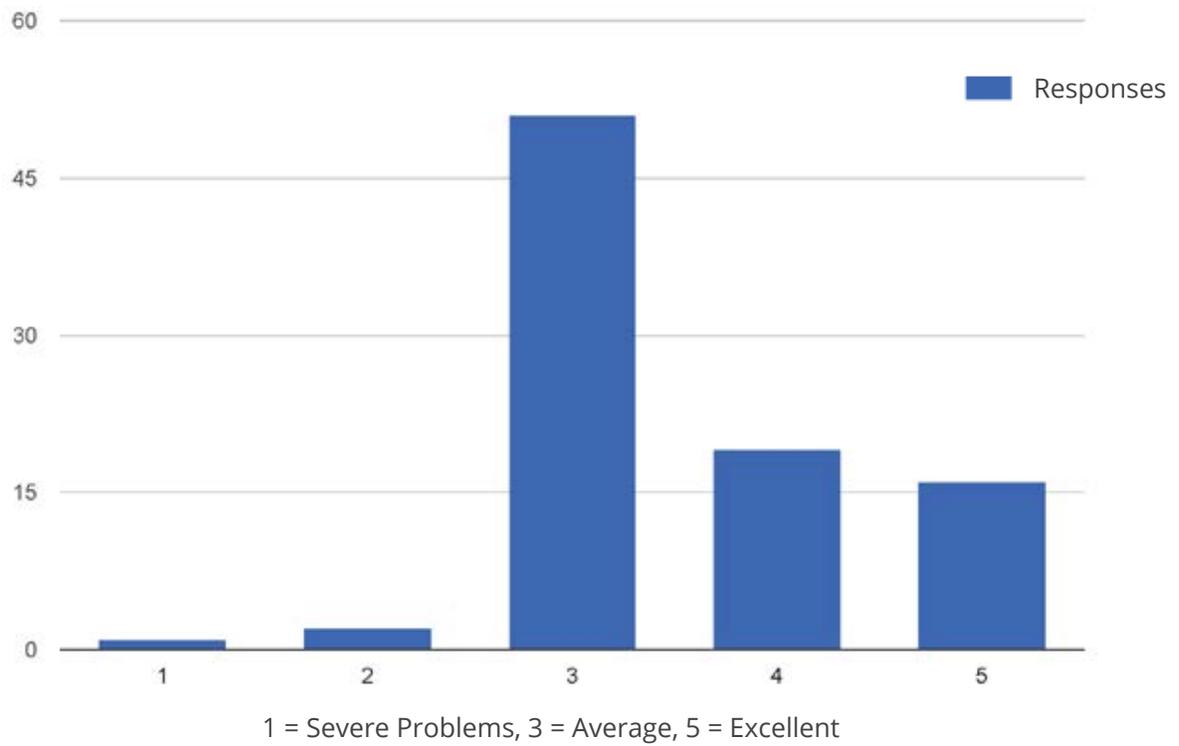
**Which site amenities do you want to see in new commercial projects in Cedar Rapids?**



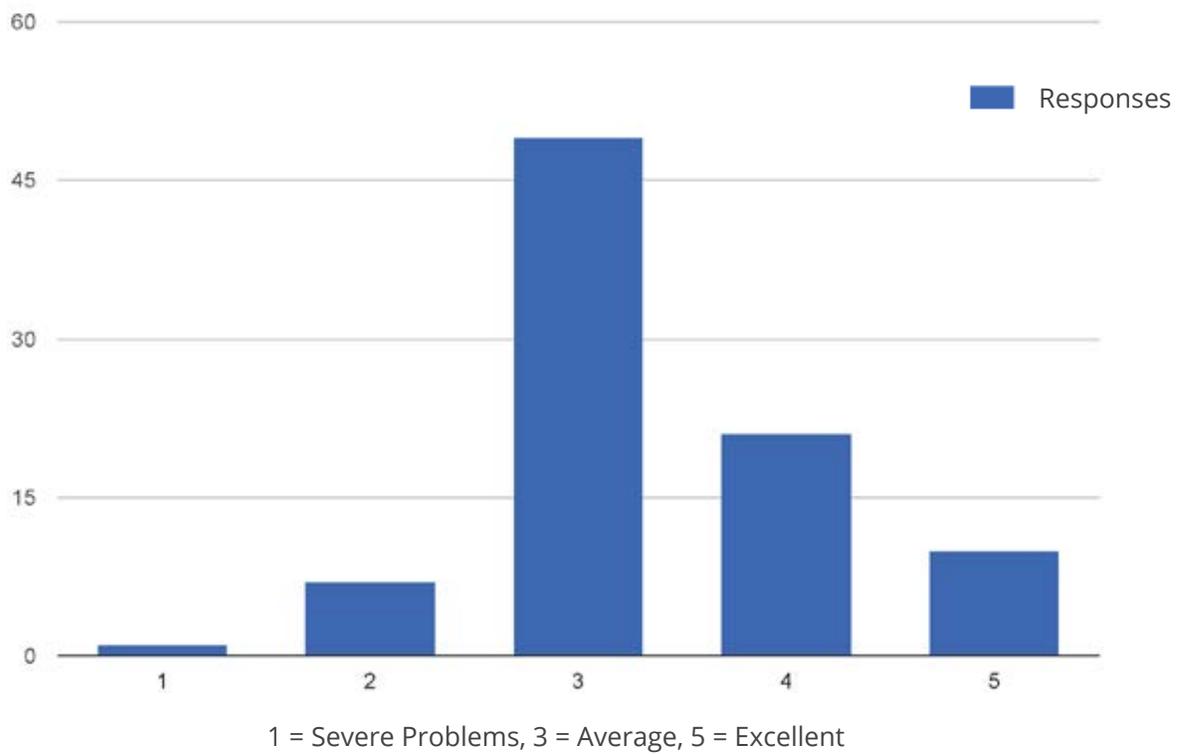
**Which site amenities do you believe increase the value of commercial projects in Cedar Rapids?**



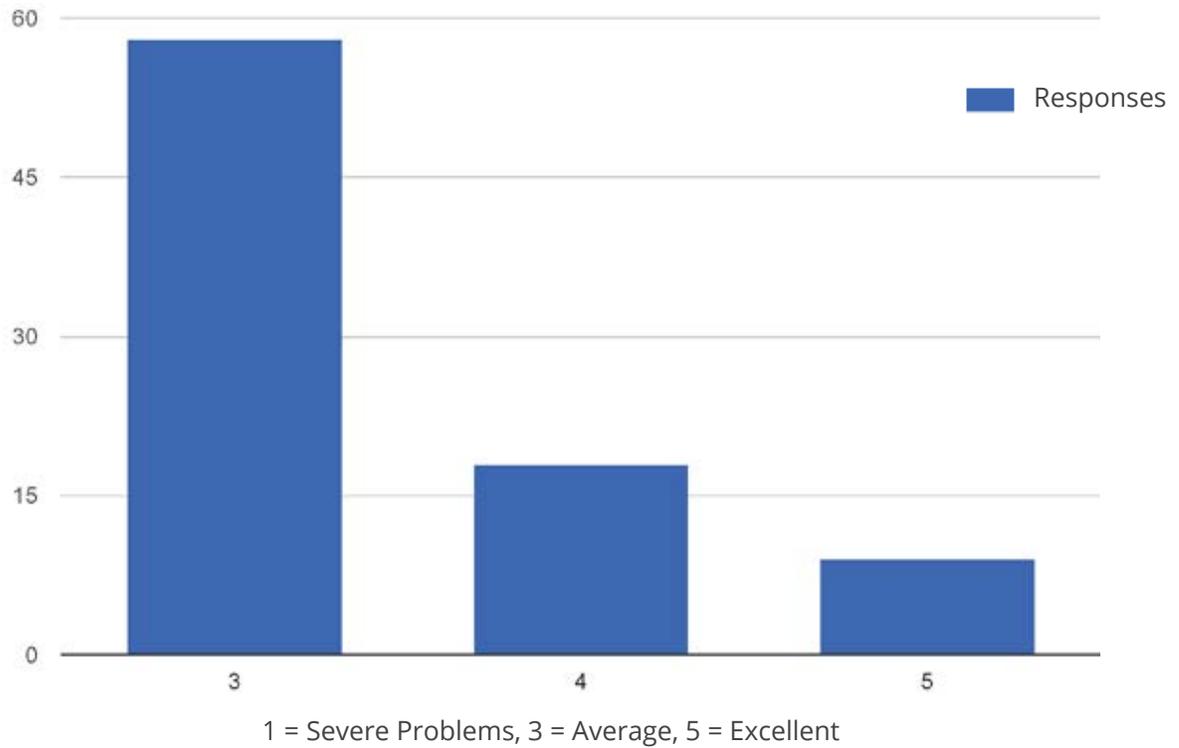
### Infrastructure Assessment: Water Service



