

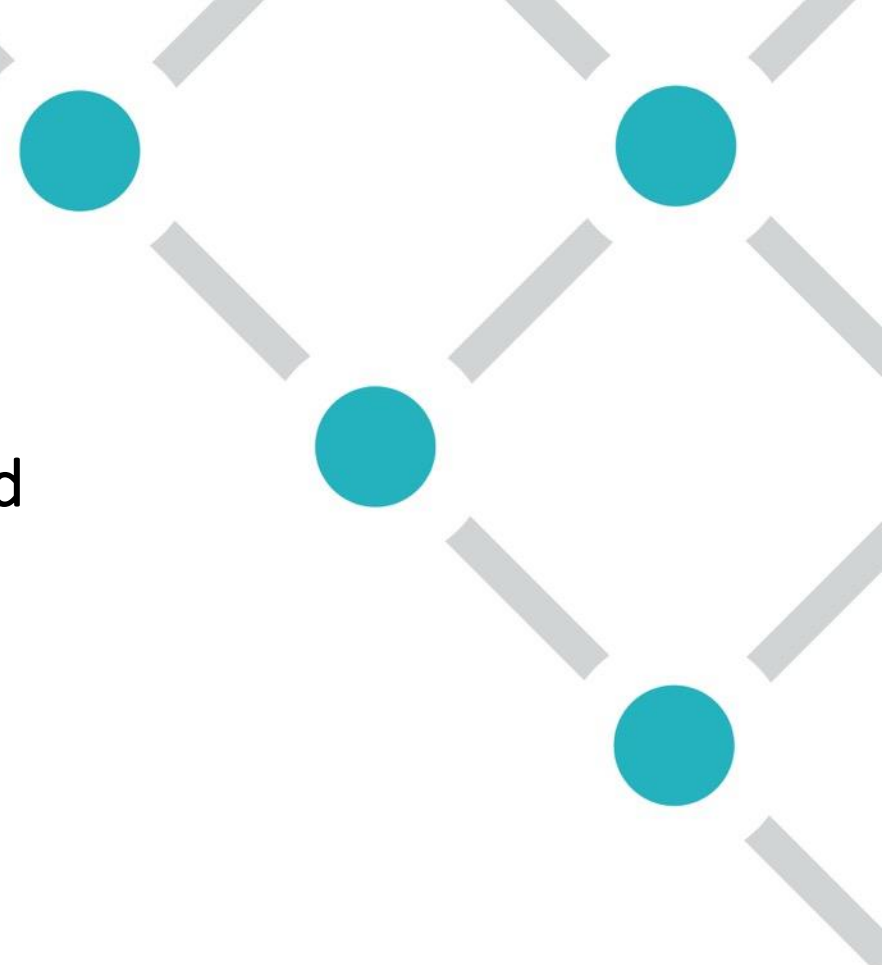


NARRATIVE
RESEARCH

Part 2: Business Confidence and Economic Issues Report

August 2020

Prepared for:





Brampton Board of Trade

Business Confidence and Economic Issues

Key Highlights

Methodology:



Online surveys

111 business people completed surveys from June 10th to July 3rd, 2020.

Business Profile

23.1 years
Average length of time business has operated in Brampton

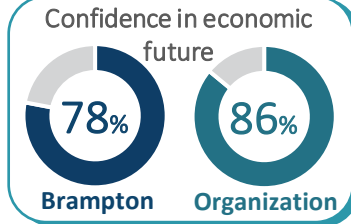
38% Located in **Brampton only**

37% Also elsewhere in Canada

Industry

- Mfg/B2B 58%
- Service 29%
- Retail 5%
- Other 8%

Economic Confidence



Top 3 Issues Facing Brampton Businesses Today (Key Unaided Mentions)

- 33%** Transportation infrastructure
- 23%** Pandemic/COVID-19 impact
- 20%** Access to talent/skilled labour

Suggestions for Board of Trade to Alleviate Issues (Key Unaided Mentions)

- 14%** Work with government
- 11%** Promote small/local businesses
- 8%** Engage business community

Economic Outlook Over The Next 12 Months

32% Expect the # of staff within their organization to **increase**

Confidence in organization's...

