NVC/PINKSTON

Northern Virginia *Business Leader* Survey.

Q2 2026 Report

NVC Pinkston.

July 8, 2026

Executive Summary & Insights.

The Q2 NVC/Pinkston Northern Virginia Business Leader Survey series captures the perspectives and sentiments of 185 CEOs, corporate executives, and business owners operating in the region, including Fortune 500 companies.

- These survey insights are intended to support strategic decision-making for policymakers and the business community across multiple sectors, shaping the future of economic growth in the Greater Washington Region and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- This survey represents the perspectives, sentiments, and strategic planning of 185 CEOs, corporate executives, and business owners with operations in Northern Virginia. A coalition of 9 business organizations participated in this survey, including:

Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC)
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce
Falls Church Chamber of Commerce
Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce
Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber
Prince William County Chamber of Commerce

- NOVA is the economic engine for both the Greater Washington Region and the Commonwealth of Virginia, representing **46%** of Washington D.C.'s regional economy and **42%** of Virginia's economy.

46%	of Washington D.C.'s regional economy source: George Mason University's Stephen S. Fuller Institute
42%	of Virginia's economy source: Fairfax Economic Development Authority

Top Insights

90%

Positive Staffing Trends

When asked about adjusting their staffing, 90% of business leaders plan to stay about the same (56%) or increase hiring (34%). This is a slight improvement from the Q1 survey when 83% planned to stay the same or increase hiring.

76%

Individual Business Sentiment Improving

76% of business leaders are very or somewhat optimistic about their own company performance in the near future, compared to 12% who are neutral, and 11% that are pessimistic. This is an improvement from the Q1 survey when 67% were very or somewhat optimistic about their company performance.

40%

NOVA Economic Sentiment Improving

40% of business leaders believe the NOVA economy will grow over the next 6 months (6% grow significantly, 34% grow slowly), while 38% believe it will remain the same, and 22% believe it will decline (22% decline slowly, 0% decline significantly). This is an improvement from the Q1 survey when 32% of business leaders believed the NOVA economy would decline over the next 6 months (7% grow significantly, 28% grow slowly, 33% remain the same, 29% decline slowly, and 3% decline significantly).

32%

Policy Issues from Governor Spanberger and General Assembly

Business leaders list the following as their top policy priorities for Virginia's Governor and legislature: reduce taxes (35%), keep right-to-work (31%), housing affordability (22%), reduce regulation (22%), transportation and infrastructure investments (20%), AI regulations (8%), public safety (8%) and WMAT (metro) funding (8%). This is a 3% increase for reducing taxes and 11% increase for keeping right-to-work from the Q1 survey.

