

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION 2025 REPORT: BUENA VISTA



In 2025, staff performed 35 visits in Buena Vista County as a part of the Corridor's GROWTH program, the Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) strategy for the region. This report highlights both the current strengths and future opportunities for growth for our business community as we work together to foster economic development.

The Place for

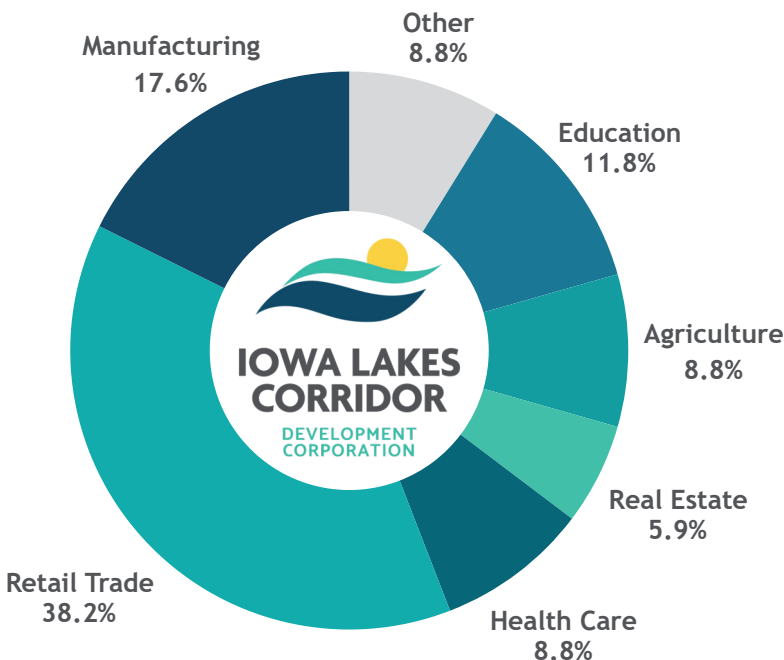
GROWTH

GATHER - RELATIONSHIPS - OPPORTUNITIES - WINS - TRENDS - HOMETOWN

WHO WE SURVEYED

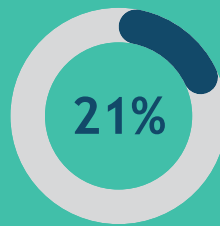
35 BUSINESSES IN BUENA VISTA COUNTY

The Iowa Lakes Corridor accounted for 13% of all BRE visits reported in the state of Iowa.



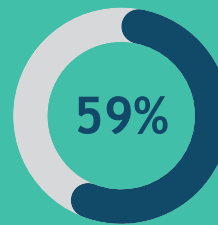
BUSINESS TRENDS

Our GROWTH program survey reveals a strong business community actively planning for expansion while embracing innovation. We estimate \$20.4+ million in capital investment and 7+ new jobs in the next 3-5 years.



EXPANSION

of companies plan to expand in the next 3 years.



INNOVATION

of companies introduced new product or services in the last 5 years

7+

anticipated new jobs

\$20.4 MILLION

in capital investment

41.2%

of companies have sustainability goals

*Data based on 34 completed surveys

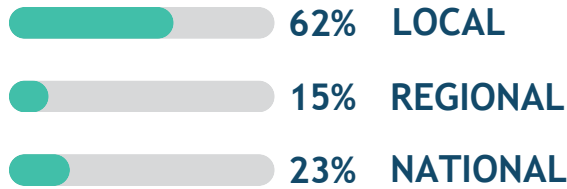
MARKET OUTLOOK

BUENA VISTA COUNTY

Buena Vista County businesses continue to demonstrate strong market reach, with **15%** reporting international sales activity. Of those engaged in international markets, **96%** indicated stable or increasing sales, underscoring both competitiveness and resilience. While a small number noted challenges related to logistics and evolving international regulations, these impacts remained limited. Many businesses were able to mitigate disruption by proactively adapting operations and remaining flexible amid regulatory changes, helping sustain momentum in global markets.

85% of companies report stable or increasing sales

PRIMARY MARKET



INTERNATIONAL STATS

15%

of companies engage in international sales
→ **96%** of which report stable or increasing sales

3%

of companies have facilities outside of the United States

21%

of companies noted challenges with logistics or regulatory international markets

WORKFORCE

The Corridor's business community continues to navigate workforce challenges amid growth opportunities, with recruitment impacting companies of all sizes. In response, many are strengthening educational partnerships to build a stronger talent pipeline. In 2025, the Corridor expanded its BRE program to include regional schools, further supporting collaboration and addressing workforce availability, quality, and long-term stability across the region.

*Scored on a scale from 1 to 5

AVAILABILITY

2.82

41%

of companies are experience recruitment problems

53

estimated jobs unfilled

32%

working with local schools on workforce programs

QUALITY

3.00

STABILITY

3.23

HIGHEST RATED COMMUNITY SERVICES

*Scored on a scale from 1 to 5

4.47	Fire Protection
4.44	Police Protection
4.41	Paramedic Services
4.24	Economic Development
4.22	Community Colleges

TOP COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

*By county

BUENA VISTA

1. Local Support
2. Diversity
3. Education

DICKINSON

1. Local Support
2. Location & Amenities
3. Education

CLAY

1. Local Support
2. Workforce Quality
3. Cost of Living

EMMET

1. Local Support
2. Workforce Quality
3. Housing

TOP SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS



Housing Opportunities



Talent Attraction



Workforce Upskilling

The Iowa Lakes Corridor region is comprised of four unique counties, each offering distinct strengths and opportunities. Together, our communities, businesses, and residents create a diverse and resilient region where businesses can grow and thrive.