



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

*Economic Development Division*

**m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** Bruce K. Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

**FROM:** Elizabeth H. Tyler, AICP, Director

**DATE:** March 18, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Report on Business Survey Results

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**Description**

The attached report summarizes conclusions from the analysis of 159 received responses from 838 business surveys that were sent out to each business within the City limits of Urbana between the period of December 2002 to December 2003.

**Issues**

Aggregate results of the survey will be posted on the City website. Individual business data will be kept internal and used by the Economic Development Division to identify business that require retention visits or other City assistance.

**Background**

The surveys were meant to provide a basis upon which to measure changes in the local business climate, attitudes of businesses, and success of economic development and community development programs and initiatives. Surveys were created by Ryan Brault, Redevelopment Specialist and mailed to each business in the City. Completed surveys were compiled and results were input into a database so that data could be analyzed and compared.

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact from this report or from the analysis of the survey findings.

## **Recommendations**

This report is submitted to the Committee for information purposes.

Attachments:    A:    Summary Report  
                  B:    Business Survey  
                  C:    Summaries of Responses

Prepared by:

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Ryan Brault, Redevelopment Specialist



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Executive Summary of Responses

March 18, 2004

### Purpose

Beginning in December 2002 and until December 2003, surveys were sent out to every business within the boundaries of the City of Urbana in order to evaluate the business climate in the City. Doing this helps us to identify both real and perceived issues of individual business owners/managers as well as trends among business neighborhoods throughout the City. Not only were vital statistics collected regarding business mix, square footage, number of employees, etc., but direct input was gathered on what issues affect businesses directly and indirectly and a great deal of input as to what the City can do better to improve Urbana as a place to do business.

This survey was mainly for the purpose of data gathering, and it's hoped that future surveys can be formulated to acquire more detailed data reflecting current business practices, wishes, and attitudes that we can use to provide even more effective follow-up as needed.

### Methods

In total, almost 1,000 surveys were sent to businesses identified from a comprehensive business list created using past data, tax records, phone listings, and visual surveys. Of those, 838 were non-duplicate, legitimate businesses (judged by how many surveys were sent back marked "not deliverable as addressed") and so that is the number used for these purposes. A total of 159 responses were received, for a 19% response rate. This is considered a very good response rate for a mailed survey without follow-up reminders or cash incentives.

Surveys were mailed out within a ten-month period depending on business neighborhood. Business neighborhoods were determined by address and were divided as follows: Downtown, East Urbana, North Cunningham, North Lincoln, Southeast Urbana, and University/Medical. Each survey envelope included a stamped envelope to ensure a high rate of response.

Business neighborhoods were defined roughly as follows:

**Downtown:** The area bounded on the north by University Avenue, west by Orchard Street, south by Washington Street, and on the east by Maple Street

**East Urbana:** Area bounded on the north by Butzow Drive, west by Maple Street, south by Florida Avenue, and east by High Cross Road

North Cunningham: All areas north of Five Points along and near Cunningham Avenue and within City boundaries

North Lincoln: All areas along and near Lincoln Avenue north of University Avenue within Urbana city limits, including Goodwin Avenue, Linview Street, Killarney, Bradley, and Kenyon Rd

Southeast Urbana: The area generally bounded on the north by Florida Avenue, west by Race Street, south by Windsor Road, and east by High Cross Road

University/Medical: The area west of Orchard Street including businesses on Campus and Wright Street, and the business corridor extending from Provena Covenant to Carle

## **Results**

Respondents represented the full range of business categories, sizes, and tenure. The average length of time that businesses had been operating and also located in Urbana was surprisingly long, with the businesses having been around for median of almost 22 years and in Urbana for almost 18 years.

The types of businesses that responded were dominated by those falling into the category of Retail/Service, with "Other" being the second most popular response. This was followed by Construction/Development companies, and an approximately equal number of Home-Based, Technology, and Manufacturing/Industrial businesses responding and making up the next largest categories. It is not surprising that retail and service businesses dominate due to the larger number of smaller employers in that category, today's economic base, and the broadness of that category. Future surveys might divide Retail/Service so as to further define the most important niches within that category.

Small businesses predominate in Urbana, and make up the backbone of the local economy (the University notwithstanding). The survey results show the average business in Urbana employing approximately 25 people full-time with about 6 part-time employees. The range takes into account everything from home-based businesses to large regional corporations.

Most of the businesses surveyed found location, usually because of good highway access and visibility, to be the primary advantages of being in Urbana. Almost half of all respondents mentioned access or visibility as most important. Cost of doing business seemed to be a minor factor in choices to locate in Urbana as it was mentioned by only 6% of respondents as a disadvantage. Other disadvantages mentioned were parking, qualities of the surrounding neighborhood, and/or lack of access or visibility.

The surveys indicate that the economic downturn has had little effect on most local businesses. This is backed up by data showing relatively stable rates of employment compared to other Illinois and US cities. Urbana employment rate has ranged between 2.8% and 3.4% since the first quarter of 2001.

Two-thirds of businesses questioned said their business had grown in the past 5 years, with 22% saying it had remained stable and only 11% saying they had experienced any decline. The future looks bright for many, as well. Almost all businesses surveyed said they were planning on remaining stable or expanding their businesses in the next 5 years.

The ratio of the number of business that own their own building or site to those that lease their space is about even. It seems that most businesses are satisfied with where they are, though about one quarter of those surveyed indicated that their site or building size were not sufficient for their needs. Fifty-nine percent said that they needed more building space while 19% said they lacked parking.

An overwhelming majority (90%), of Urbana businesses are locally owned. This was somewhat surprising, though the figure could be inaccurate due to the nature of the survey. Oftentimes, communications with national or regional businesses require approval from a head office or remote decision-making official. Since we simply mailed the surveys to only Urbana locations of companies, there may have been a lack of impetus to acquire approval to fill out detailed information on companies if no attempts were made to contact their decision-makers in such matters.