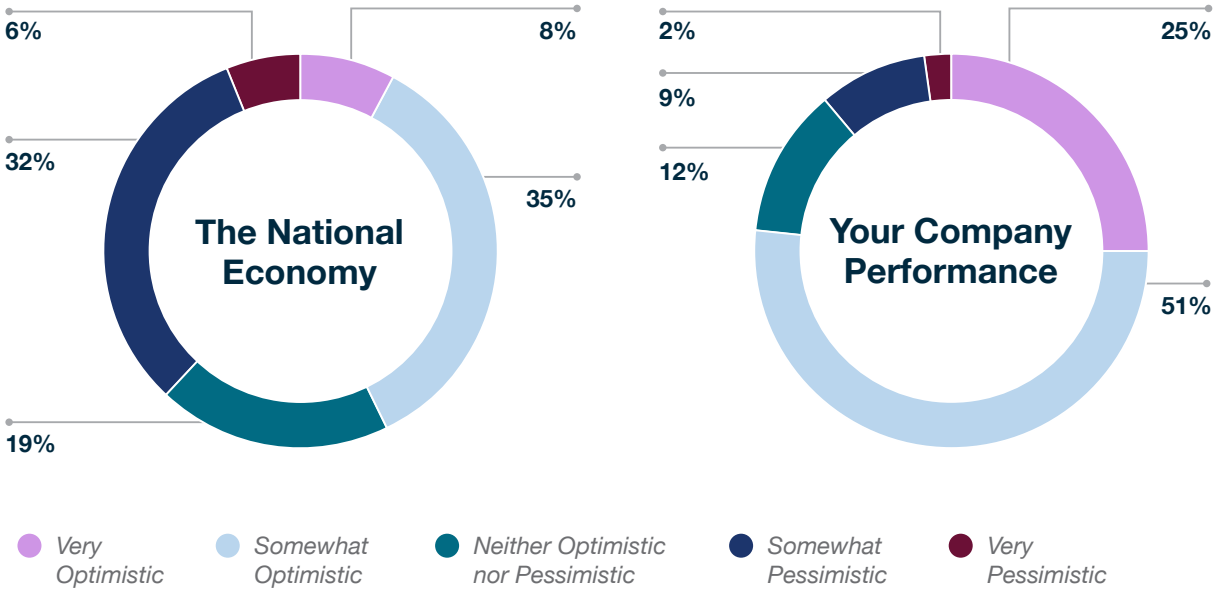
44%

Politicians Don't Understand

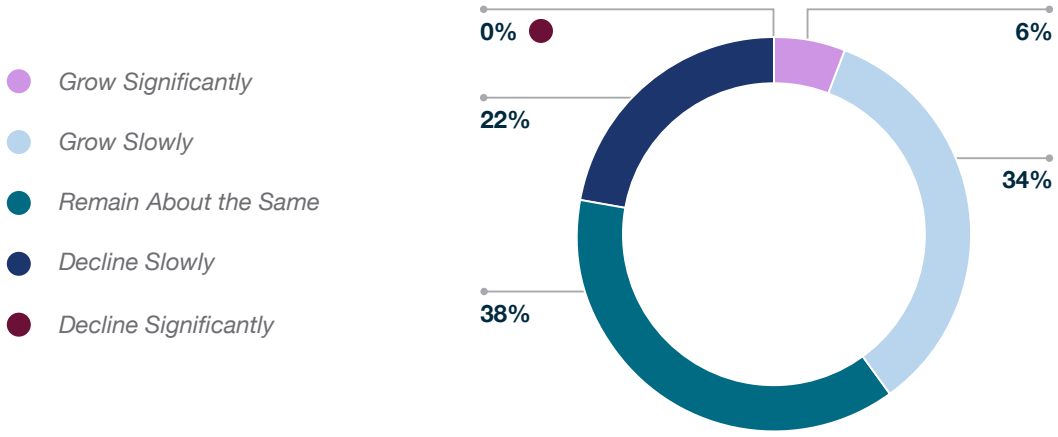
When asked how much do business leaders think state legislators and policymakers in Richmond understand their local business operations, 44% said they really don't understand (15%) or do not understand (29%), which is down from the previous quarter when 50% said they really don't understand (21%) or do not understand (29%). 39% say they are unsure, compared to 41% who were unsure in the Q1 survey. 17% believe that state legislators and policymakers understand well or very well, up from 10% from the previous quarter.

Survey Questions & Answers.

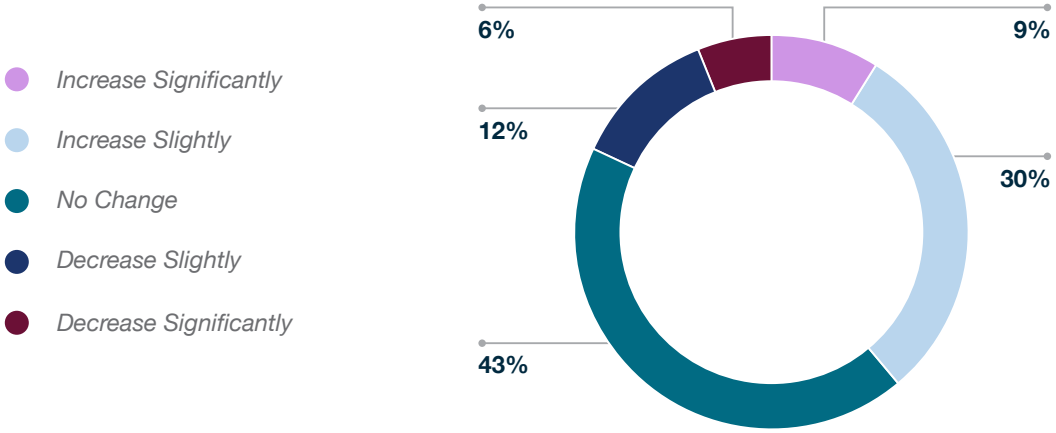
1 What is your company's outlook over the **next six months**?



