

BUSINESS RESILIENCY SURVEY RESULTS

The survey was developed by the City of St. Albert and the St. Albert and District Chamber of Commerce. This survey was conducted to better understand the current dynamics within the business community. It was delivered from February 9 until February 15, 2021, and garnered 166 respondents.

The following is a summary of the data collected in the survey.

1) Which of the following best describes the industry your business operates in?

Accommodation and food services	7
Administrative and support, waste	2
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	13
Construction	15
Educational services	12
Finance and insurance	8
Health care and social assistance	21
Information and cultural industries	2
Management of companies and enterprises	2
Manufacturing	3
Other (please specify)	11
Other services (except public administration)	26
Professional, scientific and technical services	17
Real estate and rental and leasing	5
Retail trade	18
Wholesale trade	3
Grand Total	166

2) Are you a home-based business or bricks and mortar?

- 38% Home based
- 13% Own location
- 49% Rent location

Question 3 – 4: Employment comparison chart:

- 3) How many employees does your business currently have? (January 2021) Full time:
How many employees does your business currently have? (January 2021) Part time:

- 4) How many employees did your business have in January 2020? Full time:
How many employees did your business have in January 2020? Part time:

Number of Employees – January 2021 vs 2020

	Jan. 2021 Full Time	Jan. 2020 Full Time	Difference	Jan. 2021 Part Time	Jan. 2020 Part Time	Difference
Home Based	70	72	(2)	35	36	(1)
Bricks and Mortar	437	522	(85)	248	679	(431)
Total	507	594	(87)	283	715	(432)

- 5) How did COVID-19 impact your business revenue in 2020?
(Estimated impact as a percentage change in revenue compared to 2019)

REVENUE STATUS	%
It increased	8%
It decreased less than 25%	14%
It decreased between 25 - 49%	26%
It decreased 50 - 74%	13%
It decreased 75% or more	17%
My business is less than two years old, and suffered significant revenue	6%
My business is less than two years old, and did not suffer significant	4%
No impact or change	12%

HIGHLIGHTS

69 % of respondents have accessed at least one government support program.

49 % of respondents said that the government support programs have assisted in the sustainability for their business

- 6) What government support programs have you accessed? (Select all that apply)

PROGRAM	#
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)	33%
Canada Emergency Business Account	31%
Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)	27%
Alberta SME Relaunch Grant	16%
Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA)	14%
Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy	14%

Other (please specify)	14%
Workers' Compensation Board premium payment deferral	14
Property tax deferrals	8%
Regional Relief and Recovery Funds	3%
Business Credit Availability Program	2%
Utility payment deferrals	2%
Income Tax deferral	1%
Highly Affected Sectors Credit Availability Program	0
Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility	0
Tourism levy deferral	0

7) Have available government support programs assisted in sustainability for your business?

No: 84

Yes: 80

8) What are your business priorities in 2021? (Select up to five)

SUPPORT PROGRAM	%
Increasing marketing / promotional activities to increase customer awareness	49%
Increasing the online presence / activity of your business	47%
Finding and applying to current provincial and federal government funding programs	25%
Implementing new technologies/systems to automate or improve processes	23%
Forming local partnerships / buying local	20%
Obtaining a better understanding of current provincial and federal government funding programs	16%
Attracting new employees	14%
None of the above	14%
Receiving or providing external training or professional development opportunities for your staff (example digital skills)	12%
Other (please specify)	11%
Expanding my business (to a larger location or adding another location)	10%
Undertaking research and development activities	9%
Obtaining a better understanding of current government mandated COVID-19 rules	8%
Offering co-op, internship, apprenticeship and/or work placements	8%
Increasing environmental protection (or "Green") activities in your business	5%

Increasing equity / diversity / inclusion (or EDI) practices in your business (hiring, staff training, client relations, etc.)	4%
Winding down or transitioning business to a new owner	4%
Increasing diversity among employees (sex/gender, Indigenous, Black, people of colour, newcomers, differently abled, etc.)	4%
Finding local COVID-19 related suppliers and services providers	3%
Pursuing international export opportunities	2%

Question 9 – 10: Support services and programs

The following open-ended questions yielded a variety of responses and opinions. Administration grouped the responses for additional support programs by theme.

9) What additional support programs do you feel would benefit your business?

10) If your company requires any goods or services in the short term (next 90 days) that would help in your efforts to maintain your business, please identify them below.

A) Marketing/Online support

promotion of businesses; grants to expand online business; marketing online to raise awareness to support local businesses; profiling businesses online; produce business or industry spotlight videos; lower cost advertising/free advertising; marketing and advertising assistance; promote all local small businesses; City should support a campaign to eat out in St. Albert; list of businesses in St. Albert; online forum to connect businesses; City marketing campaign to buy and eat local; educating customers to support local businesses; assistance with Shopify

B) Financial support

Rent subsidy; utilities/tax relief; wage subsidies; waive/reduce business license fees

C) Support for new businesses who aren't eligible for Gov't grants

11) Do you have any suggestions or feedback to provide to the City of St. Albert on what is needed to support mid- to long-term business resiliency in addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic?

This open-ended question provided a variety of responses — unfortunately, some of the feedback related to issues beyond the scope of municipal government. Administration sorted the responses into general themes, with the most prominent being requests for support in the areas of marketing, finances and improving community connections.