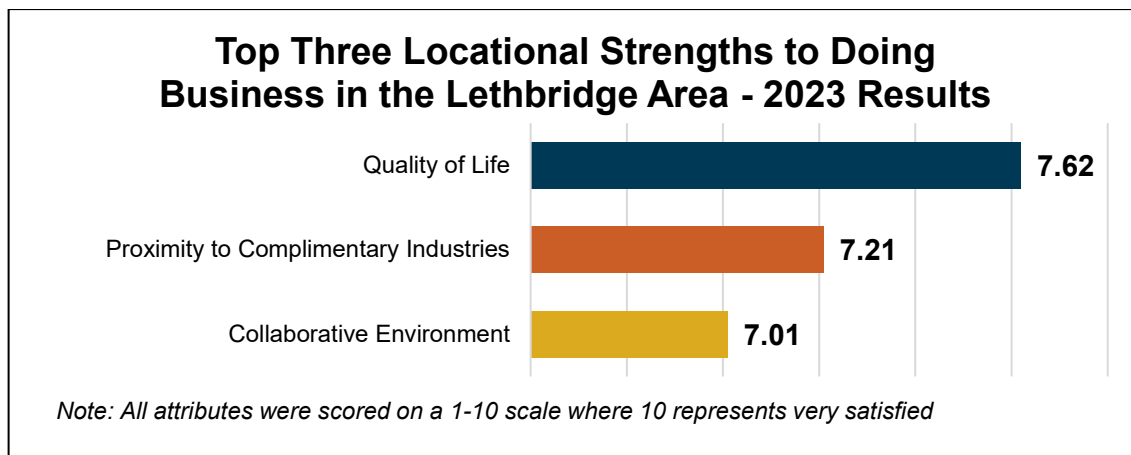


**Background:**

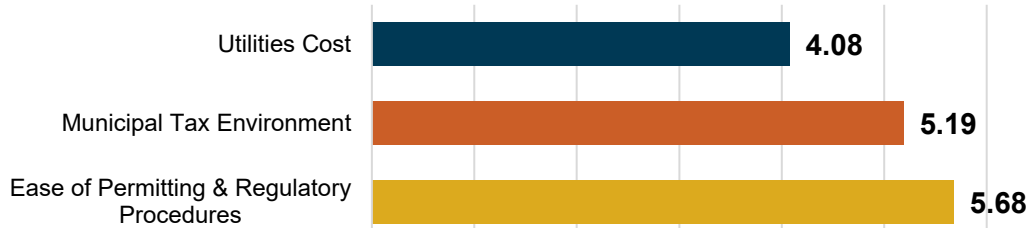
Economic Development Lethbridge (EDL) and the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce have partnered on the annual Brighter Together survey of local business since 2019. This initiative probes local organizations to provide feedback about their current sentiments and overall business health in order to better understand local conditions and to communicate the results to key stakeholders. The findings from the survey help us anticipate and respond to current and future challenges in our area and also help us highlight and articulate our comparative advantages as a city.

**2023 Highlights:**

- Optimism among local businesses & organizations remains high, as two-thirds of respondents (66%) expressed a favourable outlook for the next 6-12 months.
- The most pressing obstacles firms anticipate over the next year are related to costs, with rising cost of inputs, rising interest rates & debt costs, and rising cost of labour the top projected barriers for 2024.
- The top locational challenges to doing business were also centred around costs with utilities costs, the municipal tax environment, and ease of permitting & regulatory procedures cited as the most pressing barriers in our area. Locational strengths were consistent with previous years, with quality of life selected again as the top attribute.
- Employers are more likely to maintain the status quo in regards to their workforce, with a rising proportion of respondents indicating their head count will remain the same over the next 6-12 months.
- An increasing share of respondents indicate they are likely to focus on upskilling and staff training over the year ahead. There is also an elevated focus on improving company productivity, with two-thirds of businesses & organizations (66%) highlighting this.



