



Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development

Findings and Recommendations

Gardiner, Maine
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About Main Street America

Main Street America has been helping revitalize older and historic commercial districts for nearly 40 years. Today it is a network of thousands of neighborhoods and communities, rural and urban, who share both a commitment to place and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development. Main Street America is a program of the nonprofit National Main Street Center, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Since 1980, over 2,000 programs have used the Main Street Approach, our time-tested framework for community-driven, comprehensive revitalization. The National Main Street Center conducts research to document our impact by annually collecting statistical information on the preservation, revitalization, and economic activities in local Main Street programs throughout the country.



About the Maine Downtown Center – SBA Appropriated Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Program

Maine Development Foundation's Maine Downtown Center (MDC) is a Main Street America® Coordinating Program and was established in 1999. MDC currently has 10 nationally designated Main Street Maine programs, 14 state designated Maine Downtown Affiliate programs, and works with scores of other communities on revitalization and improvement efforts. The program is staffed by Senior Program Director Anne Ball (aball@mdf.org), Program Director Sylvie Piquet (spiquet@mdf.org), and Program Coordinator Perri Williams (pwilliams@mdf.org).



The MDC-SBA Appropriated Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Program is focused on 10 designated and/or affiliate Maine Main Street Programs and builds off the highly successful ecosystem pilot in Lisbon, Monson and Skowhegan, Maine. The project consists of ecosystem technical assistance and grants for project implementation.

About the Main Street Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Approach

The Main Street Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Approach is a framework for supporting a local and/or regional support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses in which “Place” centers our work.



Successful Entrepreneurial Ecosystems depend on cross-sector partnerships and collaboration. Main Street programs are in a prime position to convene key partners to assess gaps and opportunities within the local ecosystem.

Additionally, the importance of place is often missing from the dialogue around Entrepreneurial Ecosystems. Main Streets are well-positioned to bring this place-based perspective to the table and help ensure that entrepreneurship support strategies leverage the distinct sense of place that makes your community unique.

The Seven Critical Factors of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

We think of Ecosystem building through the lens of seven (7) critical Factors. Given the diversity of needs to support the launch, growth/ scaling, and even the exiting of businesses, it is important to understand that Ecosystem building takes the alignment of many organizational stakeholders, grounded through input from entrepreneurs, in order to be successful and sustainable.



The Place Factor acknowledges that the external environment in which a business operates is extremely important relative to overall success. In addition, much of the programming and real estate components that serve to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses tend to have a spatial element, commonly centered in a downtown, where commerce, civic functions, housing, and recreation converge. Place Factors largely consist of the following examples:

- Real Estate — unique buildings (think breweries); move-in ready spaces; affordable start-up spaces, diversity of housing
- Launch support spaces — maker spaces, incubators/accelerators, shared-use food kitchens, night kitchens, mobile retail/food trucks, co-workspaces, entrepreneur hub centers
- Programming — pitch contests, pop-up programming, soup events
- Third Spaces — breweries, coffee houses, libraries — places that allow for entrepreneurs, remote workers, and small businesses to interact and accidental collisions.



The Social Capital Factor examines the ecosystem at the relationship level, primarily focused on mentorship and networking. We also examine the formal or informality of how entrepreneurs and small businesses make connections, find information, and interact with stakeholders and fellow business owners. The Social Capital Factor largely consists of the following examples:

- Networking events
- Entrepreneur and/or small business network groups
- Access to Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)



The Financial Capital Factor looks at the availability and diversity of capital resources available to small businesses at all points of their life cycle; from early formation and launch, scaling and growing, maturity, and ultimately an exit or transition. Financial Capital for most communities needs to be evaluated locally, but also regionally, as many programs and tools tend to develop at a broader geographic scope than our own communities. The Financial Capital Factor largely consists of the following examples:

- Personal equity (home, credit cards, personal savings, friends and family)
- Government loans and grants (local, state and federal)
- Bank lending tools
- Nonprofit entities (CDFIs, façade loan programs, low-interest loans from economic development groups)
- Private equity (angel and venture capital investors)



The Culture Factor is more qualitative and appears in local attitudes about entrepreneurship, support of small businesses, celebration of new business openings, and even our willingness to accept the risk of failure with new business ideas and concepts. The Culture Factor largely consists of the following examples:

- Media features on small business and new business announcements
- Presence of buy local and promotions like “Shop Small” campaigns
- New residents opening businesses • Small business owners engaged in local civic organizations



The Government/Regulatory Factor evaluates the policies, ordinances, and the experience of entrepreneurs and small businesses as they work with the public sector to launch and scale their business operations. In an unhealthy support system, entrepreneurs find the process for getting permits difficult and an environment focused on what you can’t do rather than how do we find a solution. It also examines the prioritization of entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy. Examples of Government/Regulatory Factor to be evaluated include:

- Community-specific web resources on how to start a business
- Economic development resources and capacity targeting small business development

- Zoning practices that provide for protections while allowing for a broader mix of uses and functions



The Education and Training Factor examines not only access and availability of educational resources for small businesses and entrepreneurs but should also evaluate these aspects from the perspective of the business life cycle. As such, there may be a great deal of workshops and on demand content for business planning or even digital commerce, but very little for how to think through business model shifts, succession planning, or even dealing with supply chain issues. Thus, examples of the

Education and Training Factor consist of the following:

- Involvement and engagement from a Small Business Development Council (SBDC), Women’s Business Center (WBC) and/or Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)
- Annual small business needs assessment
- Diversity of access to education and training: traditional onsite, virtual, and on-demand
- Local colleges and universities with entrepreneurship training programs



The Human Capital Factor is multi-faceted. As such, it examines a far range of human capital related variables including access to talent that might start and grow a business, the workforce necessary to support launching and growing businesses, and even the attraction of remote workers. Importantly, Human Capital also evaluates the level of equity and inclusiveness that enables women and minority businesses to engage in entrepreneurship. The Human Capital Factor consists of the following examples:

- Levels of minority and women-owned businesses as compared to local demographic profiles
- Youth entrepreneurship programming
- Engagement of local universities and colleges in workforce development matched to local market needs



Place-Based

This factor relates to the physical spaces, building fabric, amenities, and place assets that collectively provide the environment for entrepreneurs to be successful. Place-based indicators tend to focus on real estate support tools, like incubators, drop-in spaces, and maker spaces. However, amenities such as trail systems, diversity of housing options, and “fail fast” pipelines (like pop-ups, pitch it contests, and in-store product displays) represent critical indicators to having a place-based ecosystem factor.

Place-Based Factor in Gardiner	
Owner	Gardiner Main Street
Gardiner Main Street’s Role	Primary Lead, Developer, Connector, Advocate, Provider, Supporter, Convener
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The downtown is compact with a number of significant investments including Bateau Brewing and Johnson Hall projects that serve as important anchors.• Start-up activity has been strong over the last few years.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The primary gap, like so many successful Main Streets is the lack of vacant spaces for new businesses.• Gardiner lacks any hotel/motels, so part of an entrepreneurial development could include some Airbnbs or other short-term stay options.• More pipeline programming from pop-ups, co-op or micro retailing.



Government Policy/Regulations

This factor focuses on the public sector’s role within the Ecosystem. Indicators reflect the government’s role in developing supportive business policies and creating streamlined regulatory, permitting, and zoning practices that encourage a broad range of business ventures, while also making critical capital investments in cell service and internet fiber that result in strong public infrastructure.

Government Policy/ Regulations Factor in Gardiner	
Owner	City of Gardiner
Gardiner Main Street’s Role	Supporter, Convener, and Connector
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The city has a really strong “Doing Business” guide and appendix.• City has broad zoning in places that allows a good cross section of business types including small scale production, mixed-use, etc.• City has ordinances that allow for outdoor dining, sidewalk seating, etc.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nothing was highlighted.



Financial Capital

This factor examines the depth and breadth of financial resources available to entrepreneurs at all stages of the business life cycle, including traditional bank lending, crowdfunding, and microlending initiatives.

Financial Capital in Gardiner	
Owner	SBA Maine, Local Banks
Gardiner Main Street's Role	Connector, Convener and Supporter
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City of Gardiner offers a low-interest loan program, Tax Incremental Financing, and reduced commercial sewer hook-ups.• There is good connectivity to regional support partners.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local banking does not seem engaged with SBA financing programs.• Many entrepreneurs seemed to lack understanding and knowledge around crowdfunding opportunities as well as private equity and/or angel investments.



Social Capital

Entrepreneurs exist in a world where relationships, trust, and connections are significant in all aspects of the launch, growth, and sustainability of a business. This factor evaluates the community programs and activities that either proactively and/or organically add value to the entrepreneurship social network by promoting trust, reciprocity, and cooperation.

Social Capital in Gardiner	
Owner	SCORE Maine; Kennebec Valley Chamber (TBD)
Gardiner Main Street's Role	Primary Lead, Supporter, Connector
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SCORE chapter is engaged in the area, but there is an opportunity for growing that more formally.• Locally, there are access to regional networking events.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entrepreneurs and small business owners are seeking more “hyper local” networking and peer-to-peer opportunities.• Some business owners feel that access to local business owners through mentorship, collaboration, referrals is limited.



Education and Training

Technical assistance in the form of education and training opportunities represents a critical factor for the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem. Indicators examine opportunities for entrepreneurs to participate in the basics of entrepreneurship, as well as more sophisticated programming in logistics, multi-channel marketing, etc. Communities should have a sound grounding in both public and private education and training programming.

Education and Training in Gardiner	
Owner	Maine SBDC; Roux Institute; CEI; Maine SCORE
Gardiner Main Street's Role	Supporter, Convener and Connector
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Small Business Development Center is actively engaged and available for counseling and training in Gardiner.• Based on the inventory, there are services and assistance throughout the life cycle relative to education and training programs.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a lack of private sector agencies and businesses providing local services to small business owners.• Need areas revolve around e-commerce, business model shifts/diversification of revenues• Also needing training on growing and scaling.



Culture

Localized attitudes toward entrepreneurship as a career option and as a social activity define regional entrepreneurship culture, which in turn impacts personal choices to engage in entrepreneurial activities, as well as investor confidence. This factor contains indicators that examine a community's perspectives on risk-taking, innovation, career self-determination, business regulation, and acceptance from outsiders and their ideas, as well as how entrepreneurship is portrayed in the media.

