



NVC/PINKSTON

Northern Virginia *Business Leader* Survey.

Q3 2026 Report



Executive Summary & Insights.

The 2026 Q3 NVC/Pinkston Northern Virginia Business Leader Survey series captures the perspectives and sentiments of **169 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 169 CEOs, corporate executives, and business owners with operations in Northern Virginia. A coalition of 10 business organizations participated in this survey, including:

Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC)
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce
Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

Falls Church Chamber of Commerce
Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce
Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber
Prince William County Chamber of Commerce

- Northern Virginia is the economic engine for 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

36%

Regional Optimism Declines

36% of business leaders believe the Northern Virginia economy will grow over the next 6 months, down from 40% in the Q2 survey. 22% believe it will decline, the same as last quarter. 47% of business leaders are pessimistic about the national economy (up from 38% last quarter), and only 34% were optimistic about the national economy.

53%

Data Center Support

53% of business leaders believe that data centers have a positive impact on Northern Virginia's economy, while 34% believe they have a negative impact. 13% have no opinion.

66%

Business Sentiment Dipping

66% of business leaders are optimistic about their company outlook, which is down from 77% in the Q2 survey. 14% are pessimistic, which is slightly up from 11% in the Q2 survey.

49%

President Trump's Foreign Policy Impact

Nearly half (49%) of business leaders say their companies are being negatively impacted by President Trump's foreign policy decisions.

