BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY RESULTS FOR Q1 2024

The purpose of the Business Engagement Survey (BES) of North Carolina business leaders is to measure trends, challenges, and opportunities in the business community across North Carolina. The survey is sent via email quarterly to business leaders throughout the state. The survey asks business leaders to assess local and state business conditions in North Carolina. Researchers use the data to monitor perceived business needs, trends, and overall feelings about local, state, and national economies across the state.

This report covers the first quarter of 2024 (January, February, and March). During this period, business leaders completed 198 surveys across most of North Carolina's 100 counties. Nine (9) topics were covered in the survey and include perceptions of issues related to workforce, digital transformation, technology, housing, childcare and education, healthcare, infrastructure (transportation, logistics, and energy), supply chain, and financial needs. Measures of general business conditions and concerns/challenges were also collected through open-ended questions.

The nine topics are defined in brief as follows:

WORKFORCE: The ability of my business to hire and retain employees and to access skills training.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: The ability of my business to utilize current technology and adopt new technology.

TECHNOLOGY: The ability of my business and my employees to access basic technology like high-speed internet service.

HOUSING: The ability of my employees to access quality, affordable housing.

CHILDCARE *and* K - 12 EDUCATION: The ability of my employees to access reliable and affordable childcare and quality education.

HEALTHCARE: The ability of my employees to access reliable and affordable quality healthcare.

INFRASTRUCTURE: The ability of my employees to access reliable and affordable *transportation*; the ability of my business to access *energy*; ability to access transport *logistics*.

SUPPLY CHAIN: The reliability and costs associated with my business's supply chain.

FINANCIAL NEEDS: The ability of my business to access financing and tax incentives.

Overall results are reported across North Carolina for twenty-one major industry groups and for eight prosperity zones. Both categories are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Industries in North Carolina

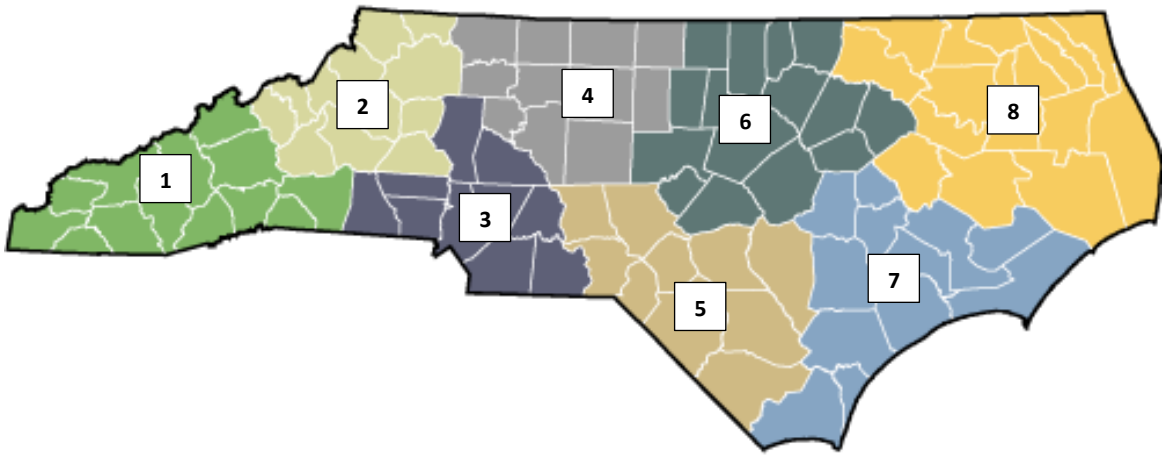
Major industries in North Carolina can be broadly defined by the categories of manufacturing, finance, education, research, tourism/hospitality, food production-related industries, logistics, healthcare, and federal/state/local government. This report compares the main survey topics across the top industries by response. The top eleven industries to respond to the survey were construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail, transportation, finance, professional/scientific/technology, education, healthcare/social services, arts/entertainment/recreation, and local government. These eleven industries were used as the unit of analysis for industry because of their relative size of representation in the respondent data.

Prosperity Zones in North Carolina

The State of North Carolina administers and oversees eight regions known as Prosperity Zones. In addition to the overview and comparisons of business-related topics by industry, this report also provides an overview of survey insights from the eight Prosperity Zones in North Carolina. The map below provides a geographical depiction of how the Zone are organized.

Map of North Carolina Prosperity Zones (See the map key below)

Source: https://www.commerce.nc.gov/about-us/nc-prosperity-zones#ne



Zone 1 – Western Prosperity Zone
Zone 2 – Northwestern Prosperity Zone
Zone 3 – Southwestern Prosperity Zone
Zone 4 - Piedmont Triad (Central) Prosperity Zone
Zone 5 – Sandhills (South Central) Prosperity Zone
Zone 6 – North Central Prosperity Zone
Zone 7 – Southeast Prosperity Zone
Zone 8 – Northeast Prosperity Zone

Zone 1: The Western Zone is comprised of Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, and Transylvania counties.

Zone 2: The Northwestern Zone is comprised of Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, McDowell, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey counties.

Zone 3: The Southwestern Zone is comprised of Anson, Cabarrus, Cleveland, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly, and Union counties.

Zone 4: The Piedmont Triad Zone is comprised of Alamance, Caswell, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties.

Zone 5: The Sandhills Zone is comprised of Bladen, Columbus, Cumberland, Hoke, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, and Scotland counties.

Zone 6: The North Central Zone is comprised of Chatham, Durham, Edgecomb, Franklin, Granville, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Nash, Orange, Person, Vance, Wake, Warren, and Wilson counties.

Zone 7: The Southeast Zone is comprised of Brunswick, Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, and Wayne counties.

Zone 8: The Northeast Zone is comprised of Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowen, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, and Washington counties.

NORTH CAROLINA OVERALL

In the first quarter, 2024, 198 complete survey respondents from businesses across North Carolina reported the most important issues, based on the questions in the survey related to the nine primary topics.

Respondents reported the topics of most concern facing business leaders in Q1/2024 were workforce, digital transformation, and housing.

Respondents reported that the three topics with the least concern were infrastructure, childcare and K-12 education, and supply chain. The following table shows the differences between Q1 2024 and Q4 2023.

	Q4, 2023	Q1, 2024
Most Important	Workforce	Workforce
	Digital Transformation	Digital Transformation
	Supply Chain	Housing
Least Important	Financial Needs	Infrastructure
	Childcare/K-12 Ed	Childcare/K-12 Ed
	Infrastructure	Supply Chain

The primary difference between the two quarters is supply chain moving from most important (Q4 2023) to least important (Q1 2024) and housing moving to most important (Q1 2024). The change in supply chain could be the result of continuing improvement of supply chain issues across the state coupled with increased impacts from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) on NC businesses. The change in housing could be from continued high interest rates, low supply, and upward pressure on rental and leasing prices.

Quantitative Data: Topic Specific by Industry and Zone - General

The data representing perceptions of improvement, decline, or no change, or IDN/C, from the previous 90 days yielded results that varied slightly from greatest concern-least concern questions and results.

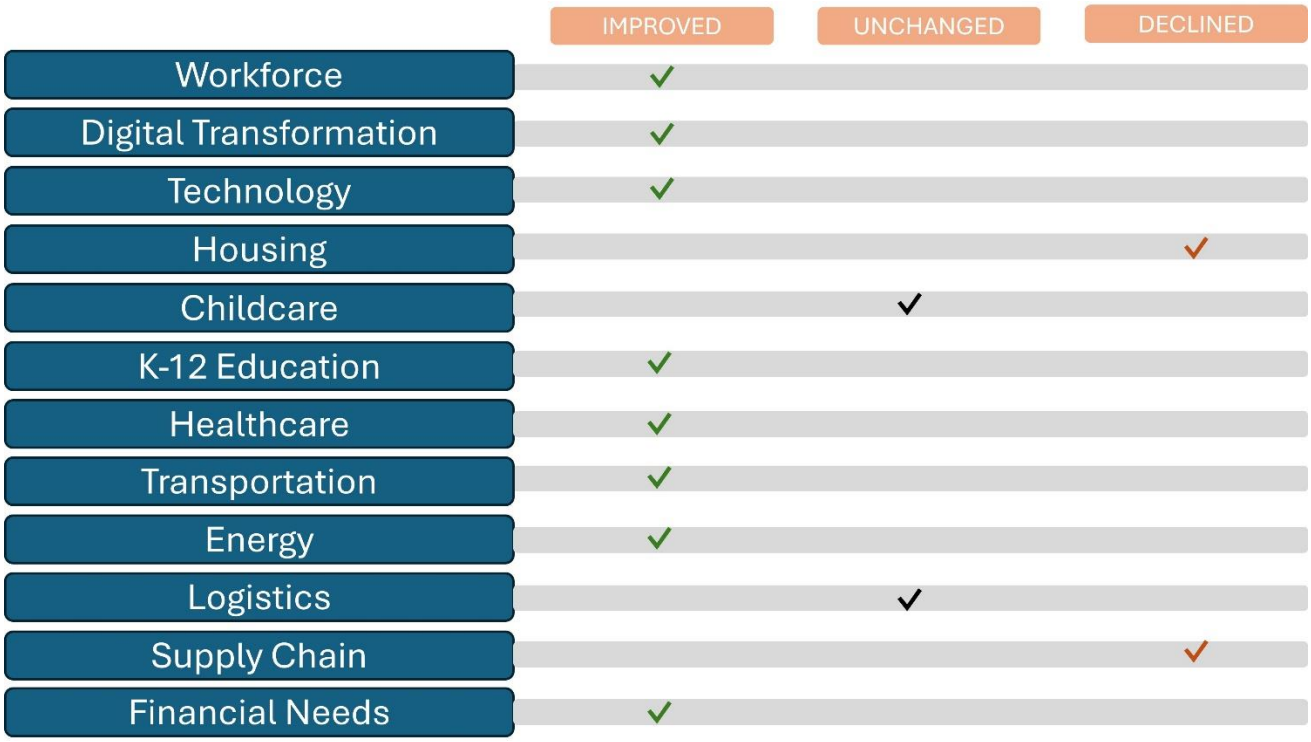
Specifically, when the IDN/C data was analyzed by **industry**, the data shows that most of the areas show improvement from the previous 90 days. Areas of improvement include workforce, digital transformation, technology, education, healthcare, transportation, energy, and access to capital. Three areas had no change including childcare, and logistics. Two topics were reported as areas of decline including housing and supply chain.

When the IDN/C data was analyzed by prosperity zone, the results were very similar to the industry analysis, but with healthcare showing unchanged.

Graphic representations of the results can be found on the following pages.

