



May 10, 2011

Dear Blind River Business Owner,

In an effort to better understand and improve Blind River's business environment, the Blind River Development Corporation is conducting a survey of the local business community. If you can take 10 to 15 minutes to complete the attached survey, your input will go a long way towards helping us improve Blind River's business climate. All answers will remain confidential and anonymous and will be used to prepare a final report and to act on specific issues and opportunities as they are presented.

If you would rather receive a printed copy or would like to complete the survey with us, simply contact the BRDC via telephone or email and we will make arrangements. Please contact the BRDC directly once you have completed the survey and we will personally pick it up from you.

The Blind River Development Corporation is here to assist new and existing businesses. If we can assist you in any way or if you would like to personally discuss an opportunity or issue, please contact me at your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Brad Parsons  
General Manager

**Company Information**

Name of Business \_\_\_\_\_

Respondents Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

**A1. What type of products/services do you sell or provide?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A2. How long have you operated this business in the Blind River? \_\_\_\_\_ Years**

**A3. Is the business locally owned?**

- Yes
- No

**A4. If no, where are the business headquarters? \_\_\_\_\_**

**A5. What type of goods/services does your business purchase outside of the local area?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A6. Why does your business purchase goods/services outside the local area?**

- Buying decisions made at head office located outside area
- Goods/services are not available locally
- Local goods/services are not competitively priced
- Other

**A7. What types of goods and services does your business purchase locally?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A8. What products, supplies or services do you wish could be readily available locally?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Business Climate**

**B1. Please indicate any major problems currently affecting your business operations.**

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**B2. Within the next three years, your business plans to:**

- Relocate
- Down size or close
- Expand
- Stay the same

**B3. If your business relocates, would it be in Blind River?**

- Yes
- No

**B4. Please indicate the primary reasons for relocating, downsizing or expanding and what problems and/or obstacles you foresee with these plans.**

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**B5. You established your business in Blind River because?**

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**B6. What is your general impression of Blind River as a place in which to do business?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**B7. In the past 3 years, has your attitude about doing business in Blind River changed? If so, is your attitude now:**

- More positive
- More negative
- Unchanged

**B8. Explain your change in attitude.**

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**B9. Which, if any, of the following factors are barriers to the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses in Blind River?**

- Resistance from local business
- Lack of proactive new business recruitment
- Land availability/cost
- Availability of space for rent or lease
- Cost of leasing space
- Cost of construction
- Provincial/Federal approval processes (ex. health)
- Municipal approval (ex. building permits)
- By-laws/local regulations
- Provincial regulations
- Business taxes
- Availability/cost of labour
- Access to education and training programs/facilities
- Availability of business financing
- Trucking & distribution
- Information technology capacity
- Municipal services (health, fire, protection, etc.)
- Water/sewer capacity/fees
- Accessibility
- Distance from markets
- Utilities
- No problems
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Elaborate or comment on any of these barriers:**

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**Business Development**

**C1. Where is your greatest competition from?**

- Blind River
- Elliot Lake
- Sault Ste. Marie
- Sudbury
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**C2. What are your business' greatest competitive advantages?**

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**C3. What are your business' competitive disadvantages?**

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**C4. What methods of business promotion are most effective for you?**

- Farmers market
- Donations & sponsorships
- Facebook/blog/social media
- Word of mouth
- Trade shows & business events
- Television
- Signage (store front, vehicle, etc.)
- Radio
- Newspaper advertising
- Internet/website
- In-house specials
- Flyers & brochures
- Cross promotions with businesses
- Billboards
- Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**C5. What cooperative marketing ideas would benefit your business and/or what target market would you like to focus on?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**C6. Have business revenues over the past two years:**

- Increased
- Decreased
- Stayed the same

**C7. In the next two years, you expect business revenues to:**

- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same

**C8. What are the greatest challenges or threats your business will face in the next few years?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Workforce Development**

**D1. How many employees does your business have at this time?**

Full time \_\_\_\_\_

Part time \_\_\_\_\_

**D2. How many employees did the business have two years ago?**

- Less than it has now
- Same number as now
- More than it has now

**D3. Current employment/hiring status?**

- Hiring
- Stable
- Downsizing

**D4. Indicate the top 3 factors that make it difficult to recruit employees?**

- Affordable housing
- Available housing
- Labour supply shortage
- Expect higher wages
- Not interested in relocating to the north
- Unable to recruit workers with skills
- Lack of employment for spouse
- Cost of living
- No problems
- Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**D5. Does your business have any major staffing problems or are there any types of positions in your business that are particularly hard to fill?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D6. If education and training are major staffing problems, what types of education and/or training are needed?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D7. In what areas do the management team and/or supervisors need additional training?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D8. What are the most significant barriers to your employees receiving the necessary training?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D9. Have you noticed an increase in training opportunities in Blind River for potential and existing employees over the past 5 years?**

- Yes
- No

**How Can We Help?**

**E1. What one issue, if resolved, would have the greatest impact on your business?**

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**E2. Are there any specific challenges your company is facing which we can assist in resolving?**

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**E3. Are there any additional industry or other support services that you feel are needed in Blind River?**

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**E4. What else can we do to enhance your company's effectiveness or profitability in Blind River?**

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**If demand exists, the BRDC will publish a bi-monthly newsletter to inform the business community of projects, seminars, funding programs and available services. The newsletter may also be a useful venue for advertising your business.**

- Please forward newsletter electronically to my email below.
- Please mail printed newsletter to my mailing address below.
- I am not interested in receiving the newsletter.

Thank you for completing our survey. Your assistance in this project is critical as we develop new programs to help make Blind River more successful. A member of the BRDC or Chamber of Commerce staff will visit your office in the near future to discuss the results of the survey with you and to obtain any additional input you may wish to provide. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact the BRDC office.

Please contact the BRDC office when you have completed the survey and we will personally pick it up from you.

Blind River Development Corporation  
(705) 356-5715