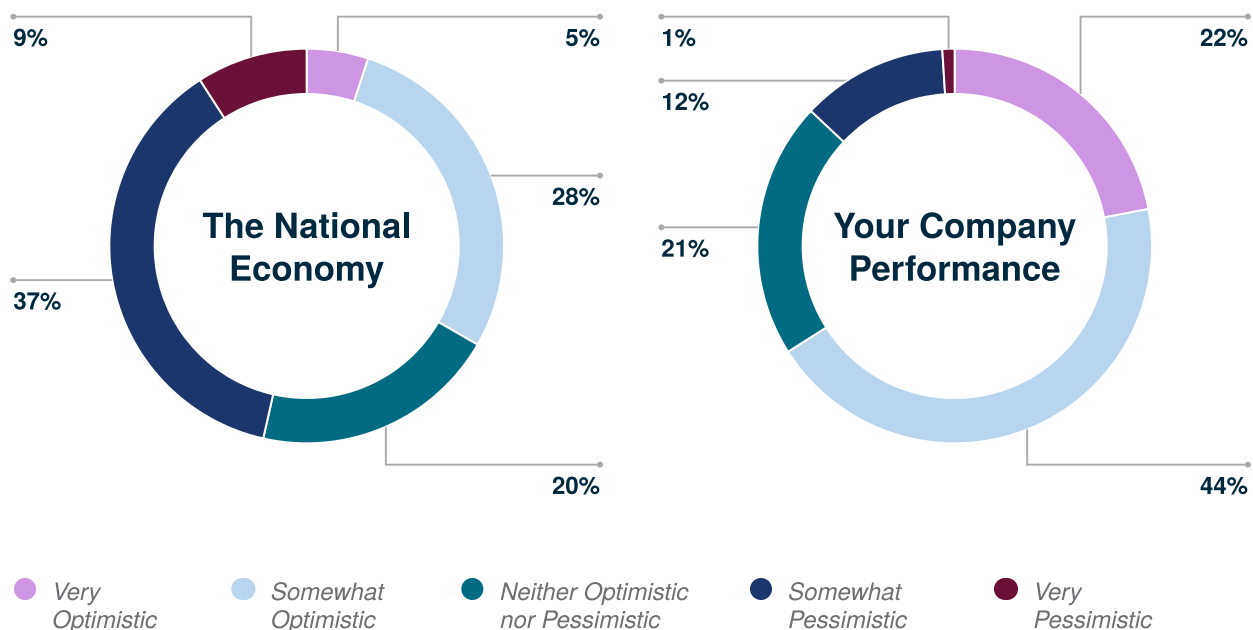
33%

Top Policy Issues for the 2027 General Assembly Session

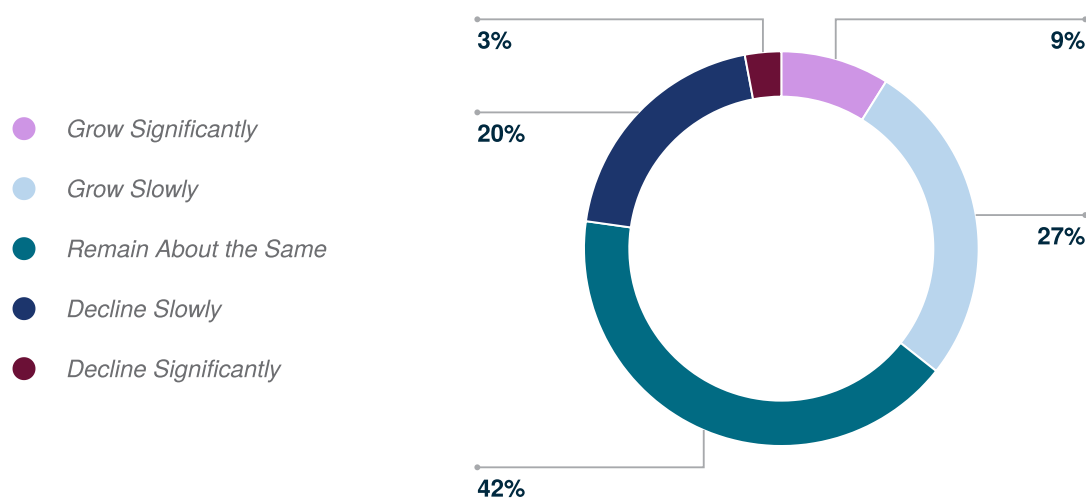
When asked about their top policy priorities for the 2027 General Assembly session, 33% of business leaders cited housing affordability, 27% cited reduced taxes, 16% cited AI regulation, data center regulation and taxes, and keeping right-to-work, 15% cited transportation and infrastructure investments, and 10% cited childcare affordability and availability.

Survey Questions & Answers.

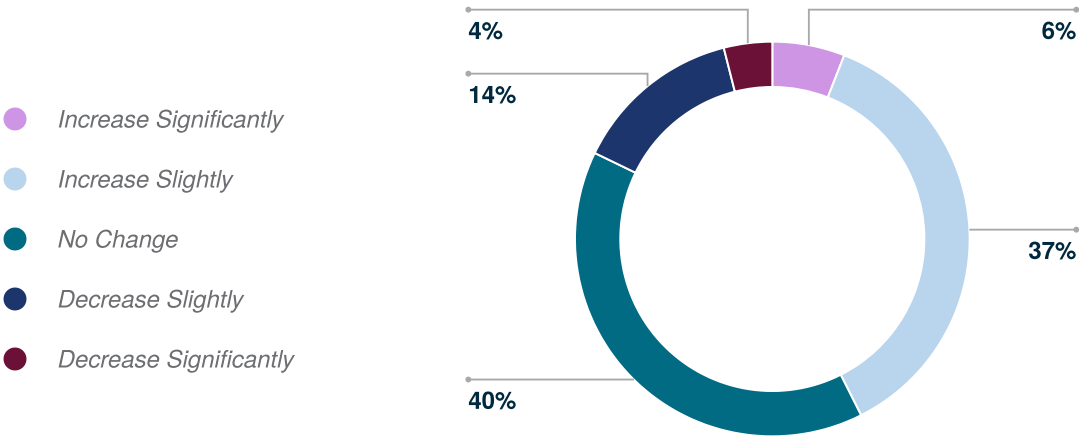
1 What is your company's outlook over the **next six months**?