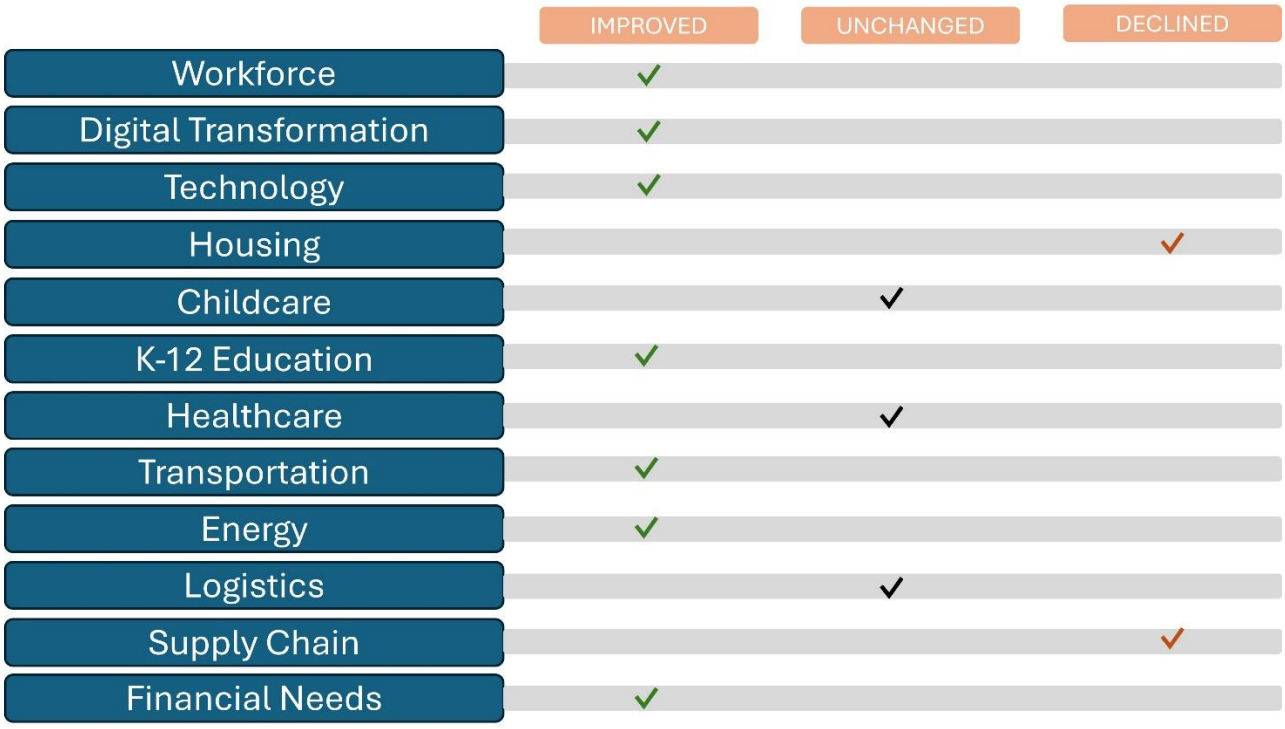
Overview of State-wide Trend Results for Q1 2024 – By Industry

Measured by comparison of "…TODAY compared to 90 DAYS AGO.."



Overview of State-wide Trend Results for Q1 2024 – By Prosperity Zone

Measured by comparison of "…TODAY compared to 90 DAYS AGO.."

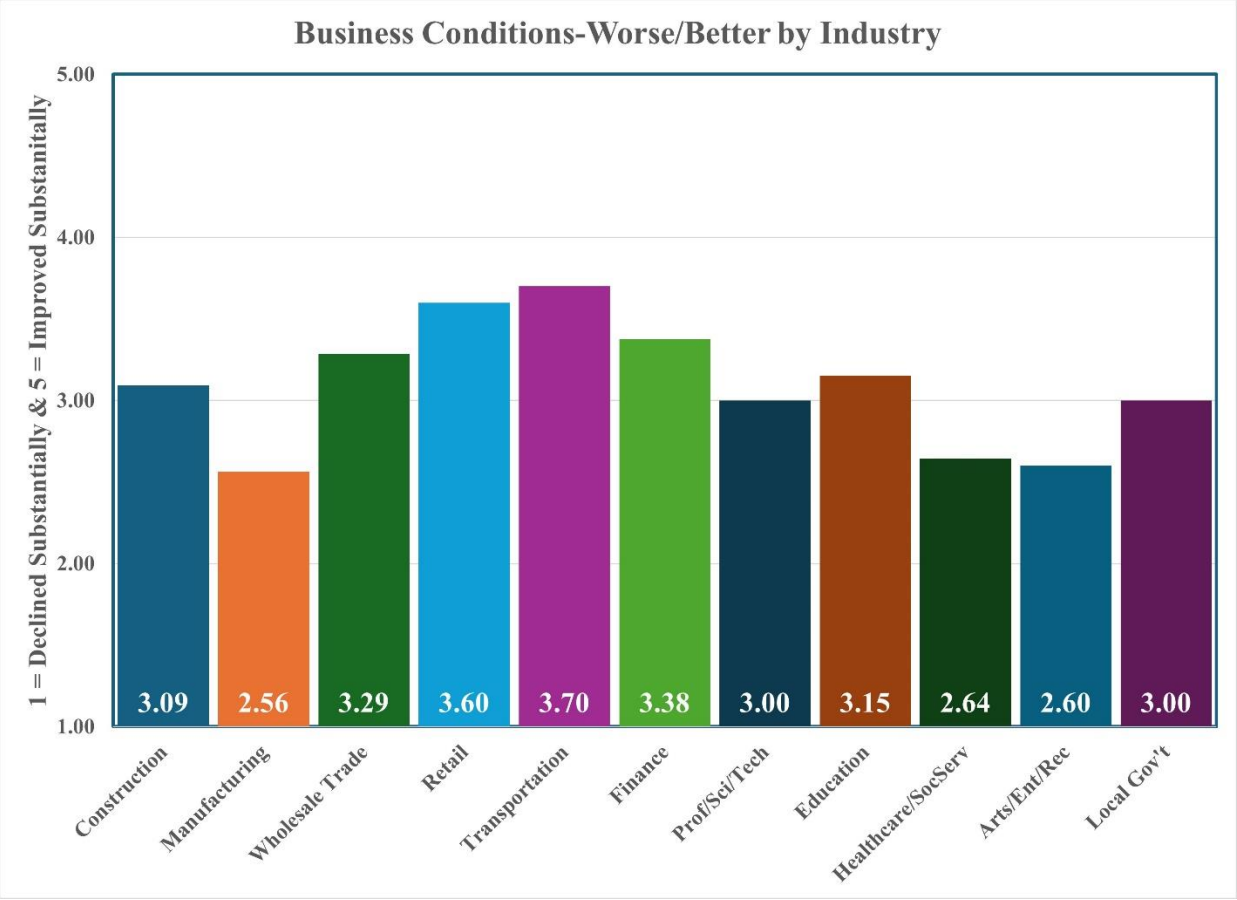


Quantitative Data: Overall Business Conditions - Top Industry and Zone Specific

Two general survey questions were posed to the respondents related to perceptions of overall business conditions since the beginning of Q1 to the end of Q1, 2024, and general optimism for the next three to six months in the future.

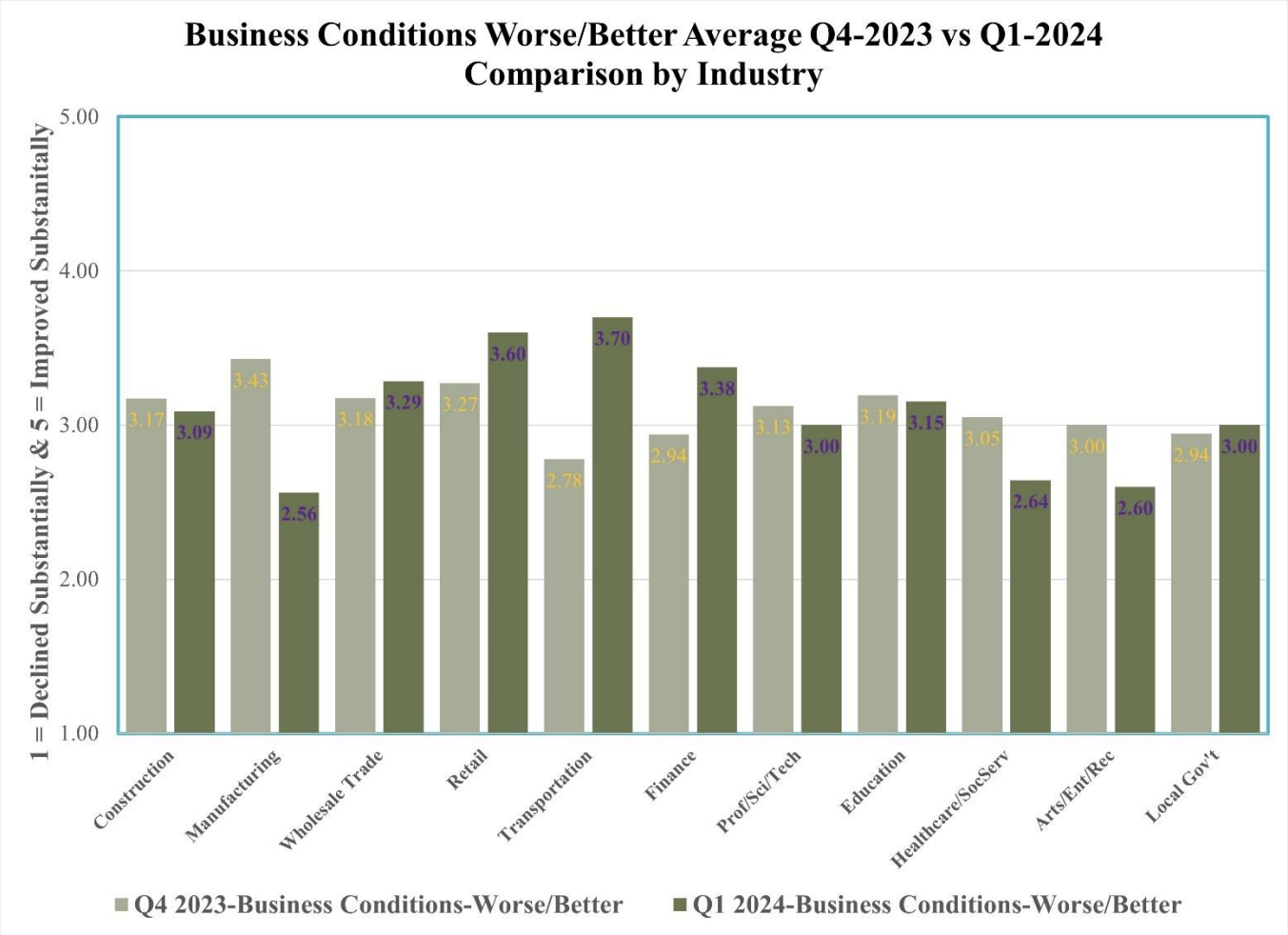
The **first** question is "Thinking about the OVERALL conditions of your business TODAY compared to 90 DAYS AGO (Last Quarter), conditions have:" with 5-point scale from DECLINED SUBSTANTIALLY to IMPROVED SUBSTANTIALLY. Across **all** respondents, the data showed near equal improvement and decline (declined 28% and improved 30 %) with the majority of respondents answering no change (42%).

