2022 Employer Survey Report



PREPARED BY

MOKAN partnership

www.mokanpartnership.com

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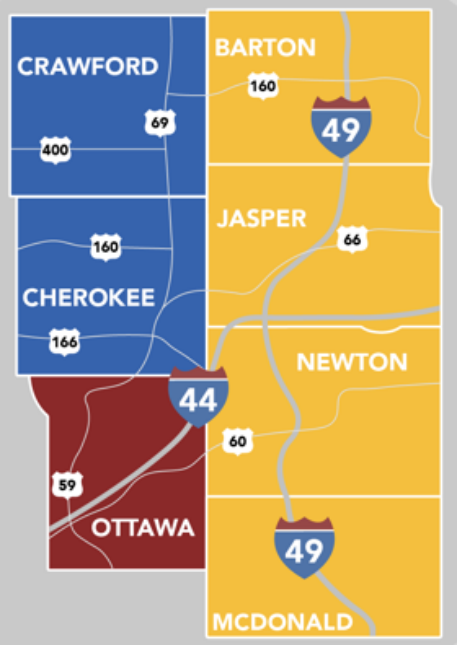
The MOKAN Partnership is a not-for-profit economic and workforce development corporation working to improve the overall economy in our seven-county region: Barton, Jasper, Newton and McDonald Counties in Missouri; Crawford and Cherokee Counties in Kansas; and Ottawa County in Oklahoma.

The MOKAN Partnership region has nearly 15,000 employers who provide approximately 133,432 jobs for its residents. This 2022 year-end survey looks at community business and workforce trends. The information contained in this report will assist in helping companies survive economic challenges, understand workforce needs and identify areas for improvement.



TOP TAKEAWAYS

- **Workforce** concerns in finding qualified employees and retaining current workers are among top challenges to business growth
- Affordable and available **housing** is cited as a top community priority
  It is also cited as a challenge to business growth and a top community weakness
- **Education** scored high on both top community strengths and the public service index
- **Childcare** is a growing issue as it was ranked the lowest on the public service index
  It was also listed as a top challenge to business growth and a top community weakness
- Sixty-five percent of employers plan to expand employment and **add net new jobs** in the next 12 months.
- **Rising costs** and **inflation** are barriers to business growth for many employers
- **Support for small businesses** from the community, Chambers of Commerce, SBDC, etc. is a top community strength

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BUSINESS SERVICES

BUSINESS LEVELS - Area businesses reported business levels as:

34% Increasing 51% Stable 14% Decreasing

EXPANSIONS - Area businesses reporting plans to expand in the next year (operations, equipment, etc.)

51% YES



49% NO

TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY - Area businesses ranked the following:

1. **Availability/Affordability of Housing**
2. **Quality of Place Initiatives**
3. **Entertainment Opportunities**
4. **Health & Wellness Opportunities**
5. **Creation of More Local, Renewable Energy**
6. **Air & Water Quality Improvements**
7. **Environment - Reduction of Waste**

IT INFRASTRUCTURE - Is the community's IT infrastructure adequate for your company's needs?

