

CLARINGTON BUSINESS REPORT FIRST DRAFT OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW

Prepared for:

*The Community Planning and Design Branch Planning Services
Department*



Prepared by:



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Methodology & Logistics

STUDY SAMPLE

- A total of 75 randomly selected business owners/managers from the Municipality of Clarington were interviewed by telephone between the days of August 14th to August 21st 2008.

LOGISTICS

- Initial calls were made between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Subsequent callbacks of no-answers and busy numbers were made on a (staggered) daily rotating basis up to 7 times until contact was made. In addition, telephone interview appointments were attempted with those respondents unable to complete the survey at the time of contact. If no contact was made at a number after the seventh attempt, the number was discarded.

SURVEY METHOD

- The survey was conducted using computer-assisted techniques of telephone interviewing (CATI) and random number selection. A total of 20% of all interviews were monitored and the management of Oraclepoll Research Limited supervised 100%.



Overview of Results

Business respondents have a positive view of operating in the community and the things they most like about the community continue to be related to the small town feel, the warmth and friendliness of the people in the area. Other issues that make running a business attractive include the location of the community and the convenience of operating in Clarington compared to larger centers.

Despite this, there are concerns over planning and development issues such as maintaining a balance between growth and the preservation of green, agricultural and historic areas. Within this context respondents want well managed growth to keep the small-town feel as the community expands.

There are economic concerns around employment and the need to create jobs. While businesses want to see new industry and business attracted to the area they want this growth balanced with not only the preservation of areas (green, historic, agricultural) they also want to ensure that infrastructure is kept up to service this growth. There is support among businesses for creating pleasant, public spaces including those that have less vehicle traffic.

Businesses are of the belief that growth and development is being managed better in Clarington compared to across the Region as a whole. Overall negative ratings for growth management are low. Finally, a majority of businesses surveyed support keeping or maintaining development at current levels while few want new growth restricted.



Executive Summary

TOP OF MIND - CHALLENGES

Respondents were first asked what they considered to be the most importance challenge facing Clarington as it continues to grow.

Top Issues	
<i>Planning/Balancing development/Growth /Sprawl</i>	17%
<i>Traffic</i>	9%
<i>Don't know</i>	9%
<i>Roads / maintenance / widen roads</i>	8%
<i>Infrastructure / services</i>	8%
<i>Big box stores</i>	7%
<i>Employment</i>	5%
<i>Economic development</i>	4%
<i>Parking</i>	4%
<i>Promotion of the community / businesses</i>	3%
<i>Government (municipal, provincial, federal)</i>	3%

Issues related to planning and growth such as concerns about traffic, roads, and other infrastructure needs were most cited in August 2008 as the top challenges that the community will face as it grows.

BENEFITS

Respondents were asked what they considered to be the top benefit of operating a business in Clarington.

Top Benefits	
<i>The community / the people</i>	27%
<i>Small town feel</i>	20%
<i>Location</i>	9%
<i>Quality of life / lifestyle</i>	9%
<i>Don't know</i>	9%
<i>Independence</i>	5%
<i>Convenience</i>	5%
<i>Just like it</i>	4%
<i>Proximity to amenities / services</i>	3%
<i>Nothing</i>	3%
<i>Making money/profitable</i>	3%
<i>Proximity to Toronto</i>	1%

The people and the community were the most stated benefits of operating a business in the community, closely followed by the small town feel, followed by quality of life and location.



IMPROVEMENTS

Businesses were questioned as to what improvements could be made to make Clarington an even better place to live.

2008 TOP IMPROVEMENTS	
<i>Don't know</i>	27%
<i>More business/industry</i>	13%
<i>Be more business friendly/less red tape</i>	9%
<i>Restrict development/protect green/agricultural lands</i>	9%
<i>Theatre/arts/recreation facilities</i>	8%
<i>Public transit</i>	7%
<i>Infrastructure development</i>	7%
<i>Better roads</i>	5%
<i>Lower taxes</i>	3%
<i>Waterfront development</i>	3%
<i>Physician recruitment</i>	3%
<i>Traffic flow</i>	1%

A total of 27% were unable to name an improvement that could make Clarington more business friendly, but of those with an opinion 13% named more businesses/industry, 9% less red tape, 9% restricting development/preserving green spaces, 8% more arts and recreational facilities, 7% public transit and 7% infrastructure development.



