

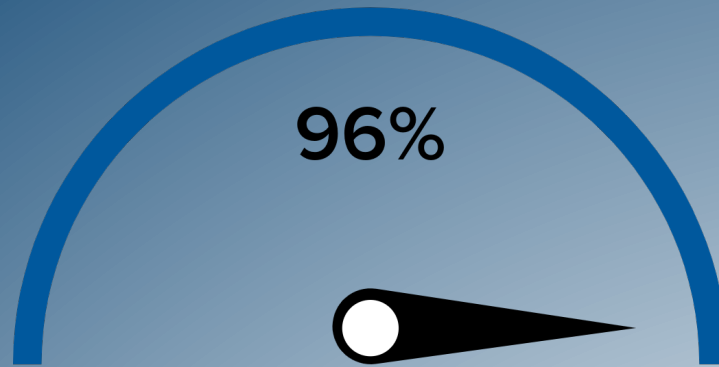
FOURTH QUARTER 2025

Business Growth Barometer Survey Results & Quarterly Update



The Traverse Connect Quarterly Growth Barometer provides a concise update on strategic initiatives, our economic development on behalf of public-sector partners, key political advocacy updates, and metrics detailing the regional business sentiment, outlook, and current challenges.

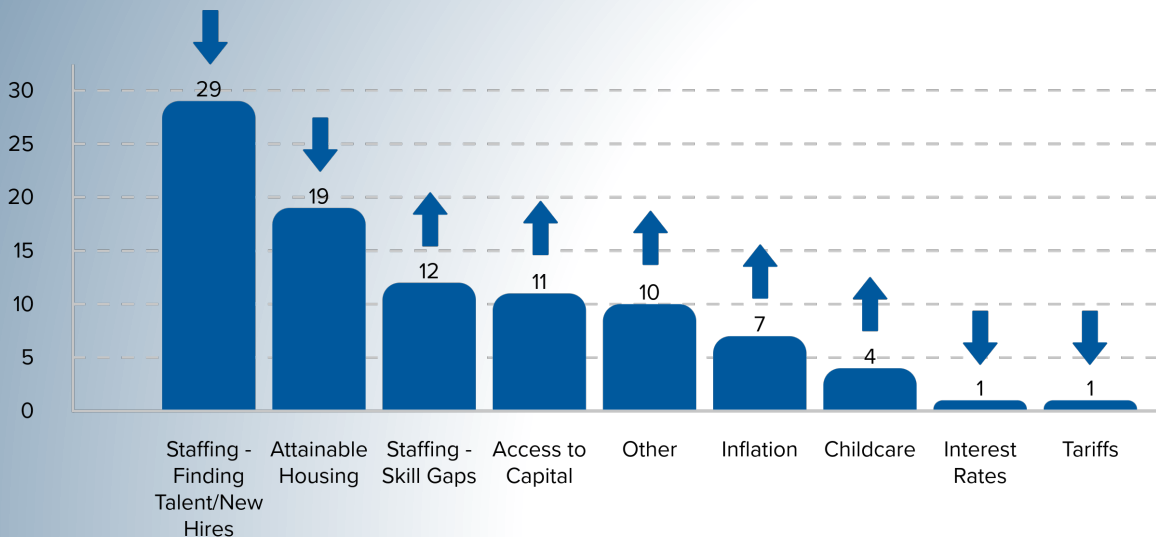
IS OUR REGION A GOOD PLACE TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS? (Net response)



IS OUR REGION IMPROVING AS A PLACE TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS? (Net response)



WHAT IS THE SINGLE-BIGGEST BARRIER TO GROWING YOUR BUSINESS? (Percentage)



BUSINESS EXPANSION

- ***Atlas Space Operations – City of Traverse City***

Atlas Space Operations, our locally grown pioneer in ground software for satellite communications, announced a strategic partnership and acquisition by York Space Systems, a defense space technology company. The transaction allows for Atlas's continued growth as it will play a key role in York's Golden Dome architecture, a next-generation defense solution that unifies spacecraft, software, and ground operations. Atlas will continue to operate independently in Traverse City and retain its team of professionals under its existing brand, serving its diverse portfolio of customers across the space industry.

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- The Traverse City region has moved up two spots in [Medium's 2025 Best of the Midwest: Startup City Rankings](#). The latest figures put Traverse City at **#32** overall in the Midwest (only four spots behind Grand Rapids), and we are now ranked **#2** in the *Smaller Hubs* category of ecosystems with metro populations of under 250k. Rankings are based on startup activity, business climate, and resource availability.
- Traverse Connect was named the Partner of the Year by [MichAuto](#), the state-wide mobility and technology association, in recognition of our work on the co-presented summer event, *ReShore: Innovation at the Intersection of Water, Mobility, and Outdoor Tech*.
- Networks Northwest, in partnership with other regional development organizations, released a comprehensive [Northwest Michigan Hybrid and Remote Worker Study](#). The report details the size of the region's hybrid and remote workforce, industries represented, income and age demographics, as well as ways in which our local employers can leverage this workforce to address their talent needs and skill gaps.

POLITICAL ADVOCACY ISSUES

- The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance hosted a webinar with Rehmann that broke down the impact of H.R. 1, also known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," highlighting its major tax provisions affecting businesses. You can view the recording here: [NMCA Rehmann HR1 Business Tax Webinar](#).
- The finalized state budget focused on allocating state dollars towards road funding and education, while making significant cuts to business and economic development programs. Road funding is paid for partially by decoupling state and federal business taxes, putting Michigan at a potential competitive disadvantage versus other states, with a loss of new federal tax benefits, and additional bookkeeping complexity.
- In a surprise and unprecedented action, the Michigan House Appropriations Committee voted to cut nearly \$650 million of project funding that had previously been approved by the state legislature in 2024. This highly unusual action resulted in widespread confusion across the state and the cancellation of funding for many important initiatives and programs in the Grand Traverse region.

BY THE NUMBERS

Traverse Connect's business engagement continued on a strong trend for the fourth quarter, with **126** direct business referrals and **37** new member companies. We conducted **421** business outreach and retention visits and hosted over **1,100** total attendees at **8** events, providing valuable opportunities for business and community leaders across our region to discuss issues, develop partnerships, and grow their businesses.

SAVE THE DATE

FOR UPCOMING EVENTS FROM



TRAVERSE CONNECT

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

COFFEE CONNECTION

**LOCATION | ELEV8 CLIMBING AND FITNESS
NETWORKING AND HEALTH & WELLNESS**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 5
FRIDAY, MARCH 6**

NORTHERN MICHIGAN DEFENSE CONFERENCE 2026

**LOCATION | HAGERTY CENTER
CONFERENCE AND PRESENTATIONS**

MONDAY, MARCH 9

NEW INVESTOR ORIENTATION

**LOCATION | TRAVERSE CONNECT
ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT AND NETWORKING**

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

COCKTAILS & CONNECTIONS

**LOCATION | MAMMOTH DISTILLING
NETWORKING**

Help your business shine by sponsoring events with Traverse Connect