2 How do you believe the (NOVA) economy will change over the **next six months**?

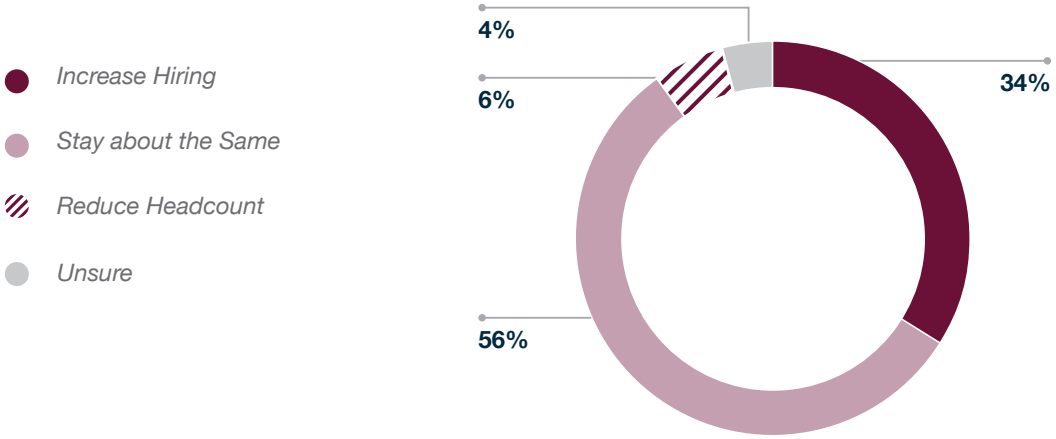


3 How do you expect your company's capital spending to change in the **next six months**?

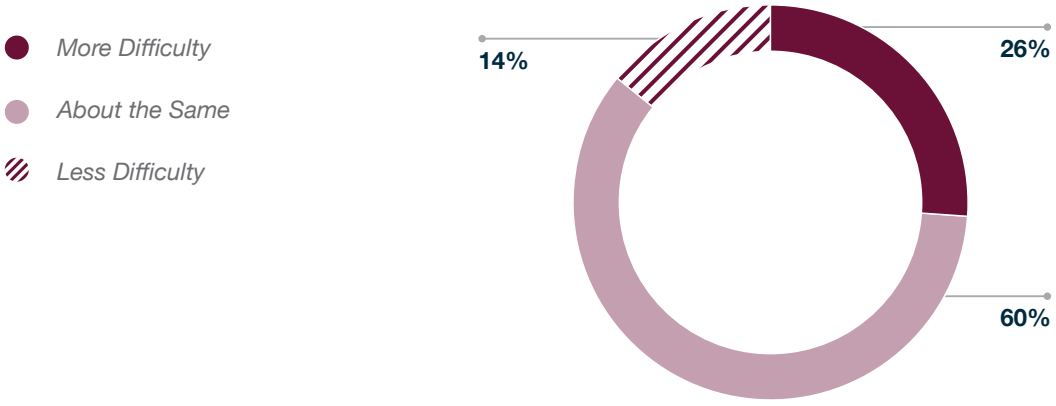


Hiring Projections

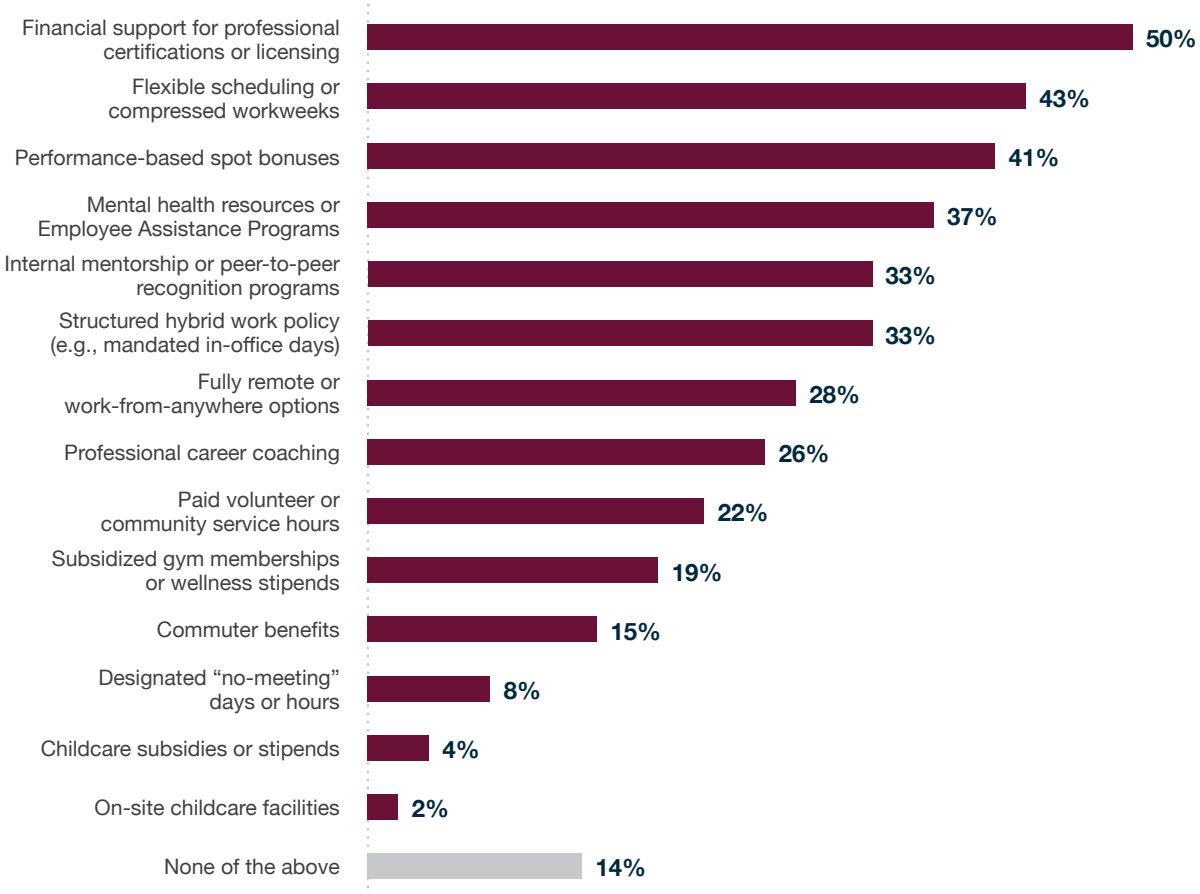
