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Part 5: 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

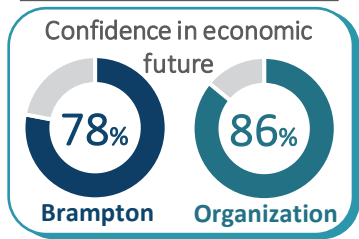
38% Located in **Brampton only**

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**

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**

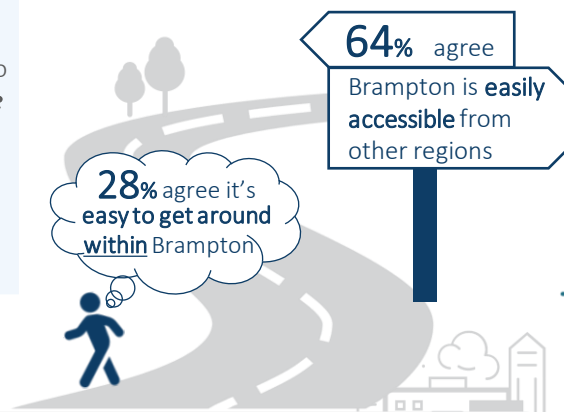
Only 1 in 2 are confident in...
... Brampton City Council's **ability to make good decisions**
... the **senior levels of government**

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

21% Import goods for resale in Brampton

28% Export goods

Top 3 Issues Impacting Trade

- Transportation costs **56%**
- Tariffs **41%**
- Protectionism **35%**

Technology and Innovation

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**

53% Say their **top innovation barrier** is their **budget**

Talent

66% 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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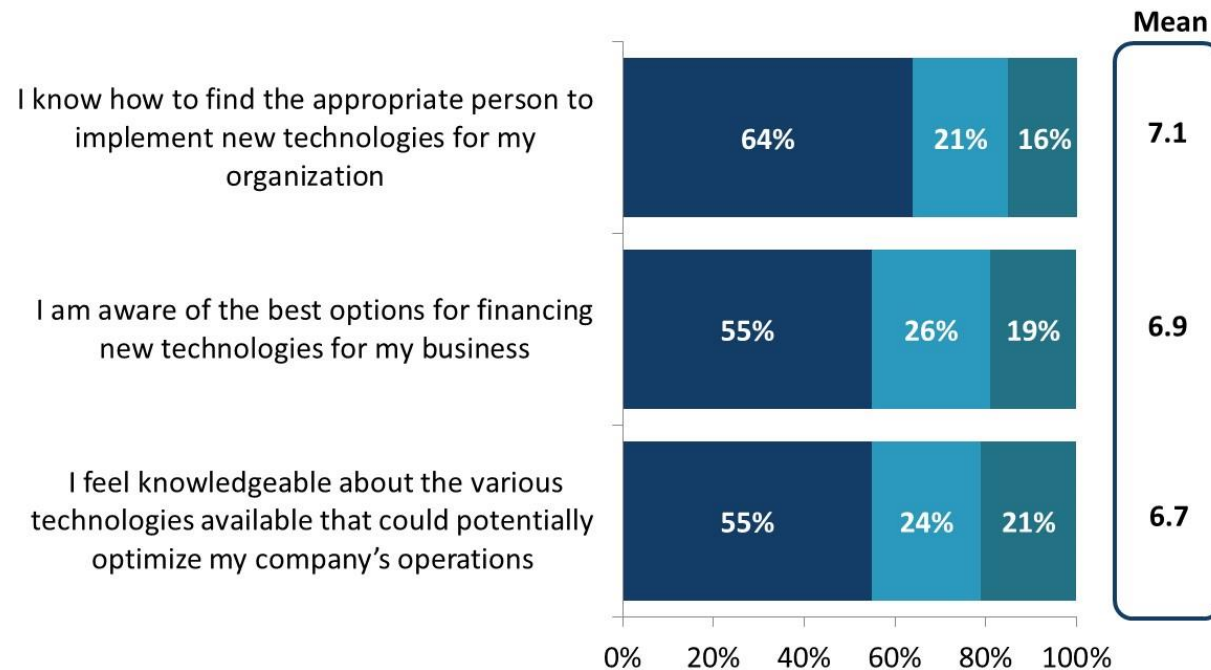
Innovation

Awareness and perceived knowledge of technological business solutions is moderate among Brampton business leaders.