### Top Three Locational Challenges to Doing Business in the Lethbridge Area - 2023 Results



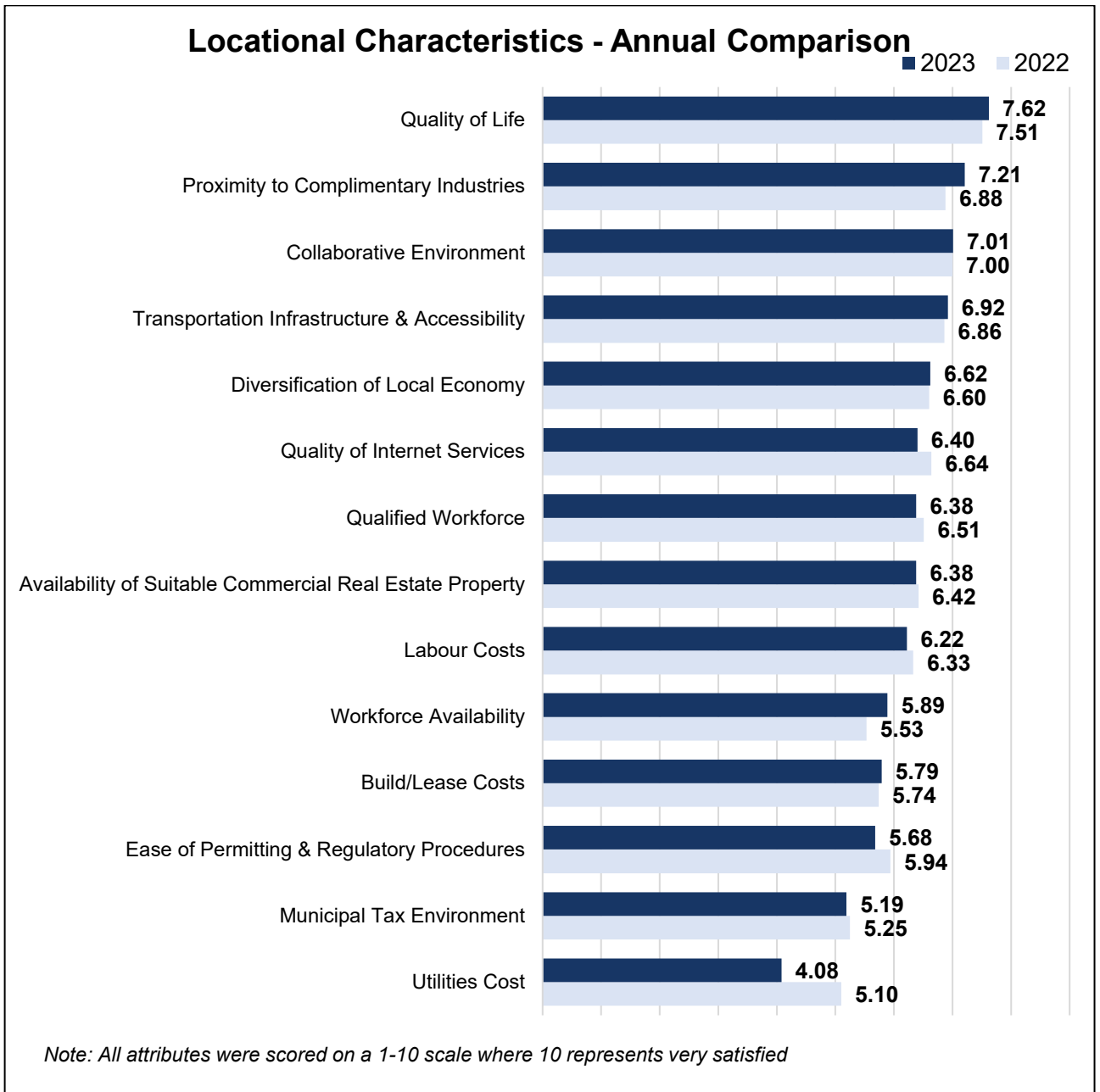
Note: All attributes were scored on a 1-10 scale where 10 represents very satisfied