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

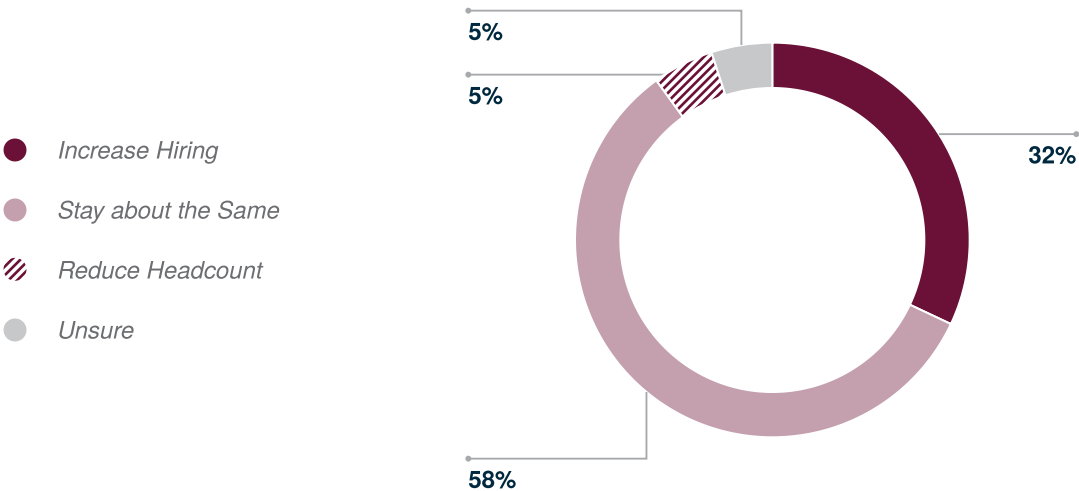


3 How do you expect your company's capital spending to change in the **next six months**?

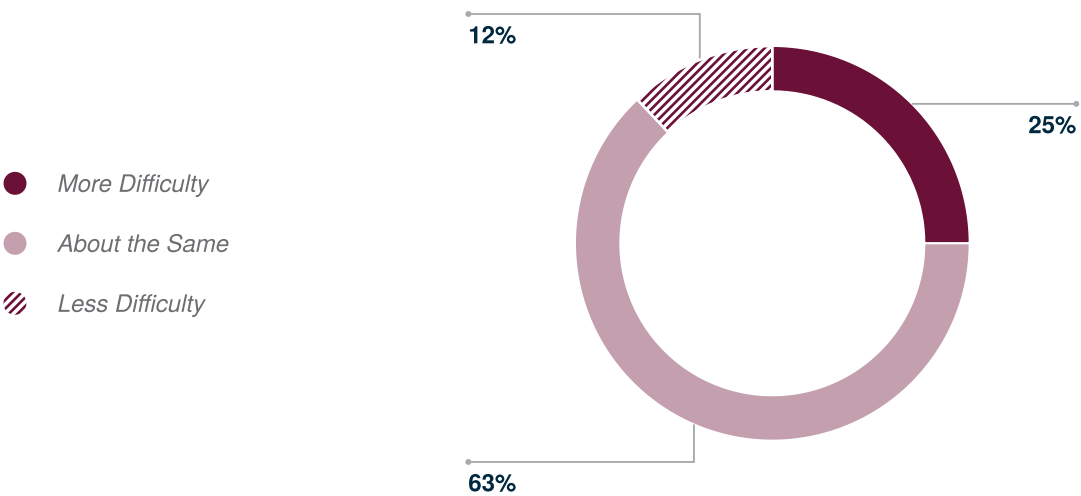


Hiring Projections

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

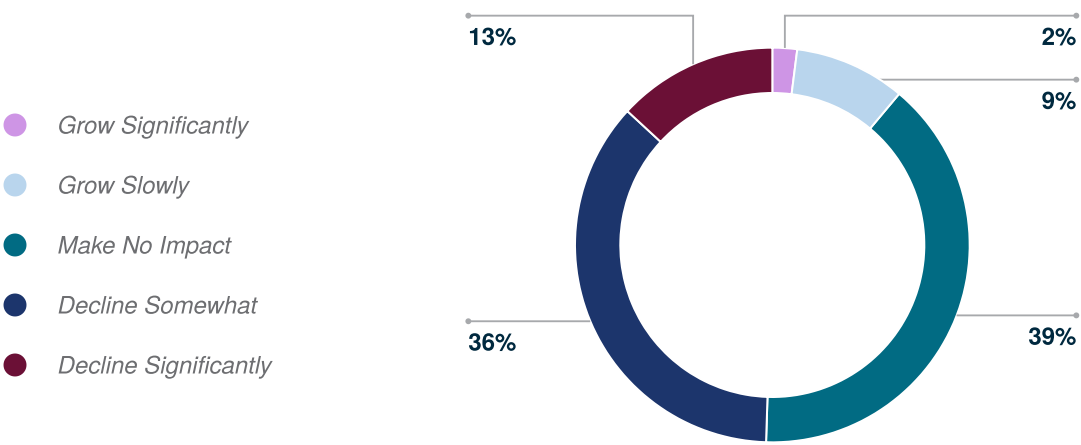