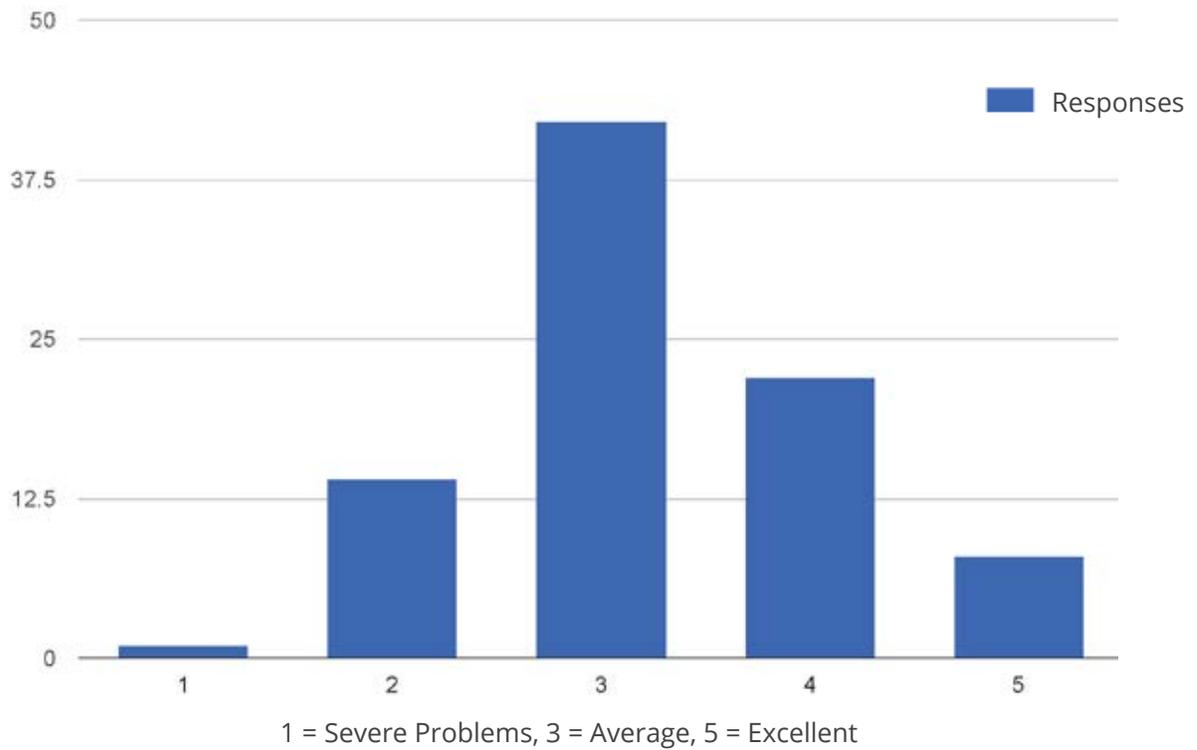
### Infrastructure Assessment: Electric Service



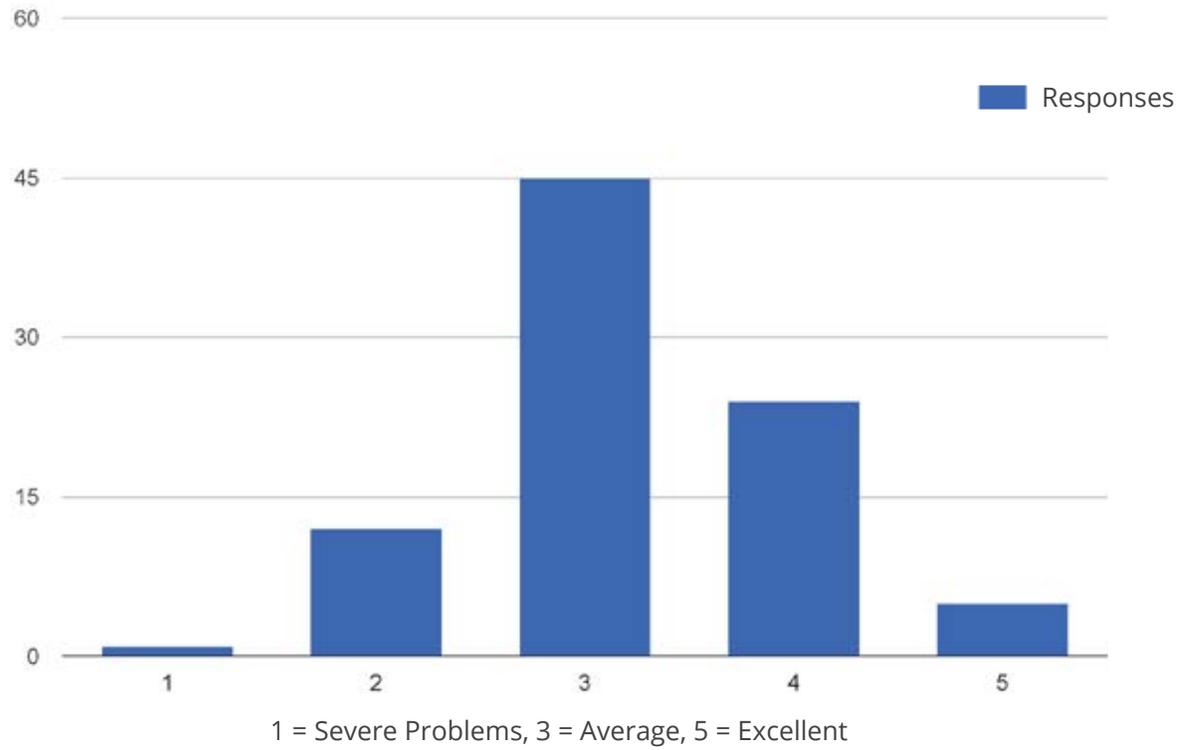
**Infrastructure Assessment: Natural Gas**



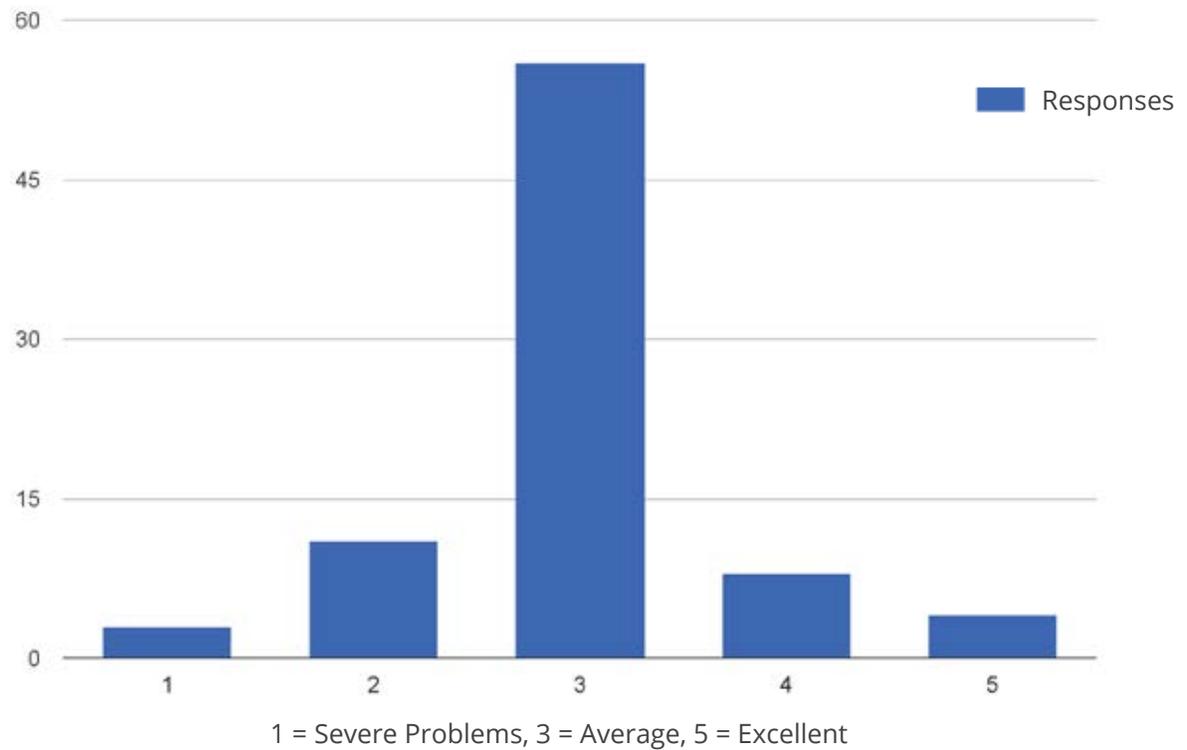
**Infrastructure Assessment: Broadband Facilities**



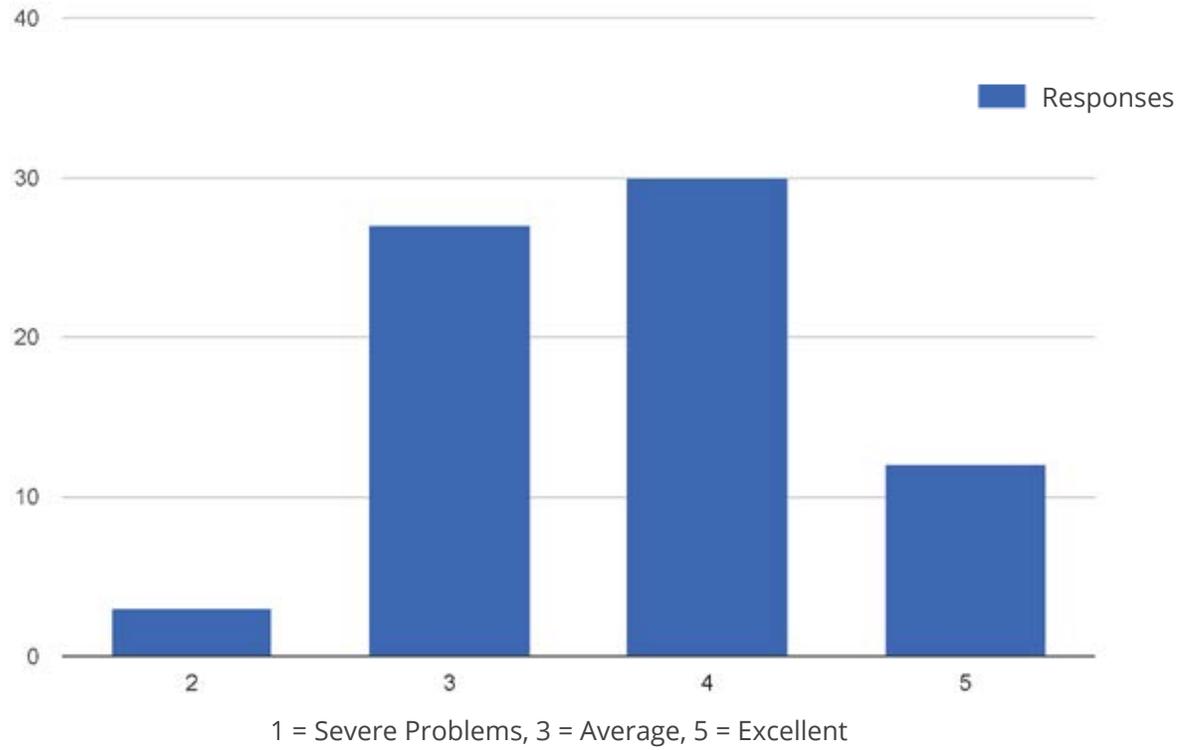
### Infrastructure Assessment: Telecommunications