- 76%** Environmental sustainability
- 73%** Economic sustainability
- 72%** Ability to generate revenue

Civic Leadership

Only 1 in 2 agree that the **municipal** government...

... displays a **positive external brand image** ... **shares priorities that align with business needs**

Only 1 in 2 are confident in... Brampton City Council's **ability to make good decisions**

... the **senior levels of government**

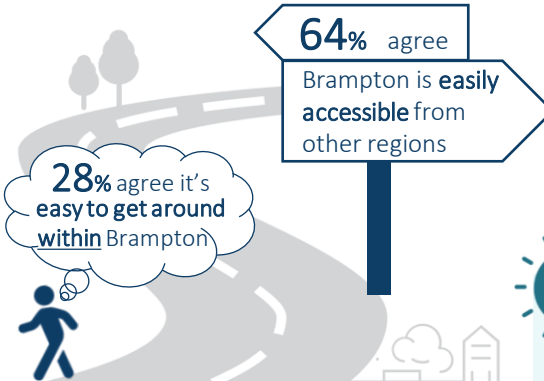
40% Believe Brampton's business community is doing enough to **foster a positive business environment**



Advice for City Hall to Increase Business Competitiveness (Key Unaided Mentions)

- #1** Support small/local businesses
- #2** Focus on business growth/Attract new businesses
- #3** Improve infrastructure

Transportation



Ways to Improve Transportation and Accessibility Both Into and Within Brampton (Key Unaided Mentions)

- | #1 | #2 | #3 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Better public transit | All day GO Train service | Improve highway capability/Build new highway |

Trade and Investment

- Top 3 Issues Impacting Trade**
- 21%** Import goods for resale in Brampton
 - 28%** Export goods
 - 56%** Transportation costs
 - 41%** Tariffs
 - 35%** Protectionism

Technology and Innovation



New Technologies for Business

- 64%** Know how to **find the personnel to implement** them
- 55%** Aware of the best **financing options**
- 55%** Knowledgeable about what is **available to optimize operations**

Talent



Prefer to **advertise online** for recruiting

45% Find it difficult to find **new talent** for their organization

- 66%** Organization **offers internships or co-op opportunities**
- 79%** **Pay** those completing internships/co-ops

78% Believe the **City should support** the three existing post-secondary institutions and their proposal to expand university offerings...

- ... **to attract/develop local talent/skilled labour** **#1**
- ... **for economic growth/benefits local businesses** **#2**
- ... **because they are established/credible** **#3**

