

# Guelph/Eramosa Township

Downtown Rockwood Business Visitation Project





# Purpose of Business Visitation Project

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1. Identifying the needs, concerns, and opportunities of existing local businesses.



2. Understanding future plans of downtown businesses regarding expansion, relocation, or retention and assessing where assistance can be provided.



3. Establishing effective communication channels with local businesses.



4. Introducing the County's Economic Development Division as a resource to support your business, projects, and future growth.



5. Understanding goals and interests related to downtown revitalization efforts.

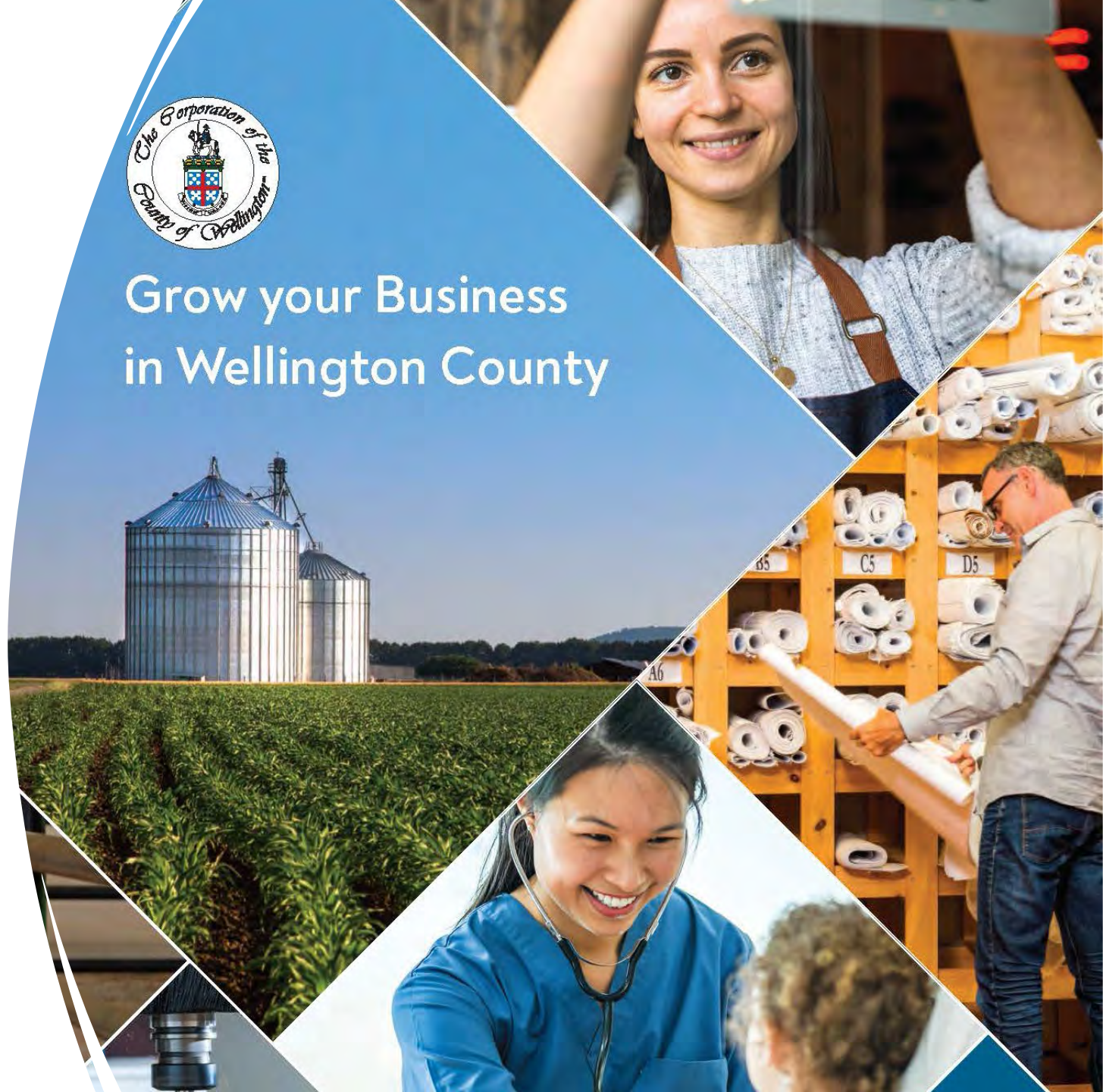
# Business Visitation Project

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- 26 businesses interviews
- Businesses resource materials and brochures distributed
- Specific follow up with businesses
- Feedback has been analyzed and summarized to maintain anonymity
- All businesses invited to Business Breakfast