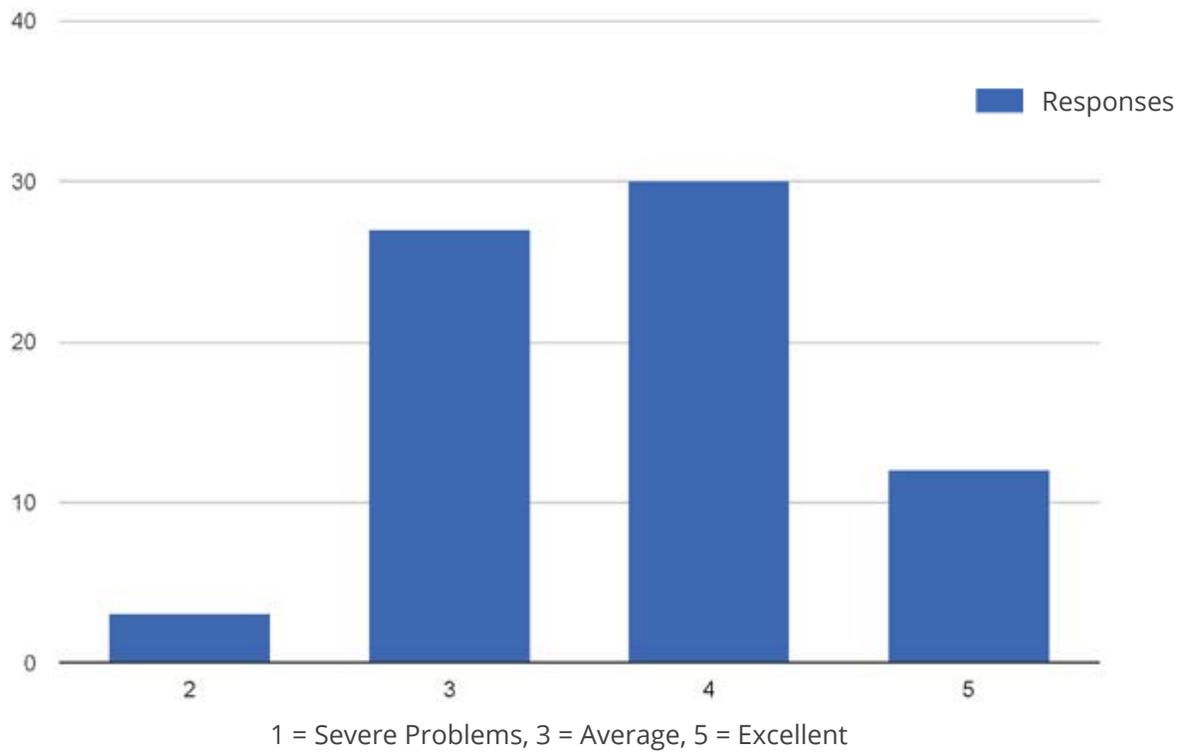
### Infrastructure Assessment: Rail System