Agreement with Statements

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

■ Top 4 Box (7-10) ■ Middle 2 Box (5-6) ■ Bottom 4 Box (1-4)



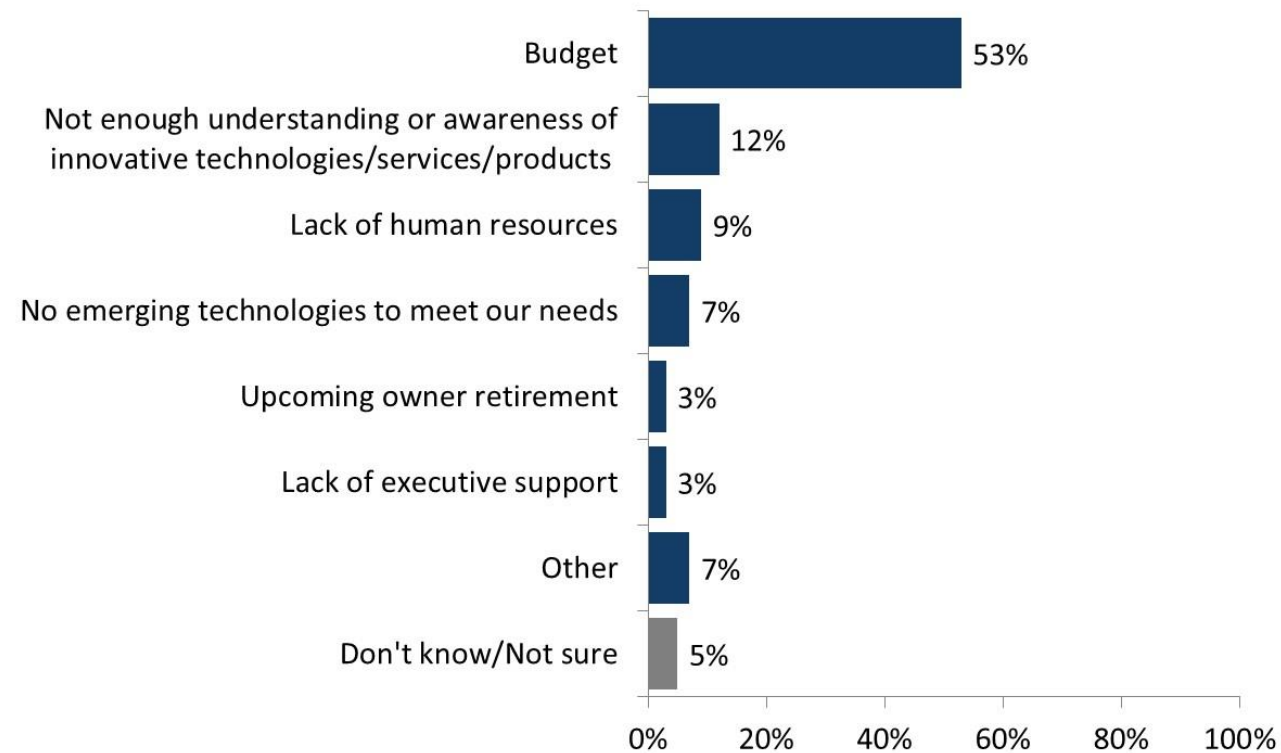
Q.C8a-c: To what extent do you agree with the following? (n=58)



Budget is by far the top innovation barrier for Brampton organizations.