The results of the business conditions question by the respondents in the **top industries**, are as follows:

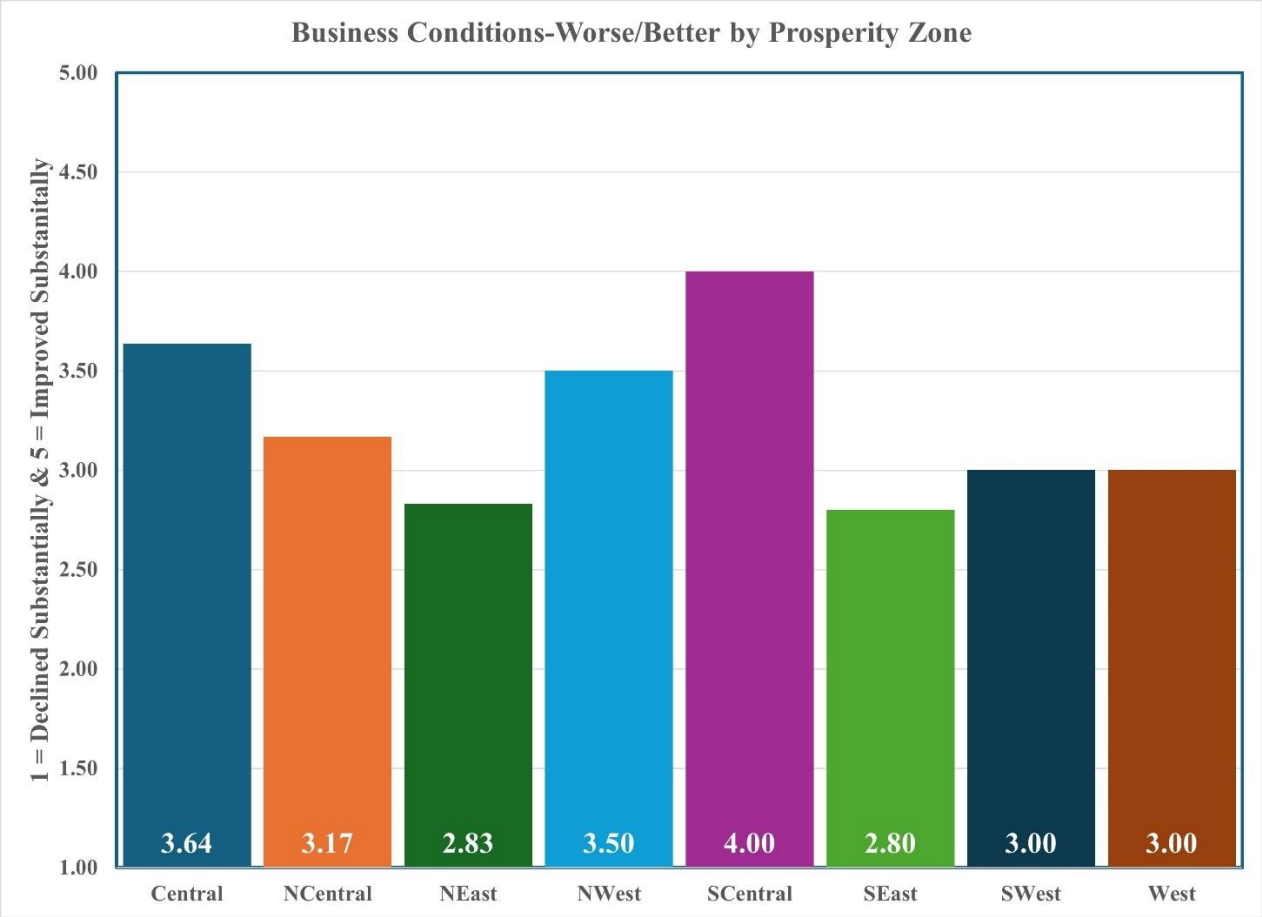


The results by top industries indicate that business conditions improved substantially for retail, transportation and finance, while conditions declined substantially for manufacturing, healthcare/social services, and arts/entertainment/recreation. All other industries indicate slight improvement or decline, but not significantly.

The results of the business conditions question by **top industries** for Q1-2024 compared to Q4-2023 are as follows:

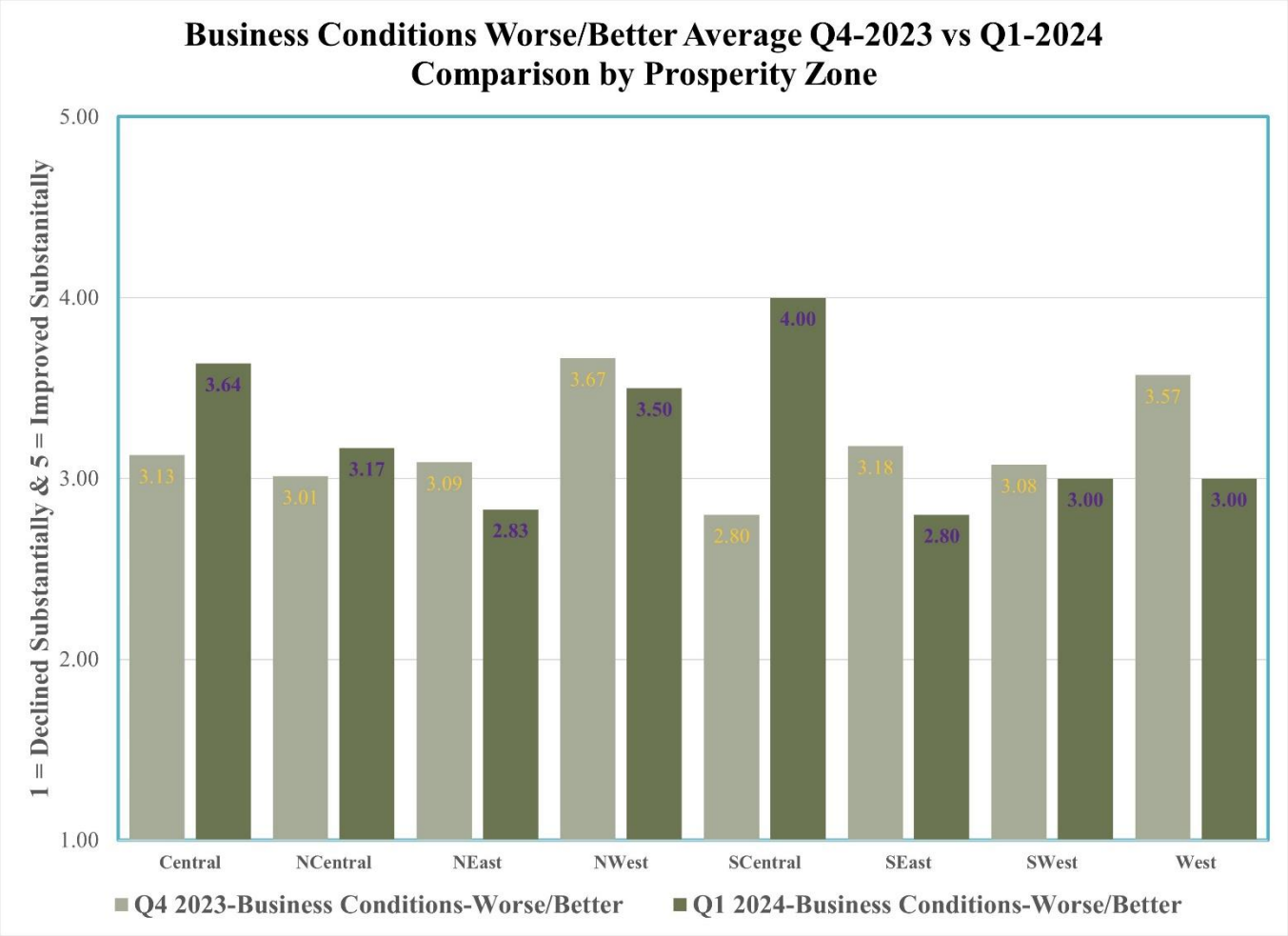


The results by the respondents in **prosperity zones,** are as follows:



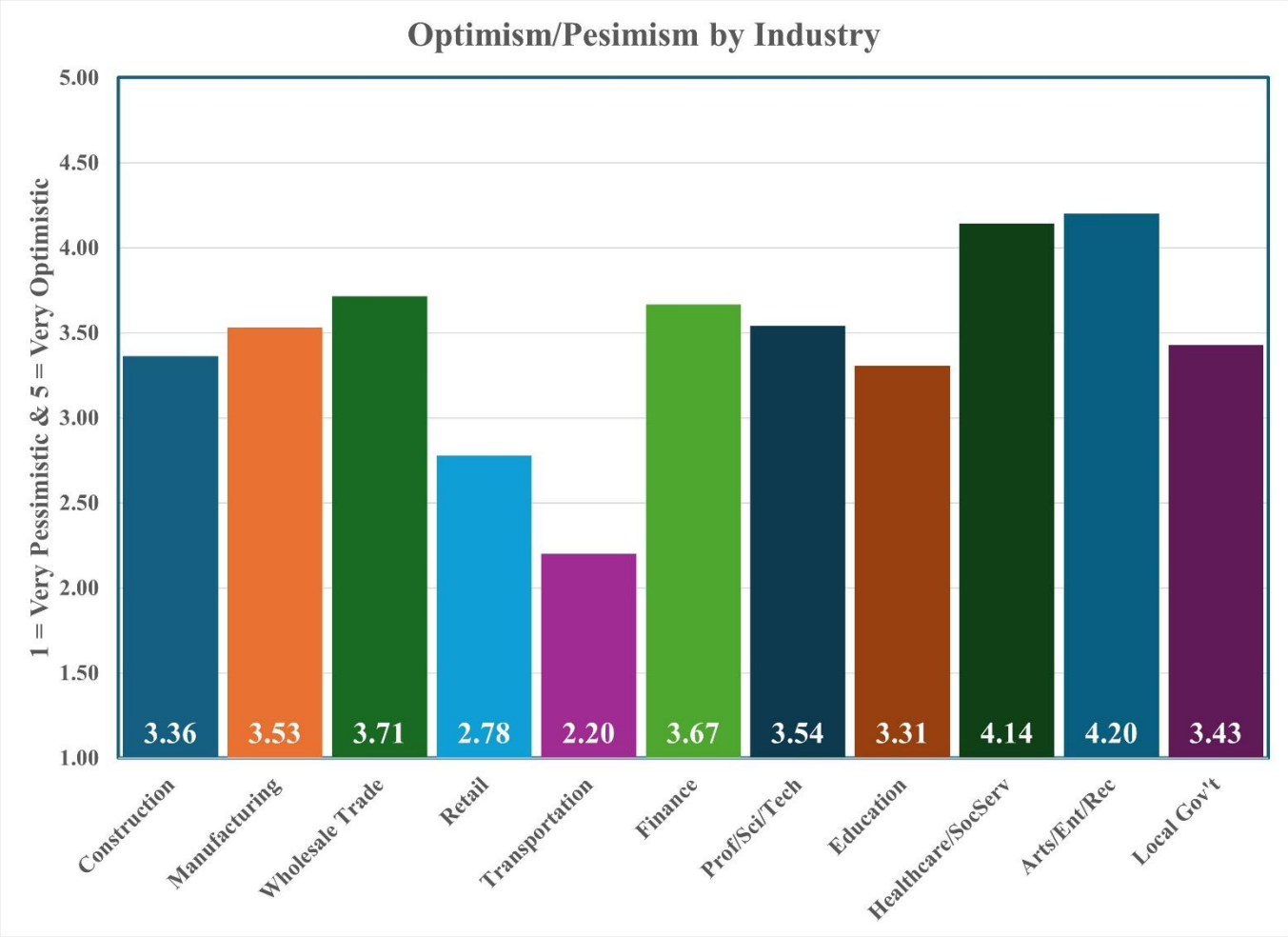
The results by prosperity zone indicate that business conditions improved substantially for the Central, Northwest, and SouthCentral zones, while conditions declined slightly for the Northeast and Southeast zone. All other zones indicate slight or no improvement/decline. Overall, the improve/decline question by zones revealed mixed information across the zones.