Several questions on the survey dealt with issues of retention, which helps ED staff identify businesses that may require special visits or follow-up in order to ensure that businesses in Urbana remain successful and satisfied with their location in Urbana. Thus, we posed some subjective questions gauging their happiness with particular aspects of their neighborhood, and also asking such direct questions as whether they are planning to relocate, and if “Yes”, why they are considering relocating. Respondents were also asked if they are planning on closing or selling their business, and how they rate the City and it’s Economic Development efforts.

The results of those questions have proven extremely beneficial, in addition to the open-ended question at the end of survey requesting specific comments or concerns. City staff used the specific results of those questions to prioritize retention visits and create special materials and follow-up visits to businesses that indicated distress or displeasure with their location or other issues that were City related. Of course, consideration was made of issues that are beyond the City’s control, such as general economic trends, increased competition, costs of business, etc.

In all, “Quality of Facilities” was given the highest rating of the subjective categories, an average of 4 points out of a possible 5, commensurate with the high number that said they were satisfied with their current space. The lowest rated categories overall were “Mix of Businesses in Area” (3.1), and “Development Incentives” (2.7). Development Incentives was by far the lowest, and is explained by the fact that only 34% of respondents were aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses. Certainly, marketing of the City’s incentive programs has been a higher priority since the survey results have been analyzed. This is currently being remedied by increased advertising, improvement of the City website, as well as through such initiatives as the “Build Downtown” program.

## **Shortcomings**

More profile information could have been collected on each business. That would have yielded more statistical data with which to compare and contrast future surveys, and would have provided better and more complete information for use in follow-ups. However, this would have increased the length of the survey and could have negatively affected the response rate.

It is also apparent from the survey responses that it may be beneficial to break down the "Business Types" into additional categories, which would make for more useful comparisons across neighborhoods and across categories. Future changes to the business survey or supplementary surveys will attempt to address these potential shortcomings.

## **Conclusion**

The attached Survey Response Summary sheets outline the results of the surveys by each business neighborhood and as an aggregate for the City as a whole. Since this is the first survey done to gauge the response to the Urbana business climate by the local businesses themselves, this report and summary will serve as a benchmark with which to measure future perceptions of Urbana and the effectiveness of the City's programs and efforts in enhancing Urbana as a place to do business. It is hoped that surveys can be sent and responses analyzed every three years in order to become a useful tool to help the City affect and respond to changes in local economy.

Attachments:   A:    Business Survey  
                  B:    Summaries of Responses

Prepared by:

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Ryan Brault, Redevelopment Specialist



## 2003 Urbana Business Survey

Business Retention is the foundation for a healthy local economy. Your response to this survey helps ensure that Urbana's Business Retention Program can help broaden that foundation with stronger, growing businesses and helps us assist those that need assistance in maintaining good business. You are not required to answer every question, but it would be helpful to fill out section 1 data so that we may add you to our business directory that we will post on the web. The directory will provide a convenient tool for consumers to use to locate businesses in Urbana that satisfy their needs. It's free advertising!

### Section 1

1. Company Name:

9. Website:

2. Name of Respondent:

10. E-mail:

3. Title:

11. Chief Executive:

4. Date:

12. Title:

5. Address:

13. Owner:

6. Zip Code:

14. Years in Business:

7. Telephone:

15. Years in Urbana:

8. Fax:

16. Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial

Industrial Supply/Service

Retail/Service

Technology

Home-based Business

Construction/Development

Forestry/Resources

Other (please name) \_\_\_\_\_

17. Product/Service:

18. Building Size:

19. Number of Full-Time Employees:

20. Number of Part-Time Employees:

The following section of the survey will help us gain better insight into the current climate and attitudes of the business owners in and around Urbana. Providing your information will help us to predict future trends and will help us to see where our efforts should be concentrated. **All information provided will be confidential and will be for City of Urbana use only.** No individual business data will be distributed. We will only use aggregate data to gauge the status of the business climate in Urbana and to provide a base that we can use to measure future surveys against in order to determine changes.

**Section 2**

21. What are the advantages of your location?

22. Disadvantages?

23. In the past 5 years business has: Grown\_\_\_\_\_ Declined\_\_\_\_\_ Stayed the Same\_\_\_\_\_

24. In the next 5 years you plan to: Expand\_\_\_\_\_ Downsize\_\_\_\_\_ Remain Stable\_\_\_\_\_

25. What are your approximate annual sales?

26. Do you own or lease your building?

Expiration Date if Leased\_\_\_\_\_

27. Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?

If not, please explain:

28. Are your projected employment needs: Increasing\_\_\_\_\_ Stable\_\_\_\_\_ Decreasing\_\_\_\_\_

29. If increasing, how many employees are you planning to hire in the next 5years?

30. Is your business locally owned?

31. Where is your head office located?

32. On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?

	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
a) Size of Space	1	2	3	4	5
b) Quality of Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
c) Size of Lot	1	2	3	4	5
d) Quality of Neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5
e) Mix of Businesses in Area	1	2	3	4	5
f) Location Advantages	1	2	3	4	5
g) Development Incentives	1	2	3	4	5

33. Is your company planning to relocate?



34. If Yes to #33, why are you considering relocating? (check all that apply)

No Land to Expand		Access to Resources	
Access/Egress Problems		Facility/Process Outdated	
Crime/Vandalism		Lack of Skilled/Trained Workforce	
Building Overcrowded		High Labor Rates	
Rigid Code Requirements		Labor Relations	
High Property Tax		Public Utilities Unavailable	
Environmental Concerns		Sales Decline	
Market Changes		Better Development Incentives Elsewhere	
Not Enough Foot Traffic		Not Enough/Poor Parking	

35. Are you considering closing or selling your business?                      If so, when?    Mo            Yr

36. If Yes to #34, what would you need to be able to stay in business?

37. Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?