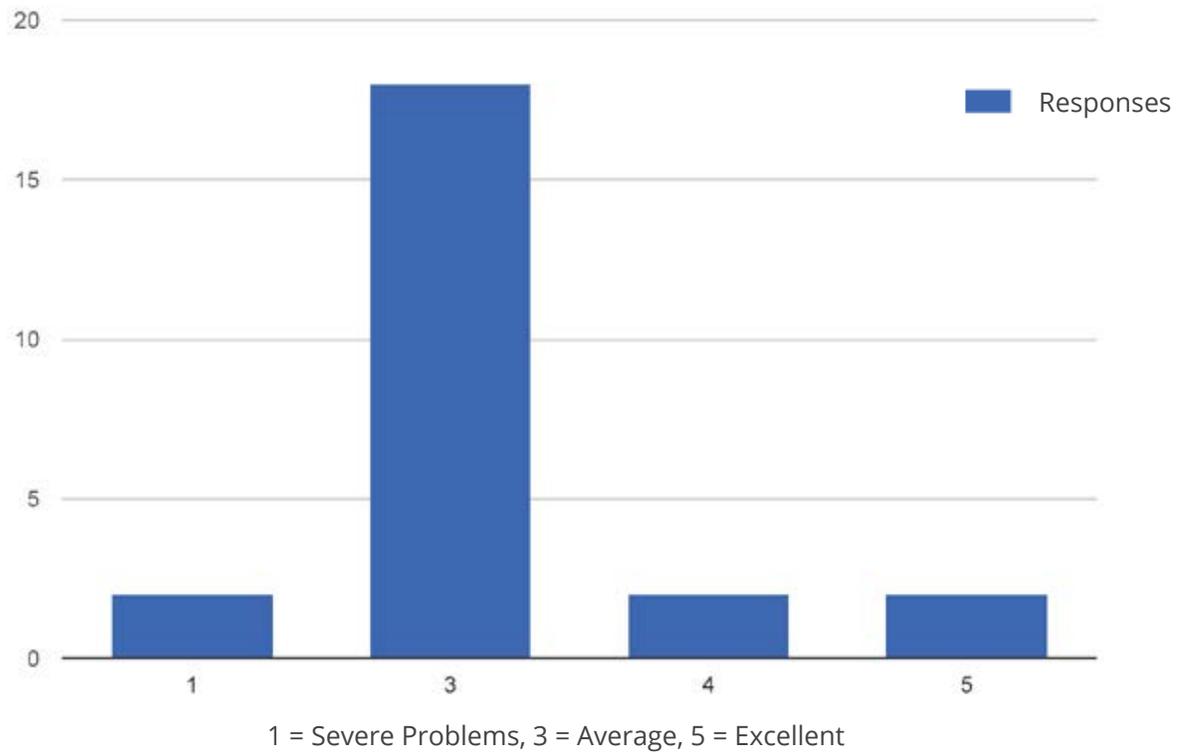
**Infrastructure Assessment: Airport**



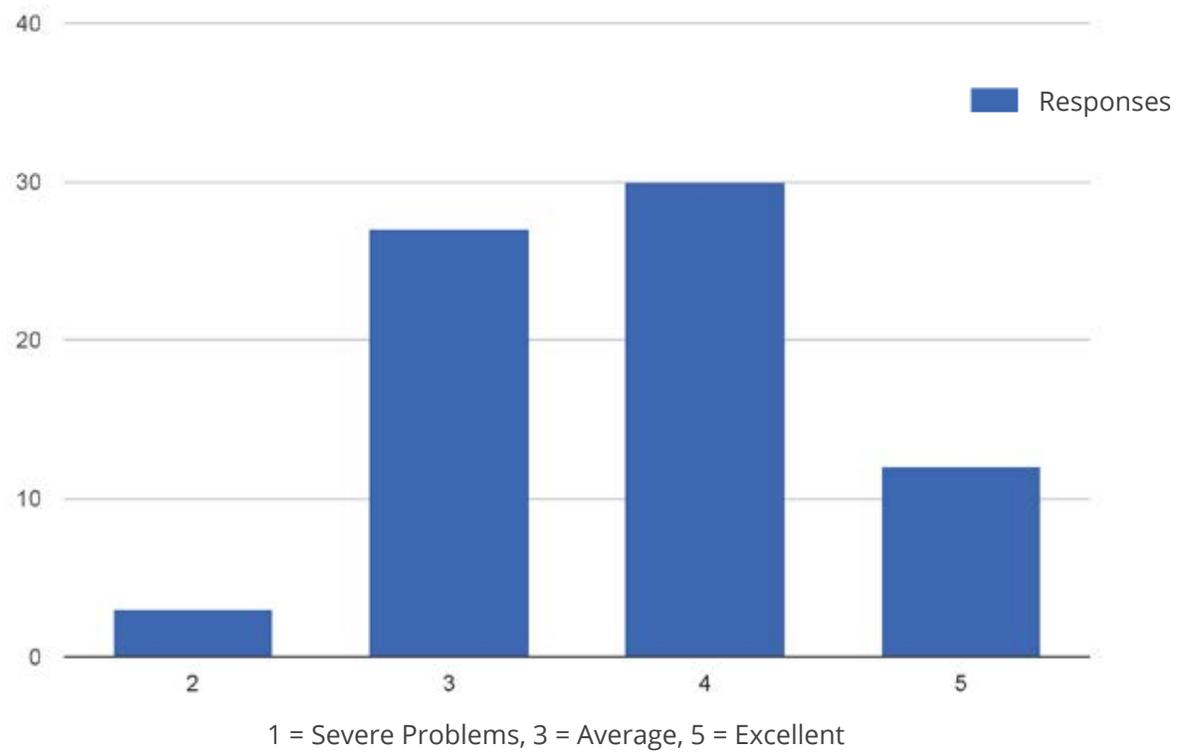
**Infrastructure Assessment: Trucking**



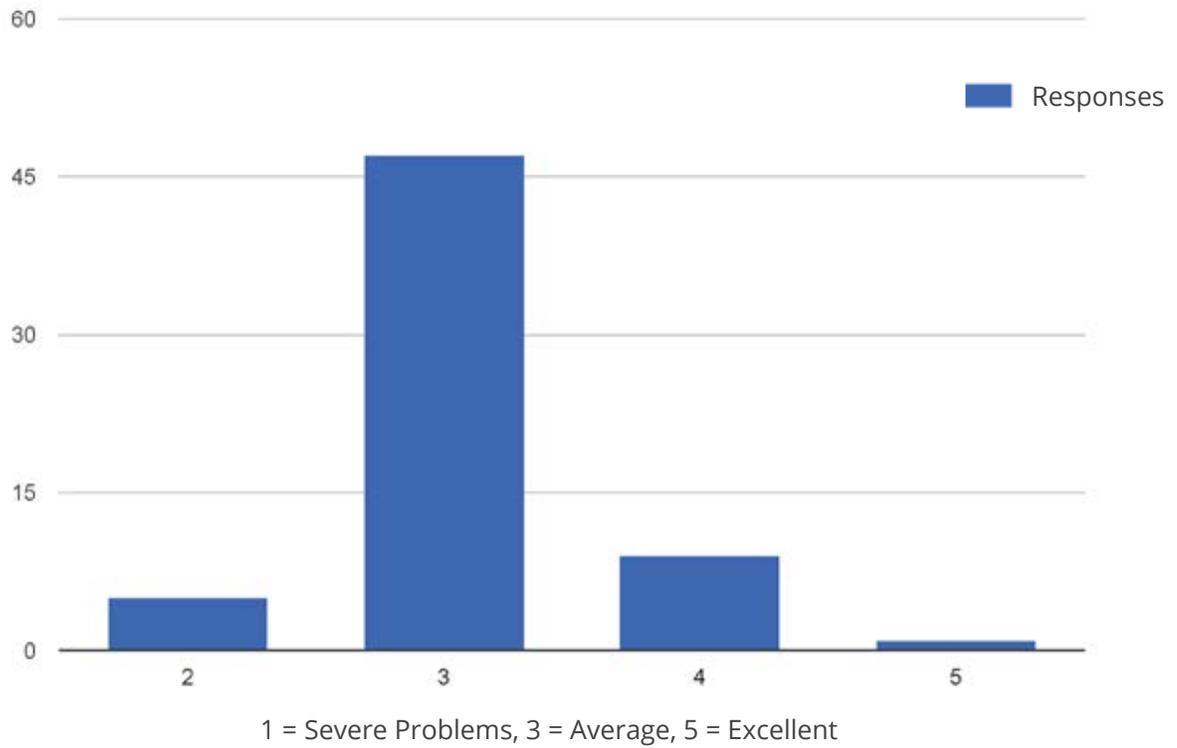
### Infrastructure Assessment: Intermodal Facilities



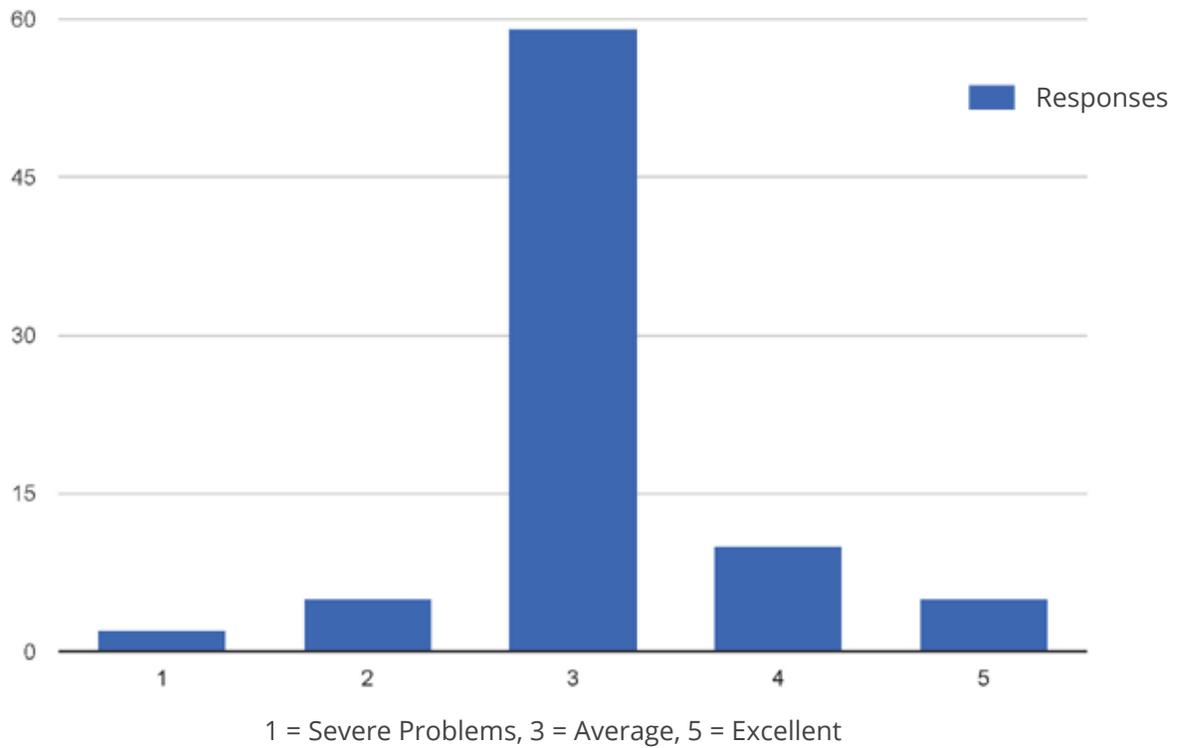
### Infrastructure Assessment: Public Transit



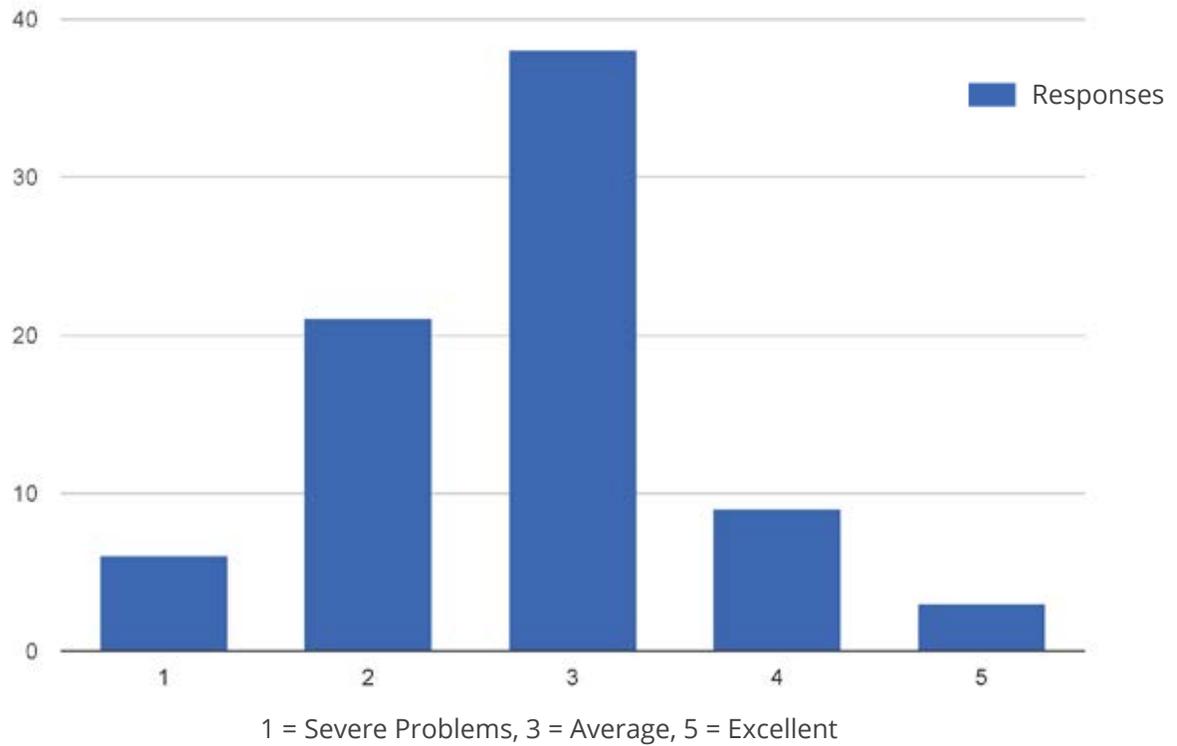
**Infrastructure Assessment: Bikes and Trails**