Grow your Business  
in Wellington County



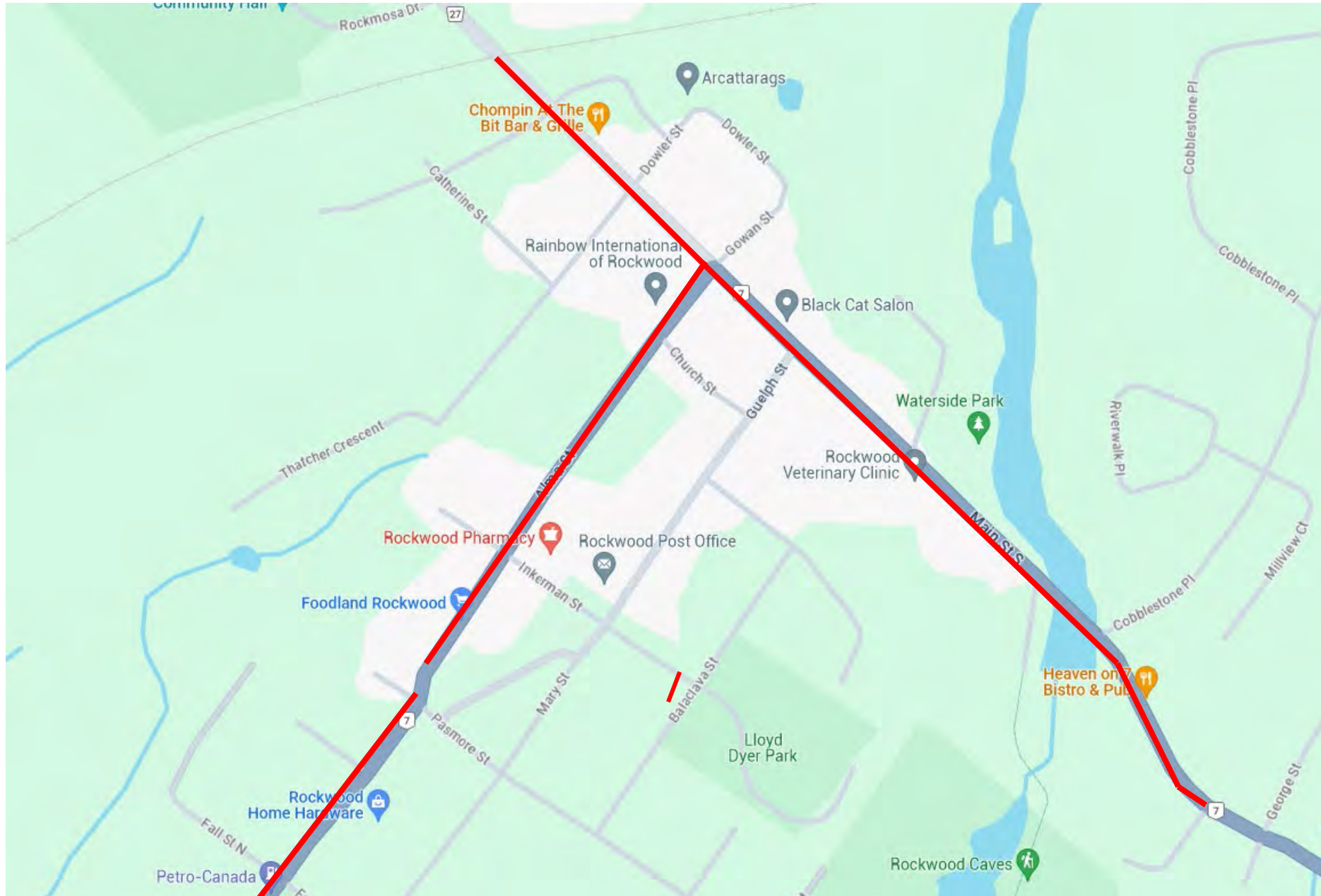


An aerial photograph of a vast, dense forest. The trees are mostly green, with some darker patches indicating shadows or different tree species. The text 'Business Interview Results' is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