The results of the business conditions question by **prosperity zones** for Q1-2024 compared to Q4-2023 are as follows:



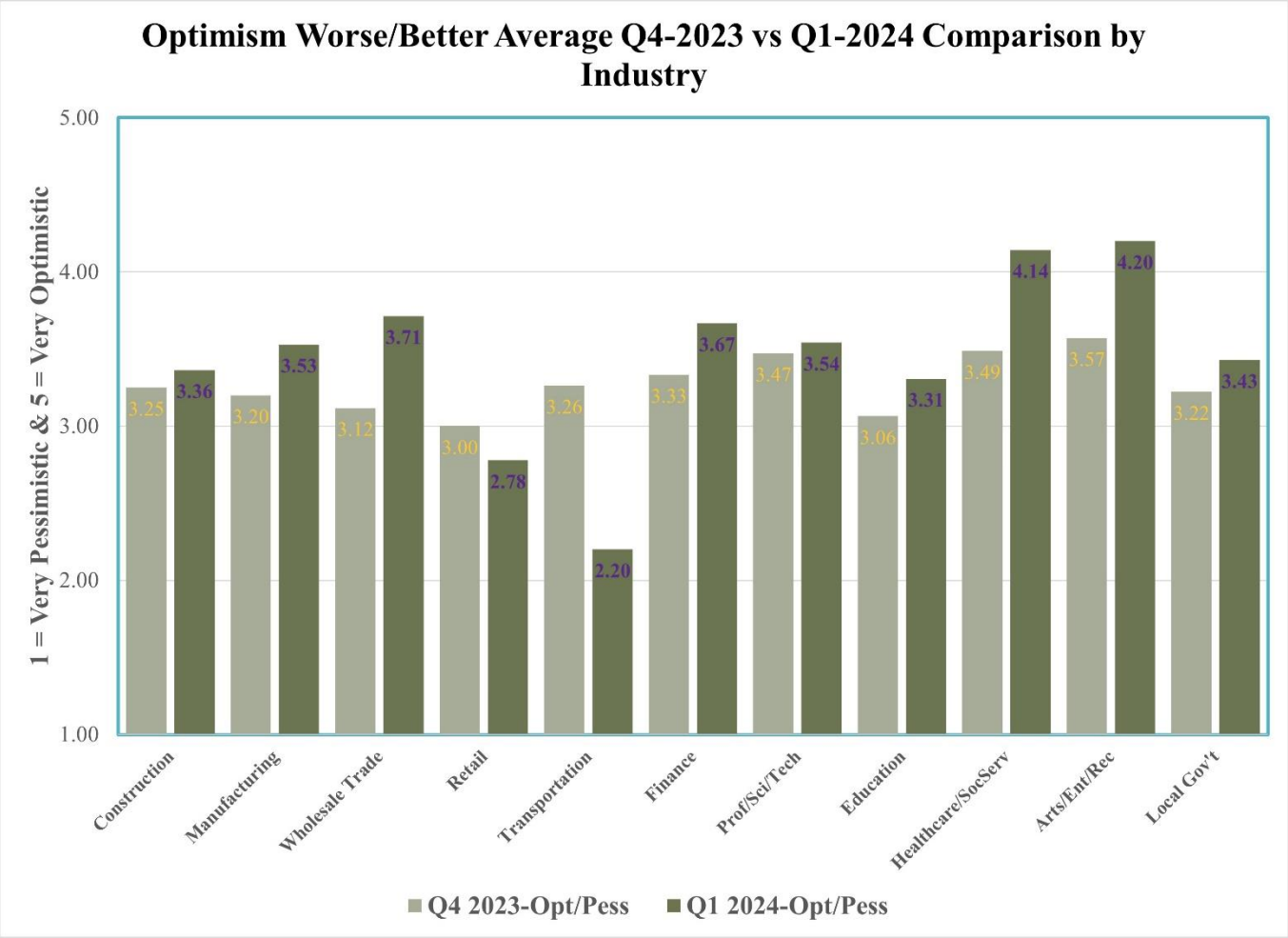
The **second** general question is "Please select the statement that BEST DESCRIBES how optimistic or pessimistic you are that business conditions for your company will improve in the next 3 to 6 months" with a 5-point scale from VERY PESSIMISTIC to VERY OPTIMISTIC. Across **all** respondents, the data showed well of half of all respondents are optimistic about the future (pessimistic 23%; neither pessimistic or optimistic 18%; optimistic 58%).

The results of the optimism/pessimism question by the respondents in the **top industries**, are as follows:

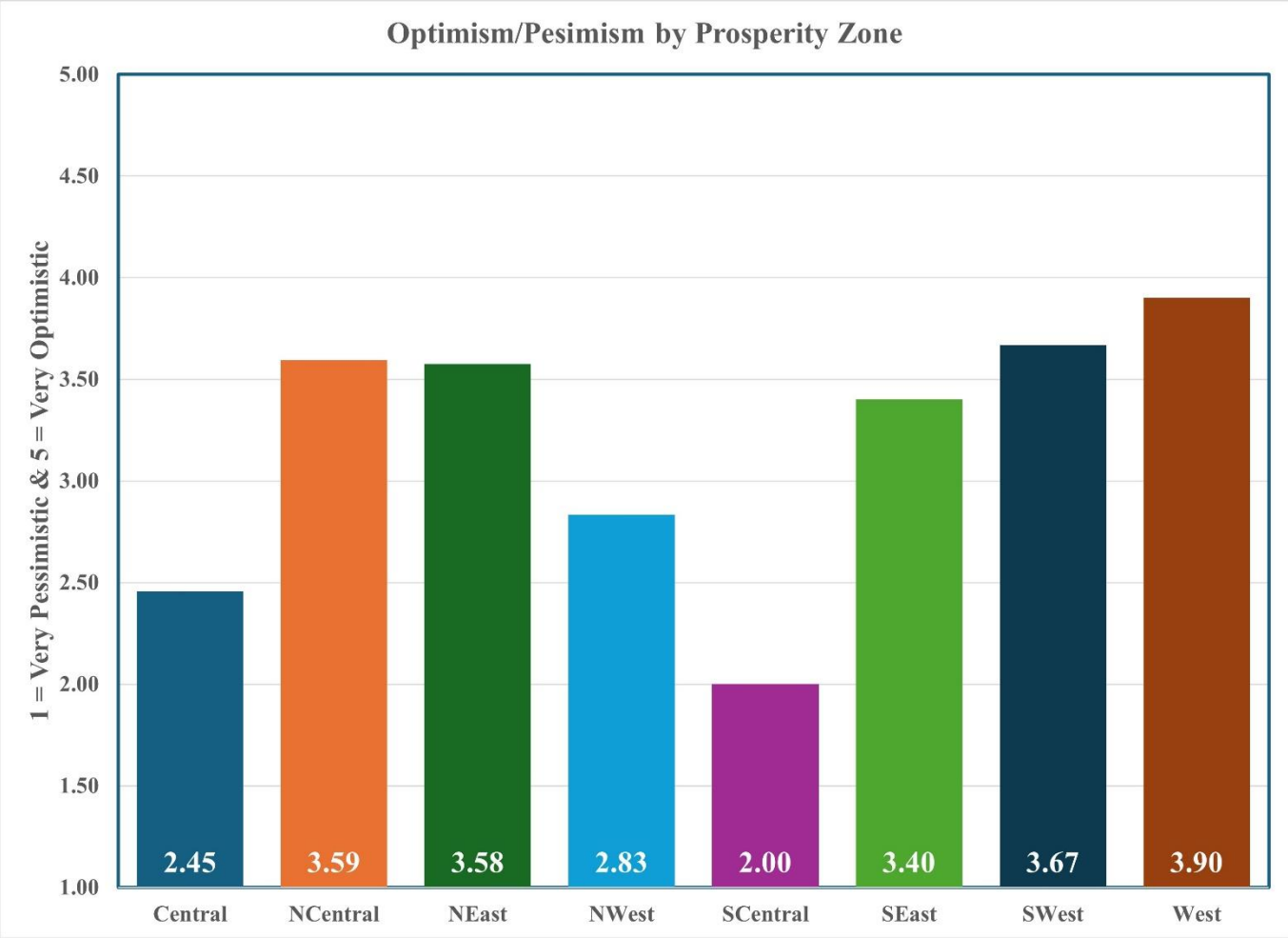


The results by top industries indicate that nearly all respondents are optimistic about the future (transportation being the only industry more pessimistic). This supports other state-level data that business is improving in North Carolina and that North Carolina is seen as an industry-friendly state.

The results of the optimism/pessimism question by **top industries** for Q1-2024 compared to Q4-20243 are as follows:

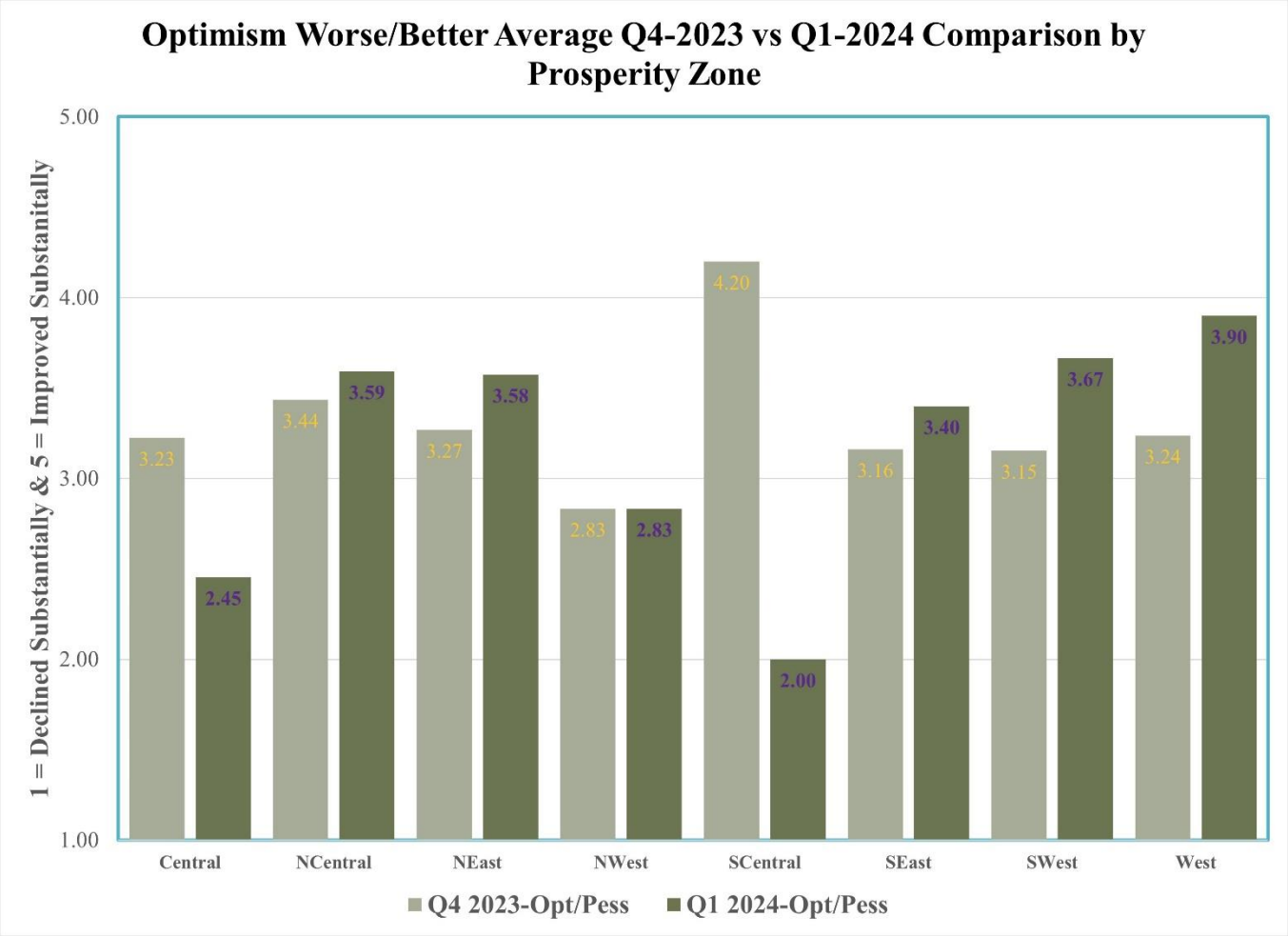


The results of the optimism/pessimism question by the respondents in the **prosperity zones**, are as follows:



The results by prosperity zone indicate an overall all optimism by respondents across the different prosperity zones except the Central and SouthCentral. This is counterintuitive to the improve/decline data that indicated improvement in the Central and SouthCentral zones. This could be explained by both zones having more tempered expectations for the future, given a robust beginning of the year (e.g., end of a big contract, funding, etc.).

The results of the optimism/pessimism question by **prosperity zones** for Q1-2024 compared to Q4-20243 are as follows:



Qualitative Data

Two open-ended questions were posed to respondents to obtain a more granular level insight and to triangulate the data to see how the quantitative and qualitative data compare. A review of responses to the open-ended questions helps provide context to the quarterly results.