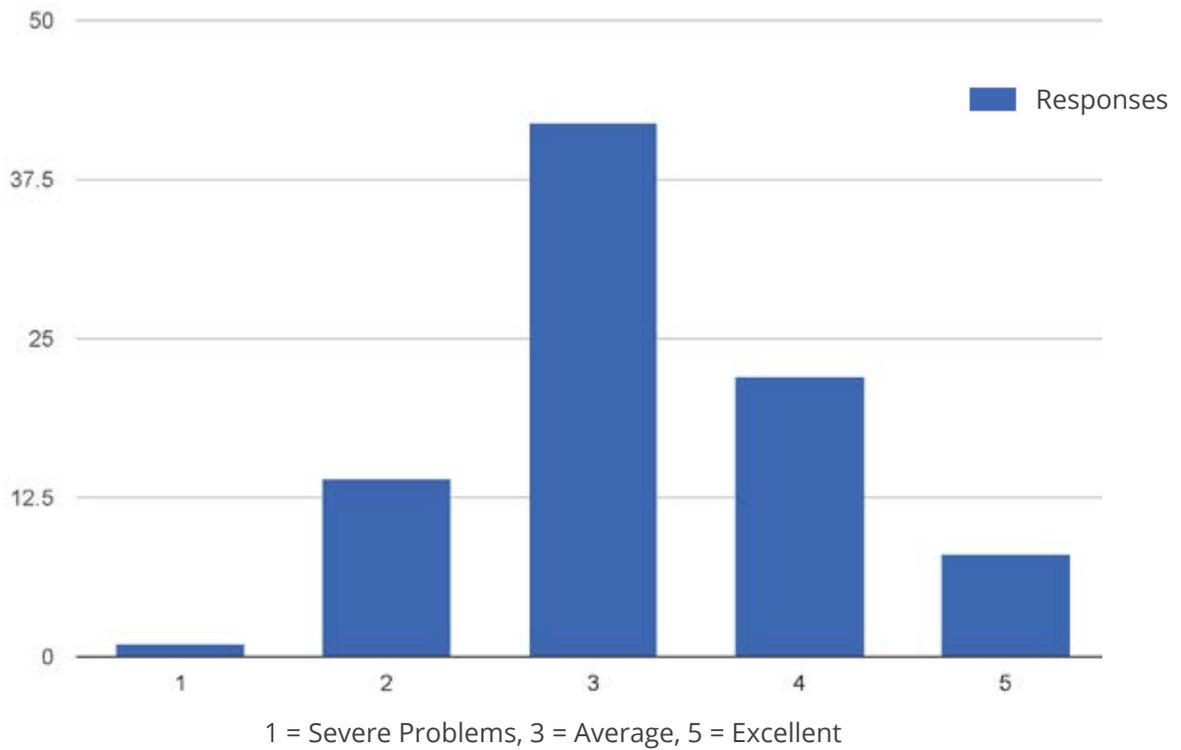
**Infrastructure Assessment: Walkability**



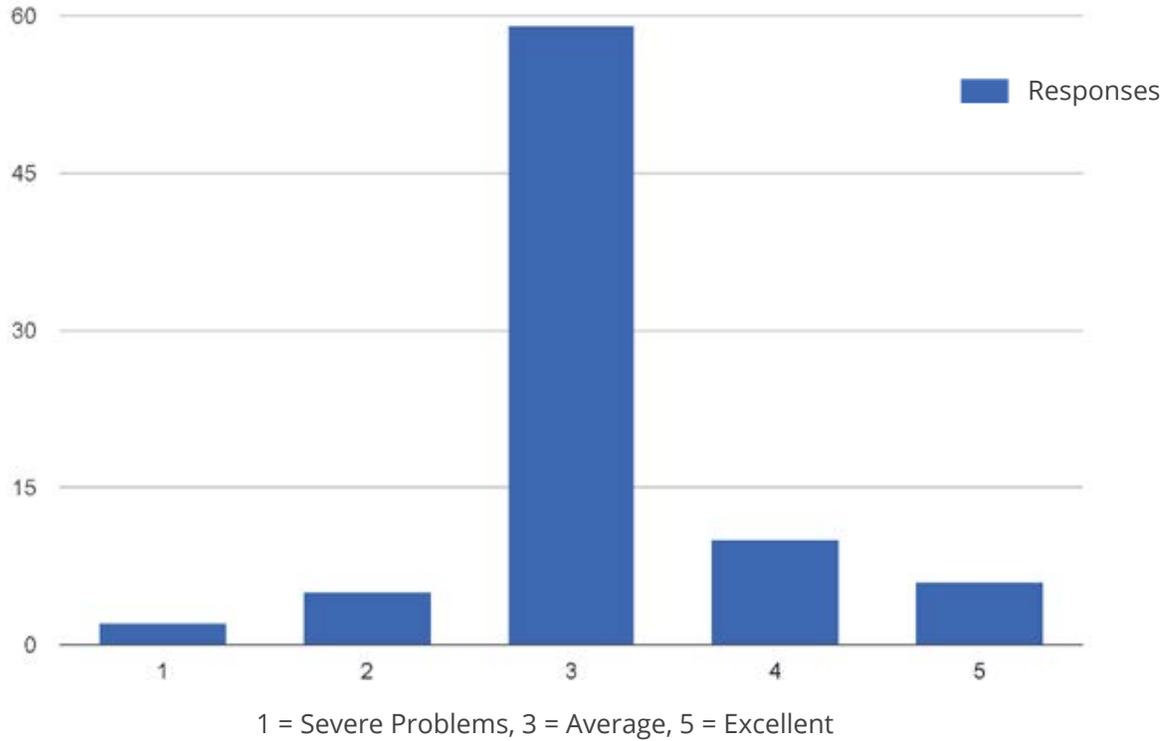
### Infrastructure Assessment: Roadways



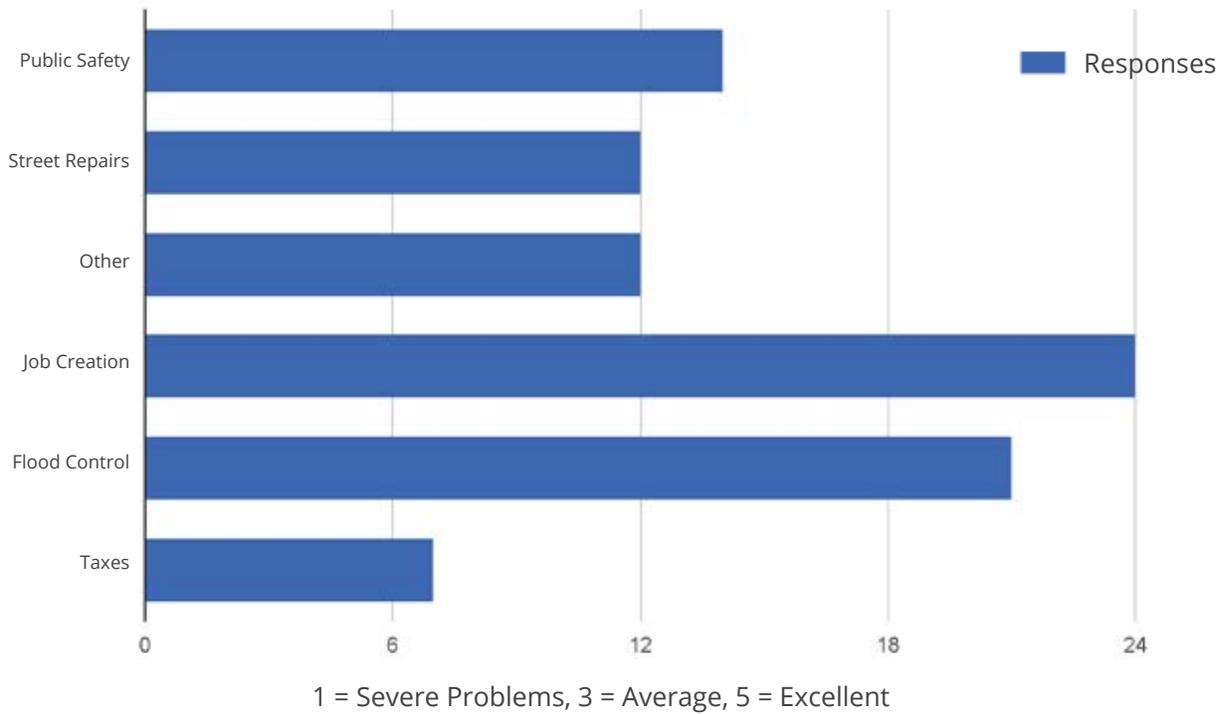
### Infrastructure Assessment: Stormwater & Drainage