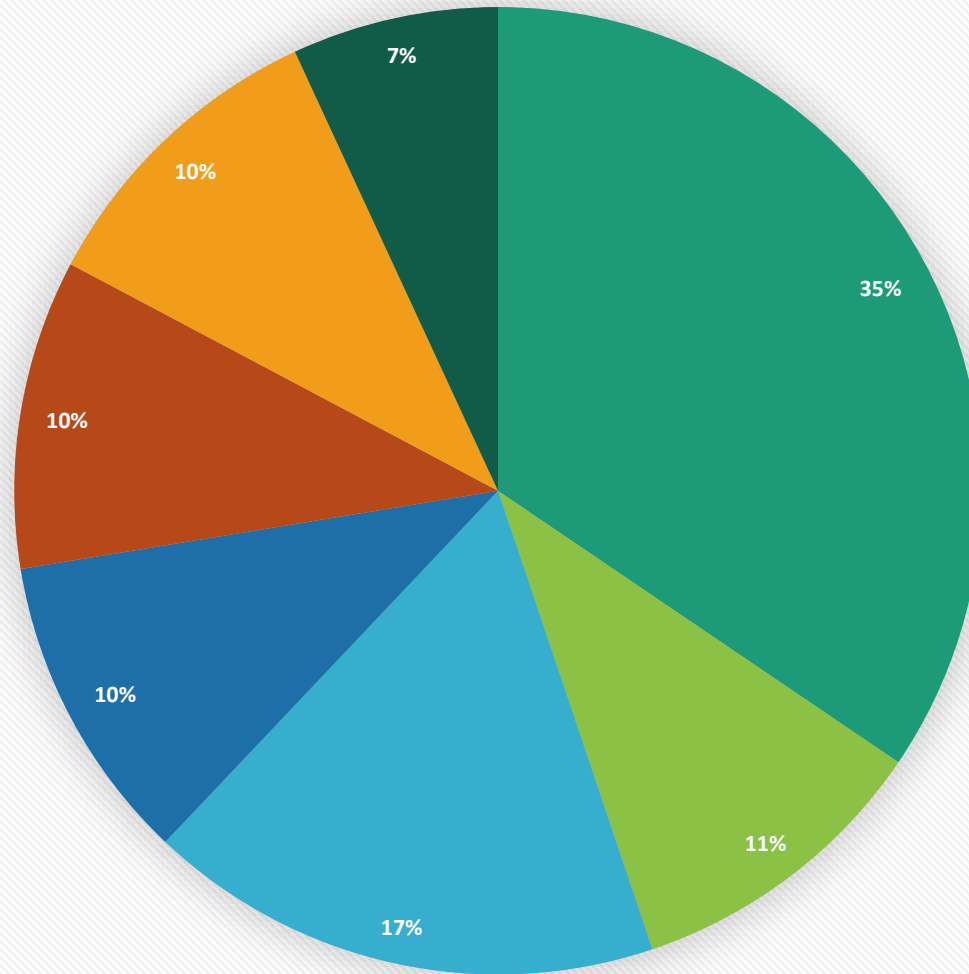
# Business Interview Results



# What is the boundary of Downtown Rockwood?

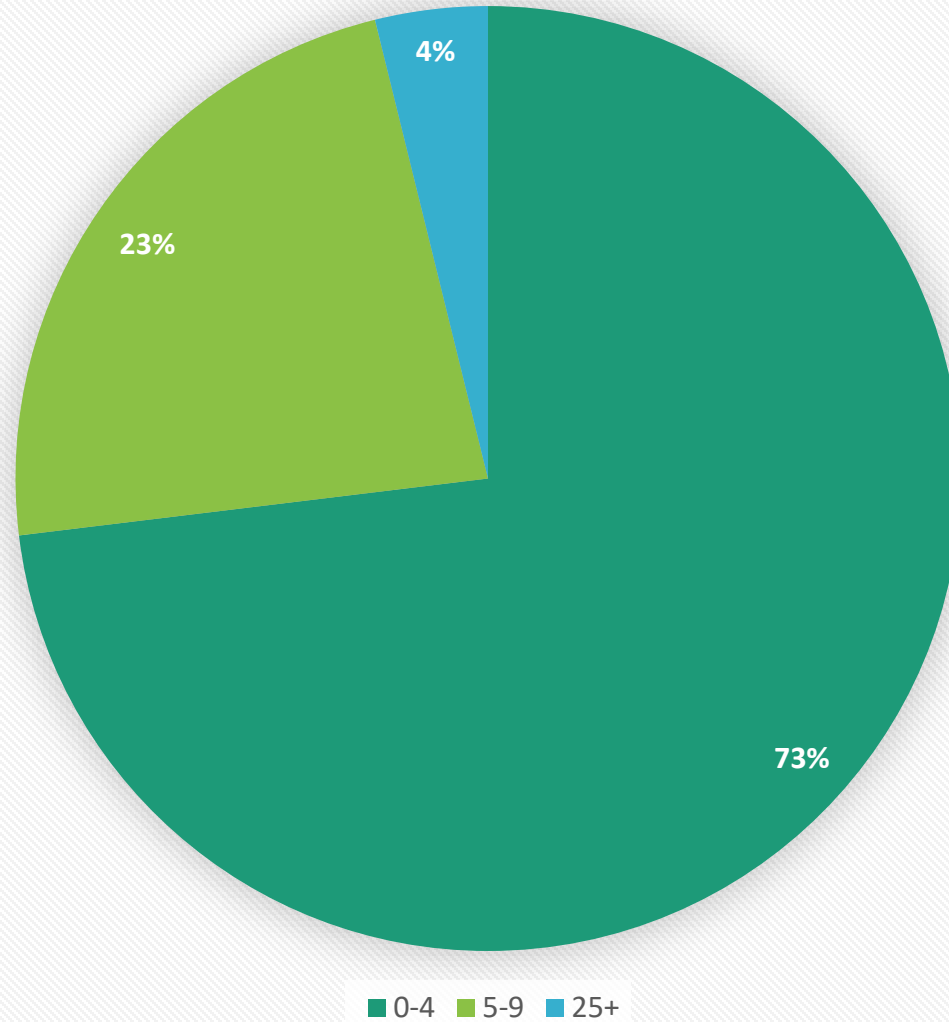


## Industry Breakdown of Surveyed Businesses



■ Retail ■ Food Service ■ Professional Services ■ Health Care and Social Assistant Services ■ Hair and Beauty Businesses ■ Pet Grooming and Vet Services ■ Other Services

## Full-Time Employees in Downtown Rockwood Businesses





# General Business Climate

*What is going well in your business?*

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- Customer loyalty and reputation
- Diversified offerings, expansion and adaptation
- Quality and reliability
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Community engagement and support
- Local economic growth





# *What are your biggest challenges?*

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- Workforce
- Customer attraction
- Connectivity (Internet)
- Financial supports
- Supply chain
- Land prices / high commercial rents
- Communication with Township