38. If Yes, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?

Which programs/incentives?

39. How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?

Poor            Fair            Good            Excellent            No Opinion

40. How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?

Poor            Fair            Good            Excellent            No Opinion

41. In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?

42. What are key issues or problems facing your business, if any?

43. Do you have any customers, suppliers, or friends who might be interested in an Urbana location?

44. Do you currently have any property that can be leased, rented or sold that you would like us to add to our inventory list? (please describe)

Property Description

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

45. Please write down any other comments or concerns you may have:

**Thank-you for taking the time to respond to this survey. Again, all information gathered will be confidential. If you wish, you may fax your survey to us at (217)384-0200, or you may mail it to the Economic Development Coordinator, 400 S. Vine St., Urbana, IL 61801. If you have any questions, you may call us at (217)384-2442 or 384-2444.**

Confidential



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Summary of Responses – Downtown Urbana

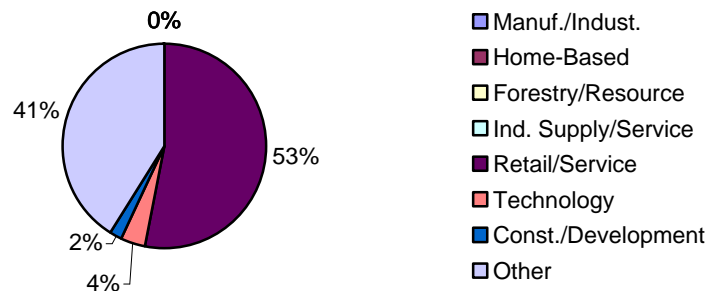
Number of Surveys Sent: 237  
 Responses Received: 50  
 Response Rate: 21.1%

Average number of Years in Business: 26.2

Average Number of Years in Urbana: 20.9

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	0%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	53%
Technology.....	4%
Home-based Business.....	0%
Construction/Development.....	2%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	41%



Average Building Size..... 3,126 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 453 – 9,600 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 21.4  
 Range..... 0-745

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 5.1  
 Range..... 0-55

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Location – 43%  
 Access/Visibility – 36%

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Parking – 29%  
 Neighborhood – 21%

### In the past 5 years business has:

Grown.....	59%
Declined.....	14%
Stayed the Same.....	27%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand.....	59%
Downsize.....	2%
Remain Stable.....	39%

<b>Average approximate annual sales.....</b>	<b>\$327,000</b>
Range.....	\$25,000 – 1 million
Total annual sales of all 15 respondents.....	\$4.9 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own.....	33%
Lease.....	67%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes.....	78%
No.....	22%

Most common reason if answered “No”:	Need more space	78%
	Need more parking	22%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing.....	32%
Stable.....	63%
Decreasing.....	5%

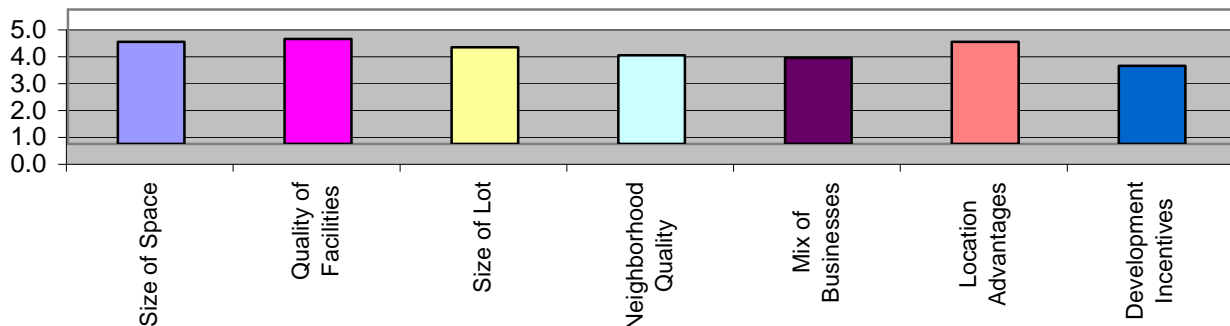
**Is your business locally owned?**

Yes.....	89%
No.....	11%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

	Average Response
Size of Space.....	3.8
Quality of Facilities.....	3.9
Size of Lot.....	3.6
Quality of Neighborhood.....	3.3
Mix of Businesses in Area.....	3.2
Location Advantages.....	3.8
Development Incentives.....	2.9

Average Rating



**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 8%  
No..... 76%  
Not Sure..... 16%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Response: All responses varied

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 5%  
No..... 95%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 48%  
No..... 52%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 58%  
No..... 42%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 3.2

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.7

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives  
Continue Increase Promotion/Marketing  
Less First Floor Offices  
Parking  
Perceptions of Urbana

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Competition  
Economy  
Public/City Support  
Lack of Traffic  
Marketing/Exposure

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between October 29 and December 2, 2003. Data compiled December, 2003 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Summary of Responses – East Urbana

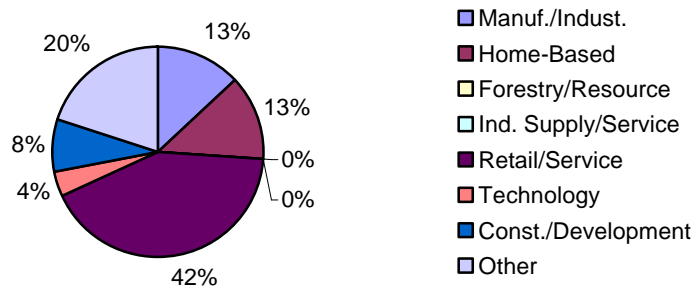
Number of Surveys Sent: 120  
 Responses Received: 20  
 Response Rate: 16.7%

