

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION (BR+E) ACTIONS 2026-2028

BR+E ACTION PLAN

TOWN OF STONY PLAIN

INTRODUCTION

The Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Program is an objective of the Town of Stony Plain's 2024-2029 Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan and intends to enhance the community's local business ecosystem.

The BR+E Program's engagement, conducted between February and May 2026, reaffirmed that Stony Plain is home to a resilient, entrepreneurial, and community-minded business sector. Businesses expressed confidence in the future, with many anticipating growth, expansion, and new opportunities in the years ahead. At the same time, they identified key challenges related to workforce attraction, housing supply, commercial and industrial space availability, rising costs, and access to information and support.

Built with business, resource network partners, and Town representatives, this action plan reflects a shared understanding of the opportunities and priorities that will have the greatest impact on business retention, expansion, and long-term economic resilience. The Town of Stony Plain extends its sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and perspectives throughout this process. Their input helped ensure the plan is grounded in local experience and reflects real business needs.

The actions identified in this plan are intentionally focused. While the BR+E engagement surfaced a wide range of opportunities and challenges, not everything can be addressed through a single action or within a single program cycle. Instead, this plan focuses on areas where local leadership, strong partnerships, and coordinated action can create meaningful outcomes into 2028.

Success will be measured not only by the completion of actions, but by the strength of the partnerships formed, the opportunities created, and the confidence businesses have in Stony Plain as a place to invest, grow, and succeed.

BR + E BACKGROUND

BR+E is a structured, action-oriented, and community-based approach to business and economic development. It promotes job growth by helping communities learn about opportunities and issues facing local businesses and sets priorities for projects to address current needs.

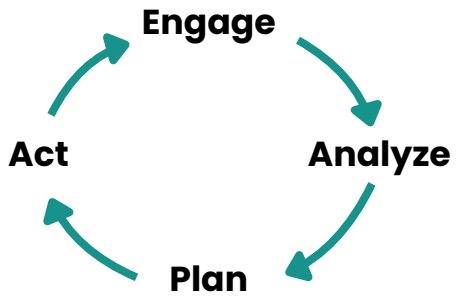
STONY PLAIN'S BR+E OBJECTIVES

The Town's BR+E Program is designed to:

- Strengthen and nurture relationships with local businesses
- Understand business retention and expansion needs
- Support business development and retention
- Expand and align the resource network
- Guide internal coordination and action
- Inform strategy, promotion, and planning

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

The BR+E Program follows a continuous cycle of engagement, analysis, collaboration, and action.



BR+E SURVEY REPORT

To strengthen the evidence base for this Action Plan, survey results were independently analyzed by the University of Alberta Cities Institute. The following pages provide a summary of the key findings that informed this plan, while the accompanying **BR+E Survey Report** contains the complete analysis and detailed results.

WHO WE HEARD FROM

The 2026 BR+E process engaged businesses across Stony Plain through a business survey and collaborative action-planning workshop.

ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

89 businesses participated in the survey

The survey exceeded its participation target and captured input from a broad cross-section of Stony Plain businesses.

42 action-planning workshop participants

Businesses, business resource network partners, and Town representatives collaborated to identify priorities and actions.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

91% locally owned

80% owners live in Stony Plain

83% employ fewer than 10 people

62% have a business plan

60% lease their business premises

25% located in Downtown Stony Plain

17% home-based businesses



WHAT WE LEARNED

The BR+E process identified a business community that is optimistic about the future and committed to continued growth. For detailed findings and analysis, please refer to the **BR+E Survey Report**.

STONY PLAIN IS VIEWED AS A GOOD PLACE TO DO BUSINESS

More than 80% of participating businesses rated Stony Plain as a good or excellent place to do business, citing community support, quality of life, and the overall business environment as key strengths.

BUSINESSES ARE PLANNING FOR GROWTH AND EXPANSION

Many businesses expect sales growth over the next two years, and nearly half expect to expand. Workforce growth was the most common anticipated outcome of expansion, followed by additional services, employee training needs, and additional space requirements.