The first open-ended question was linked to the immediately preceding ranking question. The ranking question asked participants to compare their current overall business conditions to 90 days previous (results are in the previous section). The open-ended question asked :

"Please tell us WHY you feel the conditions have either IMPROVED or DECLINED, and please SUGGEST any specific forms of support or resources that could help your business."

The majority of open-ended responses were related to challenges with businesses (implying declined) and can be placed into three broad categories including workforce issues, macroeconomic issues, and access to capital and funding.

Workforce issues are mostly centered on hiring motivated employees. Related quotes:

> "(need) Employees that care about what they are doing and can will work to the best of their ability." – The Southeast Zone, Transportation Industry.
>
> "Promote and support development of young people into the trades." – North Central Zone, Manufacturing Industry.

The primary **macroeconomic** issues were related to perceived issues with the economy, interest rates, and inflation/COGS. Related quotes:

> "Fix the economy and pay rates for customers to be able to buy more.." – The Northwestern Zone, Service Industry.
>
> "Lower cost of materials, lower interest rates." – The Northeast Zone, Manufacturing Industry

The primary **access to capital** issues were related to investment and tax credits. Related quote:

> "More tech talent in Charlotte; More Capital formation resources for early growth in the SouthEast – Charlotte and surrounding area." The Southwestern Zone, Service Industry.

The second open-ended question was a general question to capture any other comments the respondents might have about the North Carolina business environment. The open-ended question asked:

"Please tell us any other comments or concerns you have about the current business environment in North Carolina in terms of challenges or opportunities for your business."

The quotes related to other comments related to challenges/opportunities for Q1/2024 were more negative than those received in the Q4/2023 data. This could be due to challenges that are being felt at the beginning of the year and closer to the election cycle. The comments focused on housing, workforce, and technology (infrastructure). These comments support the quantitative data from the most/least important topic question reported above.

> "Housing is #1 but there's also a severe shortage of affordable commercial space, we're lucky to have a decent landlord at this business, our other business was forced to close by a greedy landlord." – The North Central Zone, Retail Industry.
>
> "The one constant reality for us is that, because we are a low-population, rural area, there are fewer individuals with the specialized skills we need living here. This means we cannot grow the business in ways we might in a bigger community." – The Northeast Zone, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Industry.
>
> "I feel overwhelmed with the transition of technology beating at my doorstep. 20 years ago I had the best website and ability to communicate with my clients. Now people don't even want to see inside the music store. People are basing pricing on what they see on the Internet, which destroys small businesses." - The Piedmont Triad Zone, Retail Industry.

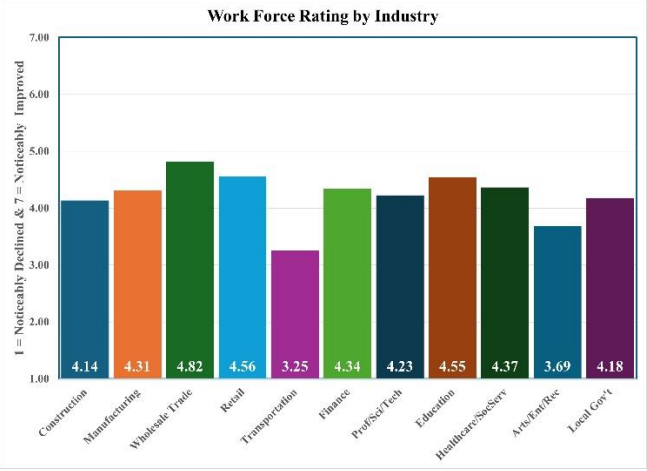
INDUSTRY AND PROSPERITY ZONE SPECIFIC

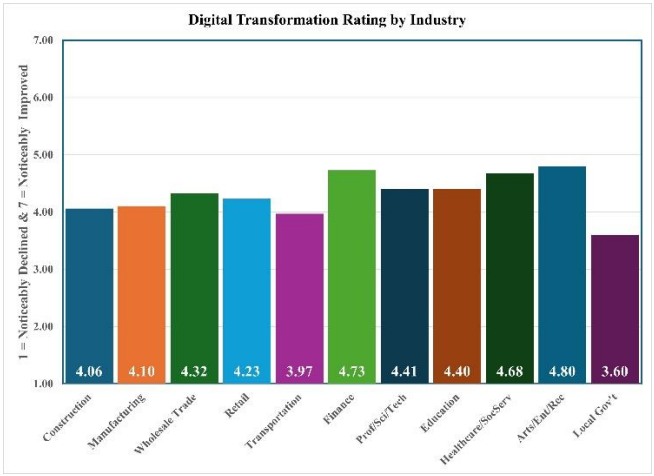
Respondents ranked each of the nine main topics on a 7-point Likert scales (NOTICEABLY DECLINED TO NOTICEABLY IMPROVED), comparing current business conditions to 90 days previous (one quarter). For Q1, 2024, this was comparing conditions from January 1 to March 31. The results were analyzed by industry and by prosperity zone.

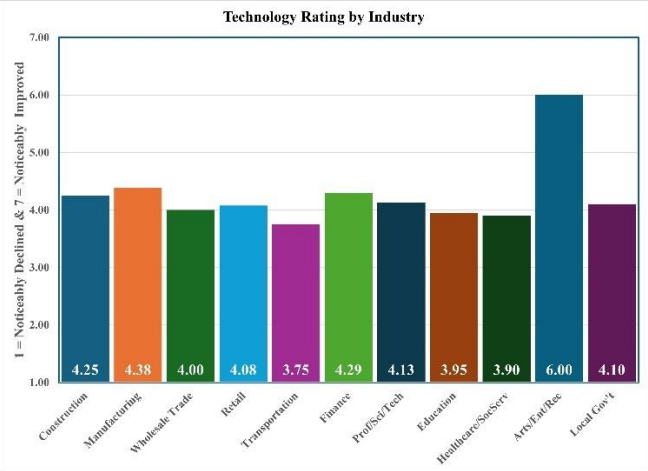
Data analysis of each topic by industry was based on the unit of analysis of the top eleven industries, by respondent. The top industries included construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail, transportation, finance, professional/scientific/technology, education, healthcare/social services, arts/entertainment/recreation, and local government.

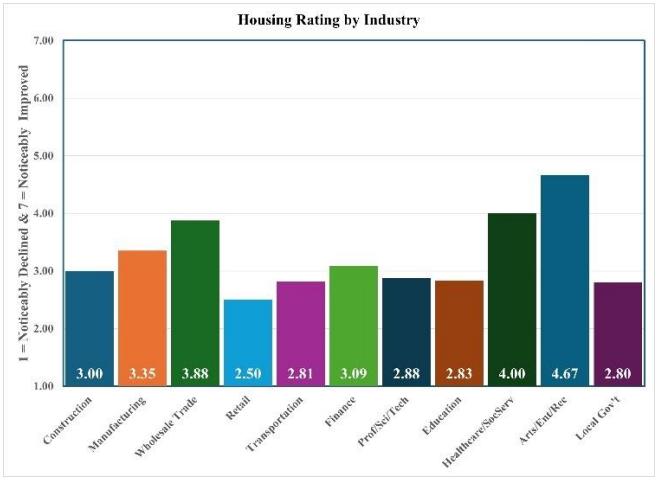
The data was then compared to that of Q1 2023, again rating the topics by industry. Both sets of graphs are as follows.

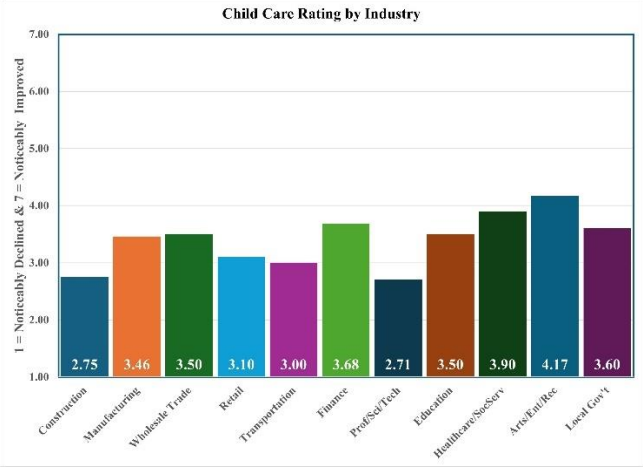
How Survey Participants – By Industry – Rated Topics by Improvement / Decline

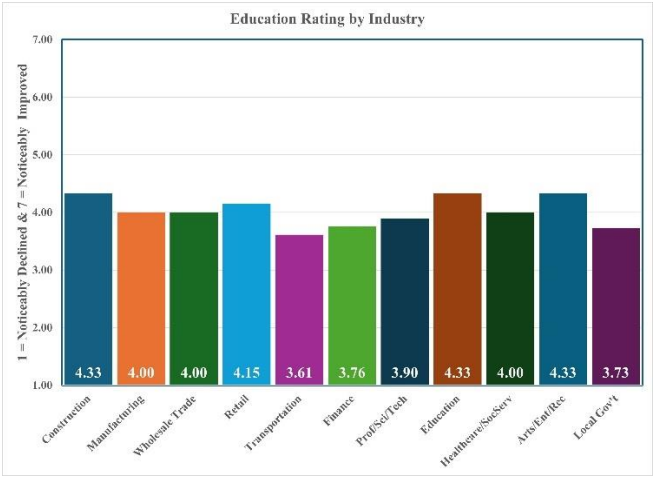


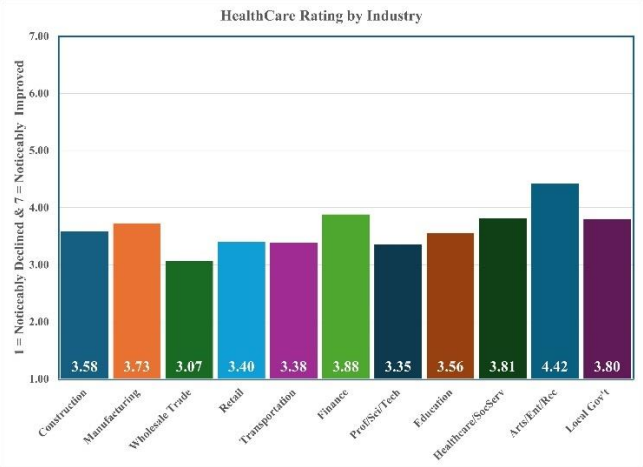


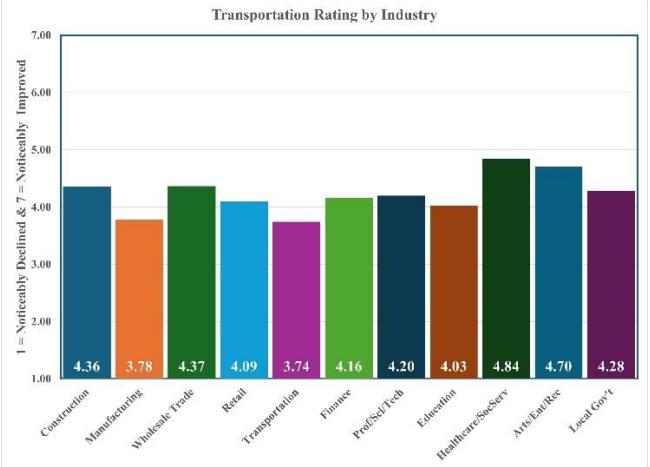

Technology Rating by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
4.25
4.38
4.00
4.08
3.75
4.29
4.13
3.95
3.90
6.00
4.10
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't