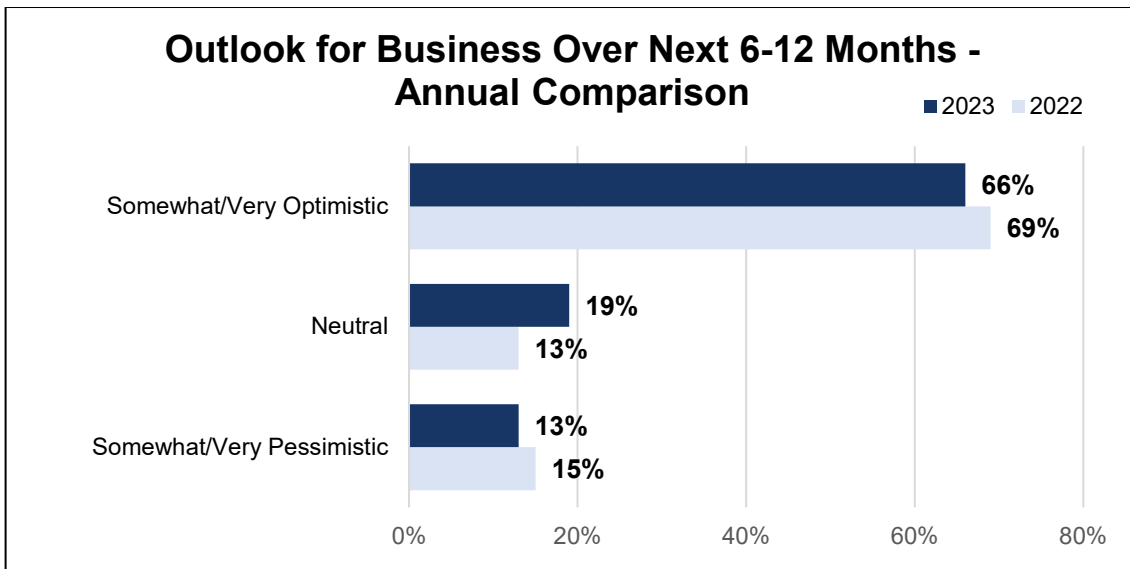
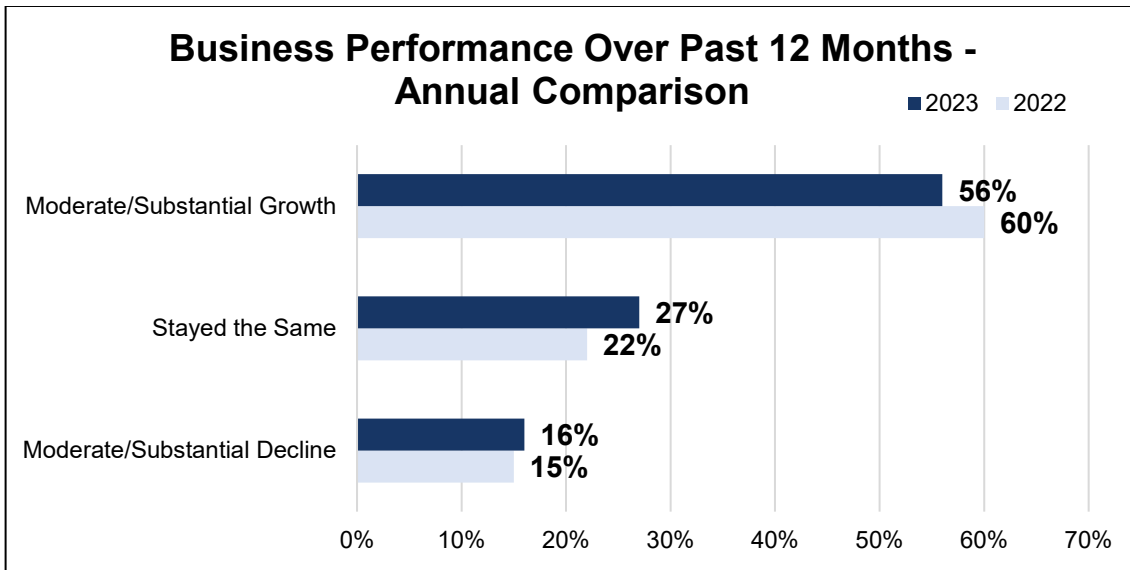
### Top 3 Locational Strengths to Doing Business in the Lethbridge Area – Annual Comparison

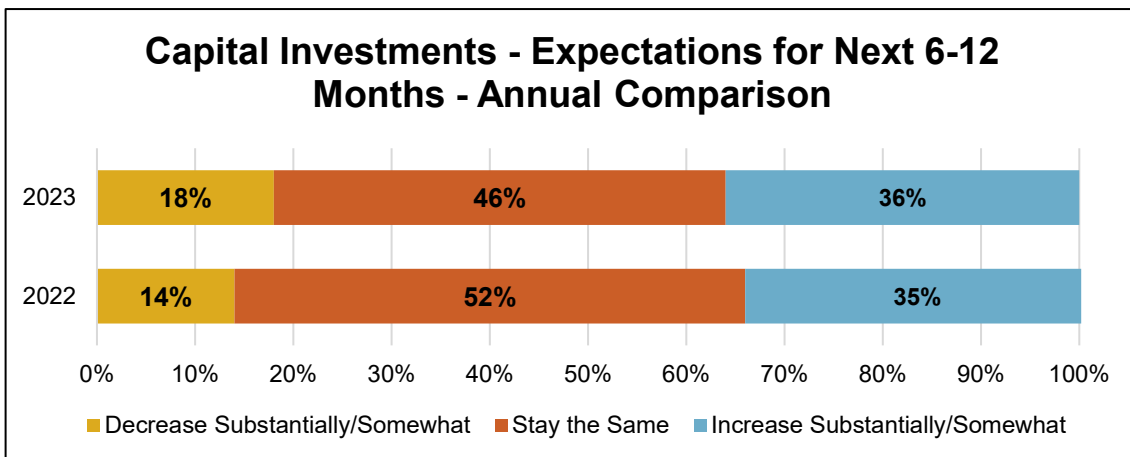