# Challenges

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- Traffic and crowd management concerns; parking
- Increased costs for supplies and staffing costs
- Local by-law challenges and provincial regulations impacting highway signage and advertising
- Economic downturn affecting customer spending habits
- COVID-19 recovery
- Seasonal fluctuations in customer traffic
- Competition with other businesses offering similar products/services
- Urban centre shopping rather than supporting local businesses
- Succession planning







*What are your future projects, plans, or aspirations?*

### **Business Expansion and Growth**

- Business scale up
- Expansion of services or products offered
- Expand hours
- Open a second business location

### **Infrastructure and Facility Improvements**

- Building and façade improvements
- Expanding within the existing business if extra room is available
- Outdoor patios
- Permanent signage

### **Staffing and Personnel**

- Hire additional staff
- Hire new staff in to replace retiring staff
- Planning for retirement





*What are your future projects, plans, or aspirations?*

### **Financial Goals and Stability**

- Improve business and personal financial security as a result of greater business revenues
- Invest in business upgrades

### **Community Engagement and Events**

- Creation of more community events
- Local business sponsorships for community activities
- Support youth entrepreneurship

### **Marketing and Public Relations**

- Business milestone celebrations
- Public education and marketing of services/products

### **Other**

- Survival of business



# *What kind of supports do you need to achieve these goals?*





# Other Supports

## Training and network building

- Access to training resources for new staff
- Facilitation of business-to-business connections to increase foot traffic to events and community spaces
- Access to an inventory of local suppliers for businesses
- Financial assistance or support for business rentals

## Infrastructure

- Access to reliable internet services and improved utilities
- Improvement of community infrastructure (i.e. roads and parking to manage event-related and conservation area traffic)

## Navigating Government Resources

- Support from the County and Township in navigating building regulations and technical aspects for business expansion projects
- Information and assistance with the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for storefront improvements
- Support from the Township for the business community
- Township support for outdoor patios in downtown areas
- Provision of free rental spaces for community events, along with increased Township support for such events
- Support for highway and community signage from the Ministry of Transportation (MTO)

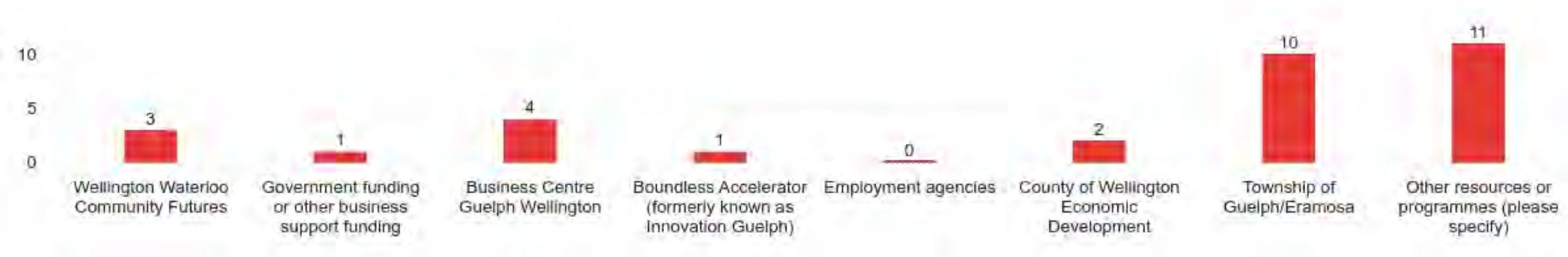




*Have you connected with any of the following resources?*

**Other resources:**

- Digital Transformation Grant
- Local business groups/connections
- Rockwood Downtown Business Group