Average number of Years in Business: 30.2

Average Number of Years in Urbana: 29.3

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	13%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	42%
Technology.....	4%
Home-based Business.....	13%
Construction/Development.....	8%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	20%



Average Building Size..... 3,620 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 800 – 11,000 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 7.9  
 Range..... 1-33

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 4.6  
 Range..... 0-40

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Access/Visibility – 36%  
 Interstate – 27%

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Responses Varied

### In the past 5 years business has:

Grown..... 74%  
 Declined..... 9%  
 Stayed the Same..... 27%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand..... 47%  
 Downsize..... 0%  
 Remain Stable..... 53%

**Average approximate annual sales**..... \$20,700,000  
 Range..... \$45,000 – 120 million  
 Total annual sales of all 7 respondents..... \$145.1 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own..... 56%  
 Lease..... 44%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes..... 71%  
 No..... 29%

Most common reason if answered “No”: **Need more space** 60%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing..... 38%  
 Stable..... 62%  
 Decreasing..... 0%

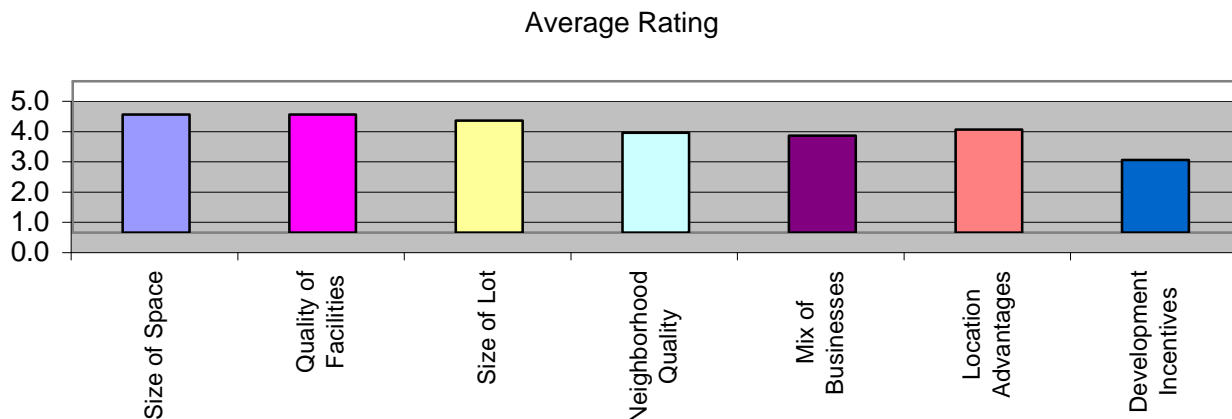
**Is your business locally owned?**

Yes..... 90%  
 No..... 10%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

**Average Response**

Size of Space..... 3.9  
 Quality of Facilities..... 3.9  
 Size of Lot..... 3.7  
 Quality of Neighborhood..... 3.3  
 Mix of Businesses in Area..... 3.2  
 Location Advantages..... 3.4  
 Development Incentives..... 2.4



**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 20%  
No..... 80%  
Not Sure..... 0%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Response: **No Land to Expand**

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 0%  
No..... 100%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 20%  
No..... 80%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 25%  
No..... 75%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.7

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 3.1

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned...  
**Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives**  
**Continue Increase Promotion/Marketing**  
**More Nice Restaurants/Hotels**  
**More Retail**  
**Bigger Airport**

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned...  
**Not Enough Businesses**  
**High Taxes**  
**Cost of Business**  
**Labor**  
**Competition**  
**Lack of Upscale Places for Business People**  
**Economy**  
**Regulations/Policies**

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between June 1 and July 22, 2003. Data compiled September, 2003 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department





# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

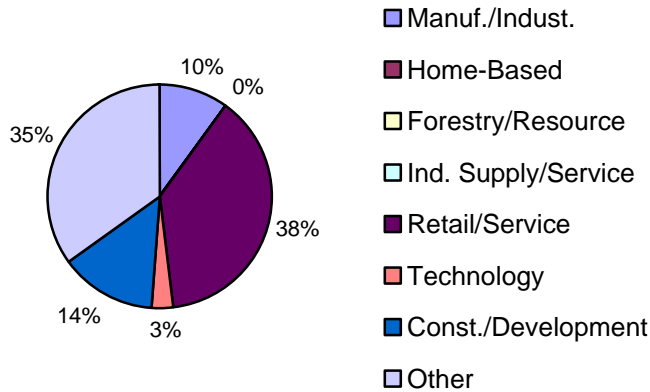
## Summary of Responses - North Cunningham

Number of Surveys Sent: 157  
 Responses Received: 26  
 Response Rate: 16.6%

Average number of Years in Business: 26.0  
 Average Number of Years in Urbana: 24.2

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	10%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	38%
Technology.....	3%
Home-based Business.....	0%
Construction/Development.....	14%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	35%



Average Building Size..... 8,478 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 1,400 – 64,000 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 19.4  
 Range..... 1 - 183

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 6.9  
 Range..... 0-30

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Access/Visibility/Traffic 100%

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: All responses varied

### In the past 5 years business has:

Grown..... 68%  
 Declined..... 9%  
 Stayed the Same..... 23%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand.....	29%
Downsize.....	4%
Remain Stable.....	67%

<b>Average approximate annual sales.....</b>	<b>\$3.3 million</b>
Range.....	\$100k – 20 million
Total annual sales of all 17 respondents.....	\$56.2 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own.....	67%
Lease.....	33%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes.....	78%
No.....	22%

Most common reason if answered “No”: **Need more space** 80%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing.....	25%
Stable.....	71%
Decreasing.....	4%