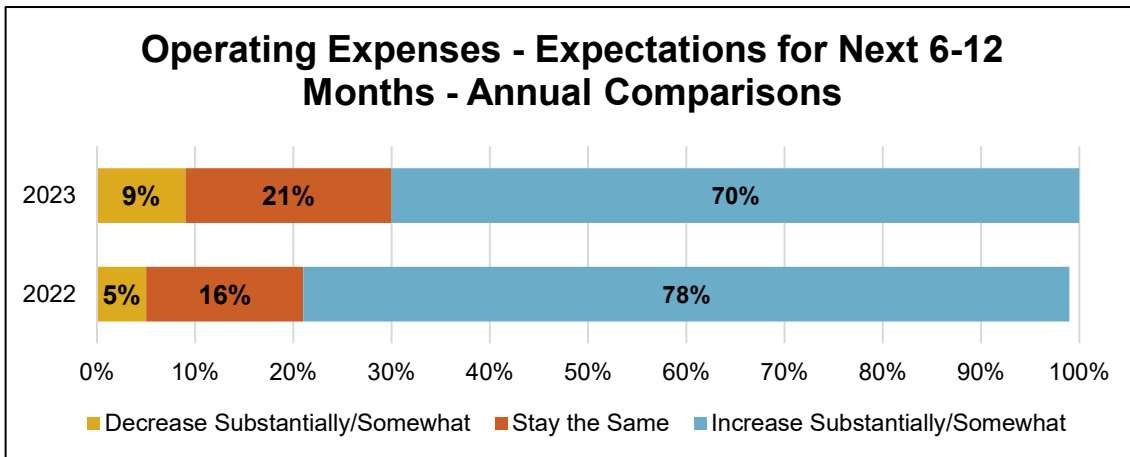
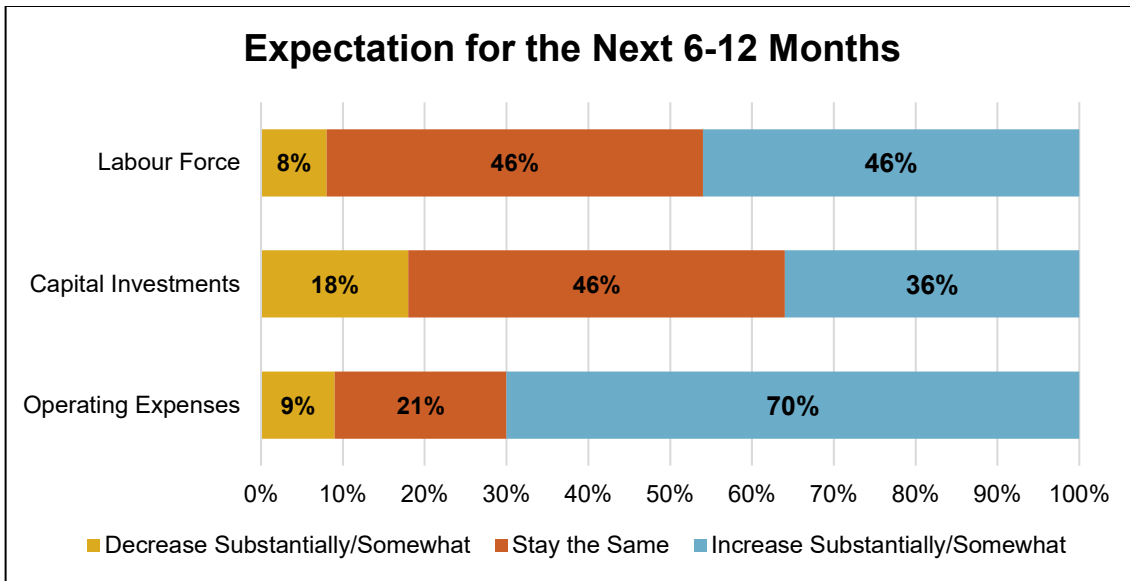
2023 – Top 3 Strengths	2022 – Top 3 Strengths
1 - Quality of Life	1 - Quality of Life
2 – Proximity to Complimentary Industries	