Top Innovation Barrier for Organization

Total Aided Mentions

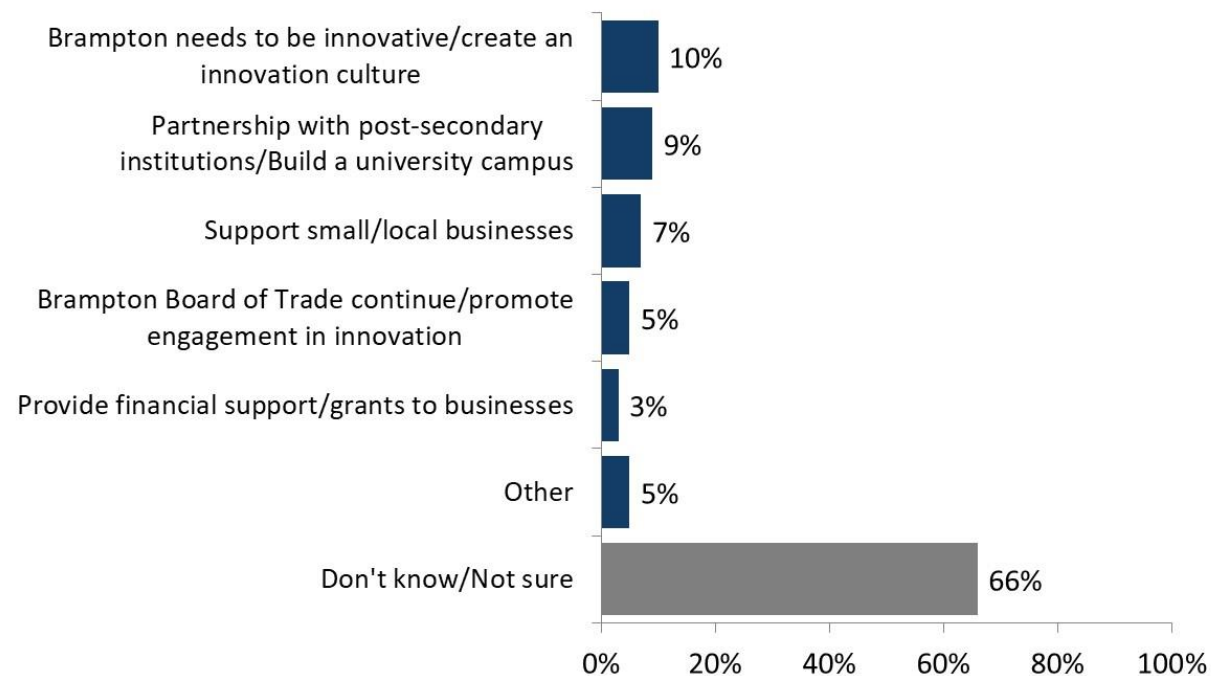


Q.C9: What is the top innovation barrier for your organization? (n=58)

Suggestions of how to improve innovation among Brampton’s business community are limited, though the most common suggestion is the need for Brampton to create an innovation culture or partner with post-secondary institutions.

Ways to Improve Innovation Among Brampton’s Business Community

Total Unaided Mentions



Q.C10: What, if anything, could be done to improve innovation among Brampton’s business community? (n=58)



“Think more like a big city and not a suburb of Toronto in the areas of transportation, infrastructure and arts and culture.”

“More of an economic impact lense applied to city projects and the impact projects could negatively have on industry and business.”

“Fibre Optic cable should be made available for all sectors of Brampton. This is consistent with the City of Brampton's Vision of the Spirit of Innovation & Infrastructure development. We are one block south of Queen Street and we do not have fibre optic cable. Innovation requires high speed transmission for Research & Development and Advanced Manufacturing.”

“Alignment between municipal, provincial and federal leaders (regardless of party or affiliation) is a must.”

Over the next 12 months, businesses will overall see an increase in the number of staff, with more planning to grow their complement than those planning to downsize.

Over the Next 12 Months, Expect Number of Staff Within Organization to...



Q.A10: Thinking again over the next 12 months, do you expect the number of staff within your organization to...? (n=111)