5 Compared to a year ago, are you experiencing more or less difficulty in finding qualified **talent to hire**?



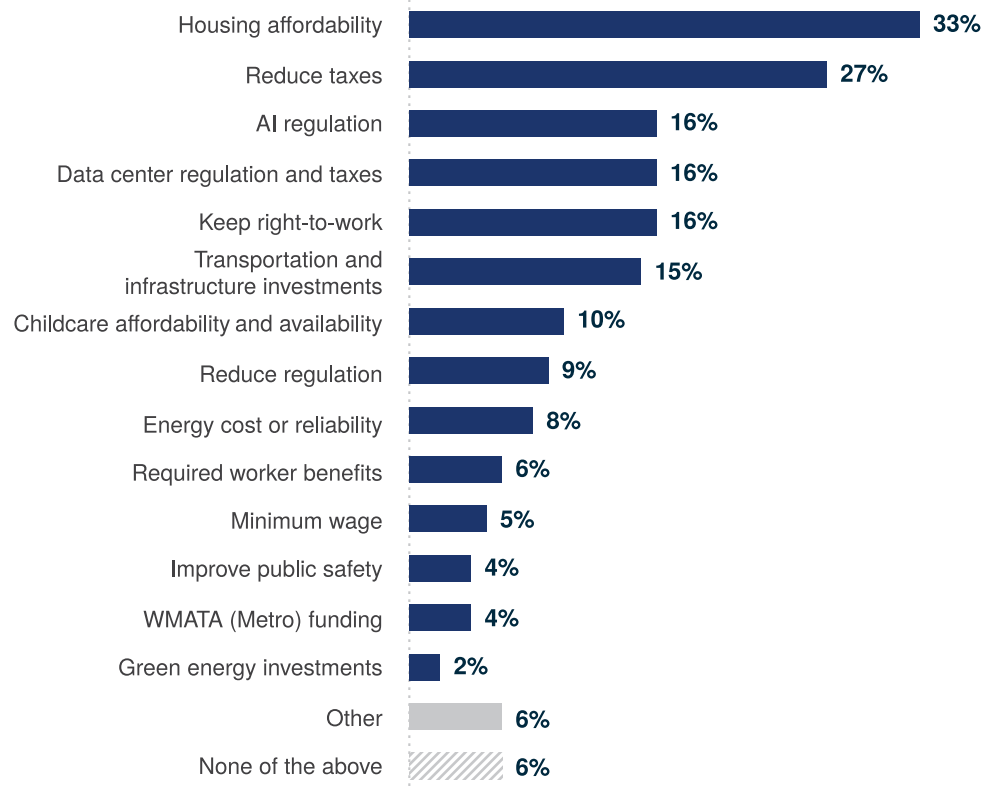
Federal, State and Local Government Impact

6 How is the president’s foreign policy (e.g. war in Iran, tariffs, and trade) impacting your company? Is it causing your company to...

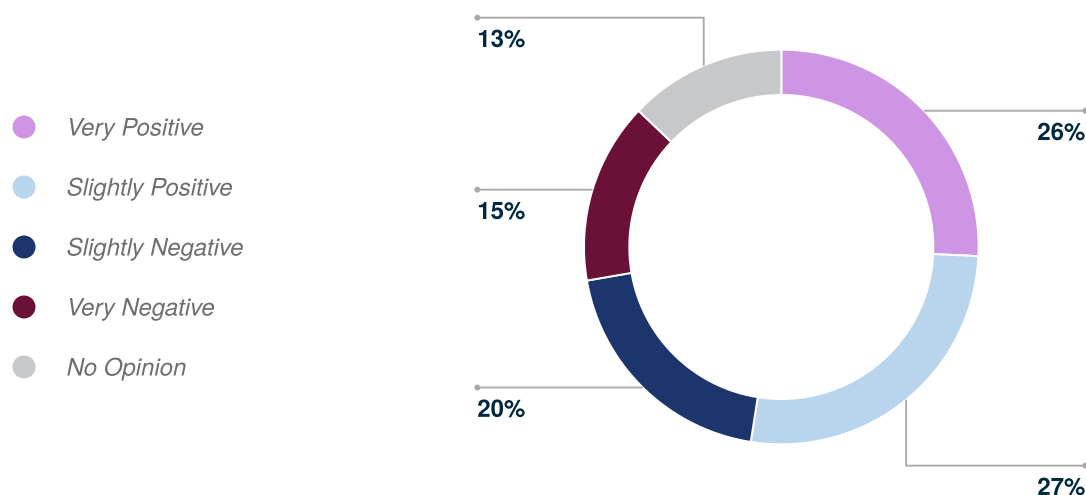


Survey Questions & Answers.