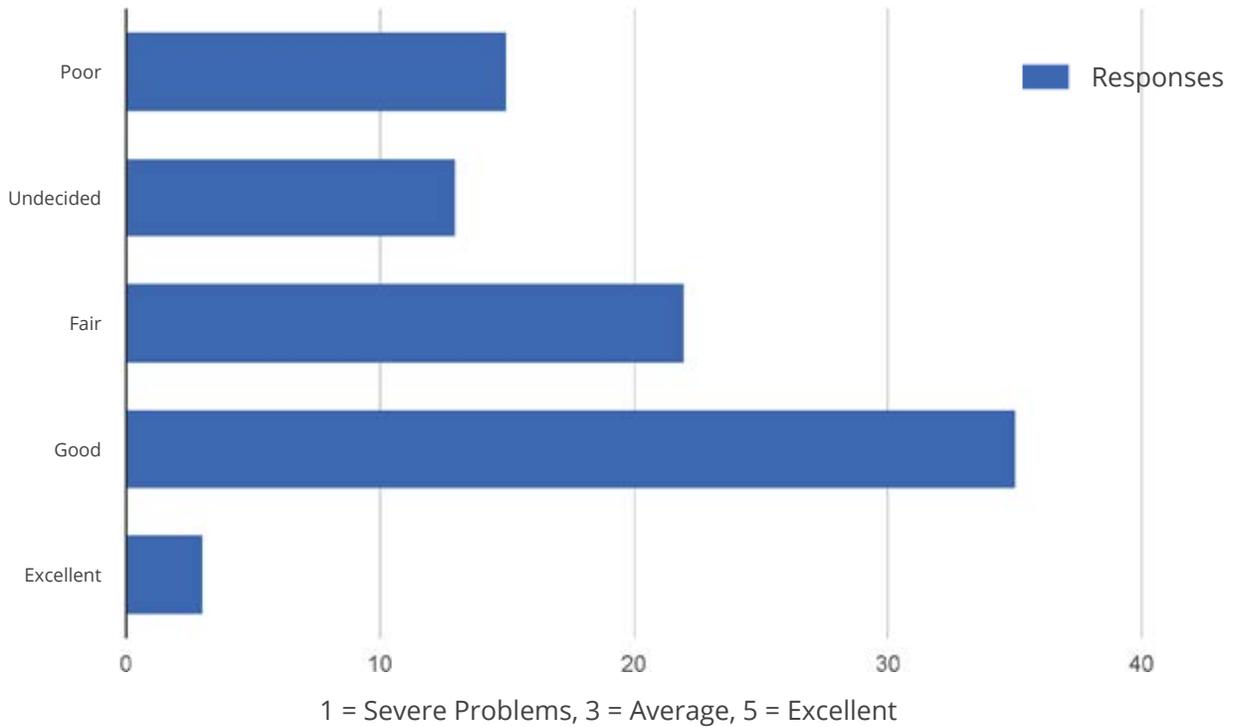
**Infrastructure Assessment: Sanitary Sewer**



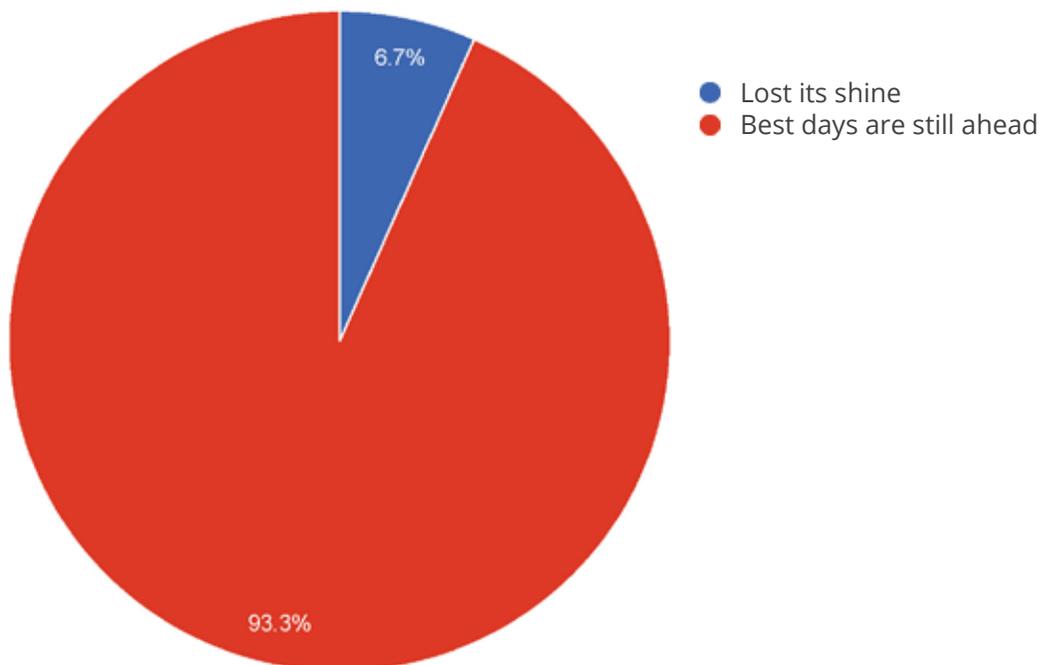
**In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Cedar Rapids?**



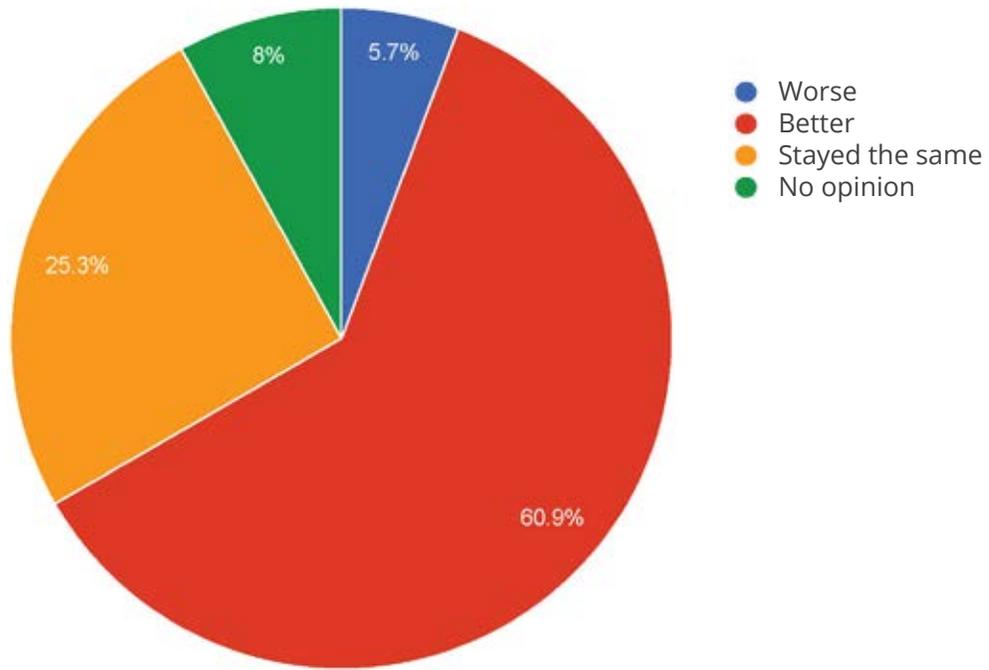
Since 2014, the City of Cedar Rapids has been using one hundred percent (100%) of the one cent penny sales tax to fix and maintain roads within the City. How would you rate the City's progress on improving the City streets?



Thinking a little about the future of the City, would you say that Cedar Rapids has lost its shine, or would you say the best days for Cedar Rapids are still ahead?



Over the past five (5) years, would you say that as a place to do business, Cedar Rapids has gotten:



# CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

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Information collected as part of the Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016) can provide a wide number of benefits to the public and private sectors alike. As has been documented in the preceding report, the information presented throughout shows how survey results were generated directly from business stakeholder input. Through analysis of that data, the survey report seeks to highlight valuable information about market conditions. Obtaining this data is a vital first step toward continuously improving City services and responsiveness to business needs in pursuit of the shared goal of economic growth.

Over the long-term, business retention information should play a valuable role in delivery of staff services to implement the City's strategic plan for economic development. Survey data will increase the awareness and visibility for the needs and priorities of existing industry within the City. Incorporating a special consideration of priorities for existing industry into the City's economic development process can only strengthen business advantages offered by locating in Cedar Rapids. Access to retention data thus adds significant value to the City's economic development services, increasing total potential for positive impact. An active program of business retention is an important part of an overall effort to place the City of Cedar Rapids in as strong a competitive position as possible for the years ahead.

Information gathered as part of the business survey project also has the potential to help address economic development policy questions. The Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016) functions to identify common needs among numerous businesses and industries. Consequently, the survey is a useful tool to bring additional information to the economic development process but such insights likewise support the design and validation of new economic development initiatives. Retention efforts will work on an ongoing basis to relate survey findings to current City programs. By better serving the needs of existing industry in Cedar Rapids, it becomes possible to realize even greater levels of economic growth and general prosperity within the community.



# APPENDIX A:

CEDAR RAPIDS STAFF SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE

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**BACKGROUND**

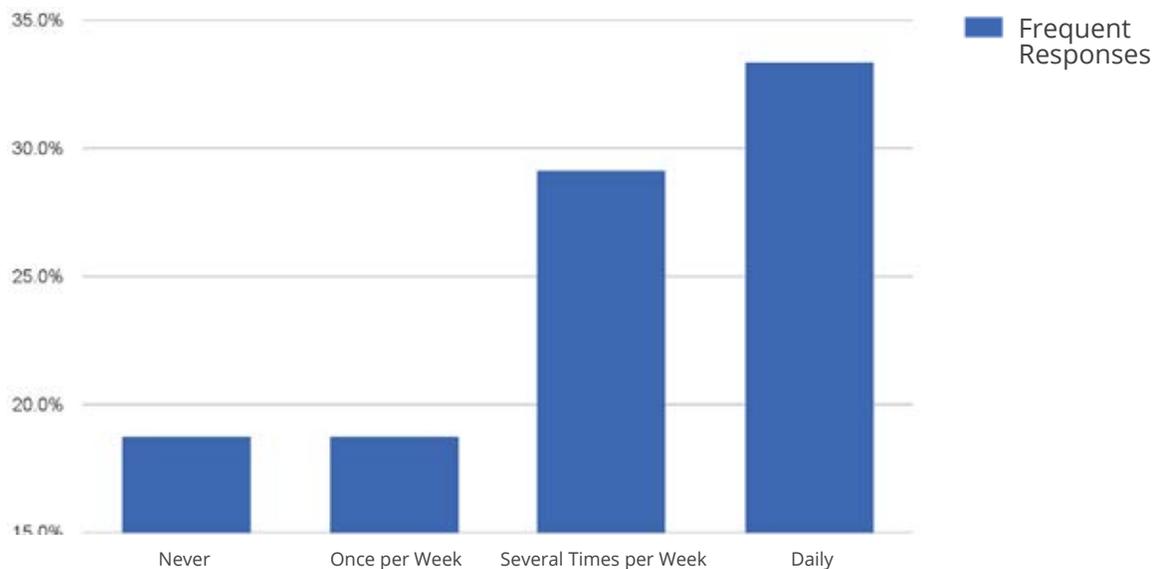
Preparation for the 2016 Cedar Rapids Business Survey Report included an online questionnaire given to City of Cedar Rapids staff. The purpose of the questionnaire was to generate useful input from City staff supporting survey design. Comments from City staff helped to identify any information gaps City staff perceived where additional information would improve service to the business community.