PRIORITIES FOR THE MUNICIPALITY

Respondents were asked to rate a series of priorities for the municipality to consider when it plans for the future.

“Please rate a series of priorities for the municipality to consider when it plans for the future. For each area please respond using a scale from one a very low priority to five a very high priority.”

Top Priorities (Responses of High & Very High Priority)	
<i>Attracting more employment opportunities</i>	87%
<i>Preserving the natural environment</i>	85%
<i>Preserving agricultural lands</i>	77%
<i>Improving public spaces and access to waterfront area</i>	75%
<i>Planning neighborhood so that they are less dependent on vehicles</i>	72%
<i>Improving roads</i>	69%
<i>Preserving historic downtowns</i>	69%
<i>Historical and heritage building preservation</i>	68%
<i>Building bike and walking trails</i>	67%
<i>Improving public transit</i>	63%
<i>Providing adequate affordable housing</i>	53%
<i>Improving arts and culture</i>	49%
<i>Having a mix of housing types (such as single family and multi units) in residential Neighborhoods</i>	47%
<i>Improving shopping areas</i>	33%

The highest priority levels were provided for attracting more employment opportunities (87%) and preserving the natural environment (85%), with the three next most important priorities being the preservation of natural lands (77%), improving public spaces (75%) and planning neighborhoods to be less vehicle dependent (72%).



Of the lowest priority were improving shopping areas (33%), followed by having a mix of housing types (47%), improving arts/culture (49%) and providing adequate affordable housing (53%).

Mid level priority issues included improving public transit (63%), building bike/walking trails (67%), historical building preservation (68%), historic downtown preservation (69%) and improving roads (69%).



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS & DARLINGTON

Respondents were asked what business opportunities they thought would arise from the expansion of Darlington as a result of the successful completion of the Environmental Assessment Process.

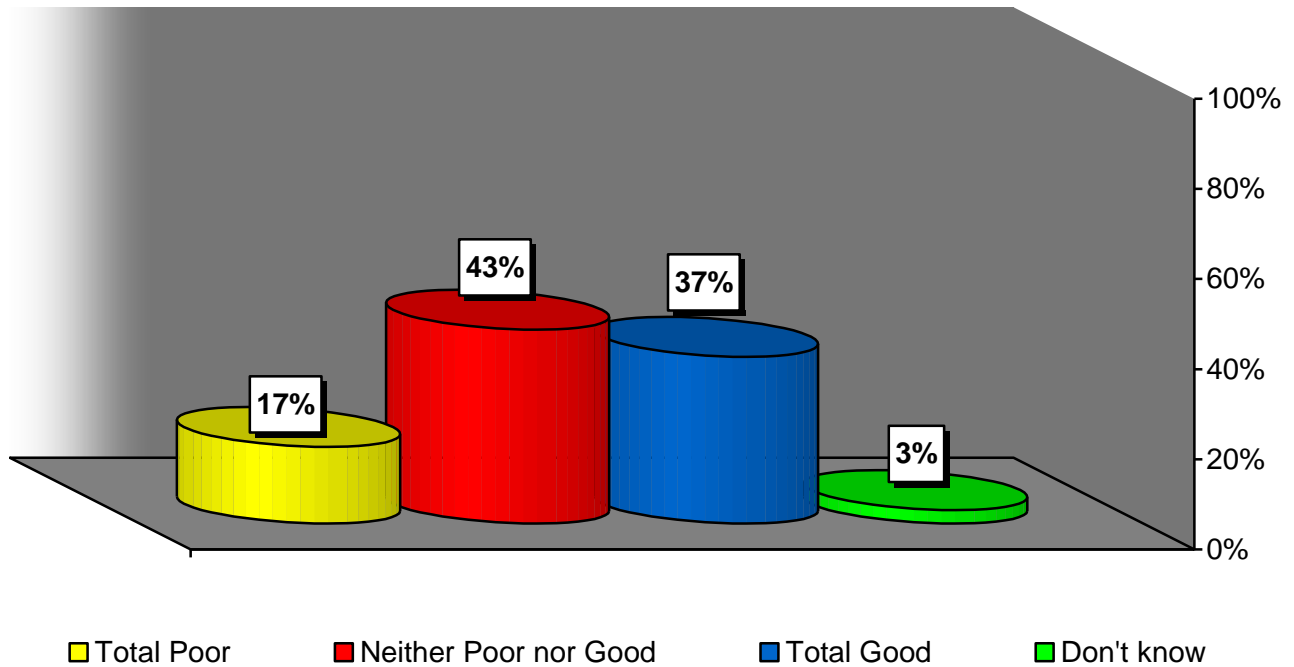
Business Opportunities	
<i>More jobs</i>	31%
<i>Population growth</i>	15%
<i>Business opportunities (retail, service etc)</i>	13%
<i>Growth (in general)</i>	8%
<i>Construction/building/infrastructure</i>	5%
<i>Housing</i>	4%
<i>None</i>	1%
<i>Don't know</i>	23%