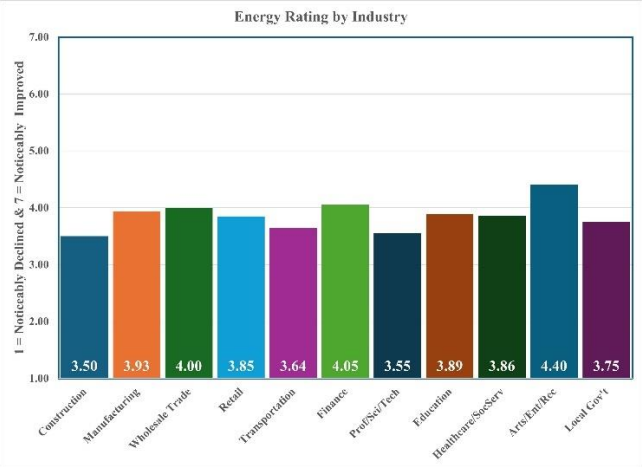

Housing Rating by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
3.00
3.35
3.88
2.50
2.81
3.09
2.88
2.83
4.00
4.67
2.80
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't

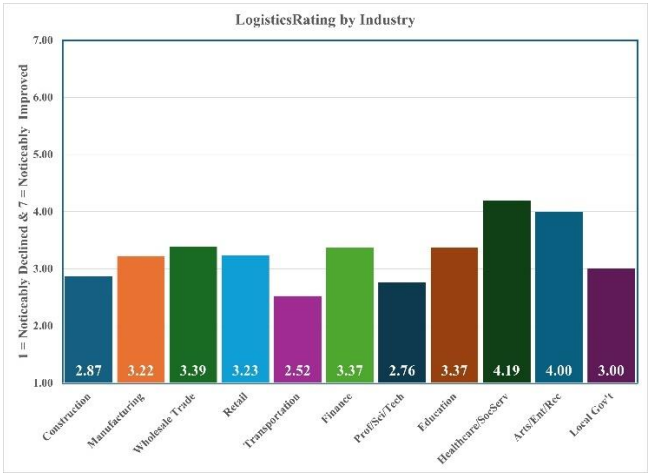

Child Care Rating by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
2.75
3.46
3.50
3.10
3.00
3.68
2.71
3.50
3.90
4.17
3.60
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't

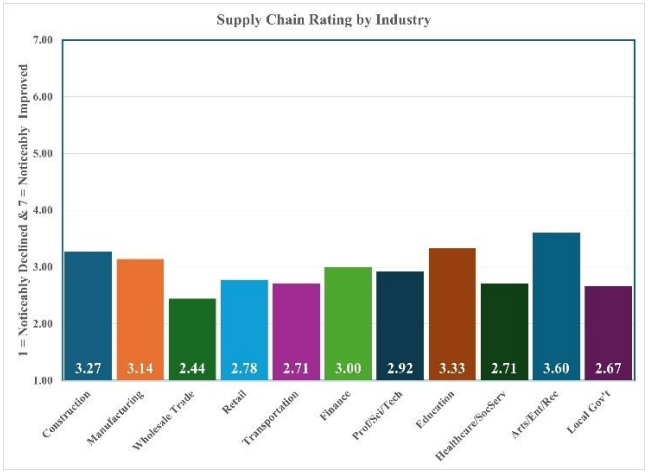

Education Rating by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
4.33
4.00
4.00
4.15
3.61
3.76
3.90
4.33
4.00
4.33
3.73
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't

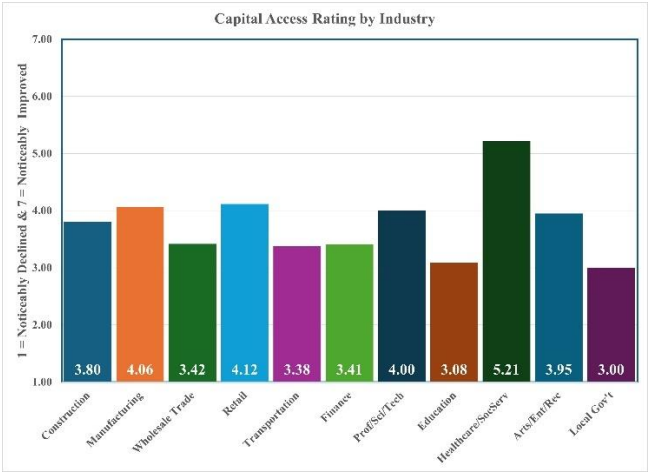

HealthCare Rating by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
3.58
3.73
3.07
3.40
3.38
3.88
3.35
3.56
3.81
4.42
3.80
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't


Transportation Rating by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
4.36
3.78
4.37
4.09
3.74
4.16
4.20
4.03
4.84
4.70
4.28
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't

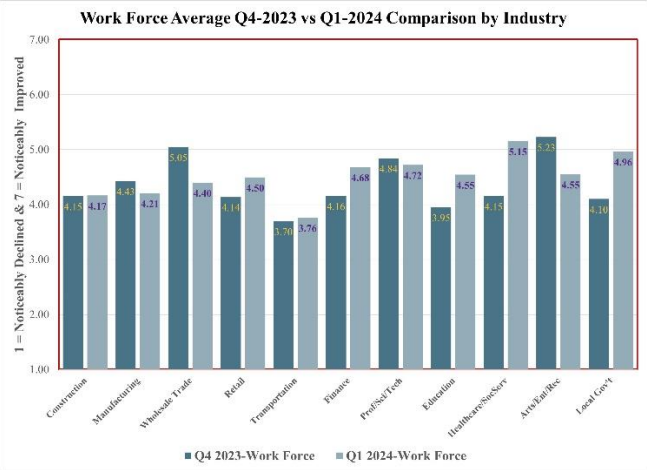


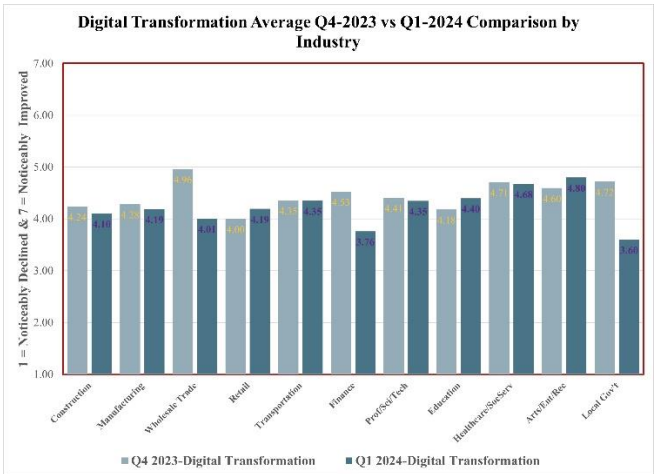


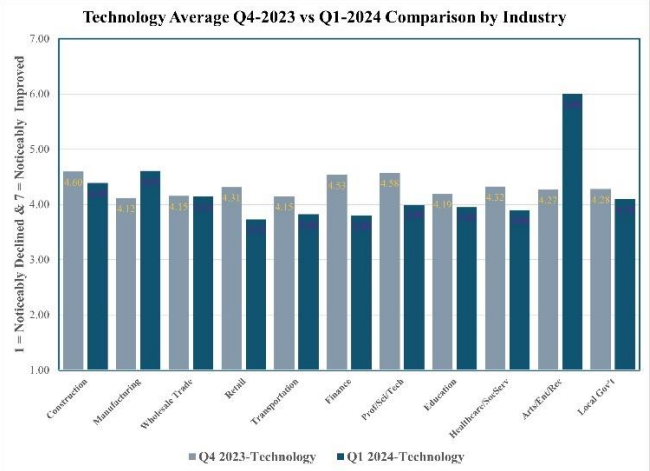


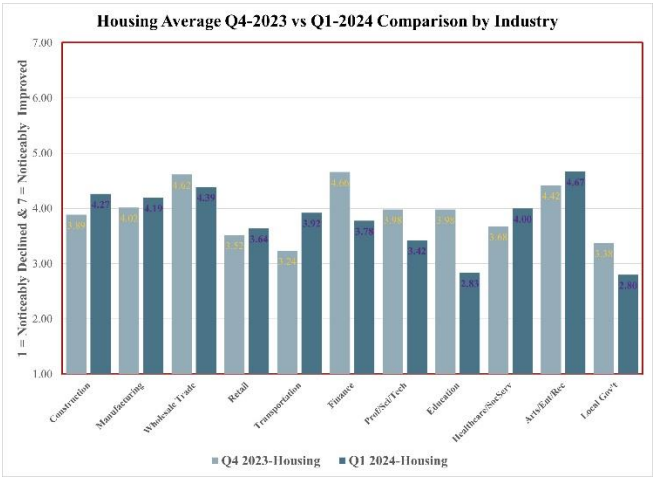


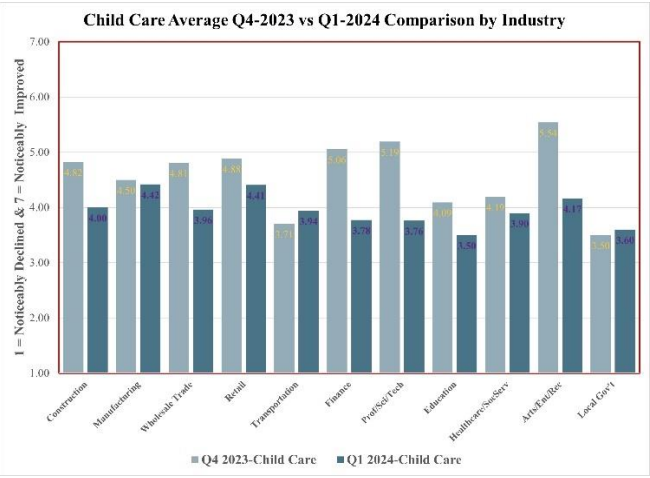
How Survey Participants – By Industry - Rated Topics by Improvement / Decline Q4 2023 compared to Q1 2024

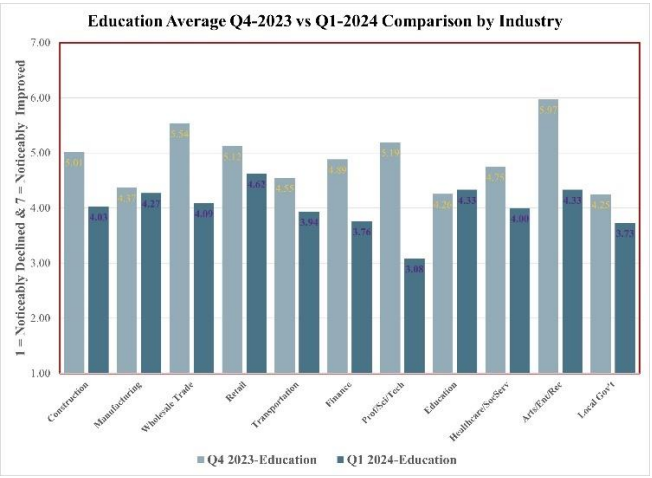


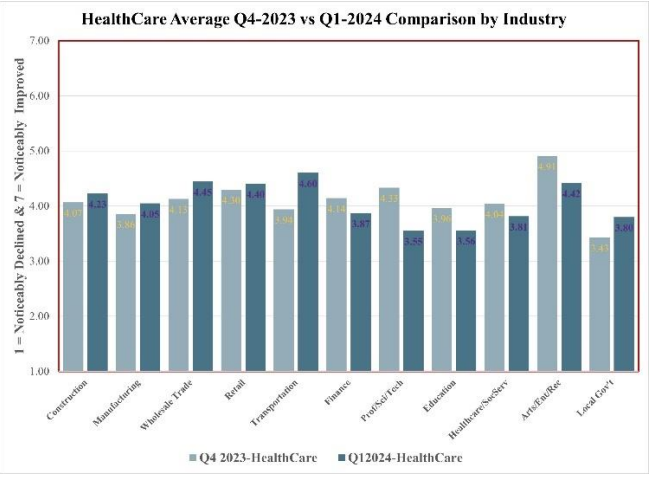


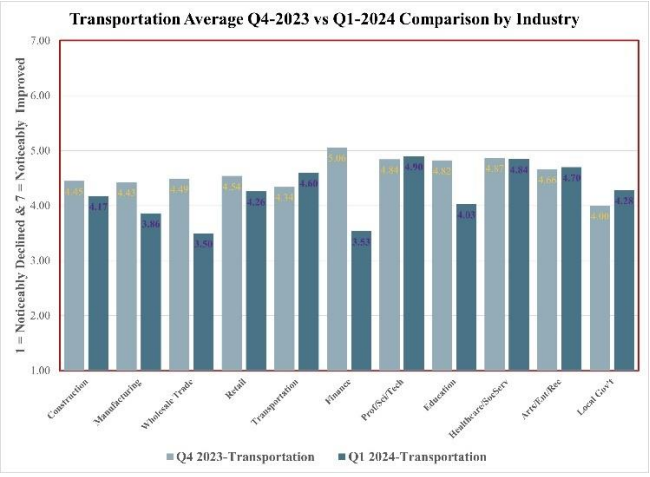

Technology Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Technology
Q1 2024-Technology