Culture in Gardiner	
Owner	Gardiner Main Street; Kennebec Valley Chamber (TBD)
Gardiner Main Street's Role	Primary Lead, Supporter, Provider, Advocate, Connector and Developer
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local media coverage is supportive of providing features of local businesses and start-ups.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There's a general lack of collaboration and cooperation among existing and aspiring entrepreneurs• Programming that would engage or support entrepreneurs and small businesses to be more active in civic life.• Opportunities to leverage social media to promote local entrepreneurs.






Human Capital

Human Capital explores whether communities are creating pipelines of entrepreneurial talent from example academic institutions and whether they have the human capital in their workforce to fill positions as entrepreneurs grow their businesses. This is especially important in areas facing workforce shortages and/or areas where entrepreneurs operating in niche fields need specialized talent.

Human Capital in Gardiner	
Owner	Library Career Center; Gardiner Youth; Boys and Girls Club Job Matching; CEI Workforce Development Specialist; A4TD Program – Augusta
Gardiner Main Street's Role	Supporter, Convener and Connector
Existing Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The mix of local entrepreneurs and small business owners is representative of local demographics.• Local colleges/universities within the area also offer entrepreneurial programming.
Primary Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Like most places across the country, Gardiner is experiencing challenges in workforce retention and attraction.• Needing to find a way to facilitate a conversation with local school system representatives around K-12 entrepreneurial programming.

Gardiner Entrepreneurs Survey Summary

 Place-Based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business could benefit from additional assistance with finding space. • Business could benefit from assistance with pop-ups or implementing mobile retailing. • Parking was identified as most significant issue for business location. • Largest demand increase in preferred business location is toward an independent storefront.
 Financial Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants need greater guidance and connectivity on overall financial capital strategies and programs • Most significant for business operations is securing financing
 Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training assistance was needed in the following areas: ecommerce/online sales/web development; business model shifts



Gardiner Entrepreneurs Focus Group – Challenges

Place-Based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of emerging business mix focus could be on real estate, such as Airbnb operations. • More design and façade assistance to fix up downtown buildings.
Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need assistance with how to scale and grow the business.
Social, Human and Financial Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More programs or linkages for start-up capital. • Hiring and retention of qualified staff. • Greater networking opportunities with small business peers in Gardiner.

Critical Gaps Summary

 <p>Place-Based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding space as entrepreneurs desire to move from the home to independent storefronts. • Pop-Up, Micro-Retailing, Co-op and Mobile Retailing Pipeline Programming and Spaces. • Parking was identified as a significant issue. • Need more Place programming and support (pop-ups, pitch, etc.) • Start-up Spaces related to market niches (think Transformation Strategies). • Grants for facades and building renovations.
 <p>Financial Capital</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to known resources as gathered in the Inventory Map. • Need more education and understanding of equity and crowdfunding financing tools. • Greater connections to SBA financing tools at local banks.
 <p>Social Capital</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional networking and mentoring options, particularly those that are Gardiner specific and have some sort of peer-to-peer learning opportunities.
 <p>Education and Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need areas revolve around e-commerce and social commerce, business model shifts/diversification of revenues, macro and consumer trends that help with growing and scaling.
 <p>Human Capital</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding and retaining workforce remains a high priority and challenges for most businesses. • Engaging high school and college students with entrepreneurial programming.

Local Ecosystem Roles - Gardiner

	Financial Capital	Social Capital	Place Factors	Govt Policy and Regulatory	Education/Training	Culture	Human Capital/Workforce
–PRIMARY	SBA Maine; Local Banks	SCORE Maine; Kennebec Valley Chamber (TBD)	City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	City of Gardiner	Maine SBDC; Roux Institute; CEI; Maine SCORE	Gardiner Main Street; Kennebec Valley Chamber (TBD)	Gardiner Library; Boys and Girls Club Job Matching; CEI Workforce Development Specialist; A4TD Program – Augusta;
–SUPPORTER	City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Realize Maine Network; City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Maine Downtown Center; City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Gardiner Main Street	Maine SCORE; Gardiner Main Street	City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Gardiner Main Street – Jobs Board
–CONVENER	Gardiner Main Street	Realize Maine Network; Gardiner Main Street	Maine Downtown Center; City of Gardiner	City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Maine DOL; Maine SCORE; Gardiner Main Street	Gardiner Main Street	Maine DOL; Gardiner Main Street
–ADVOCATE			Maine Downtown Center	SBA Maine	Maine SCORE	Gardiner Main Street	
–PROVIDER	Roux Institute; CEI; SBA Maine; Financial Authority of Maine	Roux Institute; Realize Maine Network	Maine Downtown Center; City of Gardiner		Maine DOL; CEI; SBA Maine; Maine SCORE; New Ventures Maine; Gardiner Adult Ed.	Gardiner Main Street	Maine DOL; Live+Work Maine
–CONNECTOR	Maine SBDC; CEI; City of Gardiner; SBA Maine; Gardiner Main Street	Maine SBDC; Realize Maine Network; City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Maine SBDC; Maine Downtown Center; City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street	Maine SBDC; City of Gardiner; Maine SCORE; Gardiner Main Street	Maine SBDC; Maine DOL; CEI; City of Gardiner; SBA Maine; Maine SCORE; Gardiner Main Street	Gardiner Main Street	Maine SBDC; Maine DOL; City of Gardiner; Gardiner Main Street Local Staffing
–DEVELOPER	CEI; SBA Maine		Roux Institute; Maine Downtown Center; City of Gardiner	City of Gardiner	Roux Institute; CEI; SBA Maine; Maine SCORE	Gardiner Main Street	

Gardiner Ecosystem Recommendations

1. Vacancy rates in downtown Gardiner are fairly low. As such and given the number of entrepreneurs seeking storefront space, the next logical step may be in more of “co-op” relationship. Conduct of survey of downtown business and property owners to gauge their interest in hosting a new emerging business as part of their own store. This could take on something as simple as displaying an artist’s work inside of restaurant. Or a Night-Only business that opens after the primary owner closes the store for the day, which extends activity of the downtown into the evening. A great example of this is the False Front Bar (<https://www.thefalsefrontbar.com/>) in New Buffalo, Michigan that opens in the evening, while another business David’s Delicatessen operates in the same location in the front of the building during the day.
2. There is an opportunity to use the City’s “Guide to Business” as a foundation for building additional tools and connectivity. One way is to agglomerate online and on-demand content. Gardiner entrepreneurs were concerned about their ability to balance just running their businesses with being able to focus on growing and scaling. Given particular interest in finding new customers/marketing and ecommerce consider building out an agglomerated set of on-demand educational opportunities, such as “Grow with Google Tools” <https://grow.google/> and GoDaddy’s Empower Program - <https://www.godaddy.com/godaddy-for-good/empower> The

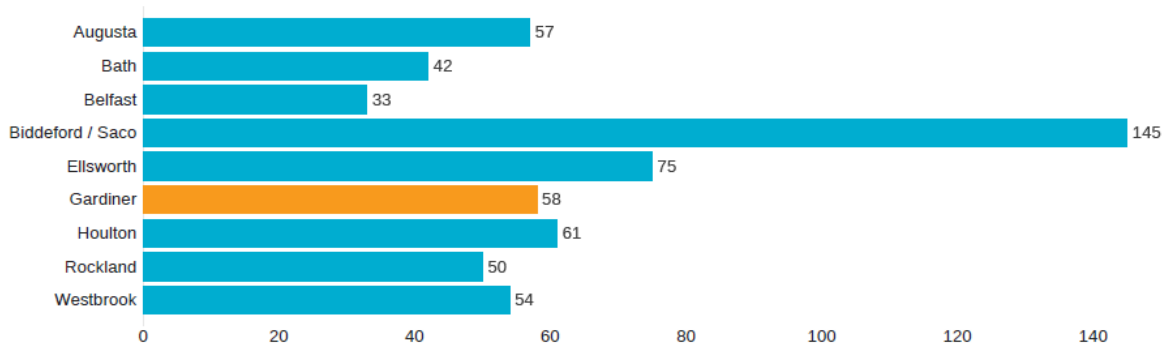
	SBDC, SBA, IRS and SCORE also have a number of on-demand programs for small business and entrepreneurs.
3.	From 2020 to 2021 according to Internal Revenue Service migration records, Kennebec County had 3,493 new filers, representing 5,811 new people. Many may have been seasonal residents and decided to go full-time or remote workers moving from another area. In fact, more than 36 percent of those were from out of state. Of the instate transfers, the majority were from Cumberland and Somerset counties. Conduct a cowork space/remote work feasibility study to examine opportunities to create a cowork space in downtown Gardiner. This may be an opportunity to also develop a new revenue stream for Gardiner Main Street through space memberships. The space could be hosted out of for example the Library, or an underutilized local sponsoring bank. That is what happened in Charlevoix, Michigan with there local Main Street and Chamber teamed up to open the “The Vault” in the current Huntington Bank branch facility basement that had it’s own entrance. https://www.charlevoix.org/thevault/
4.	The Gallery near the coffee house and brewery would make for a wonderful “event Pop-Up” space. Testing in the form of an event, would help to determine if there is an opportunity for a more permanent pop-up Gardiner shop. Here are some resources on hosting such an event: https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/creative-pop-up-events ; a full pop up tool kit: https://www.wallplay.network/toolkit https://www.thestorefront.com/mag/planning-pop-up-store-set-success-checklist/ https://medium.com/sidewalk-talk/introducing-a-pop-up-toolkit-for-retail-recovery-8cea9deb0b98 https://www.godaddy.com/garage/guide-to-launching-a-pop-up-shop/ Buil
5.	Building off the City’s work in “Starting a Business...” leverage the Ecosystem Life Cycle Inventory we developed of hyper local and statewide/federal resources and establish an updatable resource tool for sharing with partner stakeholders and hosted on the respective stakeholders’ websites. In addition, consider a more interactive version that would walk the entrepreneur through more of a “decision tree” process and then provide a set of resource connections and some form of education. This is what Main Street America did with ecommerce and its Main Street Online tool. https://mainstreetonlinetool.org/ In addition, there are database tools such as “Air Table” that can be used to support this work, or more subscription models such as https://www.joinsourcelink.com/ and EcoMap https://www.ecomap.tech/
	Work with the regional U.S. SBA representative to conduct a “lunch and learn” type of event around different SBA programs and the diversity of financial capital types and programs within the state of Maine and federal ecosystem. This is a wonderful “light lift” project that can be co-sponsored by your local Gardiner team and a chance to showcase ecosystem partnerships
6.	Formalize the E.E. Stakeholder Group by creating a joint workplan focused on entrepreneurs. Meet with the group every two months to update. Review Skowhegan Plan as an example to follow/guide the effort. This will further solidify that working relationship across the river and potentially rise additional opportunities for collaboration and building scale.
7.	Work with the City of Gardiner to scope out a more comprehensive parking study. Based on feedback from the stakeholders and entrepreneurs/small business owners, it seems there may be ways to create more short-term parking and/or drop off/pick-up spaces to create more turn-over of parking spaces. It’s unlikely that new spaces would be created so things like wayfinding; creating experiences from off-downtown parking lots to the downtown and always encouraging employees to park away from the downtown to free up those spaces.