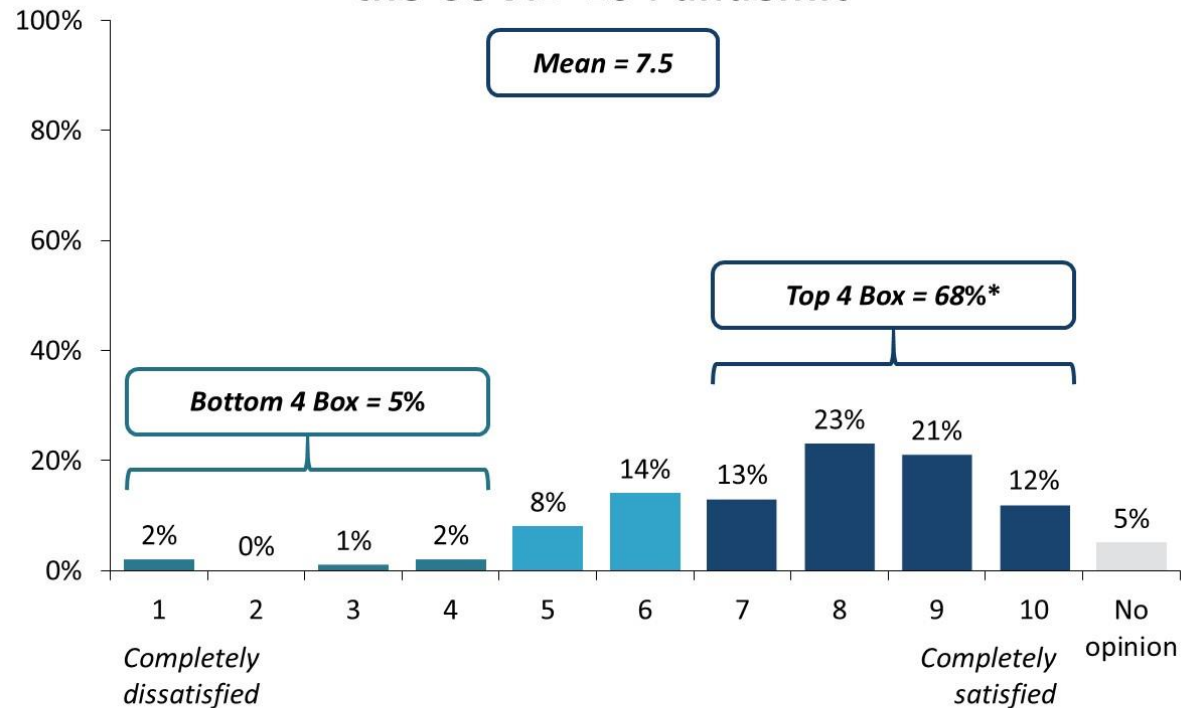


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Civic Leadership

The majority of business leaders are satisfied with how Brampton's City Council responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Satisfaction with Brampton City Council's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic



Q.A13: And thinking about the last few months specifically, how satisfied have you been with Brampton City Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? (n=111) *Due to rounding. Note: Responses of 'No opinion' are excluded from the calculation of the mean.



Respondent Feedback: City Hall's COVID-19 Response

“Patrick Brown is doing a great job keeping Brampton top of mind with the province and keeping our citizens in check (addressing large gatherings)”

“I don't trust health advice from Brampton City Council. I remember a positive test at a Tim Horton's, statements from the Mayor's office were incorrect. Communications from Peel Region's Medical Officer of Health sometimes contradicted alerts from the Mayor's office causing unnecessary concern and confusion among employees.”

“We have found the Mayor's office and economic development team very responsive. They create opportunities for engagement/best practice sharing and have been critical enablers of making important connections to help us with various requirements.”

“I saw more politicians busy with photo ops than actually making policies or discussing solutions.”

“During initial shut down, City of Brampton was very responsive to question regarding essential business and guidance, answering emails late in the night and very early in the shut down. I commend the Mayors office on response.”

“The Council has been doing an excellent job keeping us all informed, and more importantly, inviting us as business owners and residents to contribute our \$0.02 and also give us a platform for asking questions and getting answers. Keep it up!”

