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2011 Business Satisfaction Survey Businesses Say Airdrie is a Good Place to Do Business

AIRDRIE, ALBERTA – Airdrie businesses rated the city as a good place to do business and gave the highest rankings to the community’s quality of life in the City of Airdrie’s first-ever Business Satisfaction Survey.

Nearly one-third of Airdrie-based companies including commercial/industrial and home-based businesses responded to the survey, which was conducted by Banister Research & Consulting Inc. in February 2011. Of the 522 businesses responding, 89% said Airdrie is a “good,” “very good” or excellent” place to do business.

“This is a terrific response,” says Kent Rupert, City of Airdrie Economic Development Team Leader. “We were pleased business owners and managers from a wide variety of companies took the time to respond. It’s fantastic to hear that, overall, businesses are satisfied with the environment Airdrie offers.”

Businesses were queried on a number of aspects of the city’s business environment. Respondents gave Airdrie high satisfaction ratings in the following areas:

- Quality of Life – 92%
- Location – 86%
- Community Growth – 82%
- Access to Customer Base – 77%
- Business Support Services – 72%

Areas receiving less positive rankings included the cost of commercial, industrial and office space, cost of land, availability of management staff, and access to professional development programs.

When asked about the economic downturn, the majority (64%) said it had a negative impact on their businesses. Looking forward, businesses are very optimistic: 68% expect workload to grow or expand (with another 26% stating it will stay the same), and 87% plan to hire more employees or maintain constant staffing levels over the next 12 months.

Recruitment and retention of staff does not appear to be an issue for Airdrie companies: 73% indicated they do not currently have challenges in this area.

Airdrie’s home-based entrepreneurs (HBEs) were asked some additional questions. Well over half (62%) of the respondents indicated their home-based business is their primary source of income.

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Twenty-seven percent of HBEs said they are interested in moving their business from home to a storefront location.

“The entrepreneurial spirit in Airdrie is phenomenal,” says Rupert. “We know the city is home to a high number of home-based entrepreneurs. It’s exciting to hear many have plans to grow and to contribute even more to our economy.”

Businesses were asked to rate their satisfaction with City of Airdrie business-related programs and services. Of the 240 businesses that had worked with a City department in the last year, the majority gave positive ratings to the municipality, however some areas where improvement is needed was noted.

Of the products and services offered by Airdrie Economic Development, businesses were most aware of the Business Directory, Airdrie@Work e-newsletter and airdrienow.ca website. Businesses indicated high interest in enhanced online tools including online payment and renewal of business licenses (82%) and a comprehensive business directory (73%).

“We look forward to acting on the feedback collected to provide meaningful programs and services for the business community,” states Rupert.

Results are accurate to ± 3.5 percent at the 95% confidence level, (19 times out of 20) giving assurance the results are representative of the population group. The 522 surveys completed (by web or telephone) include commercial/industrial (245) and home-based (277) businesses. In 98% of the cases, the business owner or primary manager completed the survey. All respondents invited to participate were Airdrie-based businesses operating with a current City of Airdrie business license. The survey was conducted by Banister Research & Consulting Inc.

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Kent Rupert
Team Leader, Economic Development
City of Airdrie
(403) 948-8800 ext. 8738
kent.rupert@airdrie.ca

www.airdrienow.ca