8. In evaluating the Ecosystem Organizational Matrix, Gardiner Main Street and the City of Gardiner are shouldering essentially all the local responsibilities. Ensure that SBA Maine, SCORE and SBDC are more engaged as “locals” going forward to maintain communication. In addition, reach out to Kennebec Valley Chamber leadership to ensure their awareness and buy-in as to playing a primary lead role in networking events and activities.
9. As part of the resource directory, consider including a private sector tab for service providers to market their services, areas of expertise, etc.

Appendix – Entrepreneurs Survey Results

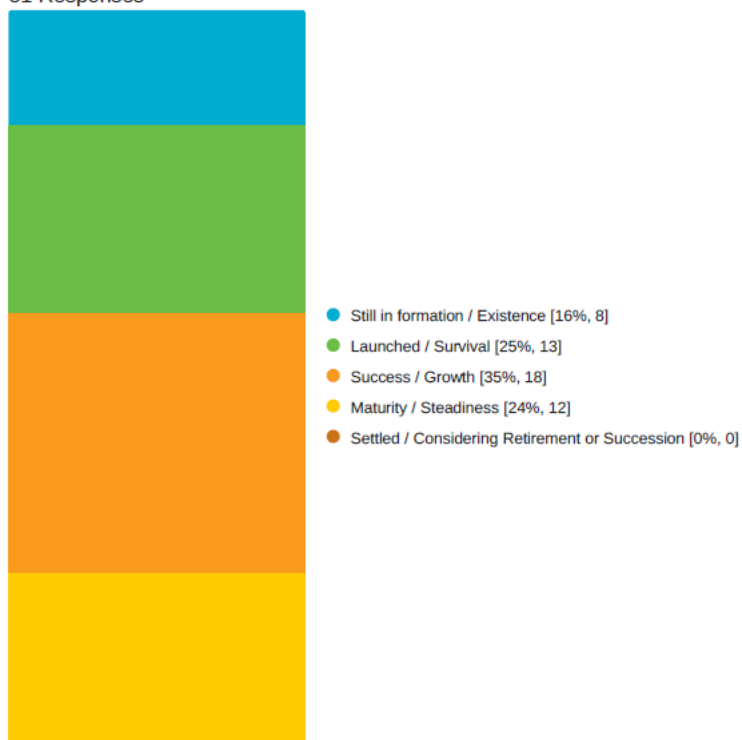
Q1 - To start, please identify the community nearest where you do most of your business or where you've been developing your business idea.

575 Responses



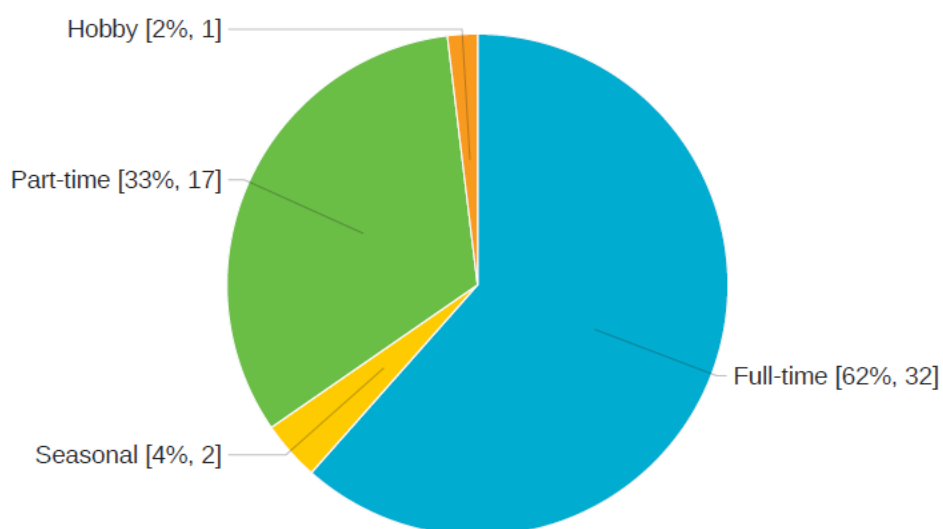
Q2 - What stage best characterizes you and your business or business idea's current state?

51 Responses



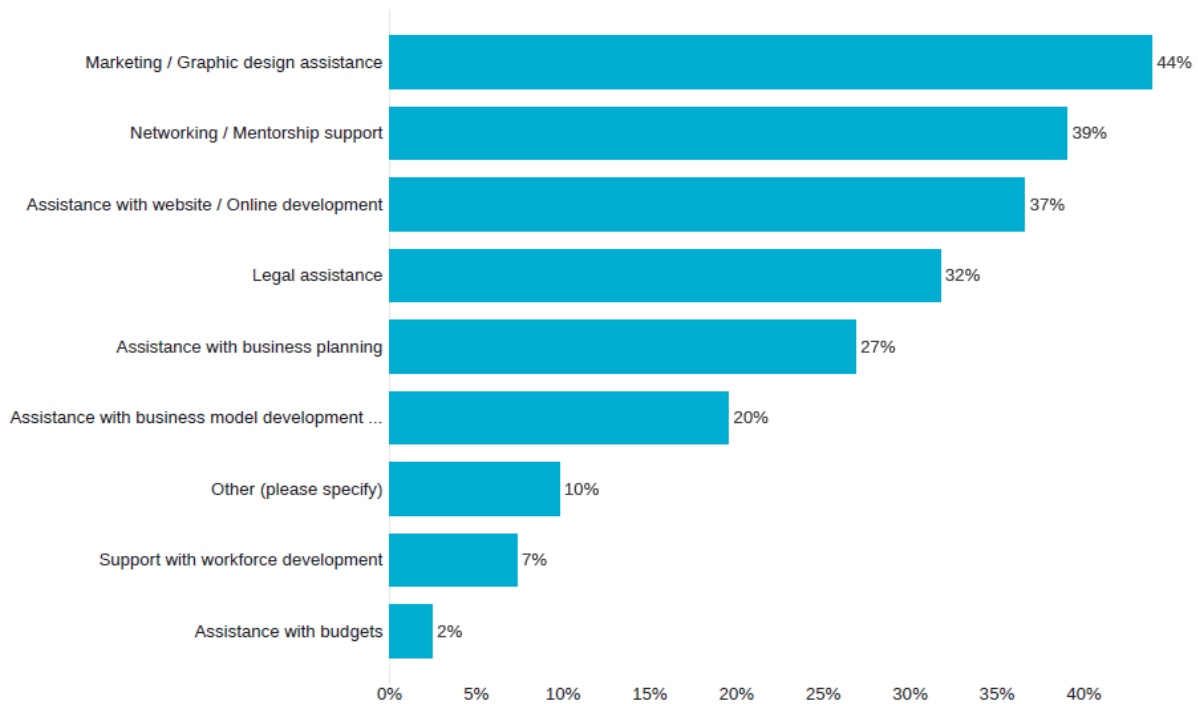
Q3 - How much time do you put into your business or business idea? (Please select all that apply.)

51 Responses



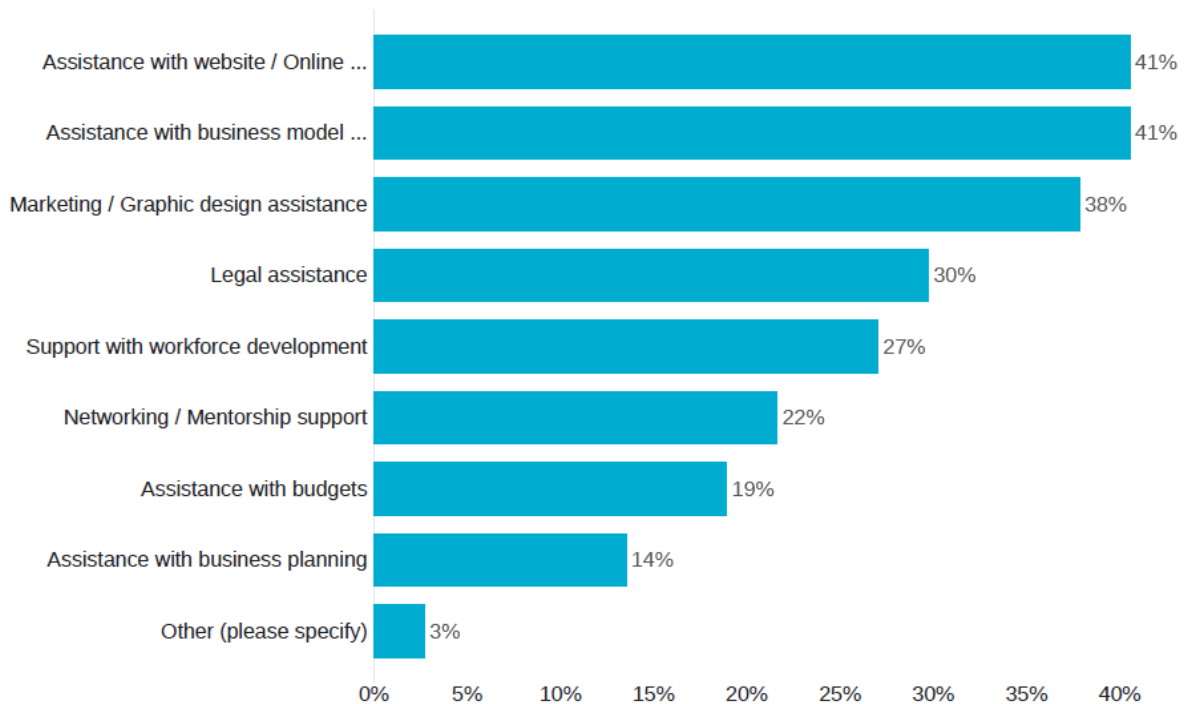
Q4 - What forms of business support and technical assistance have you used in the past as part of your business development? (Select all that apply.)