Job opportunities was seen as the biggest opportunity by 31% of those surveyed, while 15% stated population growth, followed by 13% naming business opportunities and 8% growth in general. Almost one-quarter or 23% did not know or were unsure of any opportunities.



MANAGING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN DURHAM

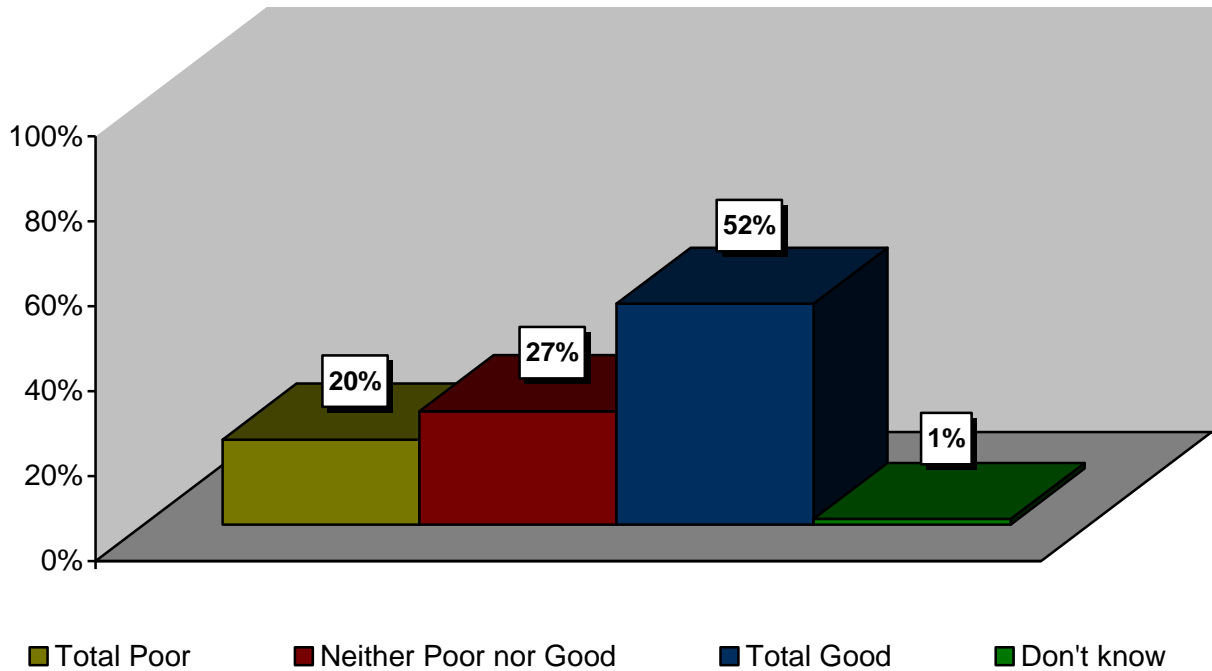
Overall how would you rate the way that growth and development is being managed in the Region of Durham from Pickering to Clarington?