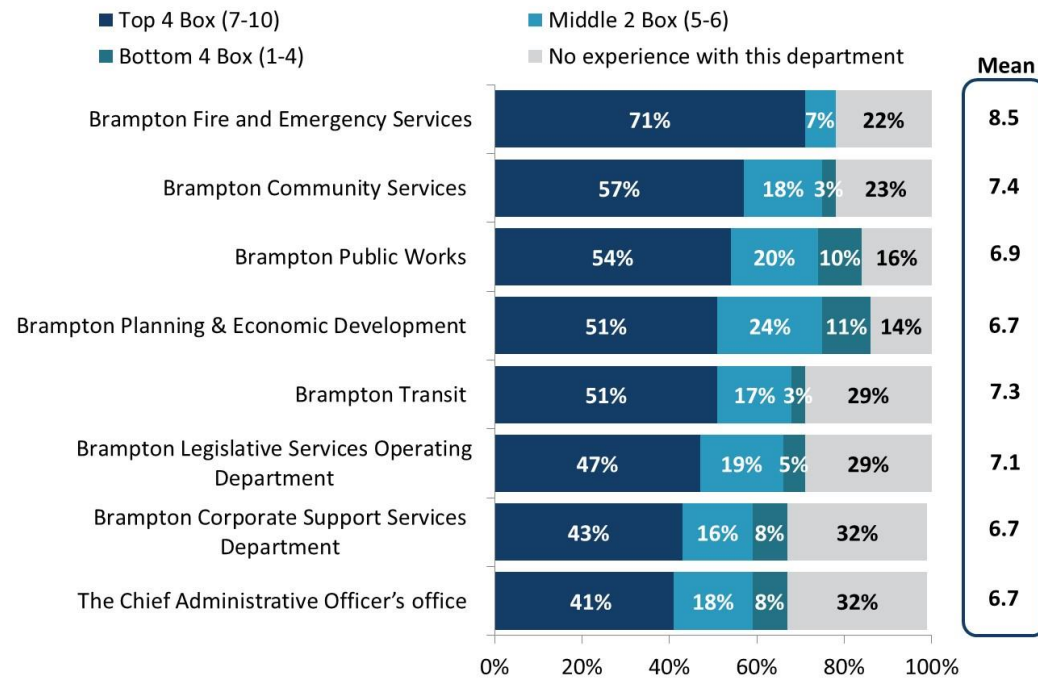


Satisfaction with Quality of Departmental Services

Most business leaders are satisfied with the quality of services offered by the Brampton Fire and Emergency Services department, and are less likely to express satisfaction with other departments, by comparison. Indeed, fewer than half report satisfaction with the three lowest-ranked departments.

Satisfaction with Quality of Services Offered by Departments

Ratings on 1-10 Scale, 1=Completely dissatisfied, 10=Completely satisfied



Q.A12a-h: How satisfied are you with the quality of services offered by each of the following departments?? (n=111)
Note: Responses of 'No experience with this department' are excluded from the calculation of the mean.



Respondent Feedback: Department Quality of Service

“Be more proactive. Be better at government relations. The Clerk's office needs to have faster ways to find reports on their website. Look at the City of Toronto as an example.”

“The amount of red tape and delay that affect projects before finally seeing approval is mind boggling; hard to understand how anything gets done.”

“Brampton Government does not collectively have the same vision for each division and there is too much lack of communication. the organization has a difficult time working together internally. The ideas are great, but leadership does not know how to execute. Too many people who "don't know"...”

“It is difficult to determine who is in charge at city hall. The turnover in personnel at city hall does not bring confidence in the administration. City Council seems to have hired people that are obedient and unqualified. I'm not sure that's best for Brampton taxpayers.”

“Planning department takes way too long to approve development projects. I get it. Brampton is growing. But the speed that we can get things done in other jurisdictions is 5-7x faster.”