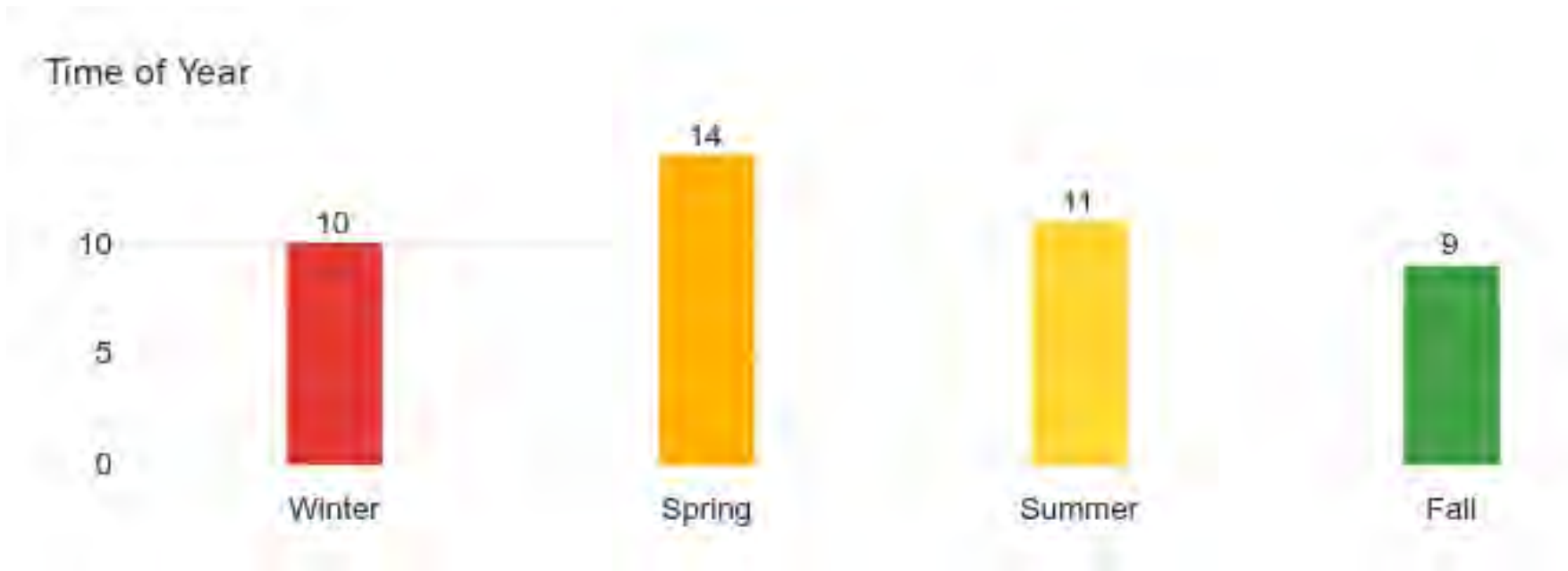


# What are the Busiest Days of the Week in Rockwood?





# What are the Busiest Times of the Year in Rockwood?





Where do your customers/clients come from?



# What are common questions from customers/clients?

- What is there to do in Rockwood?
- What is happening with the dirt mound?
- Where can I grab a bite to eat?
- Where can I use a washroom?
- When is the new grocery store coming?
- Where can I park?
- Do you have any business recommendations?
- Can you give me directions (post office, conservation area)?





# What do you think is great or unique about Rockwood? What is its Identity?

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- Rockwood Conservation Area (the GRCA)
- Small town feel, unique, quaint, peaceful, friendly, pretty
- Sense of community
- Roots in agriculture
- Waterside Park
- Bedroom community, but retains its civic pride
- Proximity to many urban centres
- Diverse community, both culturally and ethnically
- Beautiful historical aspect to the town
- Libraries and parks are great







## *What is missing in Downtown Rockwood?*

### **Beautification and Infrastructure**

- Beautification (i.e. planters, year-round beautification, lighting, signage)
- Community character
- Flags
- High street architecture
- Storefront improvements
- Reliable utilities

### **Retail and Services**

- Larger grocery store
- More stores for shopping
- Laundromat
- More coffee shops
- Consistent hours of operation for businesses in Rockwood

### **Food and Hospitality**

- Food/Restaurants
- Patios





# *What is missing in Downtown Rockwood?*

## **Community and Recreation**

- Recreational centre
- Sports facility
- Gym
- Things for youth to do
- Things to do in the evening
- Community Engagement