There was a split of opinion between those that had neutral opinion (neither poor nor good) of how growth is being managed in the Region (43%) and respondents that provided a positive good or very good rating (37%). Only 17% rated the process as poor, while 3% did not know.

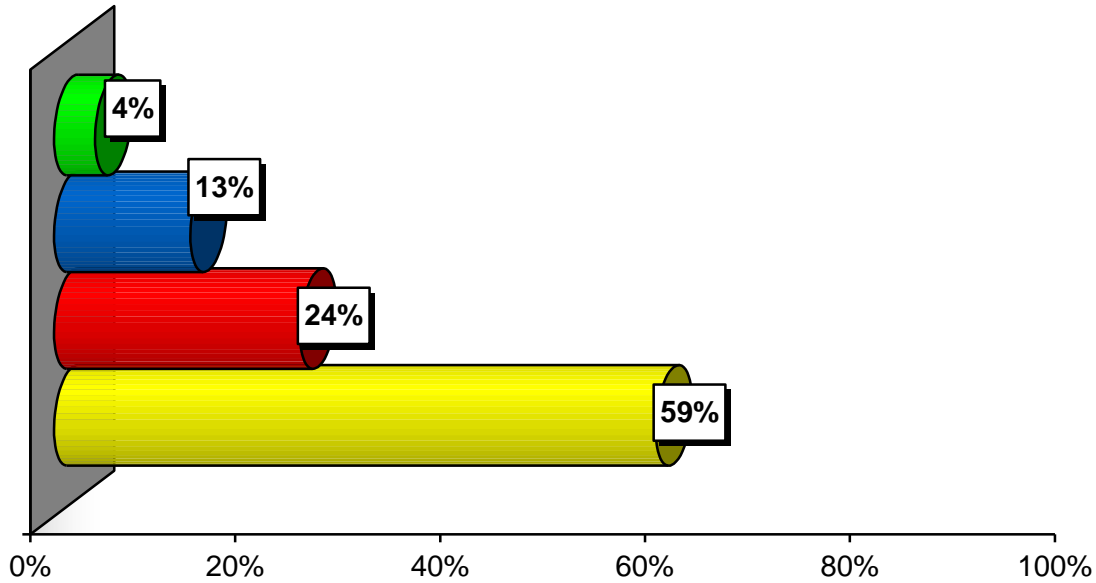
MANAGING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN CLARINGTON

Overall how would you rate the way that growth and development is being managed within Clarington? Please use a scale from one being very poor to five very good.



A 52% majority were positive (good & very good) on how growth is being managed within Clarington compared to 20% that rated it as poor or very poor, while 27% had a neutral opinion.

In your opinion, should growth be halted/restricted, be maintained at current levels or should it grow at a higher rate?