4 Within the **next six months**, do you anticipate needing to adjust your **staffing** in any way?



5 Compared to a year ago, are you experiencing more or less difficulty in finding qualified **talent to hire**?

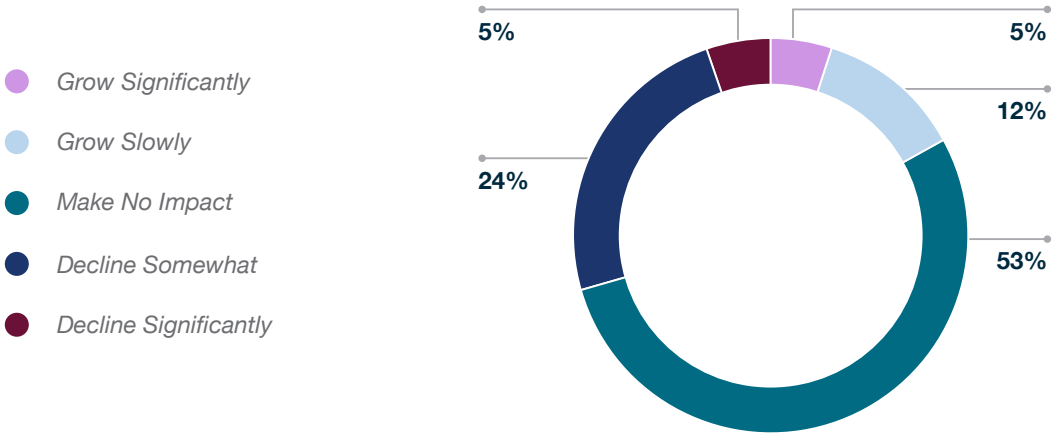


6 Which of the following employee benefits or incentives does your organization currently offer? *(Select all that apply)*