41 Responses



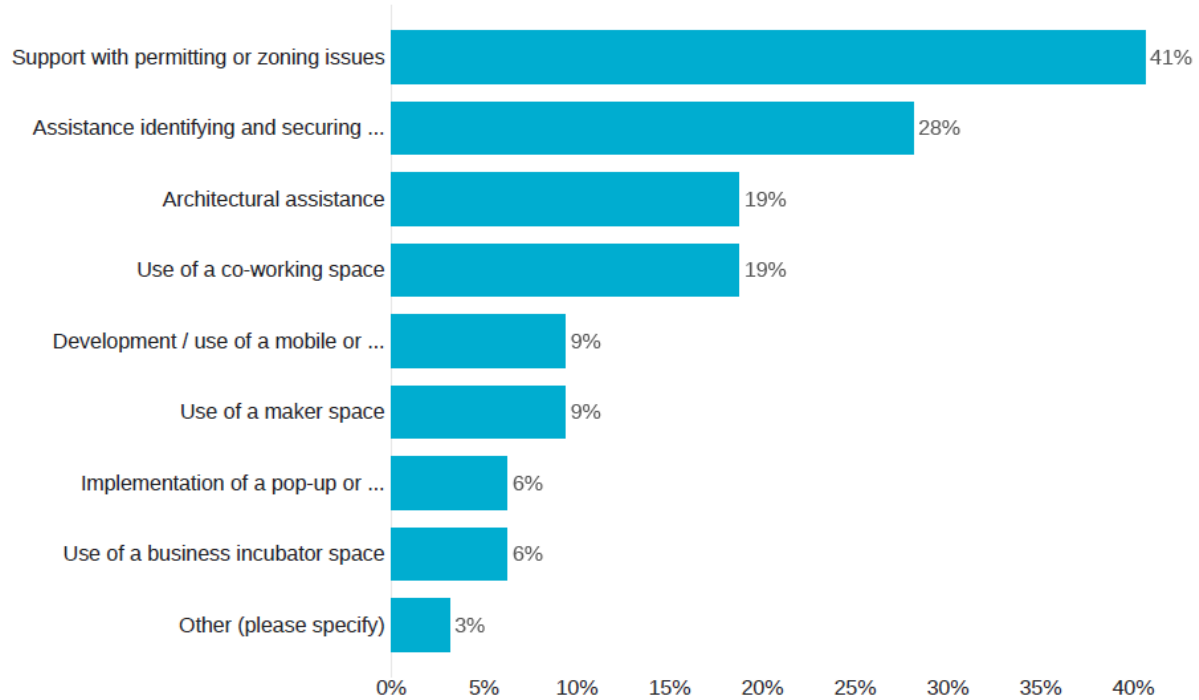
Q5 - What forms of business support and technical assistance could you currently benefit from as part of your business development? (Please check all that apply.)

37 Responses



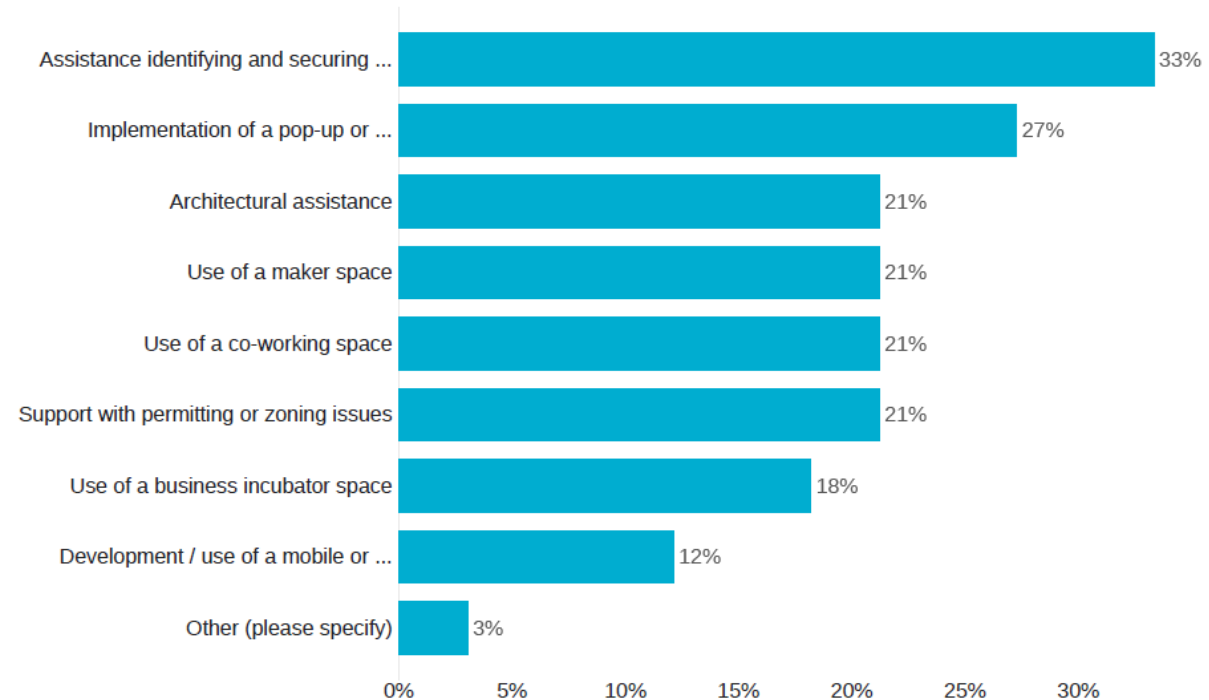
Q6 - What forms of real estate, design, or architectural support have you used in the past as part of your business development? (Please check all that apply.)

32 Responses



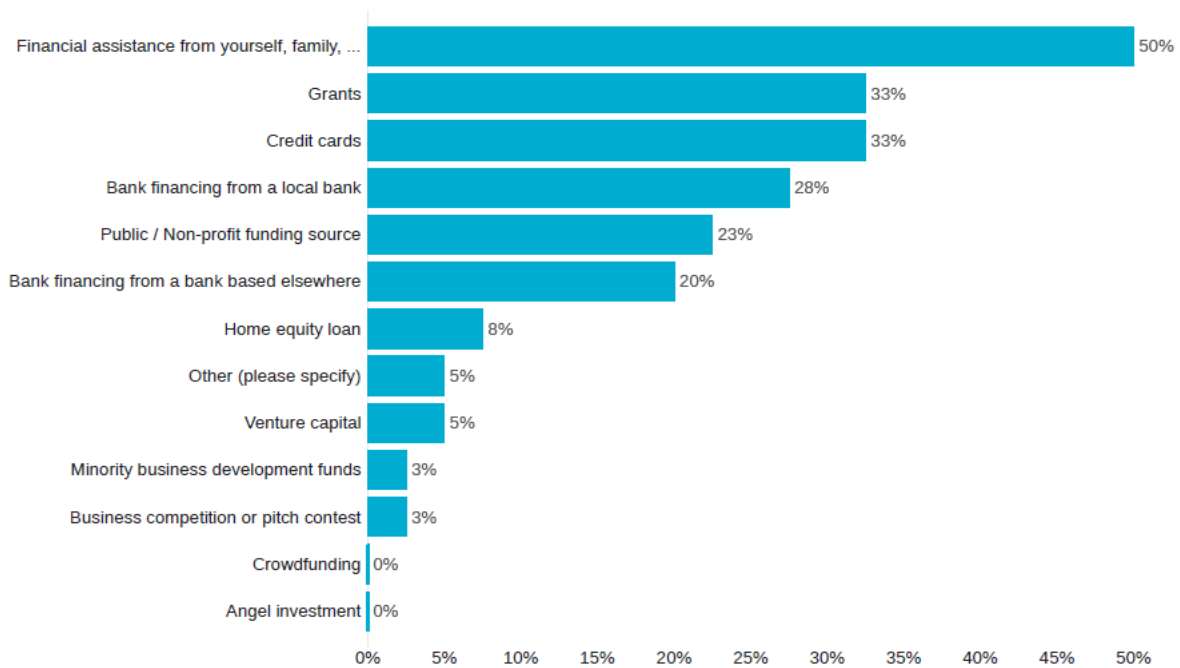
Q7 - What forms of real estate, design, or architectural support could you currently benefit from as part of your business development? (Please check all that apply.)

33 Responses



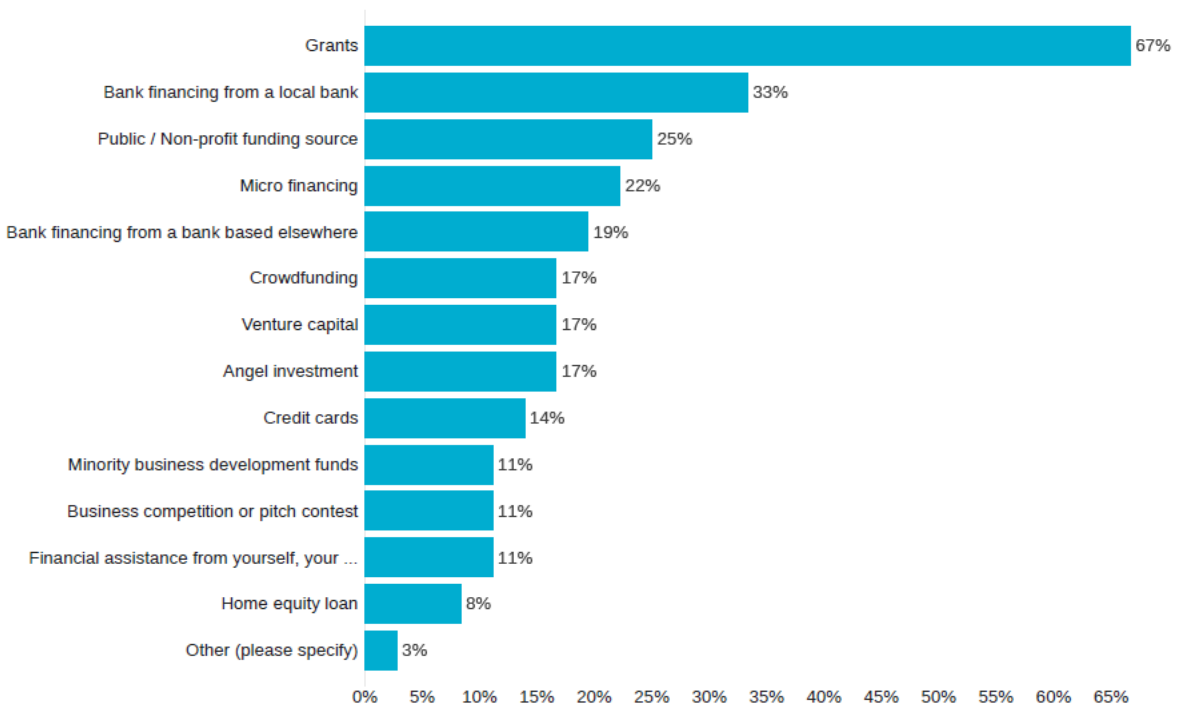
Q8 - What forms of financial assistance or support have you used in the past as part of your business development? (Reminder: Your responses to all questions will be kept confidential and will only be distributed in anonymized / aggregated form.)