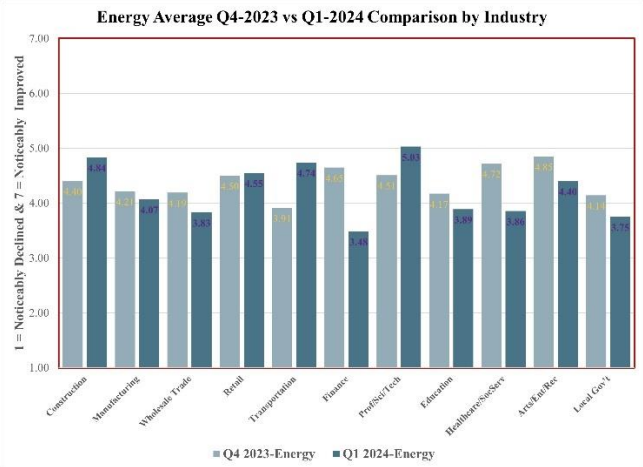

Housing Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Housing
Q1 2024-Housing

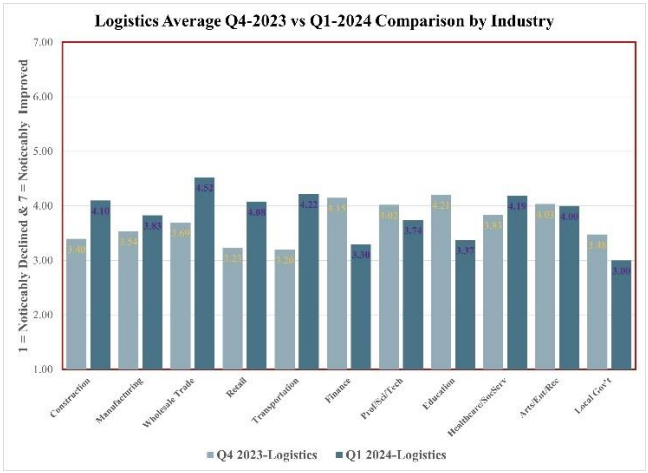

Child Care Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Child Care
Q1 2024-Child Care

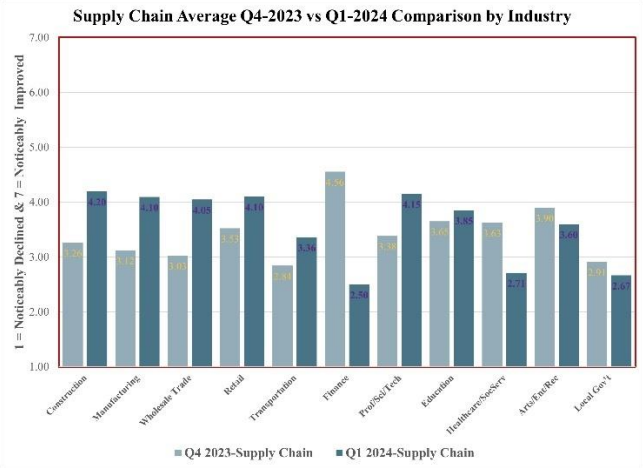

Education Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Education
Q1 2024-Education

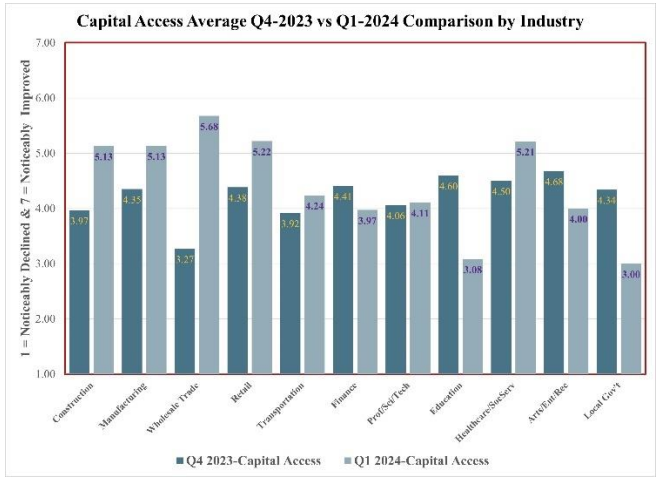

HealthCare Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-HealthCare
Q12024-HealthCare


Transportation Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Transportation
Q1 2024-Transportation


Energy Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Energy
Q1 2024-Energy

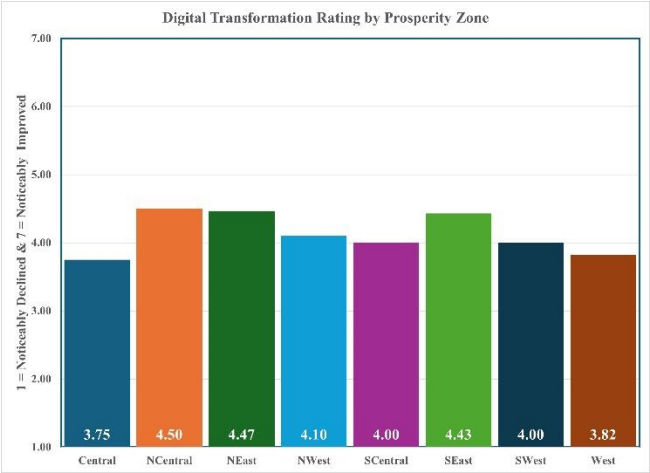

Logistics Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Logistics
Q1 2024-Logistics


Supply Chain Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Supply Chain
Q1 2024-Supply Chain


Capital Access Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Industry
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
Construction
Manufacturing
Wholesale Trade
Retail
Transportation
Finance
Prof/Sci/Tech
Education
Healthcare/SocServ
Arts/Ent/Rec
Local Gov't
Q4 2023-Capital Access
Q1 2024-Capital Access

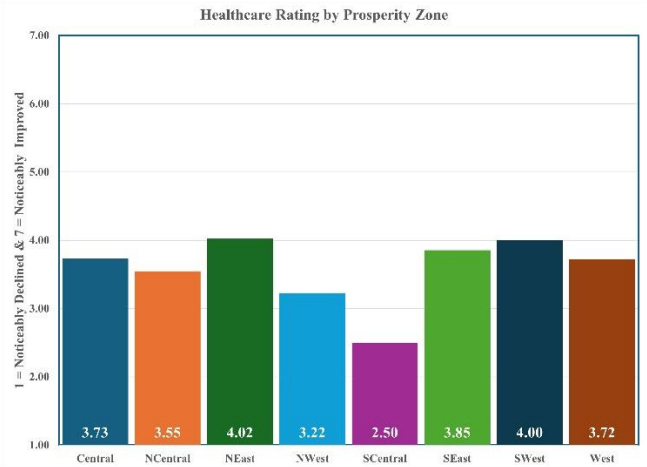
Data analysis of each topic by zone was based on the unit of analysis of all zones, by respondents. The data was then compared to that of Q1 2023, again rating the topics by zone. Both sets of graphs are as follows.

How Survey Participants – By Zone – Rated Topics by Improvement / Decline

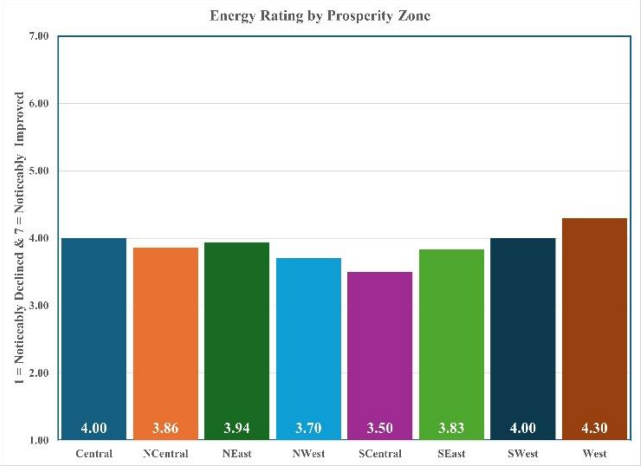


Childcare Rating by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
3.50
3.41
3.50
3.25
2.50
3.46
4.00
3.83
Central
NCentral
NEast
NWest
SCentral
SEast
SWest
West

Education Rating by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
4.38
3.95
4.06
3.67
3.50
4.28
5.00
5.00
Central
NCentral
NEast
NWest
SCentral
SEast
SWest
West

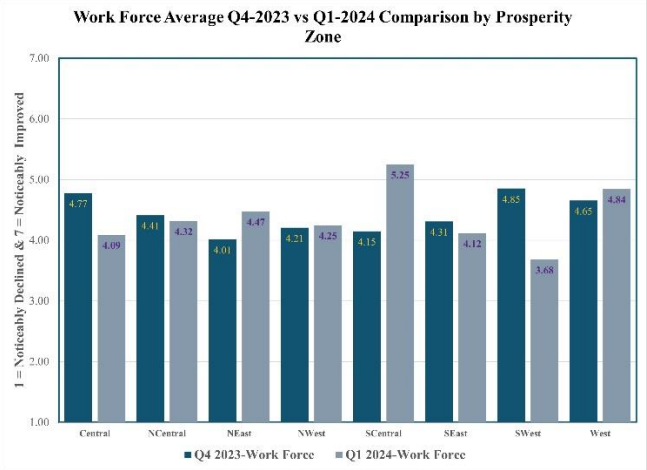

Healthcare Rating by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
3.73
3.55
4.02
3.22
2.50
3.85
4.00
3.72
Central
NCentral
NEast
NWest
SCentral
SEast
SWest
West

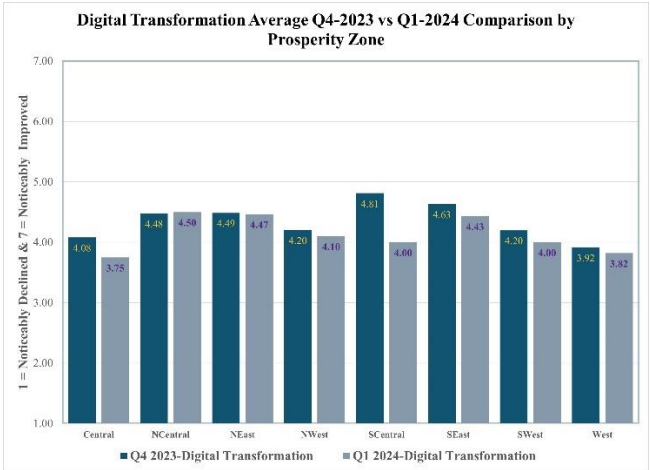
Transportation Rating by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
4.14
4.12
4.37
4.08
3.00
4.28
5.57
4.92
Central
NCentral
NEast
NWest
SCentral
SEast
SWest
West