GROWTH DEPENDS ON ACCESS TO TALENT AND SPACE

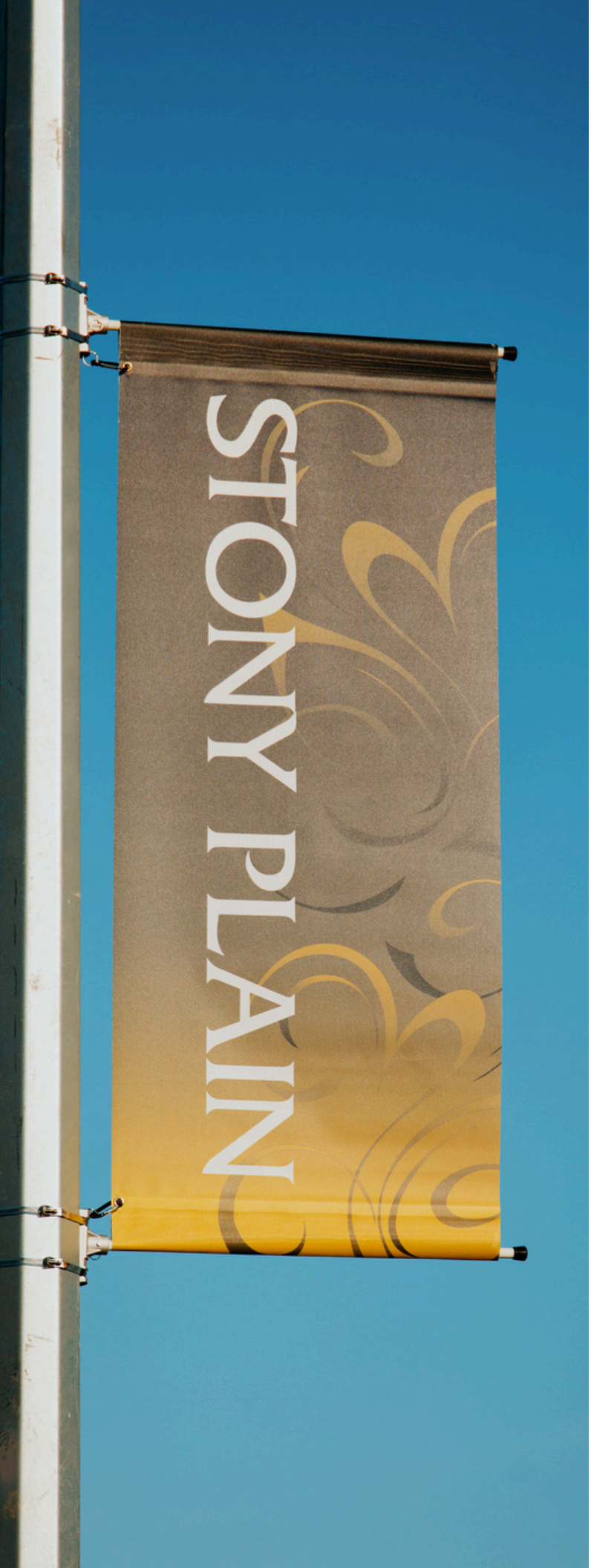
Businesses identified commercial and industrial space as an important consideration for expansion. Workforce attraction, talent development, and diversity of housing options were also identified as important factors.

RISING COSTS CONTINUE TO CREATE PRESSURE

Materials, insurance, utilities, and labour were identified as significant sources of cost pressure affecting business operations and decision-making.

BUSINESSES ARE LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND CONNECT

Participants expressed interest in practical learning opportunities related to business planning, leadership, workforce development, marketing, and artificial intelligence. Businesses also highlighted the value of networking, peer learning, and stronger connections to each other and business support organizations and resources.



BUSINESSES VALUE TIMELY AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

Businesses identified opportunities to improve awareness of programs, resources, and opportunities, while emphasizing the importance of receiving advance notice of initiatives, projects, road closures, and other changes that may affect day-to-day operations and long-term planning. Direct email was identified as the preferred method of communication with the Town.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

The survey identified differences in business outlook, opportunities, and challenges across sectors and locations, and seasonality influences business activity differently throughout the year. These findings reinforce the importance of considering diverse business needs, perspectives, and experiences when developing programs, services, communications, and future economic development initiatives.

PRIORITY AREAS

Business feedback, independent analysis, and collaborative action planning identified four areas where focused action can support business retention, expansion, and long-term economic resilience.

These priorities reflect areas where the Town of Stony Plain and its partners are best positioned to support business success.

The following four priority areas will guide the implementation of this plan:

- Workforce & Talent
- Space to Grow
- Learning & Connection
- Communication

IMPLEMENTATION

The Town of Stony Plain will champion and support implementation across all actions within this plan. Progress will be monitored through the measures identified for each action and through ongoing engagement with businesses and partners.

REPORTING

Progress updates will be provided, as appropriate, through the Town's Quarterly Report and Economic Development Strategy reporting.

WORKFORCE & TALENT

Strengthen connections between employers, talent, and workforce partners to support workforce attraction, retention, and long-term labour market resilience.

ACTION 1

STRENGTHEN TRI-REGIONAL WORKFORCE TOOLS AND SOLUTIONS

Advance regional workforce solutions that improve connections between employers and talent, reduce hiring and job search barriers, and support long-term labour market resilience across the Tri-Region.