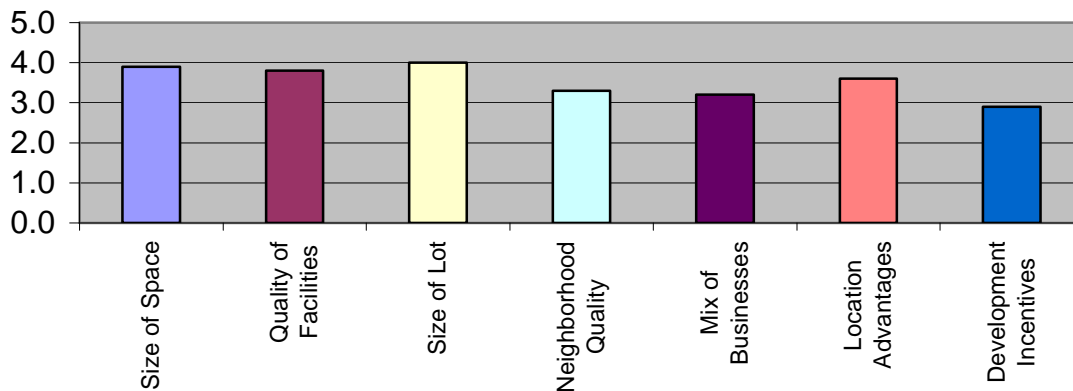
**Is your business locally owned?**

Yes.....	92%
No.....	8%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

	Average Response
Size of Space.....	3.9
Quality of Facilities.....	3.8
Size of Lot.....	4.0
Quality of Neighborhood.....	3.3
Mix of Businesses in Area.....	3.2
Location Advantages.....	3.6
Development Incentives.....	2.9

**Average Rating**



**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 4%  
No..... 83%  
Not Sure..... 13%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Response: **Better Incentives Elsewhere**

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 17%  
No..... 83%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 24%  
No..... 76%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 40%  
No..... 60%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.4

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.7

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... **Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives  
Continue Increase Promotion/Marketing  
Less Restrictive Zoning  
Communicate Intentions**

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... **Economy  
Regulations/Policies  
Competition  
Costs of business**

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between July 30 and September 4, 2003. Data compiled October 2003 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Summary of Responses – North Lincoln

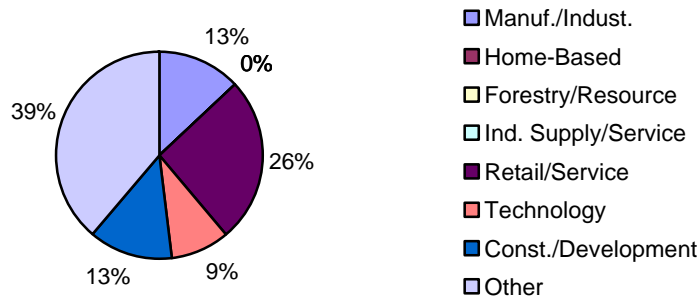
Number of Surveys Sent: 101  
 Responses Received: 22  
 Response Rate: 21.8%

Average number of Years in Business: 28.7

Average Number of Years in Urbana: 22.3

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	13%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	26%
Technology.....	9%
Home-based Business.....	0%
Construction/Development.....	13%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	39%



Average Building Size..... 17,650 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 1,400 – 100,000 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 22.7  
 Range..... 1-120

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 8.9  
 Range..... 0-100

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Access/Visibility – 63%

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Responses Varied

### In the past 5 years business has:

Grown.....	78%
Declined.....	6%
Stayed the Same.....	16%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand..... 53%  
 Downsize..... 0%  
 Remain Stable..... 47%

**Average approximate annual sales**..... \$4,800,000  
 Range..... \$300,000 – 20 million  
 Total annual sales of all 13 respondents..... \$62.5 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own..... 70%  
 Lease..... 30%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes..... 63%  
 No..... 37%

Most common reason if answered “No”: **Need more space** 67%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing..... 37%  
 Stable..... 63%  
 Decreasing..... 0%

**Is your business locally owned?**

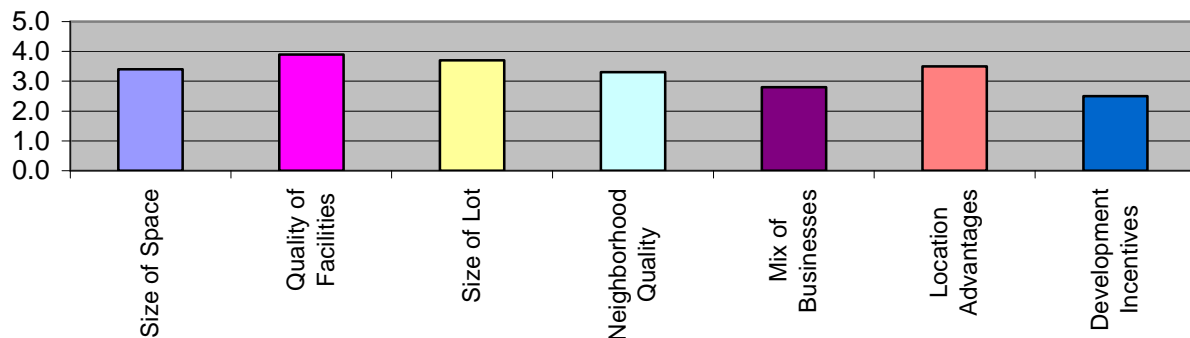
Yes..... 94%  
 No..... 6%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

**Average Response**

Size of Space..... 3.4  
 Quality of Facilities..... 3.9  
 Size of Lot..... 3.7  
 Quality of Neighborhood..... 3.3  
 Mix of Businesses in Area..... 2.8  
 Location Advantages..... 3.5  
 Development Incentives..... 2.5

**Average Rating**



**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 0%  
No..... 78%  
Not Sure..... 22%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Response: No Land to Expand  
Building Overcrowded