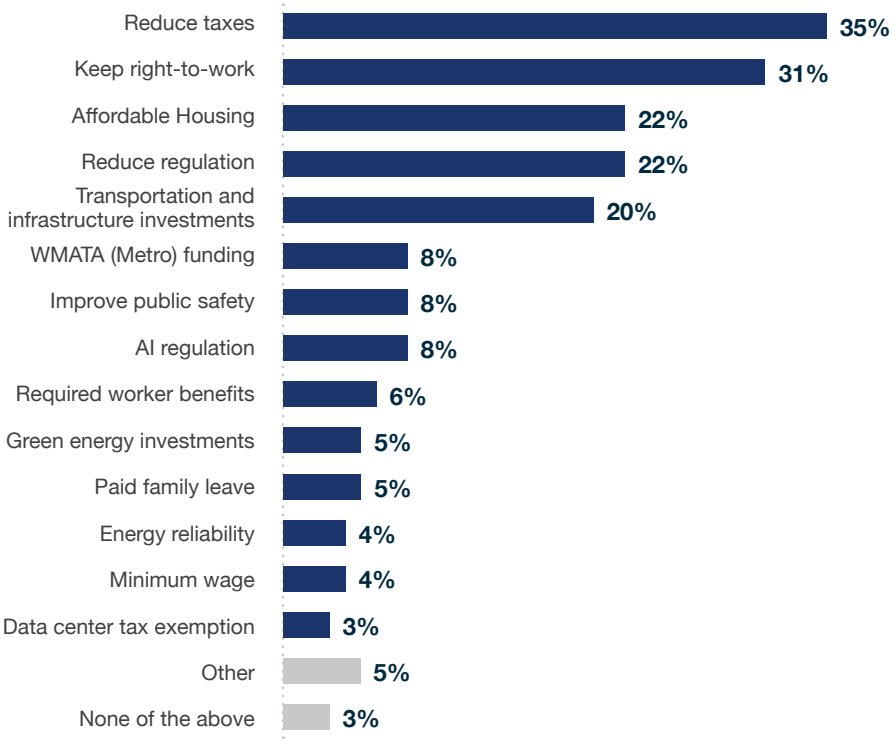


Federal, State and Local Government Impact

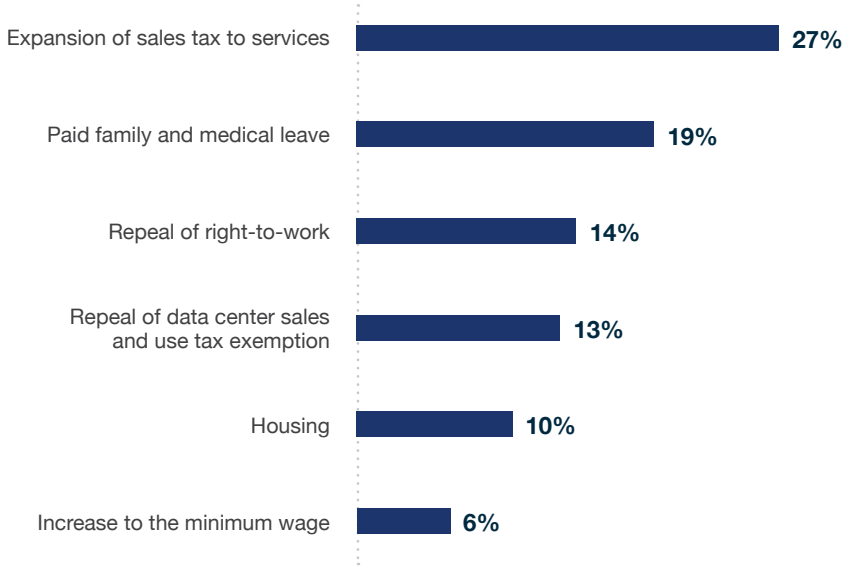
7 How is the President's foreign policy impacting your company? Is it causing your company to…