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Talent

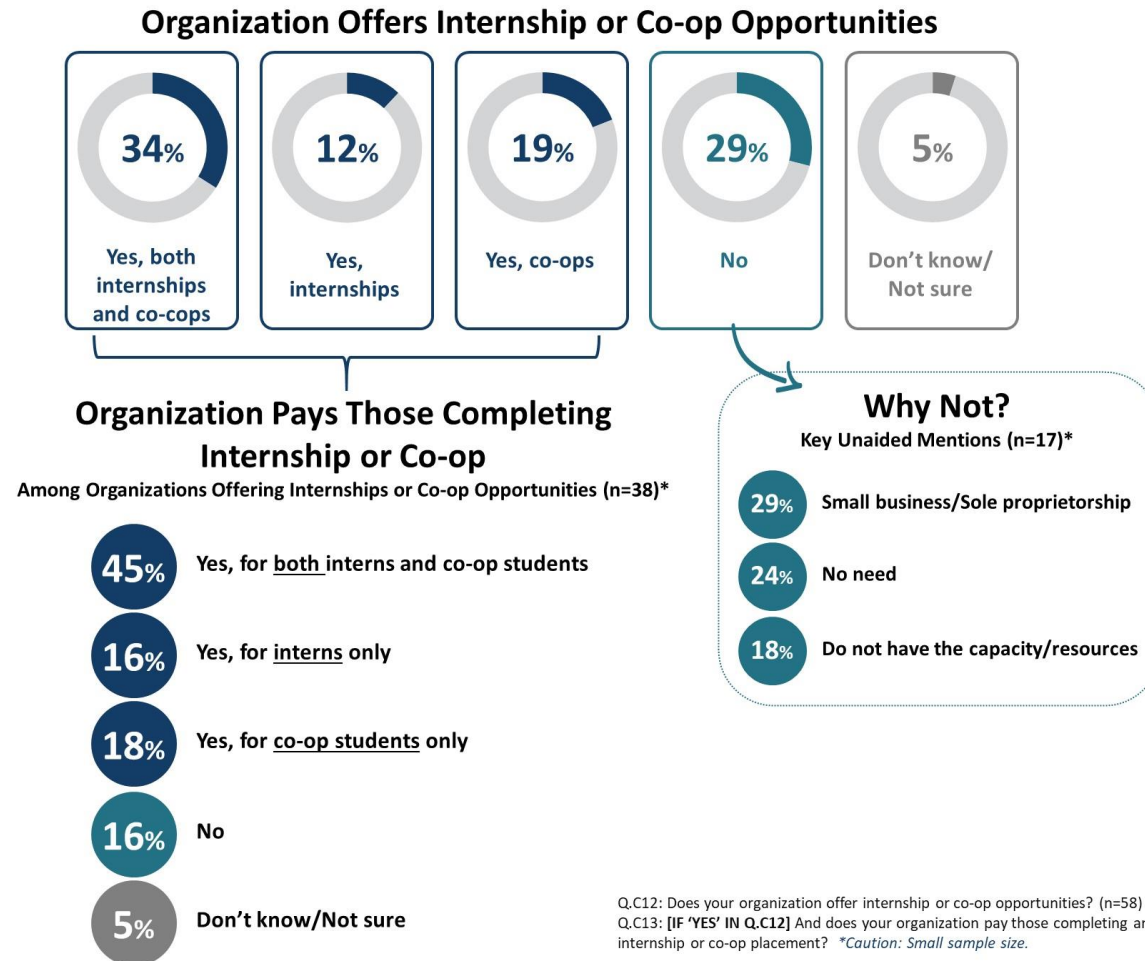


Advertising employment opportunities online is the preferred method of talent recruitment, followed by recruiters and word of mouth.



Q.C11: Thinking about recruiting new talent for your organization, what are your company's top three preferences in terms of acquiring new staff? (n=58) *Caution: Small sample size.

The majority of Brampton's organizations offer internship or co-op placements, with many providing paid opportunities.