68% YES



31% NO

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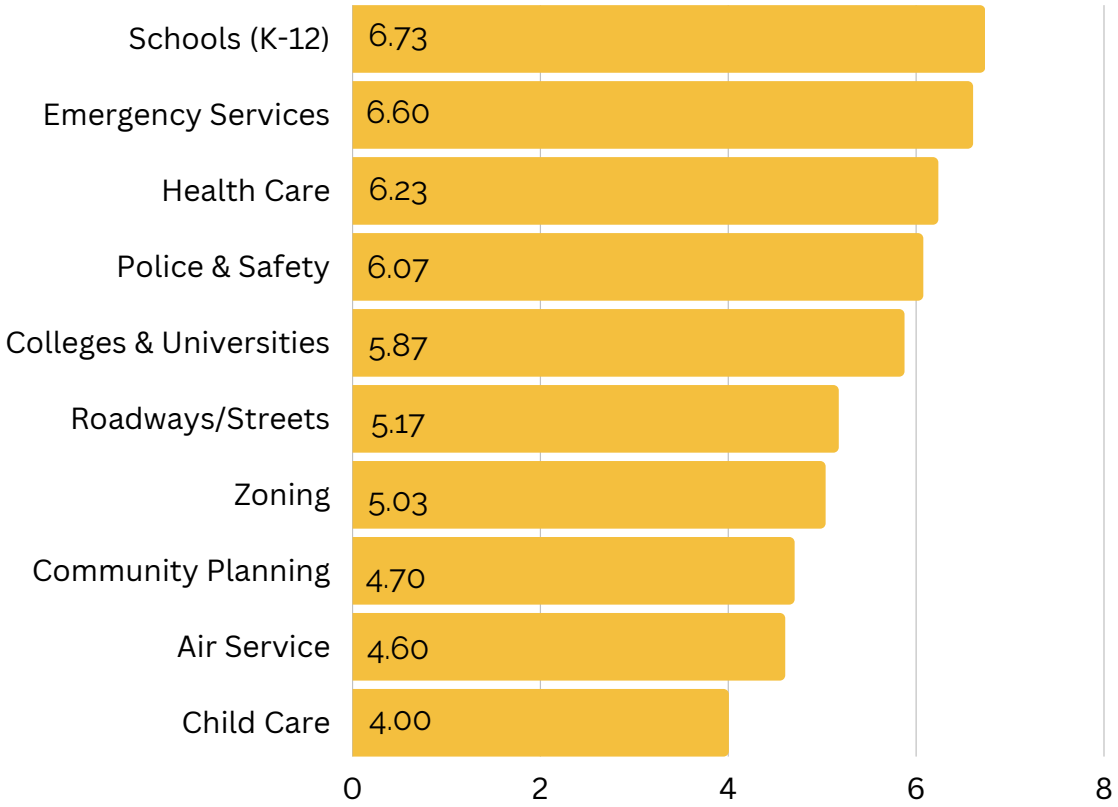
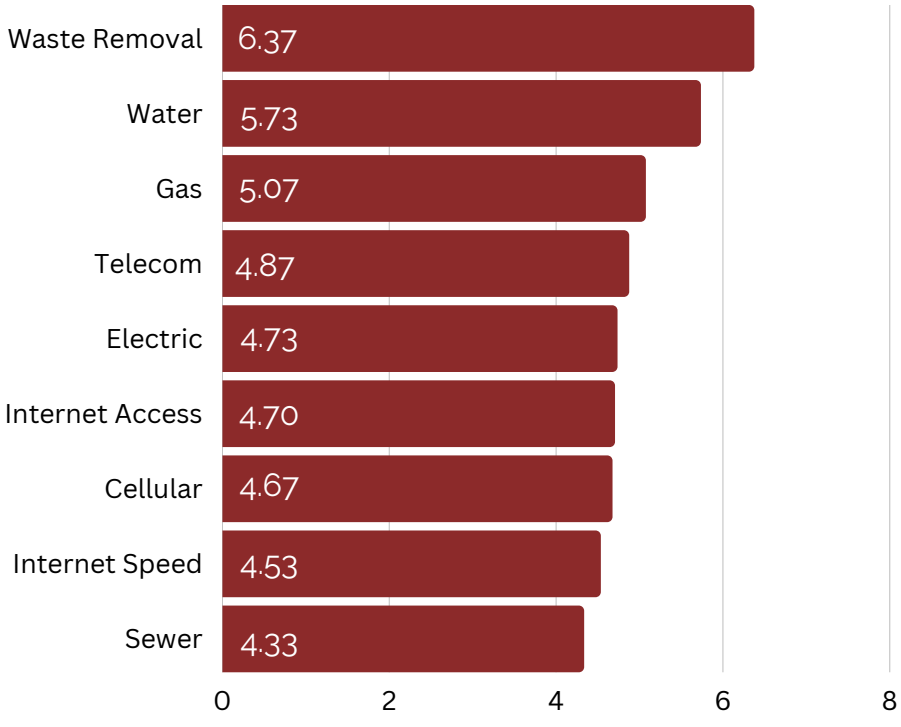
PUBLIC SERVICES INDEX - Scales of 1 to 7: 1 is Low, 7 is High



UTILITY SERVICES INDEX - Scales of 1 to 7: 1 is Low, 7 is High



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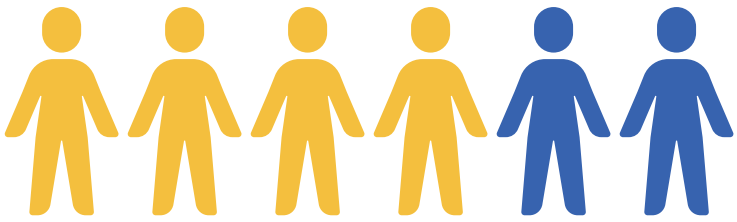
TOP 12 CHALLENGES TO BUSINESS GROWTH