8 What are your top policy priorities for Governor Spanberger and the General Assembly? *(Select up to 2)*

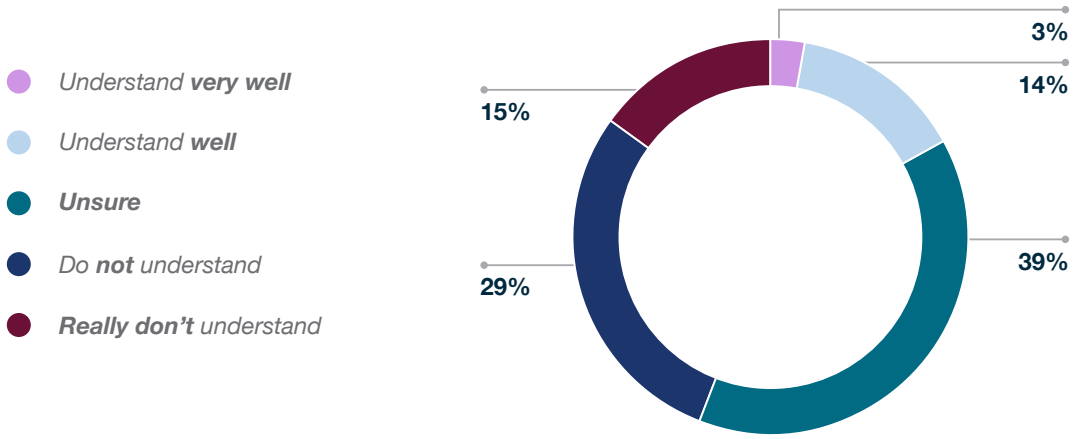


9 Which legislation considered during this past General Assembly session caused you the most concern in terms of its potential negative impact on your company's ability to grow?

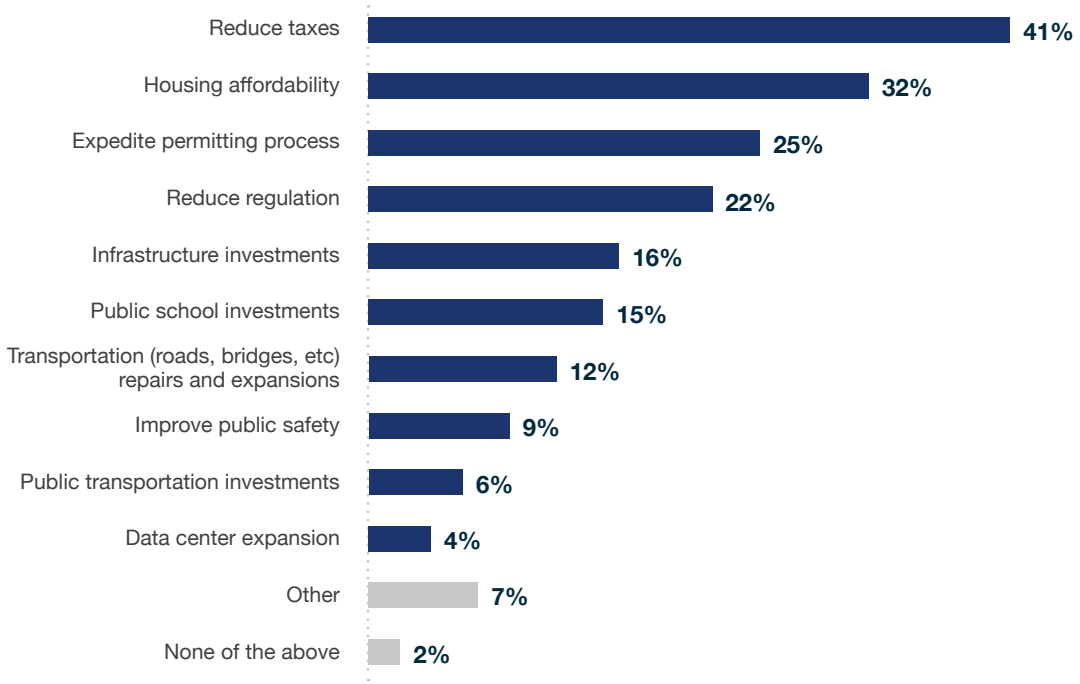


(open-end question; % mentioned among those answering; not comparable to previous quarter)