2 – Collaborative Environment
3 – Collaborative Environment	3 – Proximity to Complimentary Industries

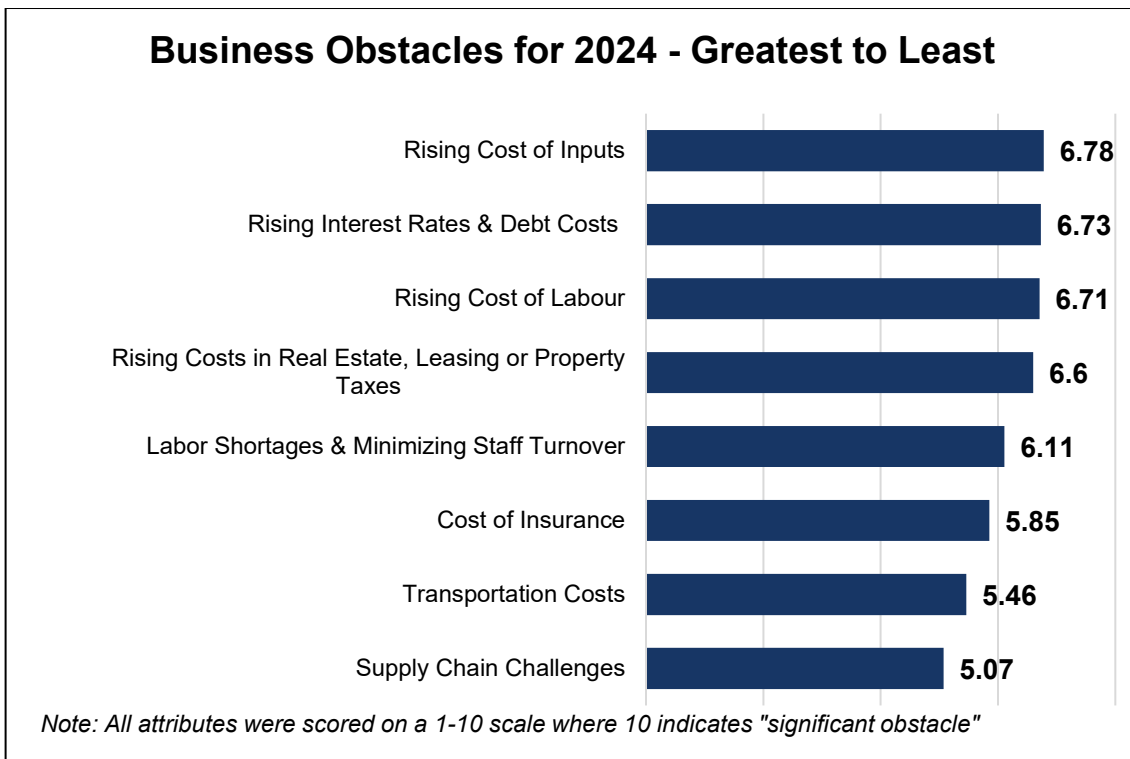
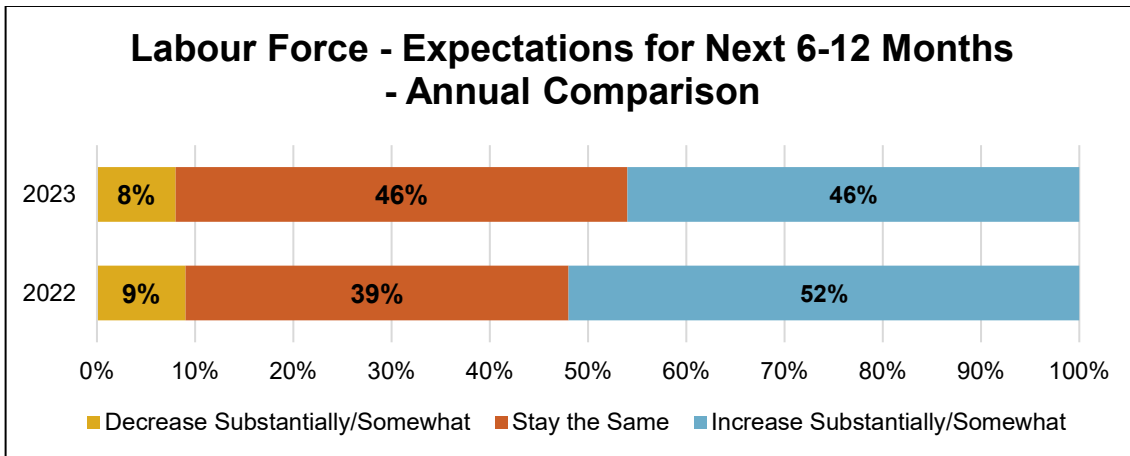