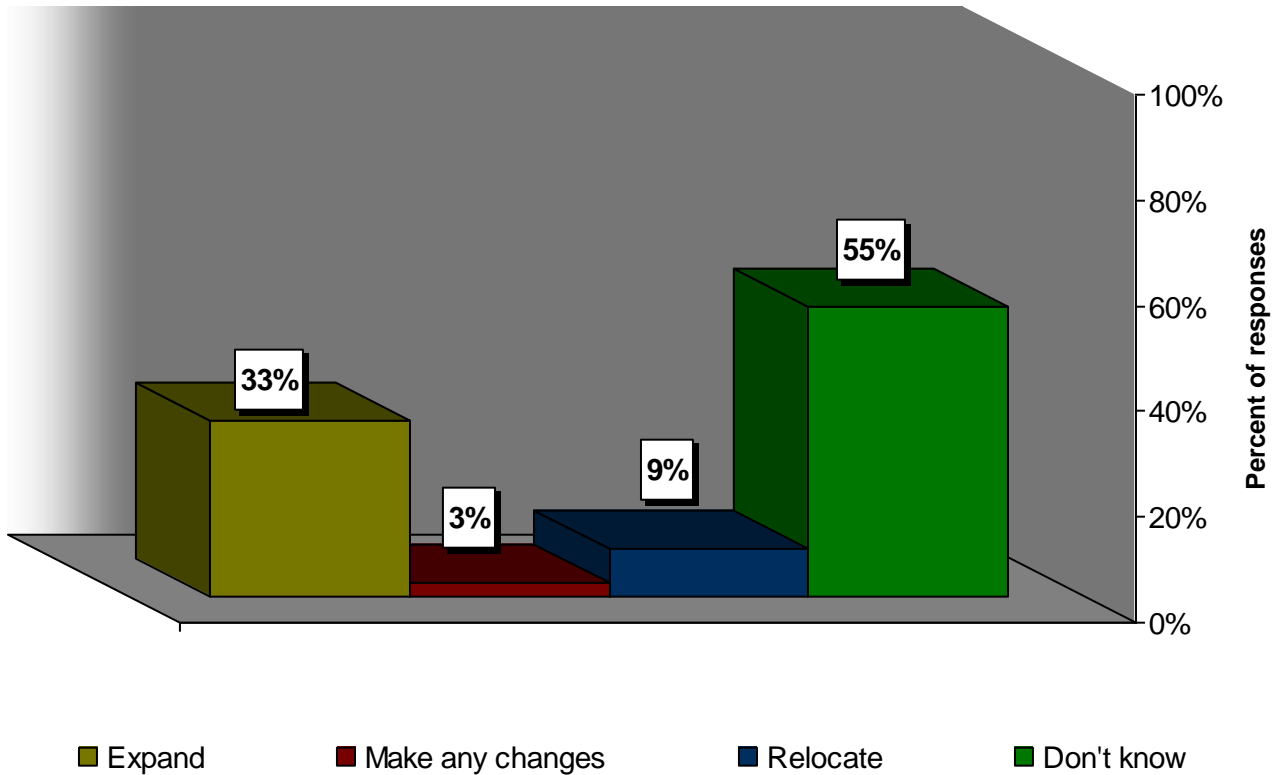
■ Maintained at current levels ■ Grow at a higher rate ■ Halted/ restricted ■ Don't know

Almost six in ten businesses or 59% feel that development should be maintained at current levels. Slightly less than a quarter or 24% said it should increase at a higher rate, 13% want it halted and 4% did not know.



CHANGES

Over the next year does your business plan to expand, relocate, or make any changes?



When asked, one third of businesses (33%) said that they plan to expand, 9% will relocate, 3% will make other changes and most or 55% were unsure.



Results by Question

Q1. What do you enjoy most about operating a business in the community?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid The community / the people	20	26.7
Small town feel	15	20.0
Location	7	9.3
Quality of life / lifestyle	7	9.3
Don't know	7	9.3
Independence	4	5.3
Convenience	4	5.3
Just like it	3	4.0
Proximity to amenities / services	2	2.7
Nothing	2	2.7
Making money/profitable	2	2.7
Proximity to Toronto	1	1.3
Good labour pool	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0

Q2. How has Clarington changed in the past 10 years? Do you feel it has changed for the better, for the worse or has there been no change at all?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Better	49	65.3
Worse	12	16.0
No Change	7	9.3
Don't know	7	9.3
Total	75	100.0

Q3. What changes to the community would make Clarington an even better place to live?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Don't know	20	26.7
More business/industry	10	13.3
Be more business friendly/less red tape	7	9.3
Restrict development/protect green/agricultural land	7	9.3
Theatre/arts/recreation facilities	6	8.0
Public transit	5	6.7
Infrastructure development	5	6.7
Better roads	4	5.3
Lower taxes	2	2.7
Waterfront development	2	2.7
Physician recruitment	2	2.7
Traffic flow	1	1.3
Be more business friendly	1	1.3
Green space/parks	1	1.3
Housing development	1	1.3
Improve the downtown	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0