40 Responses



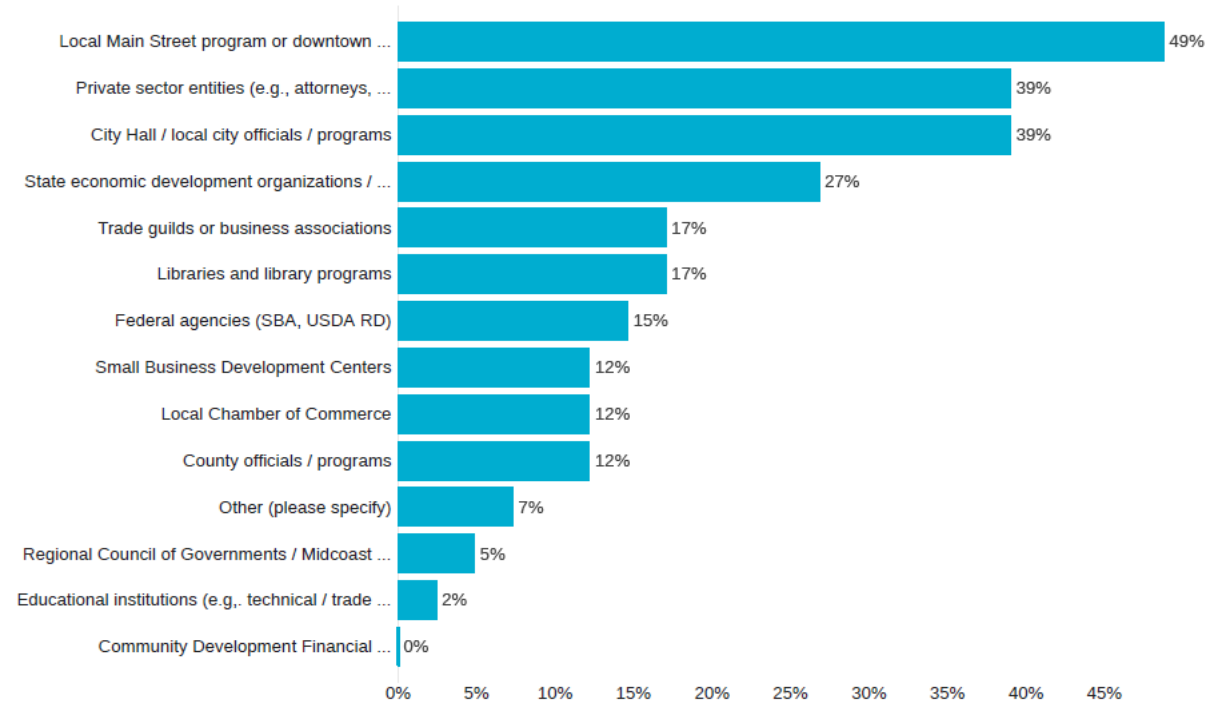
Q9 - What forms of financial assistance or support could you currently benefit from as part of your business development?

36 Responses



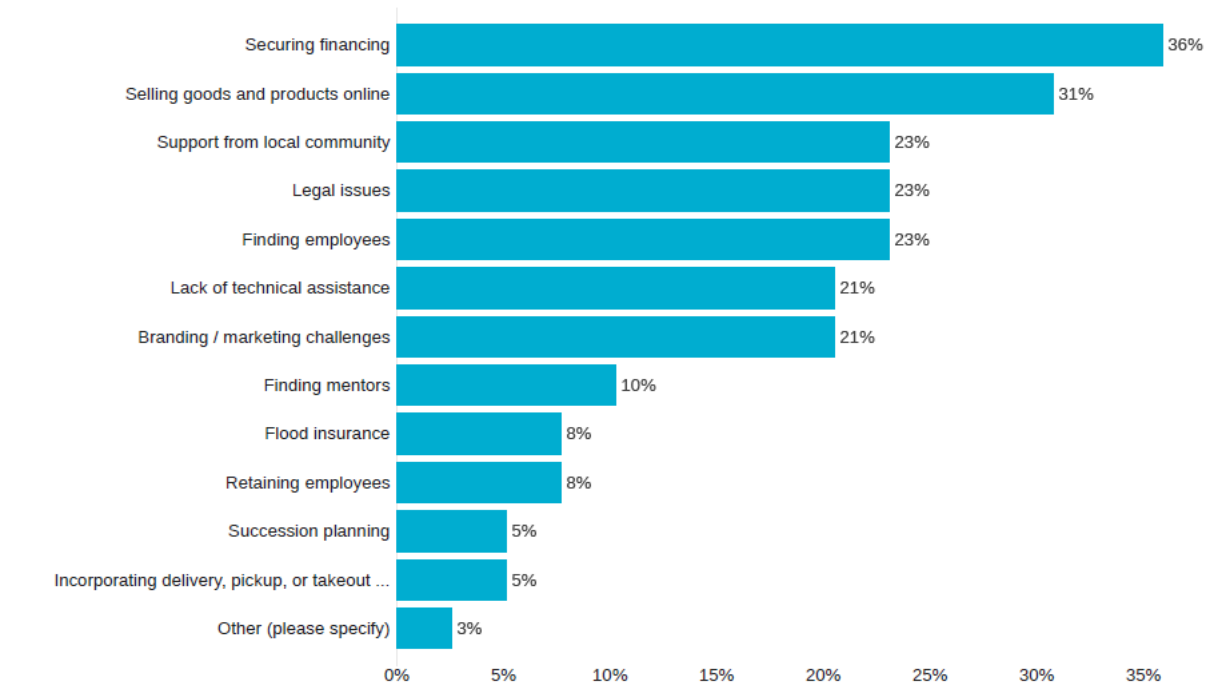
Q10 - Which of the following entities have provided you business-related support as part of your business development? (Please check all that apply.)

41 Responses



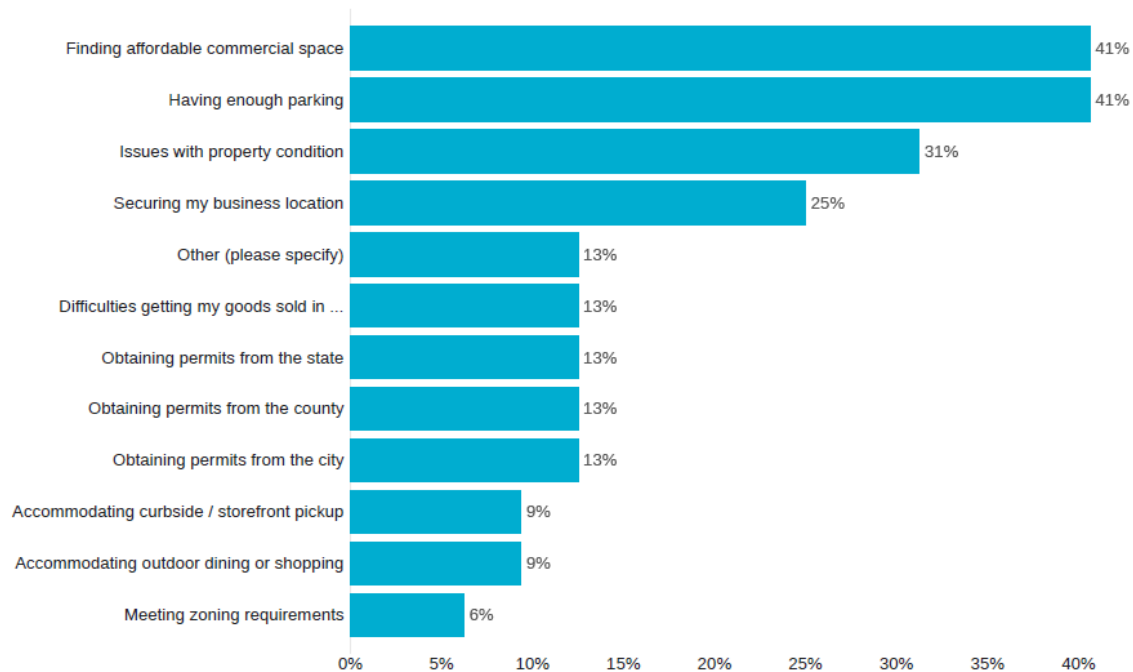
Q11 - What issues / barriers related to business planning, operations, and financing have you faced, either as you are launching your business idea or as a current business owner? (Please check all that apply.)