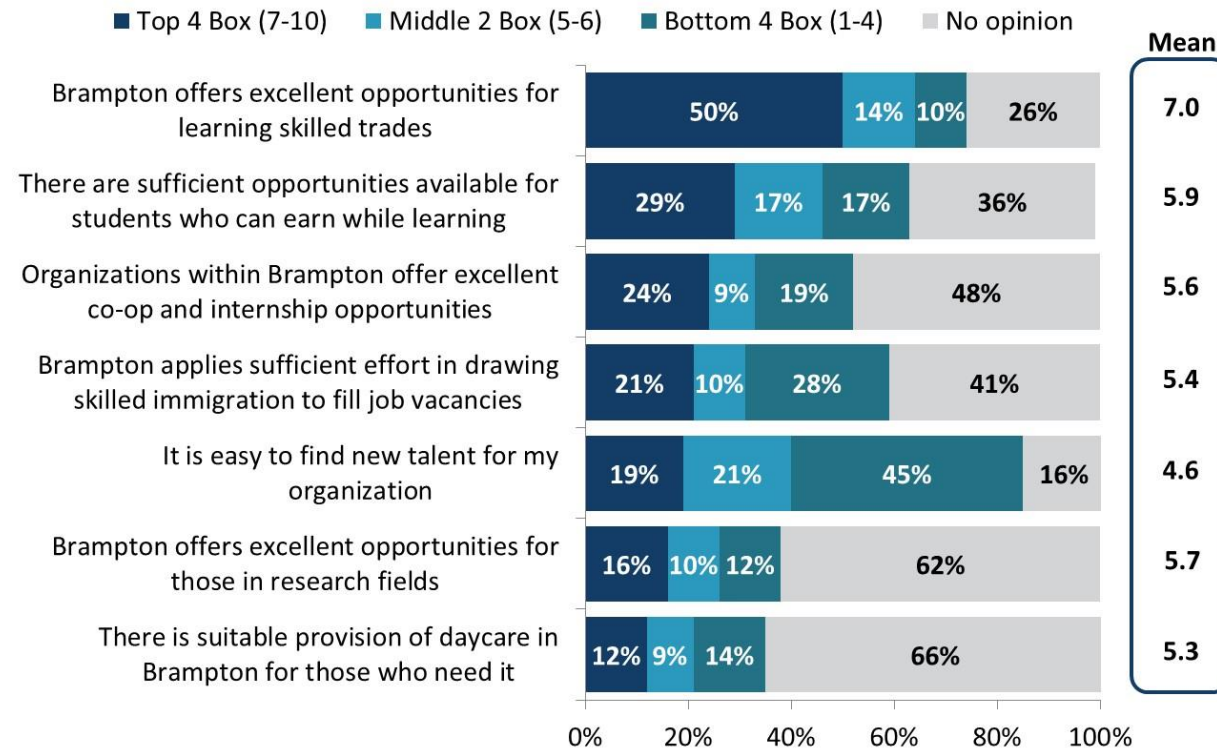




Opinions are divided when considering various opportunities for Brampton businesses, though business leaders are most likely to agree that Brampton offers excellent opportunities for learning skilled trades. Meanwhile, a significant minority do not believe that it is easy to find new talent for their organizations.