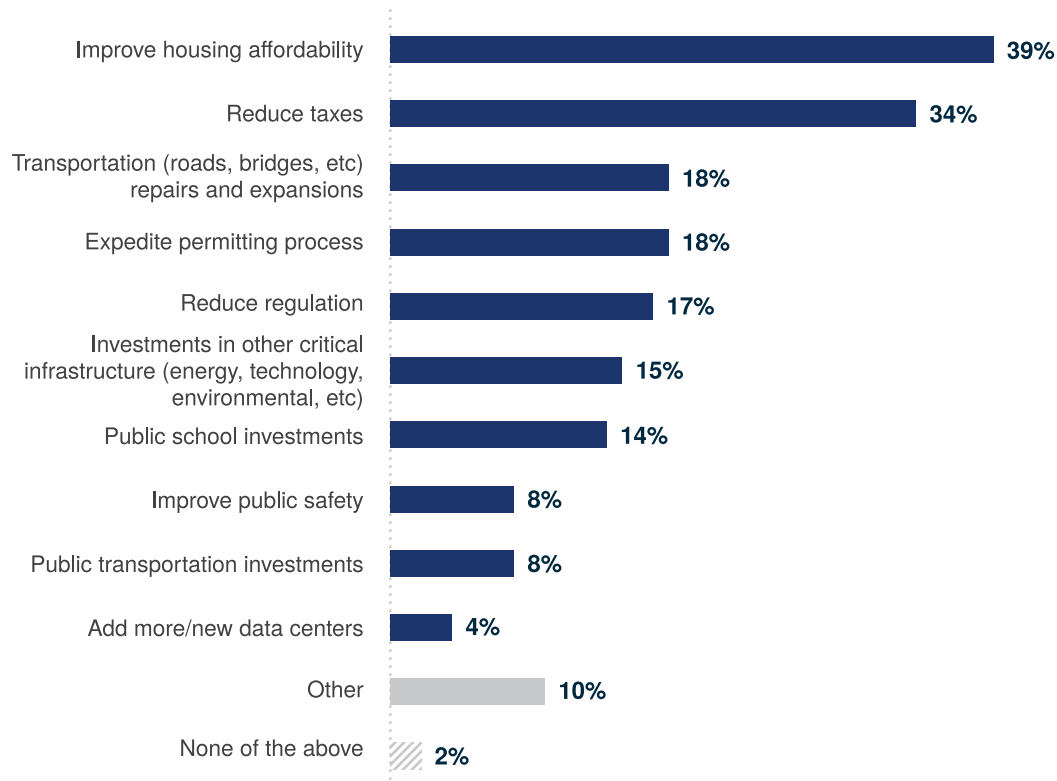
7 What are your top policy priorities for the upcoming General Assembly session in January? (Select up to 2)



8 How do you view the impact of **data centers** on the Northern Virginia economy?



9 What are your top policy priorities for your local government? *(Select up to 2)*



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 September 21-28, 2026, the survey consists of questions and responses from **169 business leaders** that explore economic outlook, business sentiment, policy priorities, hiring plans, and opinions on state and local legislation. A coalition of 10 chambers of commerce participated in this survey, including:

Northern Virginia Chamber (NVC)
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
Arlington Chamber of Commerce
Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce
Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

Falls Church Chamber of Commerce
Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce
Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber
Prince William County Chamber of Commerce

- Companies with 1-49 employees represented **70%** of respondents; companies with 50-99 represented **5%** of respondents; companies with 100-499 represented **12%**; and companies with 500 or more represented **13%**.
- Company locations included **37%** in Fairfax County or the City of Fairfax, **8%** in Prince William County or the City of Manassas, **20%** in Alexandria, **11%** in Arlington County, **15%** in Loudoun County, **3%** in Falls Church, and **6%** in other NOVA locations.
- **13%** of respondents represented companies with \$100 million or more in annual revenue; **18%** represented companies with \$10-\$100 million in annual revenue; **63%** represented companies with less than \$10 million in revenue; and **6%** of respondents declined to say.



Contacts



Julie Coons

President and CEO, NVC

E: jcoons@nvcbusiness.org



D.J. Jordan

SVP, Pinkston

E: dj.jordan@pinkston.co



Alexis Reed

Vice President, Marketing
and Communications, NVC

E: areed@nvcbusiness.org



Brooke Hempell

SVP of Research, Pinkston

E: brooke.hempell@pinkston.co

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 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



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



[View all past reports](#) →

Pinkston.