39 Responses



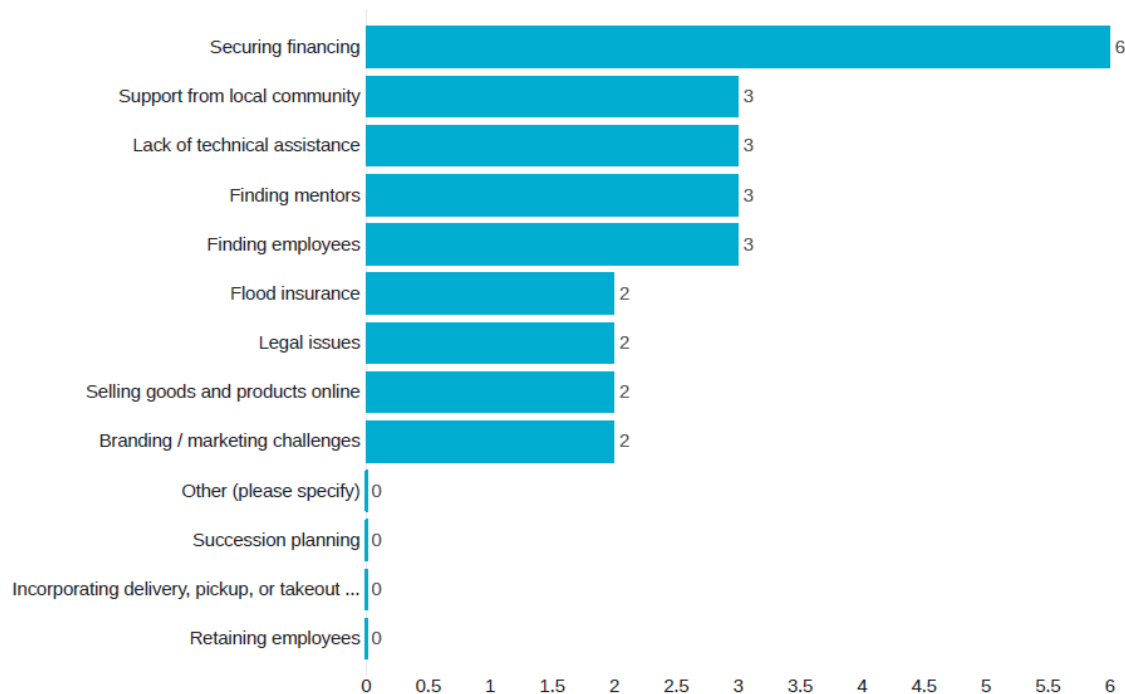
Q12 - What issues / barriers related to your present or potential business location and location design have you faced, either as you are launching your business idea or as a current business owner? (Please check all that apply.)

32 Responses



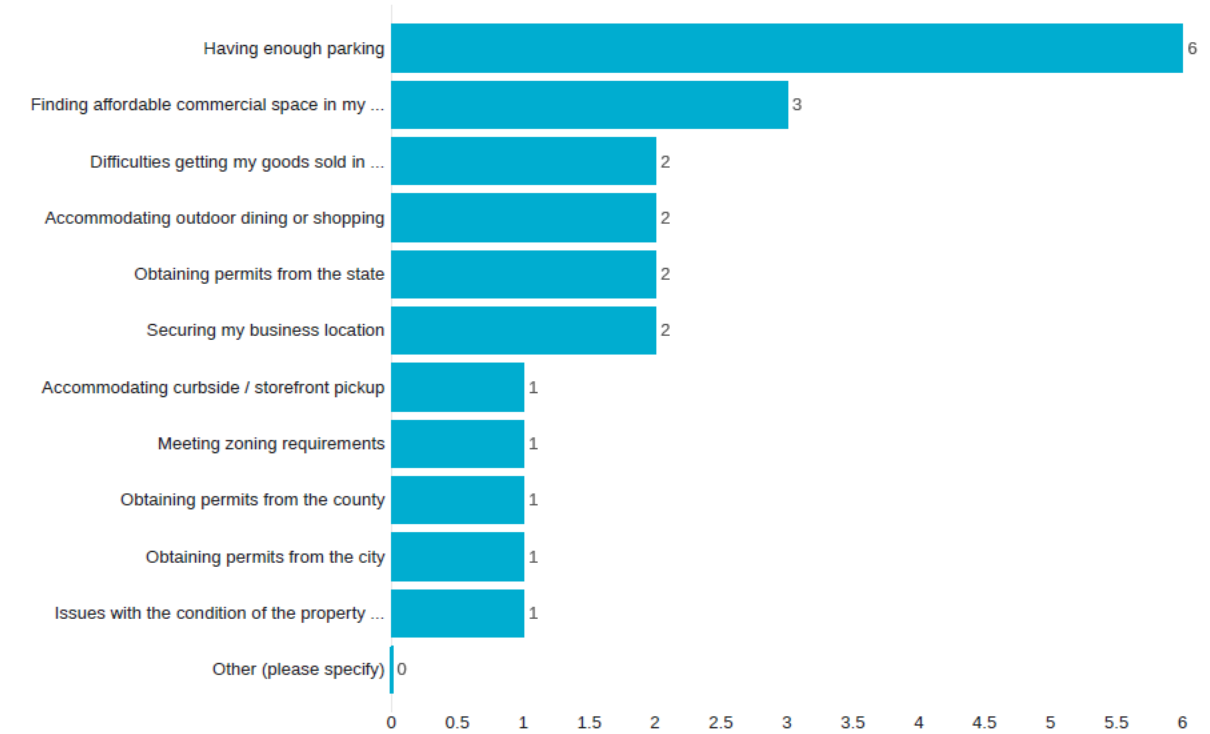
Q13 - As you think about the issues and barriers related to business planning, operations, and financing that you have faced or are currently facing, which do you think is most significant?

26 Responses



Q14 - As you think about the issues and barriers related to business location and design that you have faced or are currently facing, which do you think is most significant?

22 Responses



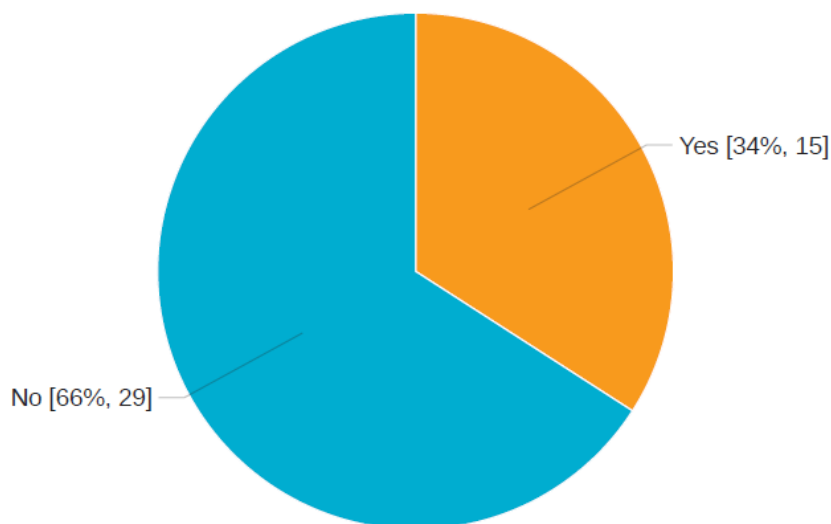
Q15_1 - Single / Greatest Current Need

44 Responses

Single / Greatest Current Need	Second Greatest Need (Optional)	Third Greatest Need (Optional)
economic support	N/A	N/A
service	quality	efficiency
Na	N/A	N/A
NA	NA	NA
Cash flow	meeting monthly expenses	staffing
Securing Financing	N/A	N/A
Finding Clients	Creating multiple products/ resell options	N/A
local clients	N/A	N/A
Qualified Employees	N/A	N/A
Financing	Business planning and permits	Affordable Location
Hiring workers	Retaining workers	N/A
Affordable Commercial Space	N/A	N/A
?	?	?
Employees	Access to healthcare	Affordable housing
Funding	Pop up/ market tools and displays	Networking
Meeting with the legal and economic conditions.	N/A	N/A
Business handling	business	Business communication
grow up	N/A	N/A
发展网络销售	N/A	N/A
Securing safe affordable space	N/A	N/A
Technical support	Financial support	Personnel support
distance	time	N/A
1	2	3
Private investors	Networking	N/A
Parking	Sidewalks	Marketing

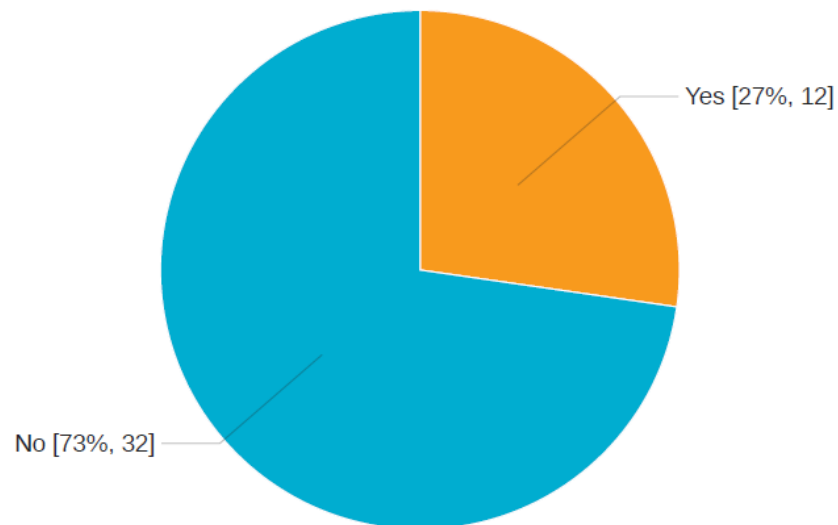
Q16 - Does the availability of housing currently impact where you choose to open or operate your business?

44 Responses



Q39 - Does the affordability of housing currently impact where you choose to open or operate your business?

44 Responses



Q16-1 - How significant is the impact of housing on where you choose to open or operate your business?

16 Responses

Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses	Sum
In terms of overall availability	2.00	5.00	3.50	1.18	1.39	14	49.00
In terms of affordability	1.00	5.00	3.60	1.36	1.84	10	36.00

Q17 - Overall, how would you rate Gardiner ...

Field	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	Responses	Sum
As a place with a strong entrepreneur network / programs supporting entrepreneurs	2.00	5.00	3.98	0.91	0.83	42	167.00
As a place where entrepreneurs can locate and succeed	0.00	5.00	3.62	1.17	1.38	42	152.00

Q18 - (Optional) Could you share more about why you rated Gardiner the way you did?

28 Responses

No

I think the Gardner community has been very effective in helping businesses.

Gardiner Maine St along with city gov't is very supporting, Great core of community supporters

I'm looking forward to hearing about the new executive director. I think the Downtown Assoc. does well for those that are downtown. But for in-home or freelancers, not sure where my place is.