From the perspective of your business, what do you feel is the most important challenge facing Clarington as its population continues to grow?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Planning/Balancing development/Growth /Sprawl	13	17.3
Traffic	7	9.3
Don't know	7	9.3
Roads / maintenance / widen roads	6	8.0
Infrastructure / services	6	8.0
Big box stores	5	6.7
Employment	4	5.3
Economic development	3	4.0
Parking	3	4.0
Promotion of the community / businesses	2	2.7
Government (municipal, provincial, federal)	2	2.7
Agricultural preservation	2	2.7
Keeping up with technology	2	2.7
Our business growth/expansion	2	2.7
Taxes	1	1.3
Health services	1	1.3
Crime	1	1.3
Water supply and treatments	1	1.3
Attracting commercial / industrial business	1	1.3
Keeping the small community feeling	1	1.3
Planning	1	1.3
Lack of business development	1	1.3
Public transit	1	1.3
Regulations	1	1.3
Competition	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0



IF GROWTH NAMED IN Q4 ASK Q5

Q5. How should the Municipality deal with this growth related challenge?

- ❖ To maintain the community warmth and still be able to server the influx of people
- ❖ To be able to keep up with the growth and my number of staff
- ❖ There are developing centres around which change traffic flow and where people drive to need to be able to walk around
- ❖ There's not a lot of money here and it became a sort of "default choice" place to live
- ❖ The municipality should not cover up our history like old buildings in the process of development
- ❖ That we develop a sustainable plan using less vehicles, plant more trees, bury hydro lines at each opportunity, and put corner stores in new subdivisions
- ❖ Stop encroachment of our green spaces
- ❖ Prioritizing reviewing current infrastructure with potential of reorganization
- ❖ No development on agricultural land
- ❖ Managing the growth
- ❖ Lack of availability of industrial land
- ❖ It will grow too quickly and Clarington will be unable to grow with it
- ❖ Don't know

Please rate a series of priorities for the municipality to consider when it plans for the future, for each area respond using a scale from one a very low priority to five a very high priority.

Q6. Attracting more employment opportunities

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Very low priority	2	2.7
Neither low nor high priority	8	10.7
High priority	14	18.7
Very high priority	51	68.0
Total	75	100.0

Q7. Historical and heritage building preservation

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Very low priority	5	6.7
Low priority	8	10.7
Neither low nor high priority	11	14.7
High priority	22	29.3
Very high priority	29	38.7
Total	75	100.0



Q8. Preserving agricultural lands

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Low priority	4	5.3
	Neither low nor high priority	13	17.3
	High priority	17	22.7
	Very high priority	41	54.7
	Total	75	100.0

Q9. Preserving the natural environment

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Low priority	1	1.3
	Neither low nor high priority	10	13.3
	High priority	16	21.3
	Very high priority	48	64.0
	Total	75	100.0

Q10. Planning neighborhood so that they are less dependent on vehicles

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	4	5.4
	Low priority	5	6.8
	Neither low nor high priority	11	14.9
	High priority	27	36.5
	Very high priority	27	36.5
	Total	74	100.0
Missing	Don't know	1	
Total		75	

Q11. Having a mix of housing types (such as single family and multi units) in residential Neighborhoods

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	7	9.5
	Low priority	15	20.3
	Neither low nor high priority	17	23.0
	High priority	20	27.0
	Very high priority	15	20.3
	Total	74	100.0
Missing	Don't know	1	
Total		75	



Q13. Providing adequate affordable housing

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	6	8.1
	Low priority	4	5.4
	Neither low nor high priority	24	32.4
	High priority	21	28.4
	Very high priority	19	25.7
	Total	74	100.0
Missing	Don't know	1	
Total		75	

Q14. Improving roads

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	1	1.3
	Low priority	5	6.7
	Neither low nor high priority	17	22.7
	High priority	22	29.3
	Very high priority	30	40.0
	Total	75	100.0

Q15. Improving public transit

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	2	2.7
	Low priority	6	8.2
	Neither low nor high priority	18	24.7
	High priority	17	23.3
	Very high priority	30	41.1
	Total	73	100.0
Missing	Don't know	2	
Total		75	

Q16. Building bike and walking trails

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	4	5.3
	Low priority	2	2.7
	Neither low nor high priority	19	25.3
	High priority	27	36.0
	Very high priority	23	30.7
	Total	75	100.0



Q17. Improving public spaces and access to waterfront area

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	1	1.3
	Low priority	5	6.7
	Neither low nor high priority	13	17.3
	High priority	22	29.3
	Very high priority	34	45.3
	Total	75	100.0