Between December 7, 2015 and January 25, 2016 one hundred and one-hundred fifteen (115) individuals from the City Managers Listserve were contacted with an invitation to share their perspective on economic development. Accordingly, all survey participants were managers and senior staff supervisors at the City of Cedar Rapids. Total responses numbered forty-nine (49) for a response rate of approximately forty-three (43) percent.

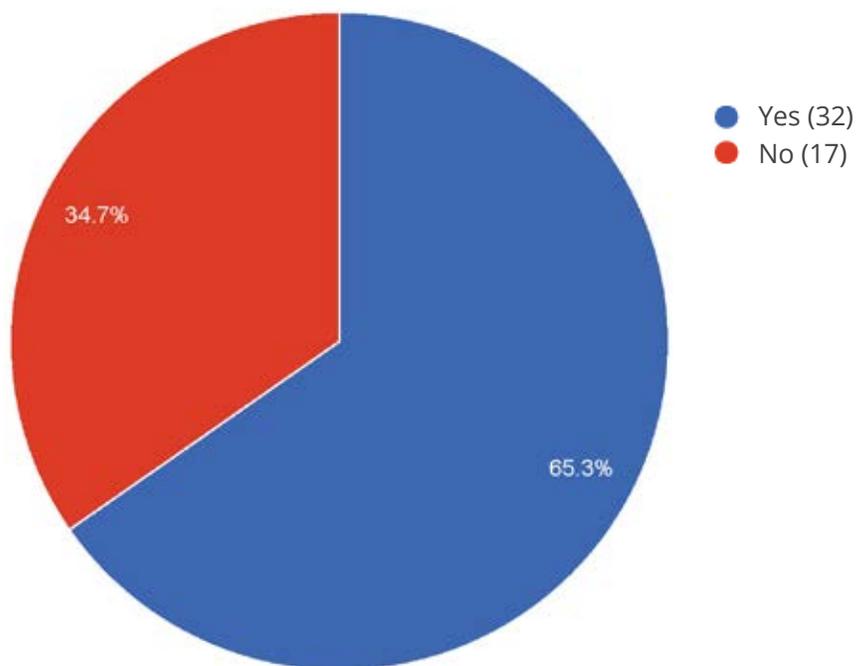
**FINDINGS**

The Survey Form consisted of five (5) questions relating to how staff managers viewed economic development. Three questions were multiple choice with a range of answers provided. The remaining questions were open-ended, soliciting comments. Results for these questions are presented below.

**Question One: How often do you or your staff interact directly with the local business community?**

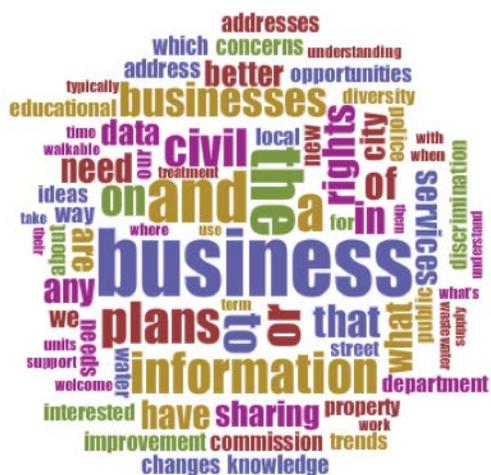


Would additional information from the private sector help continuously improve provision of services by your office or department?



Source: City of Cedar Rapids Economic Development Services (2016)

If you answered "yes" to Question #2, what type of new data from local businesses would be of most assistance?



Source: Sinclair, S. and G. Rockwell (2016). Cirrus. Voyant. Retrieved April 4, Voyant-Tools.org

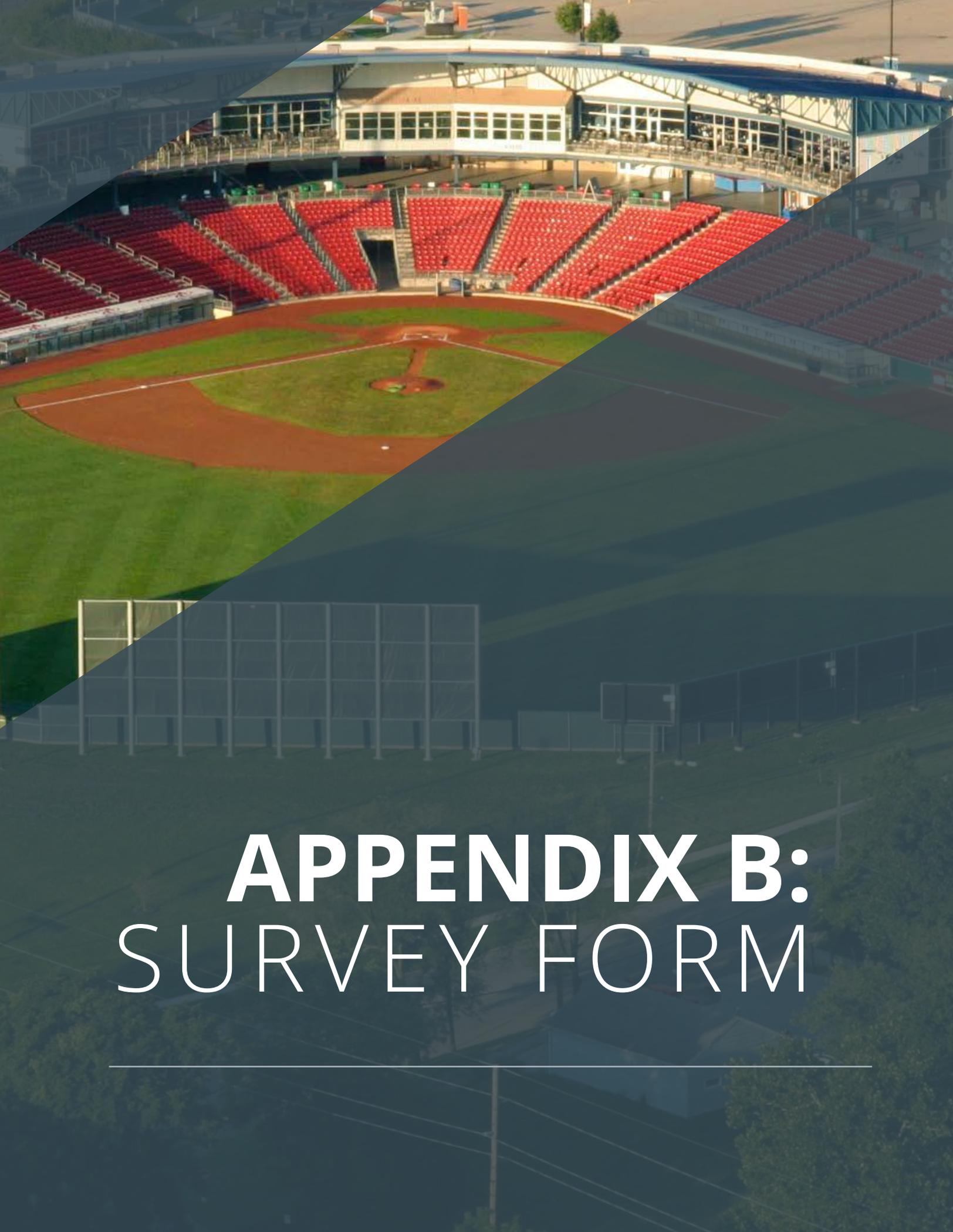


## ANALYSIS

Results show an interest in economic development as a topic among many City staff members. The data suggests there is some general staff support for City Economic Development initiatives within the organization as a whole, although further investigation of internal attitudes toward economic development through data collection may become appropriate in the future. High-level performance of economic development functions typically are characterized by teamwork and collaboration.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the data generated by the sampling of City staff perceptions on this topic can be viewed positively in that specific context.

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<sup>22</sup> Kozlow, David. *Managing for Excellence – Outcome-Based Performance for the Economic Development Organization*, 2012.



# APPENDIX B: SURVEY FORM

---

# Cedar Rapids Business Survey (2016)

Business Profile Information (To be completed in advance and confirmed at time of interview)

1. **Company Name**

.....

2. **Industry (NAICS)**

.....

3. **Date**

.....

4. **Local Phone**

.....

5. **Street Address**

.....

6. **Email**

.....

7. **Website**

.....

8. **Corporate Contact**

.....

9. **Correct Billing Address:**

.....

## BACKGROUND

Vision Statement: Cedar Rapids is a vibrant urban hometown -- a beacon for people and businesses invested in building a greater community now and for the next generation.