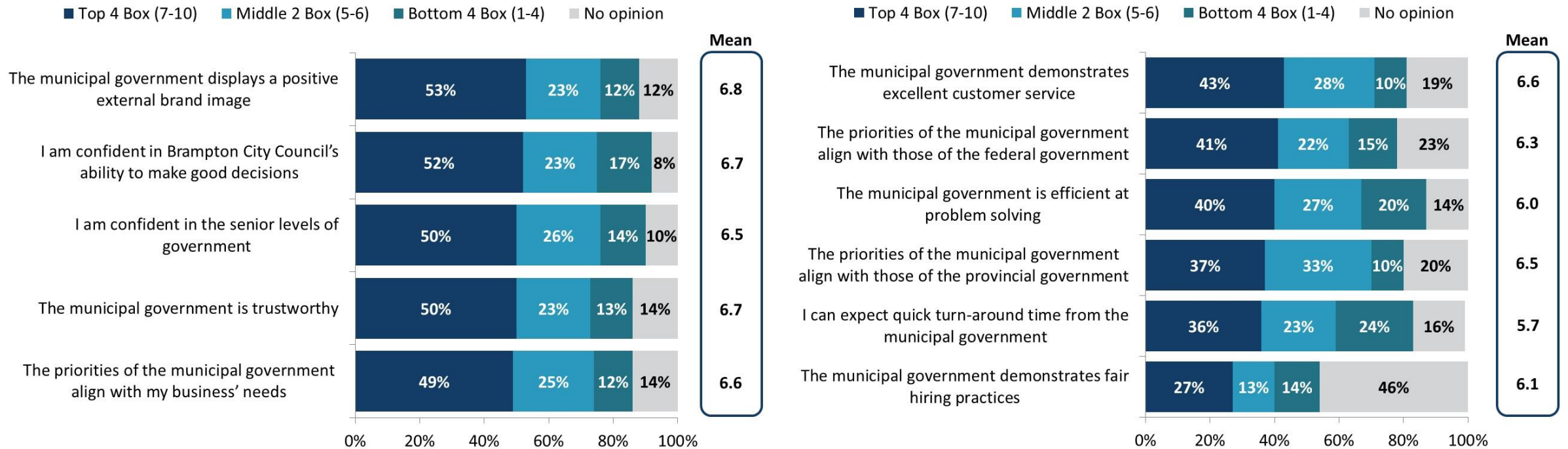
“Timing to receive site plan approvals and building permits is absurd. This has a direct impact on the GDP and Brampton's ability to grow. Companies are locating outside of Brampton since developers cannot get required approvals to build. With uncertain timing for approvals/development, businesses cannot plan properly, and therefore are planning and moving outside of Brampton where process and timing are clear. Clarity is required for business planning and decisions.”



Only half of business leaders are confident in the municipal government's display of a positive external brand image, Brampton City Council's ability to make good decisions, and in senior levels of government. Results show room for improvement with respect to business leaders' views of government in general, particularly related to demonstrated efficiencies.

Agreement with Statements

Ratings on 1-10 Scale, 1=Completely disagree, 10=Completely agree



Q.A14a-k: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following? (n=111) Note: Responses of 'No opinion' are excluded from the calculation of the mean.



Respondent Feedback: Confidence in City Hall

“It shouldn't be a surprise that Council is easily misled by staff. Hiring practices seem inadequate. Unqualified and inexperienced senior leaders don't bring confidence.”

“Allegations of misconduct by Council members cast a pall over trade missions. Can women feel safe on trade missions involving city council?”

“The Mayor and Council don't seem to have any influence with the current provincial government. Inconsistencies and indecision on development of employment lands, transportation and transit hamper job creation.”

“It is difficult to follow city council. Agendas are routinely published without adequate time for taxpayers to understand decisions being made.”

“The City of Brampton has a large opportunity to craft a better message describing all the benefits of living and working in Brampton. This message should be aimed at global companies considering locating businesses in Brampton. This is a great community with a positive vision.”



Respondent Feedback: Confidence in City Hall

“There are individuals within the municipal team who are trustworthy, responsive, and in tune with the needs of the business community. There are others who seem to be ineffective at best, and going in the wrong direction at worst. An example of this would be the "Brampton U" initiative, where it would seem the mayor and some council members were led down a garden path and in a direction that completely ignored the strong academic partners who are already invested in Brampton.”

“Confidence is also low based on some of the hiring decision for senior city staff, who have come to their roles with track records that were less than stellar. This seems an odd choice for a city trying to really bolster its reputation. Decisions such as these don't instill a great deal of confidence in city leadership.”

“Confidence is earned. The development process is rife with road blocks and challenges which do not need to occur. Professional reputable groups with a proven track record are being treated with the skepticism of first time applicants. Municipalities without vision and action will face challenges regardless of geographical location.”

A significant minority of business leaders believe that the Brampton business community is doing enough to foster a positive business environment.

Brampton Business Community Doing Enough to Foster Positive Business Environment



Q.A21: In your opinion, is the Brampton Business community doing enough to foster a positive business environment? (n=111)



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