Q18. Improving shopping areas

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	6	8.2
	Low priority	12	16.4
	Neither low nor high priority	30	41.1
	High priority	14	19.2
	Very high priority	11	15.1
	Total	73	100.0
Missing	Don't know	2	
Total		75	

Q19. Improving arts and culture

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	2	2.7
	Low priority	6	8.0
	Neither low nor high priority	30	40.0
	High priority	18	24.0
	Very high priority	19	25.3
	Total	75	100.0

Q19b. Preserving historic downtowns

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Very low priority	1	1.3
	Low priority	2	2.7
	Neither low nor high priority	20	26.7
	High priority	20	26.7
	Very high priority	32	42.7
	Total	75	100.0



Q20. As you are aware, following the successful completion of the environmental Assessment Process, Darlington will be expanding. What do you think will be the business opportunities arising from the expansion?

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	More jobs	23	30.7
	Don't know	17	22.7
	Population growth	11	14.7
	Business opportunities (retail, service etc)	10	13.3
	Growth (in general)	6	8.0
	Construction/building/infrastructure	4	5.3
	Housing	3	4.0
	None	1	1.3
	Total	75	100.0

Q21. Overall how would you rate the way that growth and development is being managed in the region of Durham from Pickering to Clarington?

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Neither poor nor good	32	43.8
	Good	22	30.1
	Poor	7	9.6
	Very poor	6	8.2
	Very good	6	8.2
	Total	73	100.0
Missing	Don't know	2	
Total		75	

Q22. Overall how would you rate the way that growth and development is being managed within Clarington? Please use a scale from one being very poor to five very good.

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Good	32	43.2
	Neither poor nor good	20	27.0
	Poor	12	16.2
	Very good	7	9.5
	Very poor	3	4.1
	Total	74	100.0
Missing	Don't know	1	
Total		75	

Q23. In your opinion, should growth be halted/restricted, be maintained at current levels or should it grow at a higher rate?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Be maintained at current levels	44	58.7
Grow at a higher rate	18	24.0
Halted/restricted	10	13.3
Don't know	3	4.0
Total	75	100.0

Q24. Over the next year does your business plan to expand, relocate, or make any changes?

	Frequency	Percent of Responses
Valid Expand	26	33.3
Make any changes	2	2.6
Relocate	7	9.0
Don't know / refused	43	55.1

We are nearing the end of our survey and we would just like to remind you that all information will remain confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only.

D1. What is the main activity of this business at this location?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Other retail business	20	26.7
Food stores, restaurants, bars	8	10.7
Finance	7	9.3
Insurance, real estate and investment trusts	7	9.3
Other manufacturing industries	6	8.0
Automobile dealerships and gas stations	4	5.3
Commercial services	4	5.3
Other services	4	5.3
Agriculture and fisheries	3	4.0
Hotel, boarding houses, camps and other dwellings	3	4.0
Construction	2	2.7
Health services	2	2.7
Communications	1	1.3
Personal services	1	1.3
Movies, entertainment, museums and gardens	1	1.3
Government education services	1	1.3
Social And Human Service Organizations	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0



D2. How long have you been in Business?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Under 5 years	12	16.0
5-10 years	15	20.0
11-15 years	9	12.0
16-20 years	6	8.0
20+ years	33	44.0
Total	75	100.0

D3. In total, how many employees are there at this location?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid 1 to 4	29	38.7
5 to 9	14	18.7
20 to 49	13	17.3
10 to 19	12	16.0
50 to 99	5	6.7
100 to 249	1	1.3
250 to 499	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0

D4. What is your position at this business?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Owner / Partner	37	49.3
Administrator / Department Head / General Manager	12	16.0
President / Vice-president	9	12.0
Manager / Assistant Manager	8	10.7
Customer service Representative	4	5.3
Director / Project Manager / Analyst / Consultant	3	4.0
IT Manager / Network administrator	1	1.3
Supervisor / Team leader / Foreman	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0

D5 .Gender

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid Male	41	54.7
Female	34	45.3
Total	75	100.0