## **Urban Design and Accessibility**

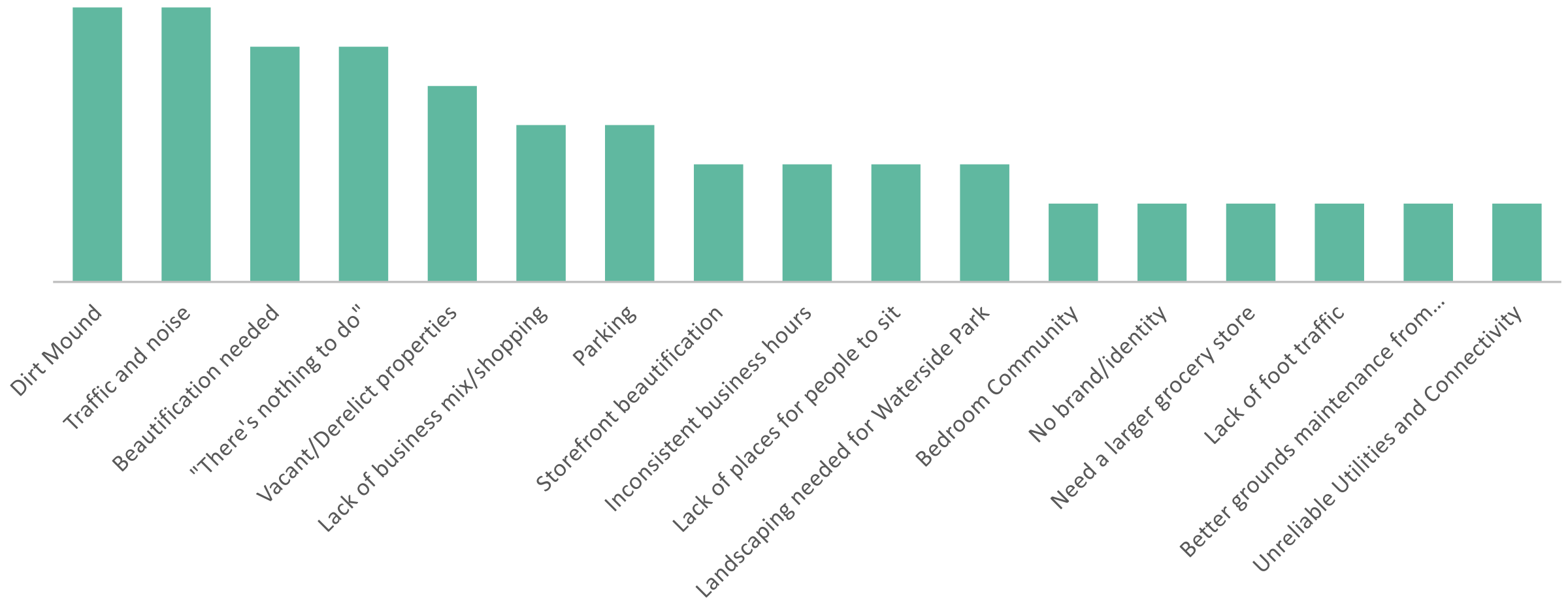
- Walkability
- Places to sit
- Parking

## **Business and Economic Environment**

- Stable business climate
- Customer foot traffic
- Services
- Advertising opportunities

# What are Rockwood's Challenges?

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# Other Challenges for Rockwood

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- Construction
- High rents
- Lack of community pride
- Lack of connection amongst business community
- Lack of destination appeal
- Lack of activities for youth
- Litter
- Proximity to bigger cities





*What type of investment would you like to see (how can we make it better?)*

- **Communication and Engagement**
- **Business and Industry Support**
- **Infrastructure and Beautification**
- **Tourism and Events**
- **Regulatory Improvements**
- **Support for Community Activities**
- **Business Mix**
- **Other Investments:**
  - Showcase a downtown business directory
  - Occupancy and investment into derelict buildings
  - More dog waste receptacles







# Thank You!

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