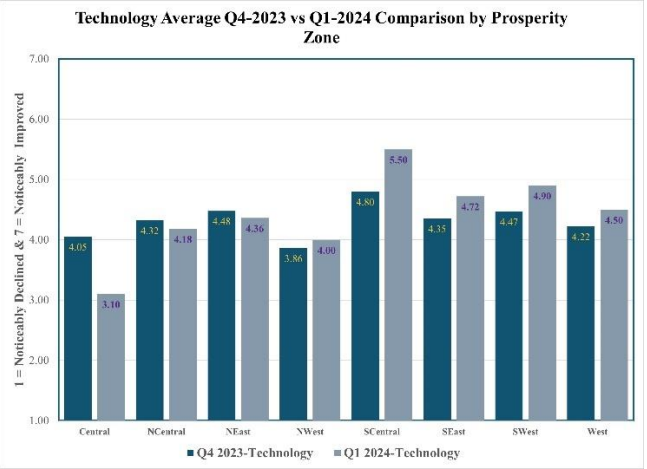

Energy Rating by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
4.00
3.86
3.94
3.70
3.50
3.83
4.00
4.30
Central
NCentral
NEast
NWest
SCentral
SEast
SWest
West

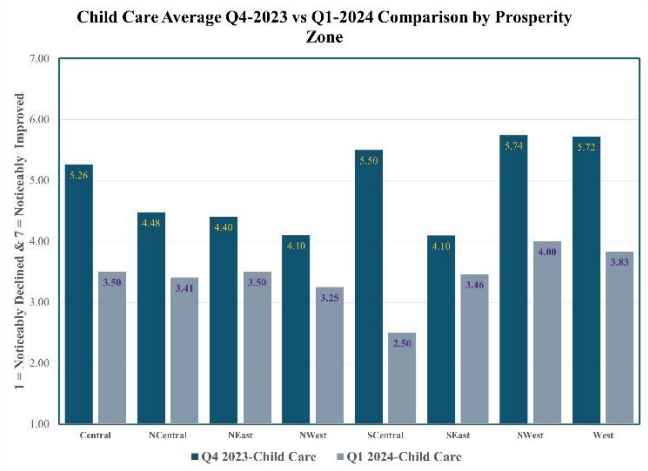
Logistics Rating by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
7.00
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
3.67
3.47
3.53
2.73
2.83
2.75
4.33
4.42
Central
NCentral
NEast
NWest
SCentral
SEast
SWest
West

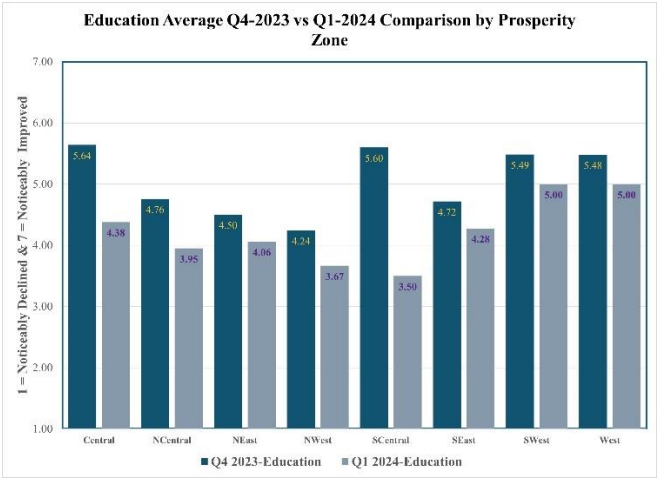
How Survey Participants – By Zone - Ranked the Relative Importance of Topic
Q4 2023 compared to Q1 2024

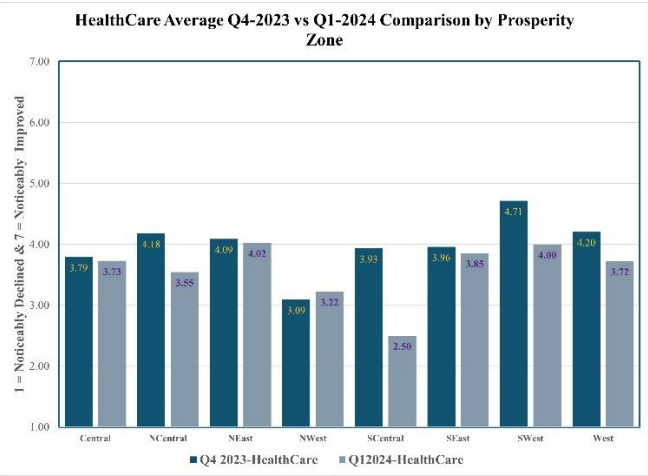


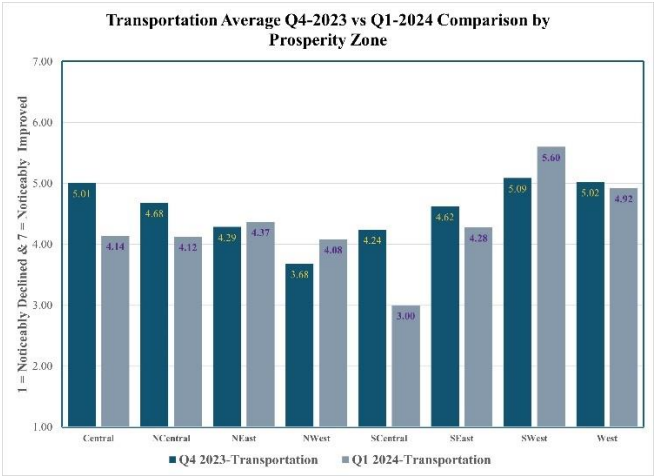


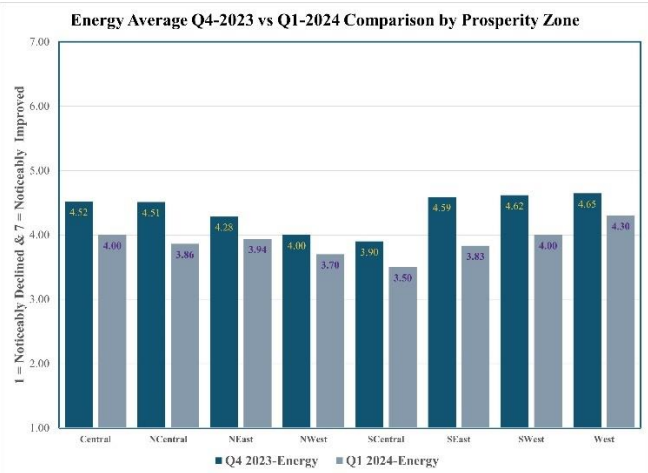


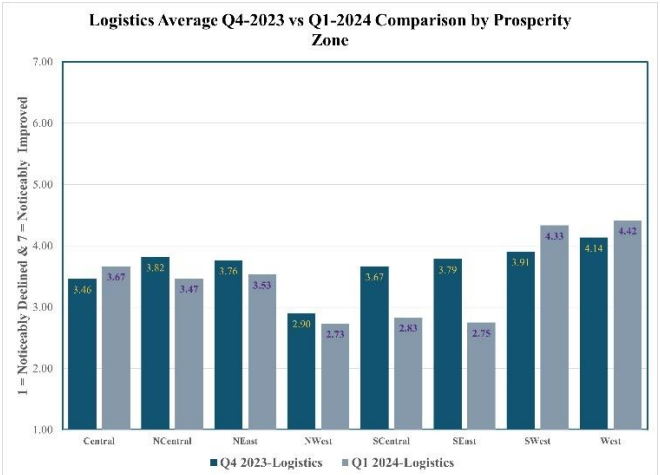

Child Care Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Central NCentral NEast NWest SCentral SEast SWest West
5.26 3.50 4.48 3.41 4.40 3.50 4.10 3.25 5.50 2.50 4.10 3.46 5.74 4.00 5.72 3.83
Q4 2023-Child Care
Q1 2024-Child Care

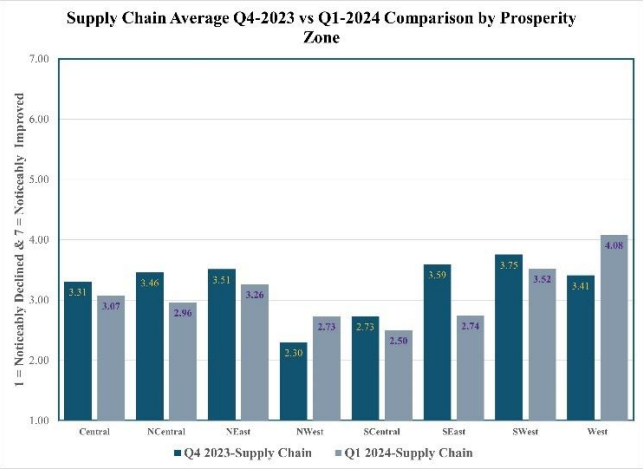

Education Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Central NCentral NEast NWest SCentral SEast SWest West
5.64 4.38 4.76 3.95 4.50 4.06 4.24 3.67 5.60 3.50 4.72 4.28 5.49 5.00 5.48 5.00
Q4 2023-Education
Q1 2024-Education

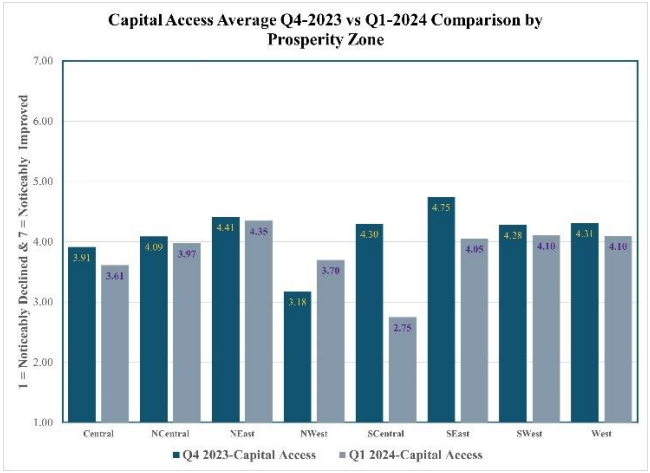

HealthCare Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Central NCentral NEast NWest SCentral SEast SWest West
3.79 3.73 4.18 3.55 4.09 4.02 3.09 3.22 3.93 2.50 3.96 3.85 4.71 4.00 4.20 3.72
Q4 2023-HealthCare
Q12024-HealthCare


Transportation Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Central NCentral NEast NWest SCentral SEast SWest West
5.01 4.14 4.68 4.12 4.29 4.37 3.68 4.08 4.24 3.00 4.62 4.28 5.09 5.60 5.02 4.92
Q4 2023-Transportation
Q1 2024-Transportation


Energy Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Central NCentral NEast NWest SCentral SEast SWest West
4.52 4.00 4.51 3.86 4.28 3.94 4.00 3.70 3.90 3.50 4.59 3.83 4.62 4.00 4.63 4.30
Q4 2023-Energy
Q1 2024-Energy


Logistics Average Q4-2023 vs Q1-2024 Comparison by Prosperity Zone
1 = Noticeably Declined & 7 = Noticeably Improved
Central NCentral NEast NWest SCentral SEast SWest West
3.46 3.67 3.82 3.47 3.76 3.53 2.90 2.73 3.67 2.83 3.79 2.75 3.91 4.33 4.14 4.42
Q4 2023-Logistics
Q1 2024-Logistics





Conclusions:

The data indicates that overall business conditions in North Carolina in Q1 2024, as perceived by the survey respondents, trended slightly toward decline. However, most respondents also felt optimistic about the future (next 3 to 6 months). More granular analysis indicates continued concerns about macroeconomic issues, primarily the continued presence of relatively high inflation, interest rates, and COGS, and (to a lesser degree) supply chain and logistics-related issues. New to the Q1 2024 analysis was concerns about housing.