

STAFF REPORT: Communications and Economic Development

REPORT TO: Committee of the Whole
MEETING DATE: September 29, 2014
REPORT NO.: CEDC.14.3
SUBJECT: 2014 Business Retention and
 Expansion Study Update

PREPARED BY: Barbara Kavanagh,
 Business Retention and
 Expansion Coordinator

A. Recommendations

That Council receive Staff Report CEDC.14.3 “2014 Business Retention and Expansion Study Update” for information purposes.

B. Background

In January 2013, Council approved the implementation of a Business Retention and Expansion Study (BR+E) to be conducted with local businesses.

Project planning, began in July 2014 with the recruitment and confirmation of community and Town employee volunteers. Business lists were consolidated through published business association lists, including the Blue Mountain Village Association (BMVA), Business Improvement Area (BIA) and Georgian Triangle Tourist Association (GTTA) along with the internal Town of The Blue Mountains business list. E-blasts, tweets and communication through the Economic Development Advisory Committee and the Thornbury Builders and Trades Association members sought to encourage businesses who were not currently on these lists to register to be interviewed.

Businesses were segmented by industry sector and randomly selected from within sectors to participate in the survey process. Sixty businesses from a cross section of industry sectors have agreed to participate and will be contacted between September and October through 30 recruited volunteer visitors. The expectation is that each volunteer visitor will conduct between two and four interviews with local businesses to collect the survey data. These volunteers include Town staff to ensure that businesses in our community understand that we truly want to hear their feedback and ideas.

With assistance from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, four weekly volunteer training sessions are organized to take place at Town Hall through the month of September. Following each volunteer training session, meetings between the volunteers and businesses will be organized within two weeks of each training session.

The BR+E study project is on track to begin business meetings by the middle of September. One interview has already been completed.

The expected completion time for all of the business interviews is the middle of November, at which time analysis of the confidential data collected will begin.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

6.6 Implement processes for continuous improvement

D. Environmental Impacts

None.

E. Financial Impact

None.

F. In Consultation With

Troy Speck, Chief Administrative Officer
Elizabeth Cornish, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator

G. Attached

G 1: Status Update of BR+E

Respectfully submitted,

Troy Speck, CAO
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BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

An Open for Business Initiative

BR+E Status



BR+E

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

An Open for Business Initiative

Volunteers

- 38 identified:
 - 30 confirmed and booked for training
- 4 training sessions:
 - Sept 4
 - Sept 9
 - Sept 16
 - Sept 23
- Business Meetings:
 - Organized through volunteers teams
 - Staggered after each training session
 - (Sept – Nov)

Businesses

- 455 identified (from Association lists):
 - 10 closed
 - 1 moved out of Town
- 444 Segmented into 18 sectors:
 - Those being interviewed were randomly chosen from each sector
- Status of Recruitment (170 targets)
 - **60 Yes**
 - 14 No
 - 80 emailed or called
 - 16 Can not contact or reach
- Redemption rate: 35%:
 - From 170 touch points
- Participation rate: 14%:
 - From current business list