Strong supporter of youth and family services

Gardiner seems to be very helpful to local businesses

Lack of quality commercial property for lease/sale

Experience with landlords asking ridiculous rents and not caring about the contribution to Gardiner

Great local support and growing downtown.

There is more affordable housing here than in other areas of central mean that has been helpful. The community is very supportive and connected.

Though there seems to be some independent stores, there is a lack of range of businesses.

公平性

Gardiner Main Street well established new City Mgr had new energy but not proven to me

I really mind.

Gardiner needs to focus more on marketing what we have to bring people to our city.

Gardiner continues to be outstanding in supporting small business development and the Gardiner Main Street organization is top notch.

For a small community the support is excellent

Q19 - What would make Gardiner a community that is more hospitable and supportive of entrepreneurs?

31 Responses

government support

The Gardiner community helps these businesses not only financially but also politically.

more outreach to the community on a whole

Could use a co-worker space or freelancer mentors.

More affordable housing for young families

Affordable locations

The permitting processes are cumbersome & sign requirements are very strict, so lessening those burdens would be helpful. Parking is insufficient.

Affordable rents and landlords not sitting on empty buildings which feels like holding the buildings hostage

Better sidewalk paving and parking

More affordable housing.

There needs to be a vision or a draw to the community. Until Johnson Hall is finished, there isn't really a "draw" to the community.

盈利

A better job on promoting what space is available for rent or sale.

I don't know

The policy is very good

Cannot disclose

Q20 - Tell us what makes Gardiner a great place to be an entrepreneur. Why should someone choose this community for their business?

30 Responses

government support

I think environment and labor are the main reasons.

The main street is welcoming and very warm, great set of existing businesses. Johnson Hall revitalization.

If you want that quaint downtown vibe. Friendliness.

Gardiner has much potential to become a business hub in the community.

Supportive community

Beautiful waterfront and business park

Rail trail

Established stores and restaurants

Beautiful library

New arts center getting ready to reopen

Great growing community

The code enforcement office was pleasant to deal with. It has a great small town feel.

Supportive community

Great city support and eye toward sustainability

Cheap rent. Vibrant downtown. Large population seeking my services.

Support through marketing and promotion.

优质资源

Q21 - Imagine someone handed you \$1M and said: "Invest this in your community to grow it as an innovative place." What would you do and why? What project would have the biggest impact on establishing the community as an innovative place?

30 Responses

All for the welfare of children and the disabled

I would put that money into community hospitals, because that's what matters to all of our residents.

Johnson Hall along with the attraction of a hotel to help Gardiner become a destination location

I would design a co-working space that has a few conference rooms as well as private spaces. In addition, creating a mentor list for different industries would be helpful. Those two things could benefit home-based entrepreneurs. Finally, having monthly talks/lectures/events at the co-working space for the entrepreneur community. Something like the business after hours at the Chamber, but more focused on technical pieces.

Operating a restaurant

Finding investors

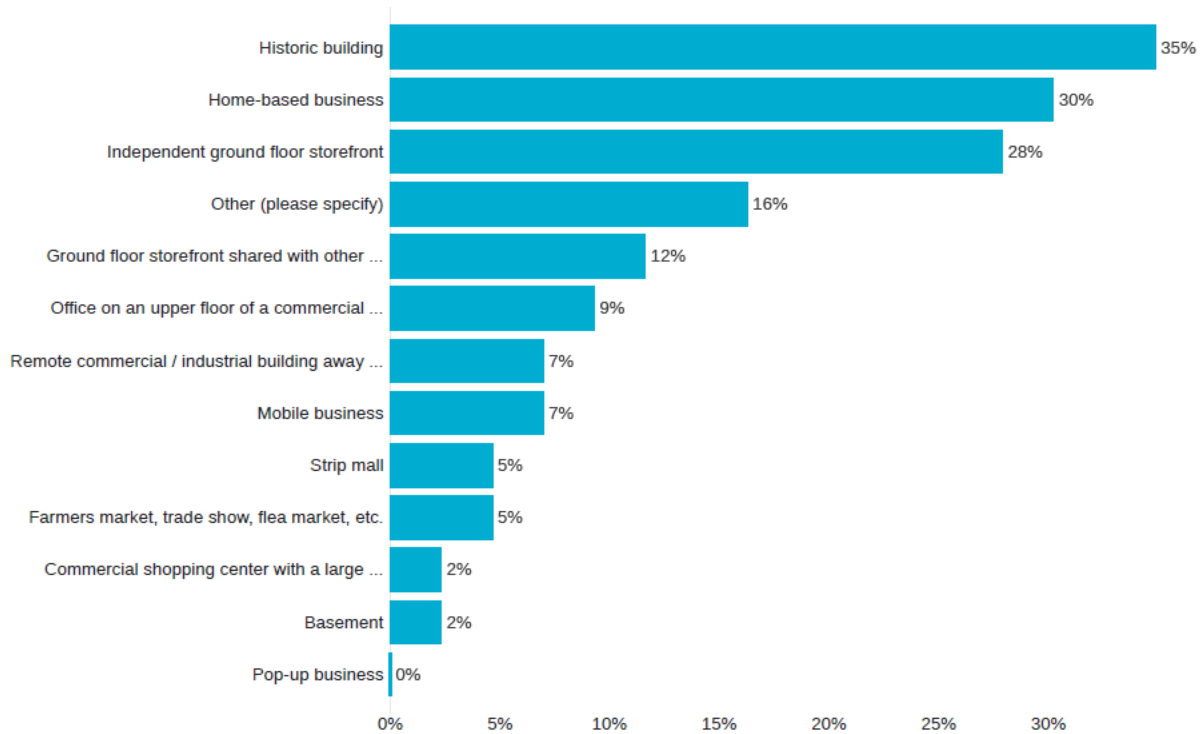
Surviving Winter as a creative entrepreneur

Work-Life Balance

The very first investing is parking for the downtown local businesses. A parking garage seems the most likely since there doesn't appear to be any land to develop into parking. A shuttle from the parking area to the downtown business would be next. And I would change the downtown business requirement of the business' need to clean off the snow in front of their shops, I would change it to a public works person cleaning off the sidewalks and making sure a clear path from the street to the stores is passable.

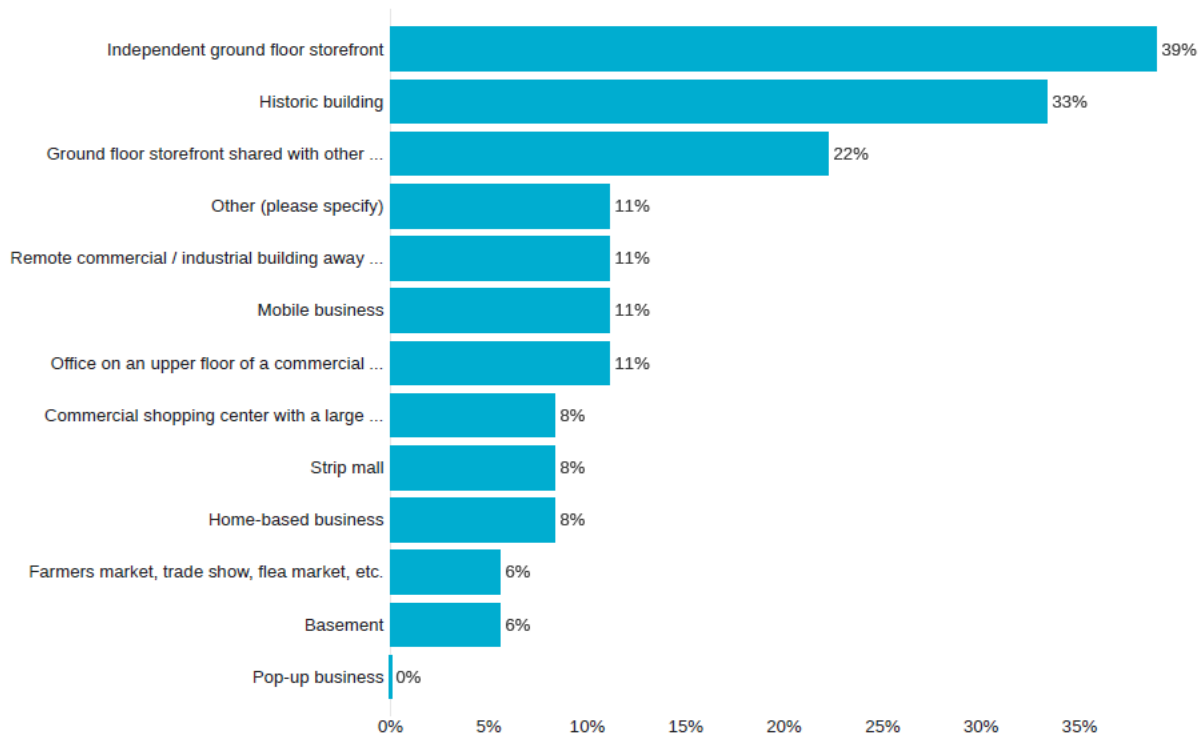
Q22 - Which of the following words or phrases could describe your current business location(s)?
(Please select all that apply.)

43 Responses



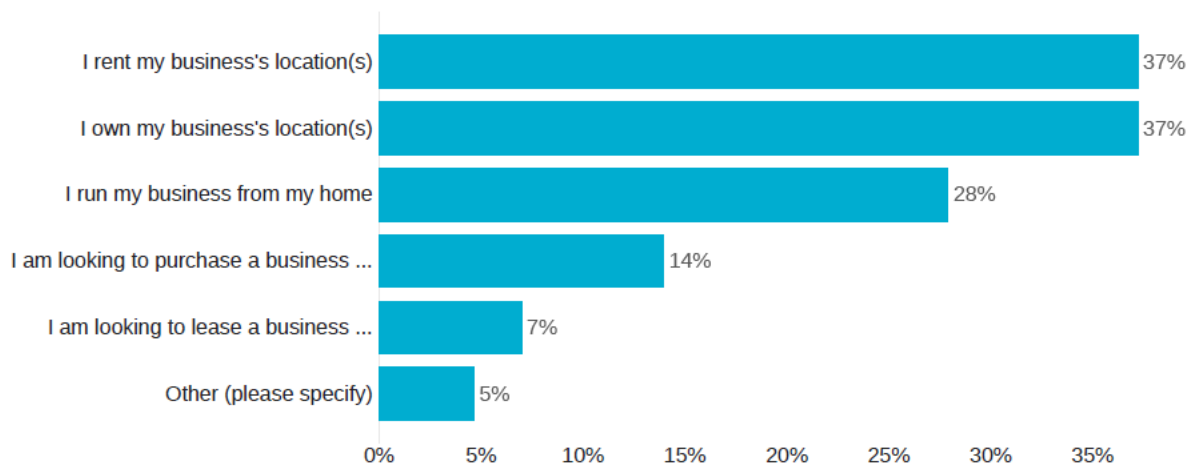
Q23 - Which of the following words or phrases could describe your ideal future business location(s)? (Please select all that apply.)