Agreement with Statements

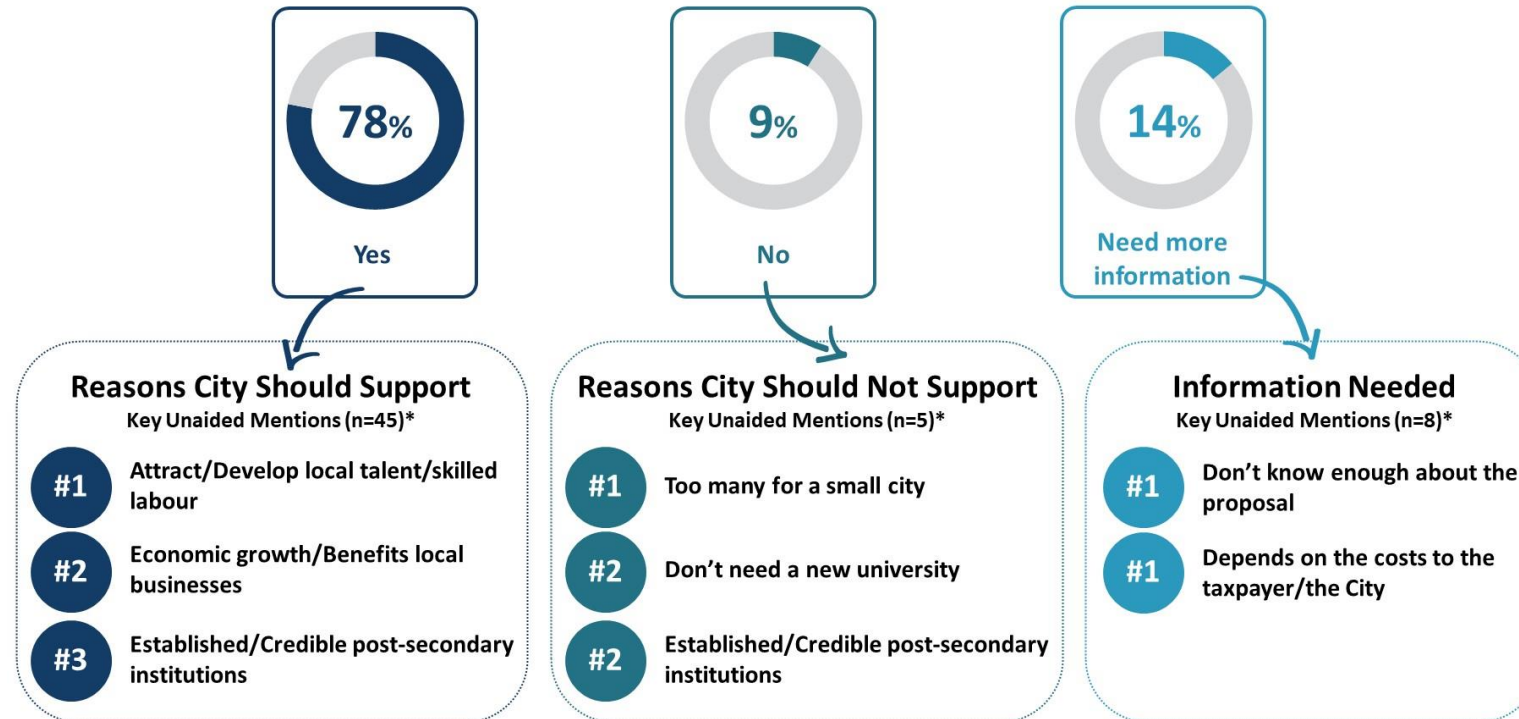
Ratings on 1-10 Scale, 1=Completely disagree, 10=Completely agree



Q.C14a-g: To what extent do you agree with the following? (n=58) Note: Responses of 'No opinion' are excluded from the calculation of the mean.

Business leaders are largely in support of the proposal for expanded university offerings, primarily because they believe it will attract or develop local talent.

Should The City Support The Three Existing Post-Secondary Institutions and Their Proposal for Expanded University Offerings?



Q.C15: As you may or may not know, Ryerson University, Algoma University and Sheridan College all currently have offerings available to students in Brampton and plans to expand, meanwhile, a new Brampton University is being proposed by the City Council. All things considered, do you think the City should support the three existing post-secondary institutions and their proposal for expanded university offerings. (n=58) *Caution: Small sample size.