Who

- Tri-Region municipalities
- Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Community Futures Capital Region
- Bredin Centre for Career Advancement
- Local employers and job seekers

Measures

To be identified through solution development

Timeline

Initiate Q4 2026

ACTION 2

CONNECT LOCAL TALENT

Promote the Town's Job Readiness Program to local businesses, facilitating employer participation, gathering feedback on workforce needs and youth employment, and strengthening connections between employers and job-ready participants.

Who

- Local employers
- Regional school divisions

Timeline

Initiate Q1 2027

Measures

- Businesses participating
- Youth employment connections
- Employer feedback

ACTION 3

SUPPORT WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Connect local businesses to work-integrated learning opportunities by identifying and supporting at least five employers to participate in co-op placements, internships or work experience programs, and gather employer feedback to inform Economic Development programming.

Who

- Post-secondary institutions
- Local businesses
- Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of Commerce

Measures

- Businesses participating
- Student placements
- Partner feedback

Timeline

Initiate Q3 2027

ACTION 4

INTEGRATE WORKFORCE CONSIDERATIONS INTO GROWTH PLANNING

Use BR+E insights to inform future growth-related discussions by actively sharing workforce-related findings with relevant Town departments and strategic partners, including those involved in planning, housing, transportation, and development initiatives.

Who

- Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Jobs, Economy, Trade and Immigration Government of Alberta

Measures

- Departments engaged on workforce-related barriers
- Workforce considerations reflected in relevant plans, strategies, and initiatives
- Updates to BR+E workforce insights based on business engagement

Timeline

Ongoing

SPACE TO GROW

Support the availability and development of commercial and industrial space that enables business retention, expansion, and investment.

ACTION 5

STRENGTHEN PROPERTY OWNER AND PROPERTY MANAGER RELATIONSHIPS

Build relationships with owners and managers of strategic properties to better understand available space, site constraints, and development opportunities, and use these insights to support business expansion, retention, and investment attraction.

Who

- Property owners
- Property managers/management companies
- Real estate professionals
- Local developers

Measures

- Number of relationship-building meetings completed
- Number of properties represented through engagement activities

Timeline

Initiate Q2 2027

ACTION 6

TRACK AND COMMUNICATE BUSINESS SPACE DEMAND

Establish and maintain a Business Space Needs Inventory to capture commercial and industrial space requirements, growth plans, and site selection needs identified through business engagement activities. Analyze and aggregate this information to develop actionable market intelligence that supports business retention and expansion efforts, informs investment attraction activities, and helps align future commercial and industrial development with demonstrated market demand.

Who

- Local businesses
- Property owners
- Property managers/management companies
- Real estate professionals
- Local developers

Measure

Number of inquiries generated through promotion

Timeline

Initiate Q1 2027

LEARNING & CONNECTION

Support access to business learning, networking, and support resources that help businesses grow and adapt.

ACTION 7

INCREASE ACCESS TO BUSINESS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Partner with business support organizations to increase the availability of business learning, networking, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities in Stony Plain. The Town will support awareness, promotion, and business participation in programs that respond to identified business needs and opportunities.

Who

- Local businesses
- Greater Parkland Region Chamber of Commerce
- Business Link
- Community Futures Capital Region
- Post-secondary institutions

Measures

- Number of events hosted
- Number of attendees
- Number of partner organizations involved

Timeline

Initiate Q1 2027

COMMUNICATION

Strengthen business-focused communications and improve information sharing.

ACTION 8

STRENGTHEN BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND EMAIL ENGAGEMENT

Ensure businesses receive timely, relevant, and actionable information regarding municipal initiatives, projects, opportunities, and disruptions that may affect their operations, growth, or investment decisions. Establish a coordinated approach across the organization to identify business impacts early and communicate with the business community through appropriate channels.

Measures

- Newsletter subscriber growth
- Number of conversions
- Open and click-through rates
- Business communication tactics incorporated into relevant communications plans

Timeline

Ongoing

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Town of Stony Plain extends its gratitude to the 89 businesses that participated in the 2026 BR+E engagement process. Your insights, experiences, and perspectives helped shape this Action Plan.

The Town also recognizes the contributions of:

- Business Link
- Community Futures Capital Region
- Government of Alberta – Jobs, Economy, Trade and Immigration
- Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of Commerce
- MacEwan University
- Town of Stony Plain team members representing the business units of:
  - Community and Social Development
  - Corporate Communications
  - Culture and Tourism Development
  - Enforcement Services
  - Financial Services
  - Planning and Development
  - Strategic Services
- Town of Stony Plain's Growth and Commerce Committee

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Special recognition is extended to the Cities Institute at the University of Alberta for providing independent analysis of survey findings and contributing an external academic perspective to the BR+E process.

Learn more about Stony Plain's BR+E Program at **www.stonyplain.com/bre**.