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 11%  
No..... 89%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 35%  
No..... 65%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 60%  
No..... 40%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.8

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.7

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Bring In More Businesses  
Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives  
Continue Increase Promotion/Marketing  
Less Restrictive Zoning

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Competition  
Economy  
Cost of Business  
Infrastructure  
Visibility  
Regulations/Policies

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between January 20 and March 27, 2003. Data compiled May 2003 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Summary of Responses – Southeast Urbana

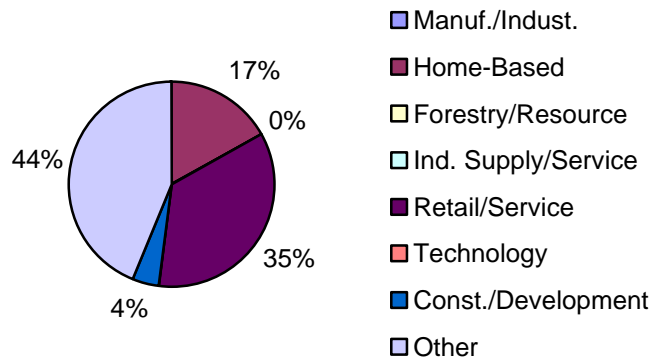
Number of Surveys Sent: 118  
 Responses Received: 21  
 Response Rate: 17.8%

Average number of Years in Business: 22.7

Average Number of Years in Urbana: 15.4

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	0%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	35%
Technology.....	0%
Home-based Business.....	17%
Construction/Development.....	4%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	44%



Average Building Size..... 18,993 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 1,000 – 85,000 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 6.8  
 Range..... 0-40

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 6.0  
 Range..... 0-43

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: All responses varied

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Lack of Businesses in Area – 25%

### In the past 5 years business has:

Grown..... 65%  
 Declined..... 15%  
 Stayed the Same..... 20%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand.....	55%
Downsize.....	5%
Remain Stable.....	40%

<b>Average approximate annual sales.....</b>	<b>\$1.6 million</b>
Range.....	\$9,000 – 9.2 million
Total annual sales of all 6 respondents.....	\$9.8 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own.....	22%
Lease.....	78%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes.....	94%
No.....	6%

Most common reason if answered “No”: **Need more space** 80%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing.....	26%
Stable.....	68%
Decreasing.....	6%

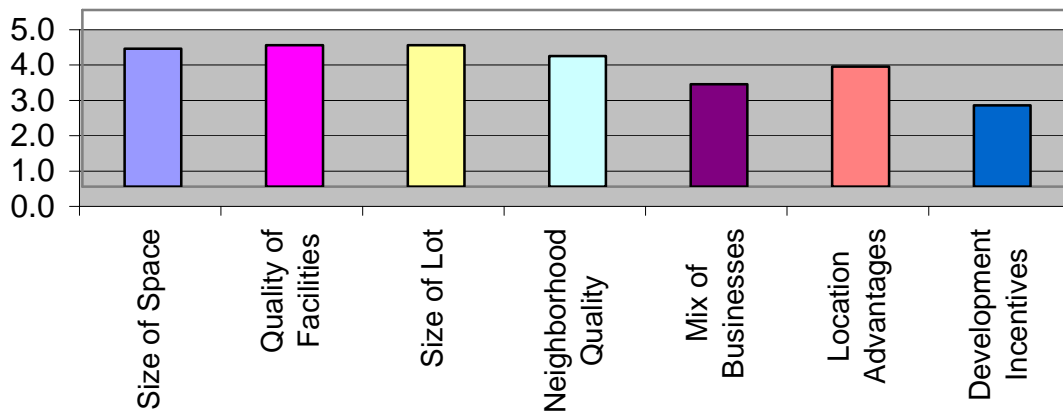
**Is your business locally owned?**

Yes.....	80%
No.....	20%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

	Average Response
Size of Space.....	3.9
Quality of Facilities.....	4.0
Size of Lot.....	4.0
Quality of Neighborhood.....	3.7
Mix of Businesses in Area.....	2.9
Location Advantages.....	3.4
Development Incentives.....	2.3

Average Rating





**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 6%  
No..... 83%  
Not Sure..... 11%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Response: Lack of Room to Expand

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 11%  
No..... 89%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 18%  
No..... 82%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 0%  
No..... 100%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.2

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.2

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives  
Continue Increase Promotion/Marketing  
Less Restrictive Zoning

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Economy  
Regulations/Policies  
Competition  
Costs of business  
Not enough businesses

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between March 26 and April 4, 2003. Data compiled May 2003 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Summary of Responses – University/Medical Area

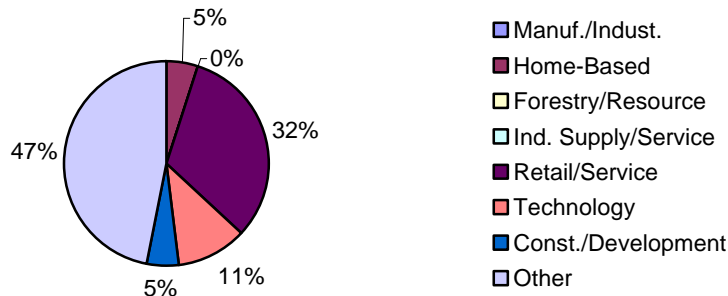
Number of Surveys Sent: 105  
 Responses Received: 16  
 Response Rate: 15.3%

Average number of Years in Business: 31.6

Average Number of Years in Urbana: 26.5

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	0%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	32%
Technology.....	11%
Home-based Business.....	5%
Construction/Development.....	5%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	47%



Average Building Size..... 23,520 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 1,300 – 150,000 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 100.1  
 Range..... 0-1,100