1. This initiative is sponsored by the City of Cedar Rapids through its Economic Development Services Program.
2. Cedar Rapids works in partnership with a wide range of organizations locally, regionally, and statewide to promote best case economic growth of the City. Partner organizations include the following:
  - Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance
  - Cedar Rapids Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
  - Diversity Focus
  - East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)
  - Entrepreneurial Development Center (EDC)
  - Iowa Start-up Accelerator
  - Kirkwood Community College
3. Private sector, government and educational leaders have agreed to help us work with local businesses on this program.
4. This survey is a voluntary, joint effort on the part of public and private sector.
5. The intent of this program is to do the following:
  - Demonstrate support for local business;
  - Help address immediate concerns from the private sector;
  - Aid local competitiveness and business advantage;
  - Help implement a strategic approach to economic development;
  - Build community capacity to sustain growth and development.
6. The “Skip It Rule” All answers are voluntary. If you would like to omit an answer to a question, we will do that; just let us know. There is no need to explain your reasons.
7. Final copies of this report will be provided to all businesses that participate in this survey.

## SURVEY

What follows is a brief business survey. It is intended for use only within the City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The average time required to take the survey should be approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

All answers to questions contained in this survey are voluntary. Data provided in response to survey questions below will be utilized by the Cedar Rapids Economic Development Services Program office as an aid to program development, performance measurement, and analysis.

Please direct any questions or comments concerning this business survey to David Connolly, Economic Development Specialist. Contact by email at [d.connolly@cedar-rapids.org](mailto:d.connolly@cedar-rapids.org) or by phone at 319-286-5067.

## Section I. Location History & Site Status

---

10. Do you own or lease this facility?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Own  
 Lease  
 Both

11. Please rate the condition of your building(s):

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor

12. What is the condition of company equipment?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor

13. Can you expand your existing facilities on-site?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No  
 NA -- Not Applicable

14. Do you currently have surplus space not utilized in this facility?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No  
 NA -- Not Applicable

## Section II. Management and Organization

---

15. When was your firm established in Cedar Rapids?

.....

16. Please indicate the legal form of organization:

*Mark only one oval.*

- Corporation (S or C)
- Cooperative
- Partnership
- Limited Liability Corp (LLC)
- Limited Liability Partnership
- Sole Proprietorship
- Other

17. Has there been a change in ownership in the past three (3) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

18. If so, please describe the change:

.....

19. Does the company have a succession plan in place?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable - NA

20. Has the company's strategic plan been updated in the past two (2) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

**21. What is the company's attitude toward this facility?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**22. Please note business specific activity at this facility.**

*Check all that apply.*

- Agricultural Production
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation and Public Utilities
- Wholesale Trade
- Finance Insurance and Real Estate
- Retail Trade
- Lodging
- Tourism and Recreational Services
- Food and Beverage
- Education
- Mail order/Internet sales
- Public Sector or Non-profit
- Healthcare
- Technology
- Other: .....

**23. Describe the life cycle stage of your primary product/service?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Growing
- Stable
- Mature
- Declining

24. **What percentage of raw materials or supplies are sourced from Cedar Rapids?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less
- 11% to 25%
- 26% to 50%
- 51% or more

25. **What percentage of raw materials or supplies are sourced in Iowa but outside Cedar Rapids?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less
- 11% to 25%
- 26% to 50%
- 51% or more

26. **What percentage of raw materials or supplies are sourced nationally but outside Iowa?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less
- 11% to 25%
- 26% to 50%
- 51% or more

27. **Are there any products or services you purchase from outside the city where you would prefer to find a local supplier?**

---

### Section III. Markets and Customers

---

28. **How would you characterize your company's market share?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable
- No Change

29. **What percentage of your customers are located in Cedar Rapids?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less
- 11% to 25%
- 26% to 50%
- 51% or more

30. **What percentage of customers are located in Iowa but outside Cedar Rapids?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less
- 11% to 25%
- 26% to 50%
- 51% or more

31. **What percentage of customers are located in the United States but outside Iowa?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less
- 11% to 25%
- 26% to 50%
- 51% or more

32. **Does your company currently export?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

33. **Please note any important export markets.**

.....

34. **Is your company interested in growing exports?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

## Section IV. Future Plans

---

35. Does the company plan to expand in Cedar Rapids during the next three (3) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

36. If so, please state estimated job gain or loss, total capital investment and planned development schedule, etc.

37. Does your firm have plans to expand outside of Cedar Rapids in the next three (3) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

38. If so, where:

.....

39. Does the company plan to sell this facility, move or make acquisitions that might adversely impact the current operation in the next three (3) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No

40. If so, please explain.

.....

41. Rate the financial health of your operation.

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor

42. Please rate the overall financial health of any parent company.

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Not Applicable

43. What is the likelihood of phasing out or shutting down this operation in the next three (3) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Probable
- Possible
- Remote
- Non-existent

44. What is the likelihood of downsizing or outsourcing this operation in the next three (3) years?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Probable
- Possible
- Remote
- Non-existent

45. If considering expansion elsewhere, what factors would cause you to make a decision to invest outside this facility? (Select all that apply)

*Check all that apply.*

- Tax Climate
- Incentives
- Workforce Supply
- Permitting and Regulatory Issues
- Supply Chain
- Labor Cost
- Infrastructure
- Lack of Available Land
- Lack of Buildings
- Lack of Capital/Funding

46. **Are changes to how the company would utilize city utilities being planned?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No  
 Not Applicable

## **Section V. Workforce Development**

---

47. **What is the approximate number of employees working at this facility?**

.....

48. **Which of the following statements best characterizes job growth at this location for the next three (3) years?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Stable (no new jobs planned)  
 Modest Growth (new jobs less than 10%)  
 Growth (new jobs less than 33%)  
 Strong Growth (new jobs more than 33%)  
 Not Applicable - Employment planned to decrease

49. **How many shifts do you have in operation?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 1  
 2  
 3  
 Other

## Workforce Availability

---

Please rate the availability of the following workforce occupations on a scale from one (1) to five (5):

**50. Professional/Management**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**51. Skilled**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**52. Unskilled**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**53. Clerical**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

## Workforce Quality

---

Please rate the quality of the following workforce in Cedar Rapids for the following occupational categories on a scale from one (1) to five (5).

**54. Professional/Management**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**55. Skilled**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**56. Unskilled**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**57. Clerical**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

58. **What are the top three types of occupations found at this facility?**

*Check all that apply.*

- Management
- Professional/Technical
- Sales/Marketing
- Administrative Support
- Highly-Skilled
- Semi-Skilled
- Unskilled

59. **What issues has management encountered retaining employees?**

.....

60. **What issues has management encountered attracting talent?**

.....

61. **Is the number of unfilled positions in the company:**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- No change

62. **What job training programs, if any, has your company utilized in the past three (3) years?**

.....

63. **Are you interested in collaborating with other employers in the region on workforce training and development?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

64. **Are your company's employees generally able to locate housing options in the City of Cedar Rapids?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No  
 Not Applicable

65. **How would you rate the productivity of your company's existing workforce?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor

66. **How would you rate the stability of your company's existing workforce?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Fair  
 Poor

67. **What percentage of your workforce will retire in the next five (5) years?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- 10% or less  
 11% to 25%  
 26% to 50%  
 More than 50%

68. **Are business education programs (e.g., Cedar Rapids MBA programs) useful to your company's efforts to attract and retain talent?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes  
 No  
 Not Applicable -- NA

## Section VI. Financial

---

69. **What are the annual sales for this location?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than \$500,000
- \$500,001 to \$1,000,000
- 1,000,001 to \$5,000,000
- \$5,000,001 to \$10,000,000
- Greater than \$10,000,000

70. **Are your firm's gross sales:**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Stable

71. **Which statement best captures the trend for this establishment's net profit margins over the past three (3) years?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- More profitable
- Less profitable
- Unchanged

72. **Has your company experienced difficulty securing necessary working capital in the last three (3) years?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

73. **Would additional equity financing help your business expand?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No
- Not Applicable

## Section VII. Overall Impressions

---

74. What is your overall opinion of the business climate in Cedar Rapids?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- No Opinion

75. What is your company's view of the community?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- No Opinion

76. What is your company's view of the process to apply for any necessary City permits or licenses?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- No Opinion

77. Which site amenities do you want to see in new commercial projects in Cedar Rapids?

*Check all that apply.*

- Energy efficiency and sustainable design
- Bike and pedestrian accessibility
- Landscaping incorporating native species
- Parking aesthetics (e.g. lot screening, buffering, facility design.)
- Light pollution reducing standards
- Preserving neighborhood history
- Public art

**78. Which site amenities do you believe increase the value of commercial projects in Cedar Rapids?**

*Check all that apply.*

- Energy efficiency and sustainable design
- Bike and pedestrian accessibility
- Landscaping incorporating native species
- Parking aesthetics (e.g. lot screening, buffering, facility design.)
- Light pollution reducing standards
- Preserving neighborhood history
- Public art

## **Infrastructure Assessment**

---

Please rate the quality of following infrastructure types on a scale from one (1) to five (5):

**79. Water Service**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**80. Electric Service**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**81. Natural Gas**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**82. Broadband Facilities***Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**83. Telecommunications***Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**84. Stormwater/Drainage***Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**85. Sanitary Sewer***Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**86. Rail System***Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**87. Roadways***Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**88. Airport**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**89. Trucking**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**90. Intermodal Facilities**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**91. Public Transportation (e.g., Bus)**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**92. Bikes/Trails**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**93. Walkability**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent				

**94. Are there crime or public safety issues impacting your business? If so, please explain.**

.....





**CEDAR RAPIDS**

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City of Five Seasons®