1. **Lack of Qualified Employees**
2. **Inflation/Cost of Goods**
3. **Lack of Affordable Housing**
4. **Ability to Pay Competitive Wages**
5. **Retaining Employees**
6. **Taxes**
7. **Affordable Education**
8. **Decreased In-Person Shopping**
9. **Supply Chain Issues**
10. **Childcare**
11. **Uncertain Economy**
12. **Government Regulations**

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

JOB CREATION - Companies planning to add net new jobs i the next 12 months

65% YES 35% NO



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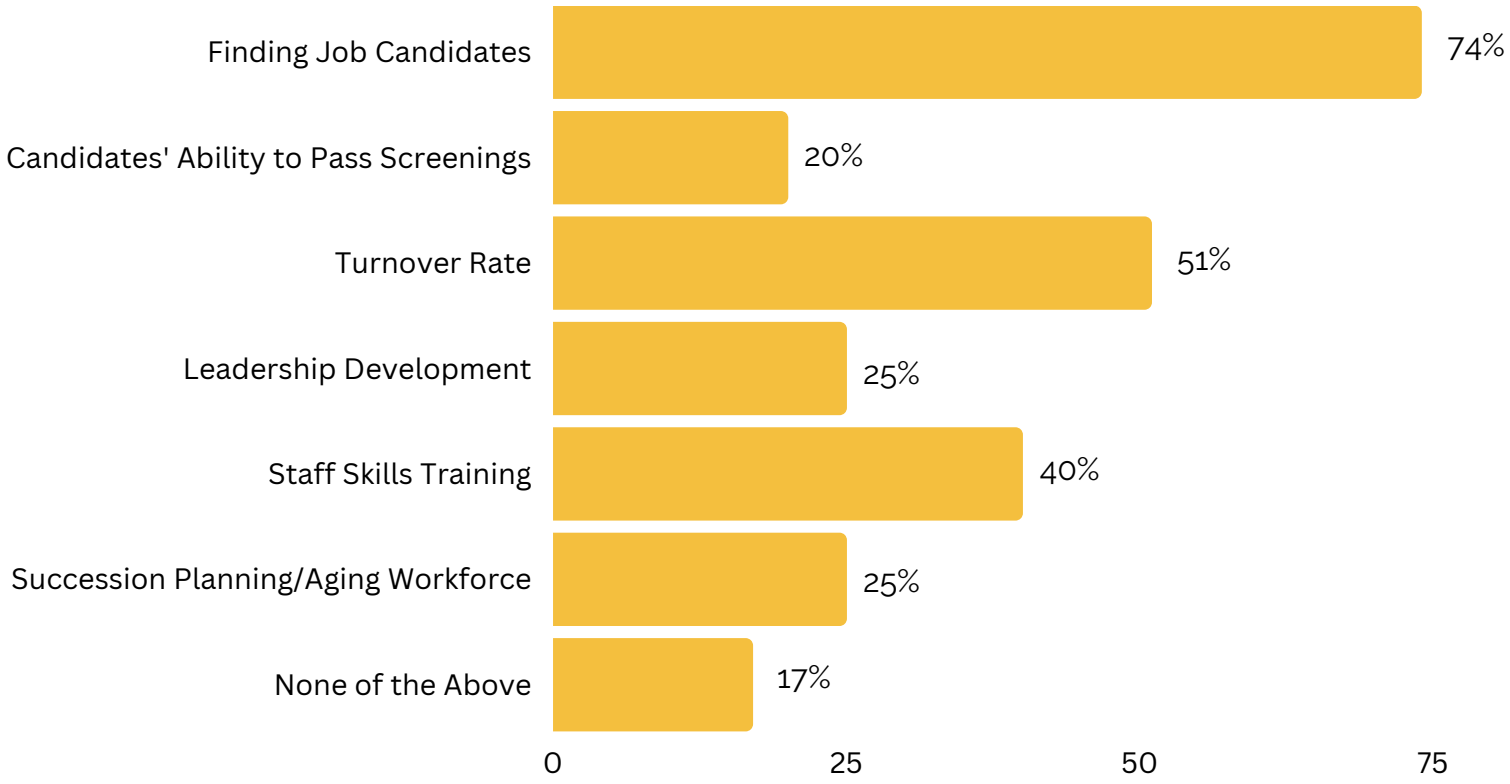
WORKFORCE NEEDS - Area businesses ranked the following as biggest workforce needs/challenges:



WAGES - Area businesses report on whether their wages are above average, average, or below average

40% Above Average **40% Average** **22% Below Average**

BENEFITS - Area businesses report on whether their benefits are above average, average, or below average

26% Above Average **35% Average** **38% Below Average**