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 8.3  
 Range..... 0-40

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Proximity to University – 50%

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning: Parking – 33%

### In the past 5 years business has:

Grown.....	65%
Declined.....	14%
Stayed the Same.....	21%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand..... 25%  
 Downsize..... 8%  
 Remain Stable..... 67%

**Average approximate annual sales**..... \$15,300,000  
 Range..... \$90,000 – 100 million  
 Total annual sales of all 8 respondents..... \$107.3 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own..... 50%  
 Lease..... 50%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes..... 54%  
 No..... 46%

Most common reason if answered “No”:  
 Need more space 50%  
 Need more parking 33%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing..... 31%  
 Stable..... 69%  
 Decreasing..... 0%

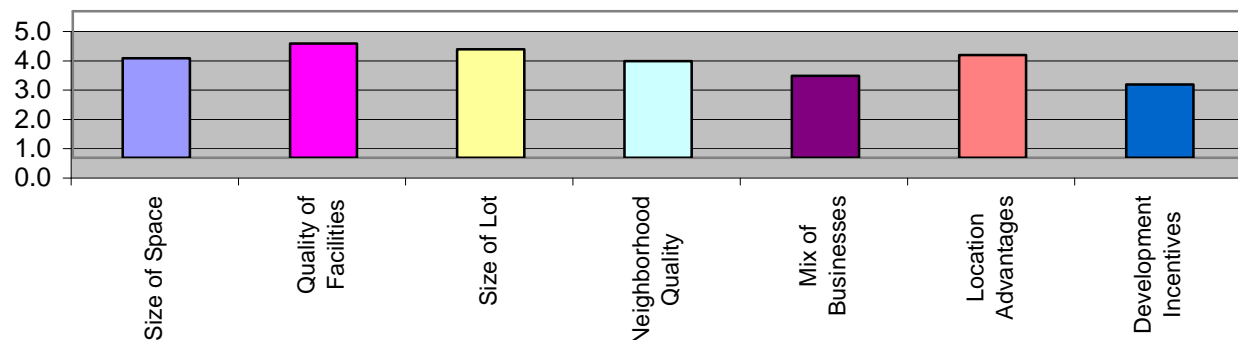
**Is your business locally owned?**

Yes..... 79%  
 No..... 21%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

	Average Response
Size of Space.....	3.8
Quality of Facilities.....	3.7
Size of Lot.....	3.8
Quality of Neighborhood.....	3.8
Mix of Businesses in Area.....	2.8
Location Advantages.....	3.5
Development Incentives.....	2.4

Average Rating



**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 8%  
No..... 92%  
Not Sure..... 0%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Response: Lack of Access to Resources  
Not Enough/Poor Parking

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 11%  
No..... 89%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 46%  
No..... 54%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 25%  
No..... 75%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.3

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.7

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... More Businesses  
Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives  
Regulations/Policies  
Continue/Increase Promotion/Marketing

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Cost of Business  
Lack of Traffic  
High Taxes  
Economy  
Regulations/Policies Labor

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between June 3 and July 4, 2003. Data compiled September, 2003 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department



# 2003 Urbana Business Survey

## Summary of Responses – City of Urbana

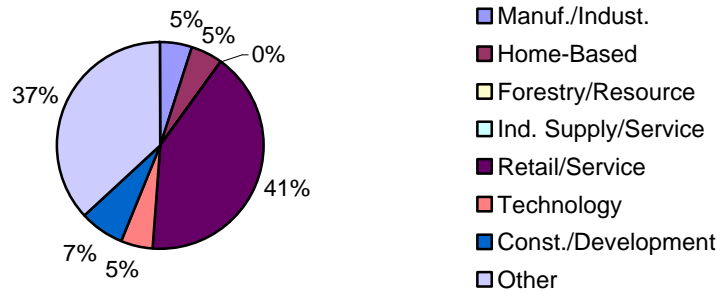
Number of Surveys Sent: 838  
 Responses Received: 159  
 Response Rate: 19.0%

Average number of Years in Business: 26.7

Average Number of Years in Urbana: 22.5

### Type of Business:

Manufacturing/Industrial.....	5%
Industrial Supply/Service.....	0%
Retail/Service.....	41%
Technology.....	5%
Home-based Business.....	5%
Construction/Development.....	7%
Forestry/Resources.....	0%
Other.....	37%



Average Building Size..... 12,565 sq. ft.  
 Range..... 453 – 150,000 sq. ft.

Average Number of Full-Time Employees..... 24.4  
 Range..... 0-1,100

Average Number of Part-Time Employees..... 5.6  
 Range..... 0-100

### What are the advantages of your location?

Responses mentioning:

- Access/Visibility – 49%
- Location – 40%
- Interstate – 17%
- Cost – 4%

### What are the disadvantages of your location?

Responses mentioning:

- Lack of Access/Traffic/Visibility – 18%
- Parking – 15%
- Neighborhood Qualities – 15%
- Lack of Businesses in Area – 9%
- Costs/Taxes – 6%

**In the past 5 years business has:**

Grown.....	67%
Declined.....	11%
Stayed the Same.....	22%

**In the next 5 years you plan to:**

Expand.....	47%
Downsize.....	3%
Remain Stable.....	50%

<b>Average approximate annual sales.....</b>	<b>\$5,600,000</b>
Range.....	\$9,000 – 120 million
Total annual sales of all 71 respondents.....	\$388.2 million