### Top 3 Locational Challenges to Doing Business in the Lethbridge Area – Annual Comparison

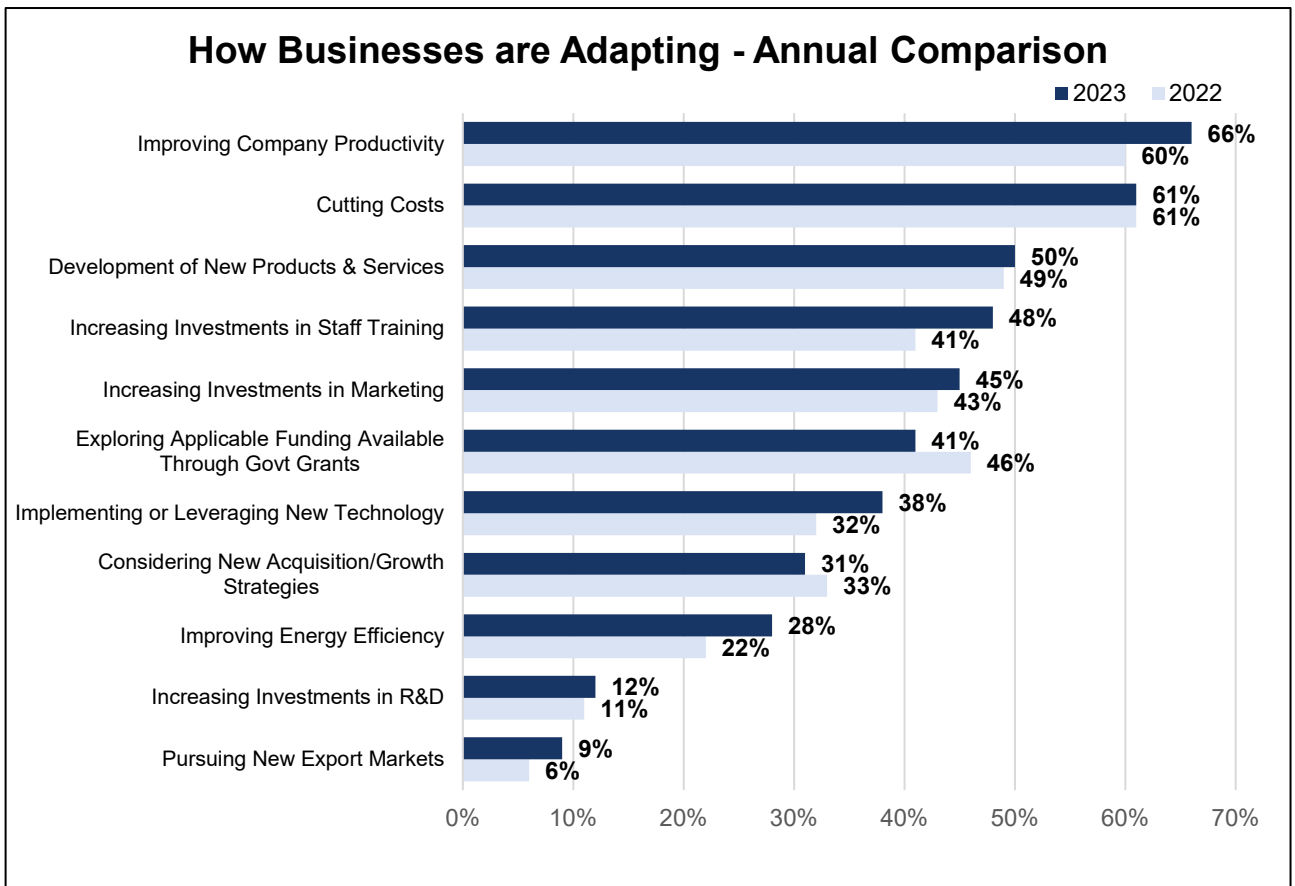
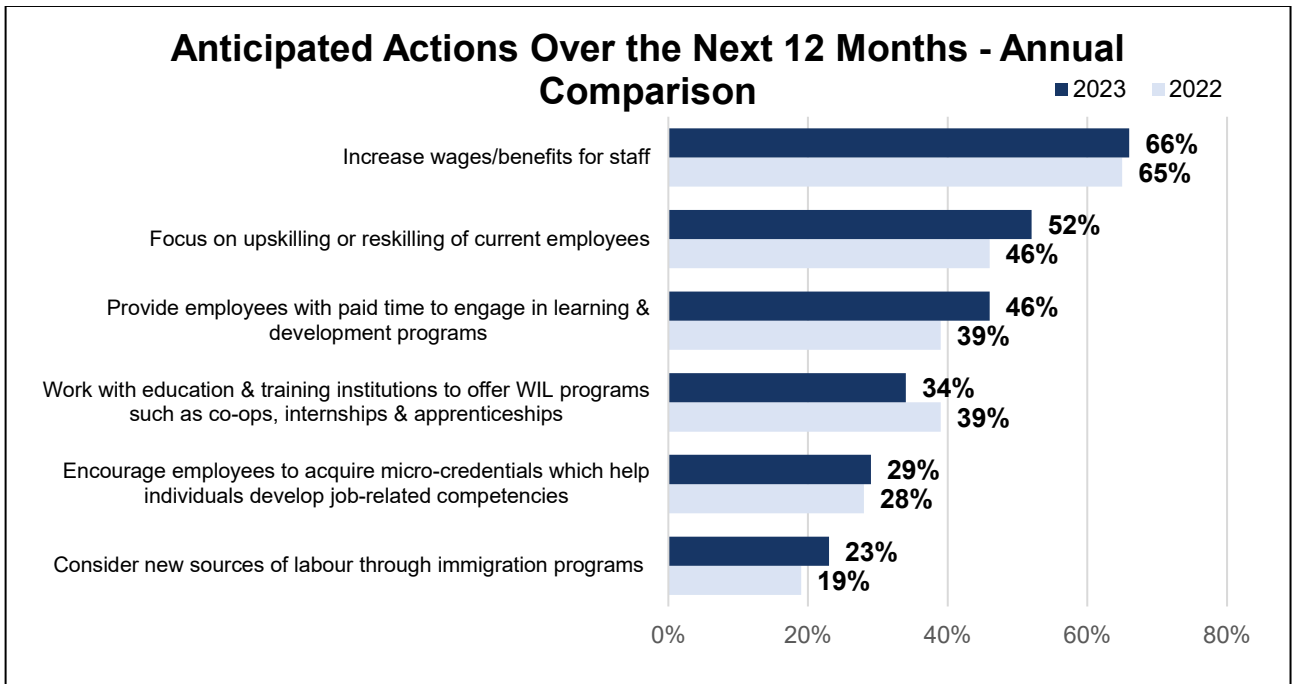
2023 – Top 3 Challenges	2022 – Top 3 Challenges
1 - Utilities Cost	1 – Utilities Cost
2 - Municipal Tax Environment	2 – Municipal Tax Environment
3 – Ease of Permitting & Regulatory Procedures	3 – Workforce Availability











### Assistance Businesses are Presently Seeking