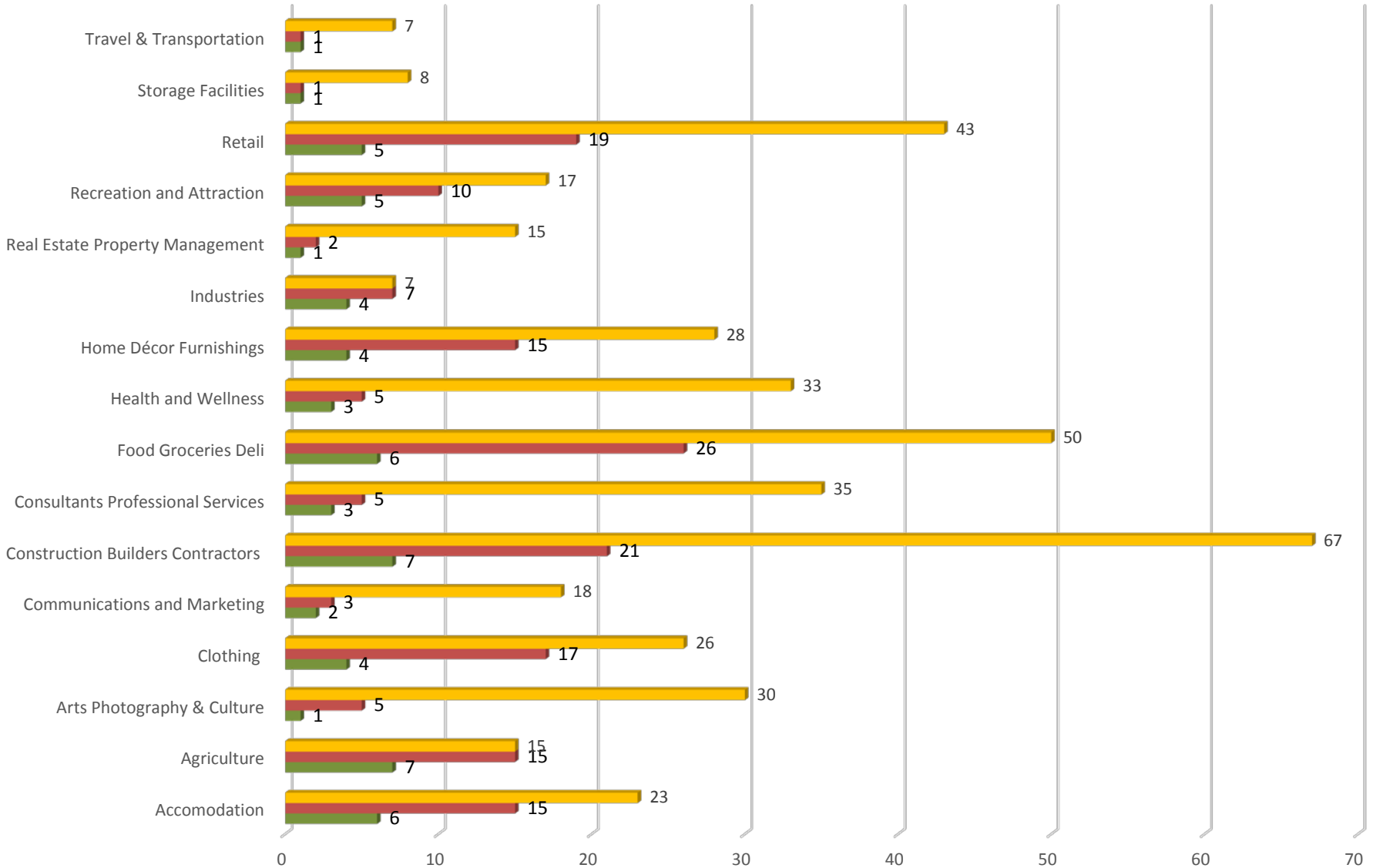
Businesses Sectors



BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

An Open for Business Initiative

Businesses # Targeted Yes



Source: TOBM, GTTA, Chamber, BMVA, BIA, Thornbury Builders & Trade



<u>Business Sectors</u>	<u>Businesses Identified</u>		<u>Targets</u>		<u>Confirmed Sept 10</u>		
	# Businesses	% Total Businesses	# Targeted	July	Aug	Yes	% Total Surveys
Accomodation	23	5%	15			6	10%
Agriculture	15	3%	15			7	12%
Arts Photography & Culture	30	7%	5			1	2%
Automotive	11	2%	2			0	0%
Clothing	26	6%	17			4	7%
Communications and Marketing	18	4%	3			2	3%
Construction Builders Contractors	67	15%	21			7	12%
Consultants Professional Services	35	8%	5			3	5%
Entertainment	2	0%	0			0	0%
Food Groceries Deli	50	11%	26			6	10%
Health and Wellness	33	7%	5			3	5%
Home Décor Furnishings	28	6%	15			4	7%
Industries	7	2%	7			4	7%
Pet Stores Veterinary Services	7	2%	1			0	0%
Real Estate Property Management	15	3%	2			1	2%
Recreation and Attraction	17	4%	10			5	8%
Retail	43	10%	19			5	8%
Storage Facilities	8	2%	1			1	2%
Misc/Cleaning	1	0%	0			0	0%
Travel & Transportation	7	2%	1			1	2%
	443	100%	170			60	100%