**Do you own or lease your building?**

Own.....	48%
Lease.....	52%

**Is your site or building size sufficient for your needs?**

Yes.....	75%
No.....	25%

Most common reason if answered “No”:	Need more space	59%
	Need more parking	16%

**Are your projected employment needs...**

Increasing.....	29%
Stable.....	68%
Decreasing.....	3%

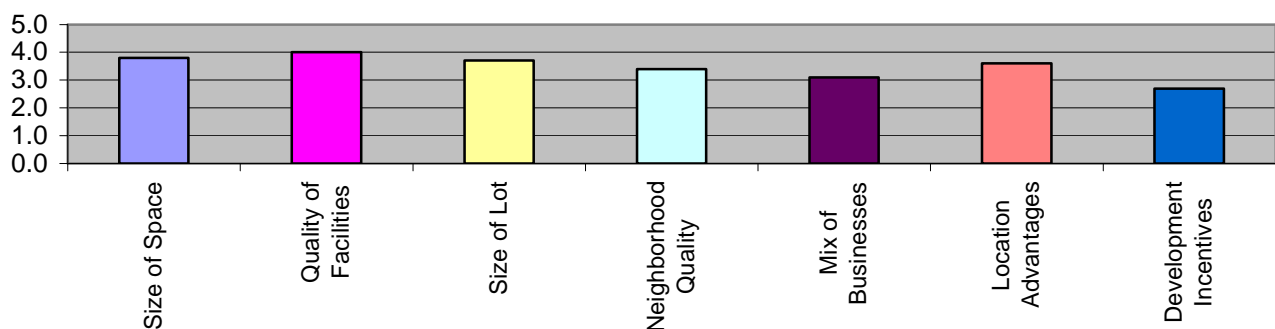
**Is your business locally owned?**

Yes.....	90%
No.....	10%

**On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the following for your location?**

	Average Response
Size of Space.....	3.8
Quality of Facilities.....	4.0
Size of Lot.....	3.7
Quality of Neighborhood.....	3.4
Mix of Businesses in Area.....	3.1
Location Advantages.....	3.6
Development Incentives.....	2.7

Average Rating



**Is your company planning to relocate?**

Yes..... 8%  
No..... 81%  
Not Sure..... 11%

**If “Yes”, why are you considering relocating?**

Most Common Responses: No Land To Expand  
High Property Tax  
Not Enough/Poor Parking  
Building Overcrowded  
Access/Egress Problems  
Better Incentives Elsewhere

**Are you considering closing or selling your business?**

Yes..... 7%  
No..... 93%

**Are you aware of the City’s economic development incentives for businesses?**

Yes..... 34%  
No..... 66%

**If “Yes”, have you taken advantage of any of these incentives?**

Yes..... 44%  
No..... 56%

**How would you rate the City’s economic development efforts?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.8

**How would you rate Urbana overall as a place to do business?  
(1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)**

Average..... 2.7

**In your opinion, what could Urbana do to better serve businesses in your industry?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Lower Taxes/Tax Incentives  
Continue Increase Promotion/Marketing  
More Businesses  
Less Restrictive Zoning  
Parking  
Restrictive Codes  
Perceptions of Urbana

**What are key issues of problems facing your business, if any?**

Most Common Responses mentioned... Competition  
Economy  
Regulations/Policies  
Cost of Business  
Not Enough Businesses  
Lack of Traffic  
Public/City Support  
Marketing/Exposure

**The following are examples of actual comments made on the surveys reflecting issues that are important to individual business owners:**

"The key issues of our business would be competition from non-locally owned businesses that have vast amounts of capital that we don't have. Urbana seems to be more supportive of locally owned businesses."

"Economic downturn. We are the type of business that seems to weather the national economic storms and not be overly affected, however, it will be a concern if it prolongs itself."

"Seems like you're on the right track by promoting and developing North Cunningham. We hope to be a part of this great development by University Auto."

"I find the city to be very cooperative and business oriented. I wish the liquor license fee weren't so high and that Urbana had different kinds of licenses as most cities do."

"Proximity to courthouse dictates the many law offices in the area, would be nice to attract more businesses/retail to the downtown area. Also, parking is STILL a problem, elderly/disabled have hard time finding handicapped parking. Could use lower property taxes, lower or no parking meters."

"Need to bring more clean business to Urbana to improve tax base and sales tax revenue. Reputation of City Council as "anti-business" is a detriment (whether warranted or not)."

"Stop annexing everything. Do something innovative with Lincoln Square (ice rink/indoor recreation/health club, library space) or take it out completely. It's an embarrassment to the community."

"I am very concerned that as Champaign continues to attract businesses, Urbana loses them. Please figure out WHY and attack that problem. Thank-you. I would prefer an online survey."

"We would like to see better restaurants & services in southeast Urbana. We are amazed at the difficulties that southeast Urbana retailers seem to encounter."

"Urbana has never visualized the great potential near UIUC and the Council has taken every opportunity to keep change & growth out of that area. It is our greatest potential for dollar & tax growth."

"Overall it has been great to be here. The neighbors - especially in the back alley, take poor care of their property and the students are a problem from a litter & junk point of view. As a previous urban planner, however, I am glad to be supporting the downtown. Mirabelle, Strawberry Fields, Courier Cafe, The Office - all are GREAT assets. Keep them happy!"

"The sidewalk improvements have been great - looking much better! (Downtown Urbana)"

"I would like to see those of us in the city, school district, park district, UBA, interested others (Carle, Busey Bank) with marketing and PR expertise work together and share our abilities to market Urbana. We really missed the boat on a premium marketing advantage with Chicago Bears fans, which would have reaped financial rewards for everyone. Let's not let that happen again."

"It seems like a basic survey of your area businesses is a much more cost-effective way of gathering information than hiring an out-of-town consulting firm. Reading the results of your last "consulting firm" survey the major recommendation was for more retail w/ residential areas above... all you had to do was ask! We've been doing that successfully for 15 years."

"We don't have problems, only opportunities."

**Notes:**

All percentages and averages are based those surveys for which there was a response to the question asked. They do not include respondents for which there was no response to a given question. Survey results based on responses received between January 2003 and December 2003. Data compiled January 2004 by RLB, City of Urbana Economic Development Department