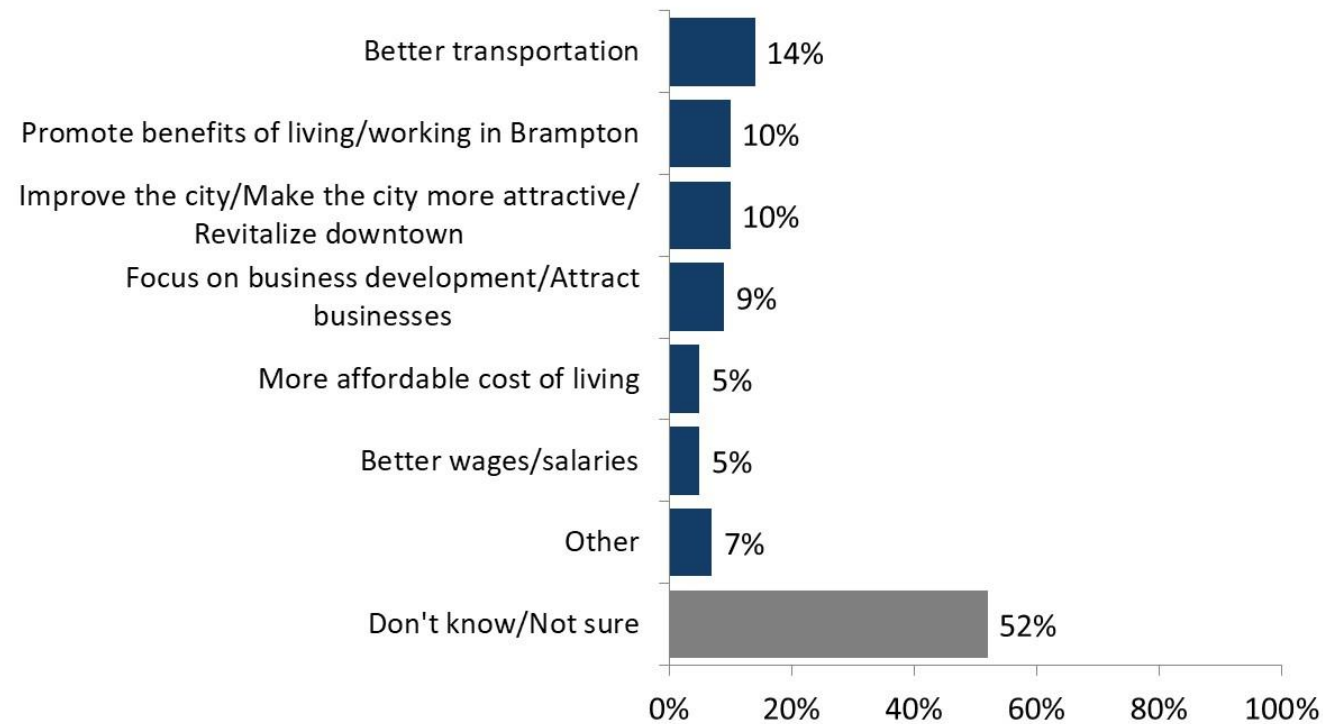


“Drop the pursuit of BramptonU and focus on working with existing PSE partners. The fixation with BramptonU is causing confusion and lacks vision and a real understanding of how the sector actually works.”

Better transportation is identified as the top course of action to improve or attract skilled talent to fill job vacancies in Brampton.

Ways to Improve or Attract Skilled Talent to Fill Job Vacancies in Brampton

Total Unaided Mentions



Q.C16: What, if anything, could be done to improve or attract skilled talent to fill job vacancies in Brampton? (n=58)



Ways Organizations Will Improve or Attract Skilled Talent

Business leaders primarily indicate their organization is prepared to offer co-op or intern programs in order improve or attract skilled talent to the City.

Ways Organization is Prepared to Improve or Attract Skilled Talent to Fill Job Vacancies in Brampton



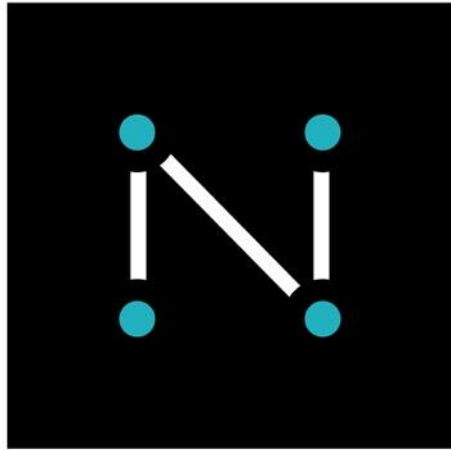
Q.C17: And finally, what, if anything, is your organization prepared to do to improve or attract skilled talent to fill job vacancies in Brampton? (n=58)

“We need to improve our image so people want to be here and take pride in Brampton.”

“Get better transit into downtown Brampton, connect to transit/metro with our neighbouring communities & to the Airport. Get unnecessary transport trucks off the road to relieve congestion (support Milton Hub).”

“The city needs to think about what its front door looks like. Like a mall that needs an 'anchor tenant', the city needs businesses that carry a certain cachet in order to attract more of the same and the high-skill, high-pay jobs that come with them. Canon and Loblaw are a good start, but we need others in key locations unless Mississauga Road is going to become Brampton's Main Street.”

“Work with the existing post secondary institutions (Sheridan, Ryerson and Algoma) and stop the distraction of attracting another University so that the existing schools can have the confidence to continue to spend and investment in critical research and innovation hubs in Brampton; invest in a vibrant downtown and 'cool-factor' cluster hotspots across the City to help attract investment to Brampton and retention of talent.”



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