36 Responses



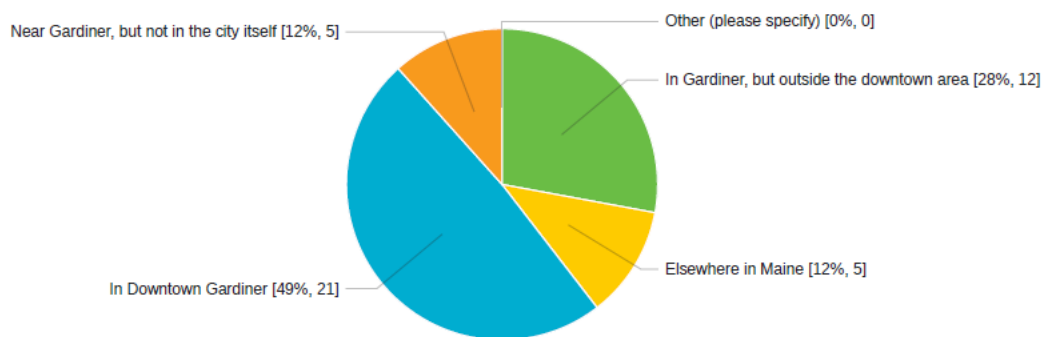
Q24 - What is your current situation relative to your business's location? (Please check all that apply.)

43 Responses



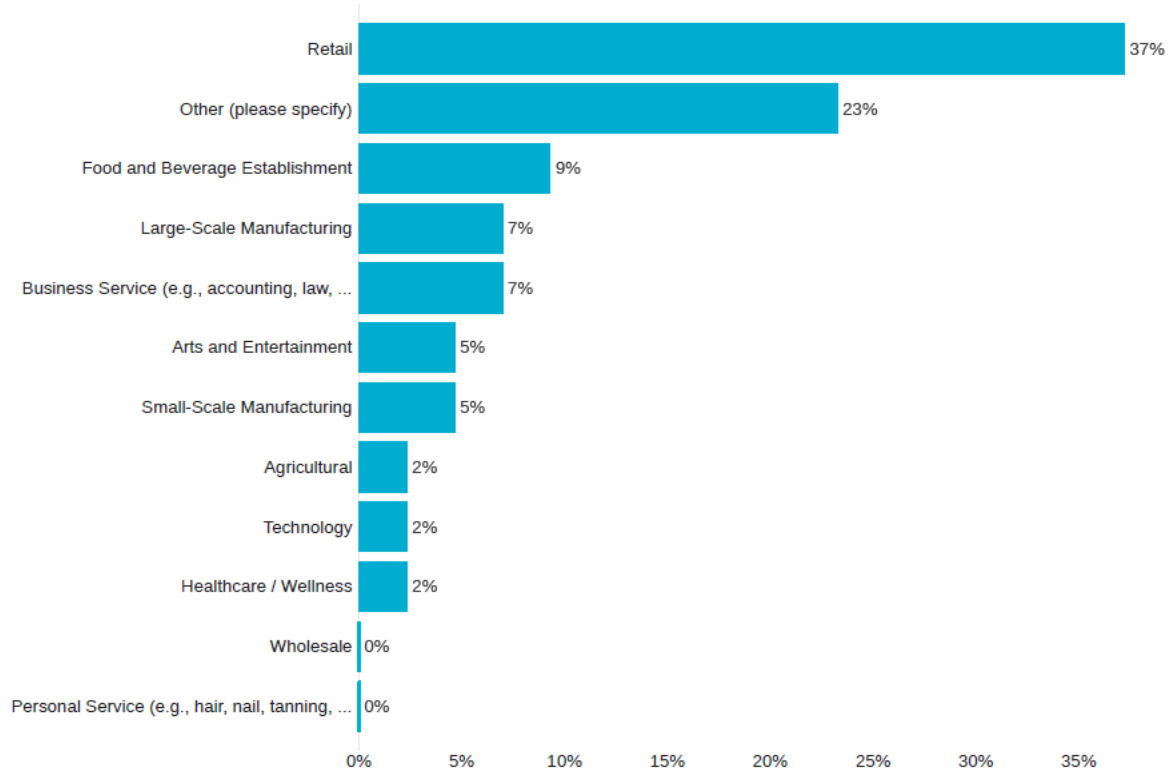
Q25 - What is the primary location of your business?

43 Responses



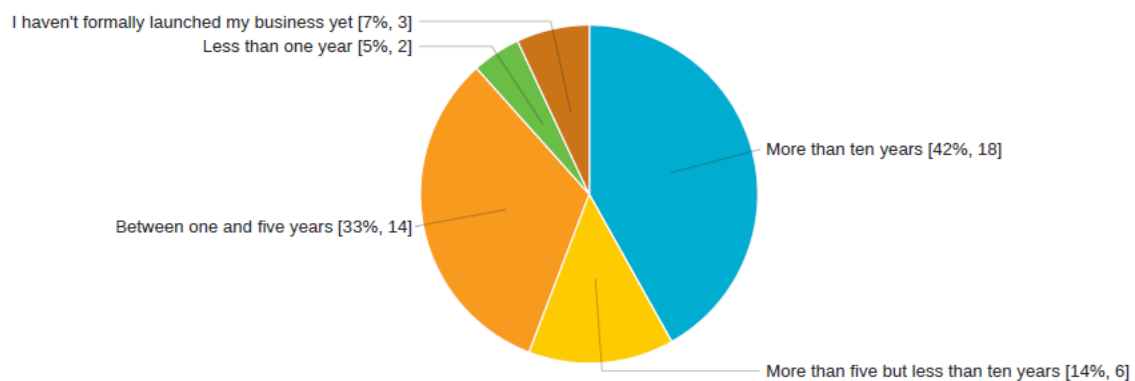
Q26 - What sector best describes your business or business idea?

43 Responses



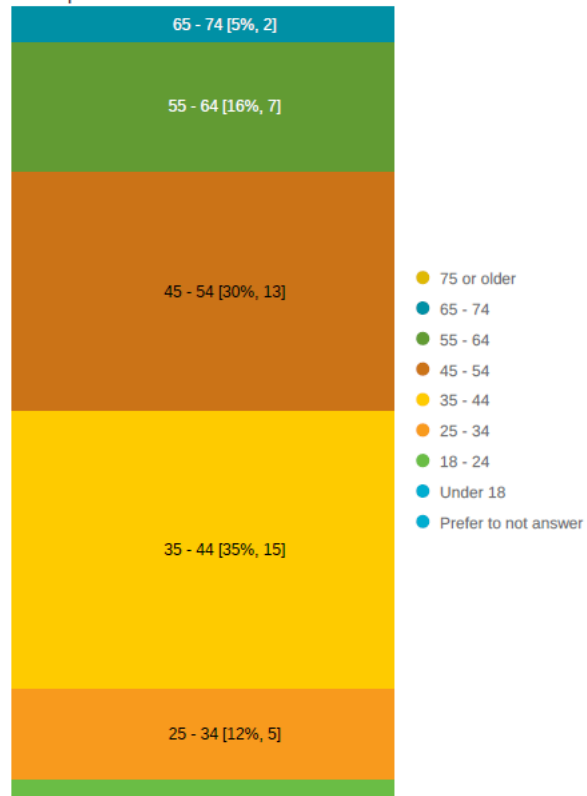
Q27 - How long have you been in business?

43 Responses



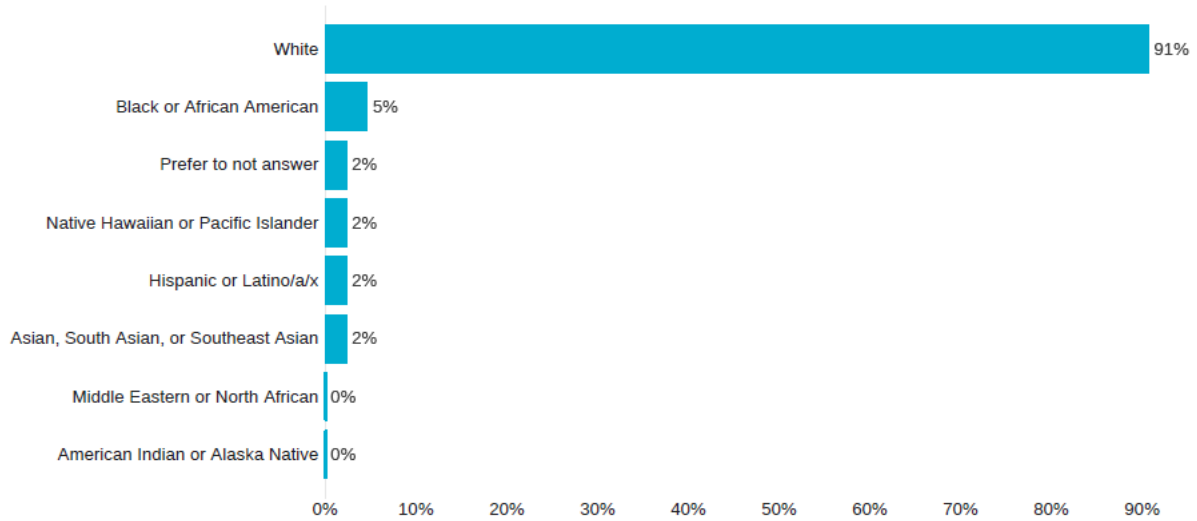
Q28 - How old are you?

43 Responses



Q29 - How do you identify in terms of race and ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

43 Responses



Q30 - How do you identify in terms of your gender? (Please select all that apply.)

43 Responses