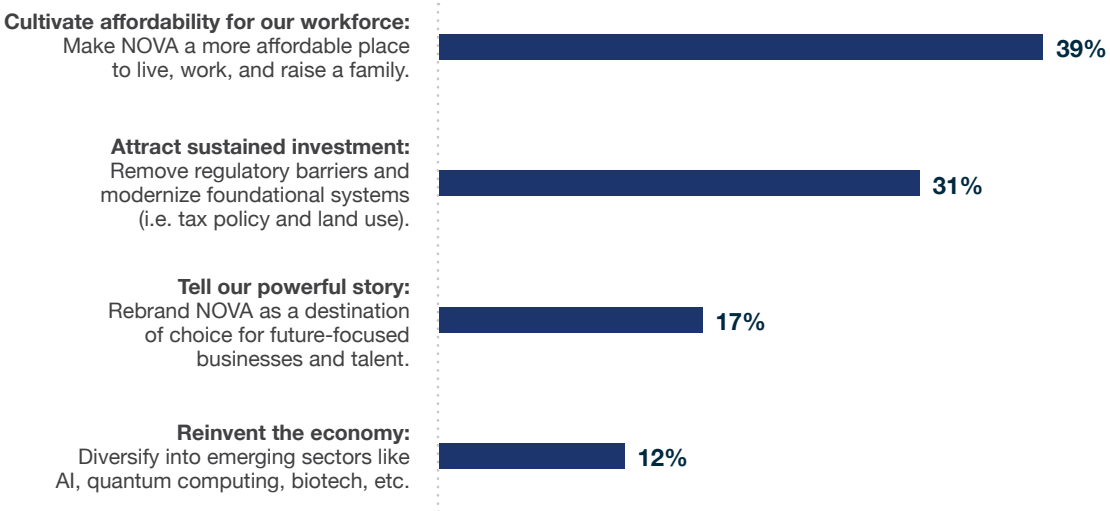
10 How much do you think state legislators and policymakers in Richmond understand your local business operations?



11 What are your top policy priorities for your local county or city government? *(Select up to 2)*



12 Which NVC NOVA Roadmap goal would have the most positive impact on your organization's growth?



Methodology.

This survey offers a platform where CEOs, corporate executives, and business owners operating in Northern Virginia can forecast economic trends and offer valuable insights to Greater Washington's business community and policymakers.

- Fielded June 22-29, 2026, the survey consists of questions and responses from **185 business leaders** that explore economic outlook, business sentiment, policy priorities, hiring plans, and opinions on state and local legislation. A coalition of 9 chambers of commerce participated in this survey, including:

  Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC)
  Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
  Arlington Chamber of Commerce
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- Companies with 1-49 employees represented **69%** of respondents; companies with 50-99 represented **4%** of respondents; companies with 100-499 represented **12%**; and companies with 500 or more represented **15%**.

- Company locations included **40%** in Fairfax County or City of Fairfax, **20%** in Prince William County or City of Manassas, **18%** in Alexandria, **11%** in Arlington County, **4%** in Loudoun County, **1%** in Falls Church, and **5%** in other locations.

- **15%** of respondents represented companies with $100 Million or more in annual revenue; **17%** represented companies with $10-$100 Million in annual revenue; **64%** represented companies with less than $10 Million in revenue; and **4%** of respondents declined to say.

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About NVC

For over 100 years, the **Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC)** — the largest and most influential chamber in Greater Washington — has driven innovation and economic growth. NVC has championed key developments such as the Metro, Dulles Airport, and George Mason University. Representing nearly 400 members, NVC continues to lead on affordability, workforce, and regional development through NOVA Roadmap and through exclusive programming and events.

Learn more at
www.nvcbusiness.org

NVC

About Pinkston

Pinkston is a full service branding, marketing, and communications firm that offers an integrated collection of strategic capabilities, including public relations, strategy, digital marketing, brand identity, research, social media, video production, and web development. Founded in 2001 and based in Falls Church, Virginia, Pinkston serves a wide range of clients including Fortune 100 companies, innovative technology startups, national non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

Learn more at
www.pinkston.co

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