



Strong Businesses Build Healthy Communities

BUSINESS VITALITY SURVEY April 27 – May 27, 2020



Village of Rockyford



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Futures Wild Rose conducted a survey to assess the current business climate throughout the CF Wild Rose Region and West boundaries of Rocky View County to gain further understanding of businesses as a result of COVID-19 to develop an action plan to support businesses through the recovery process. This will be achieved through an electronic survey beginning April 27, 2020 to acquire baseline data and subsequent quarterly surveys throughout the next 12 months to monitor and assess the business environment. The results of the surveys will allow Project and Industry Partners to create proactive solutions while strengthening existing businesses to overcome challenges and identify opportunities.

Community Futures Wild Rose partnered with Community Futures Centre West to assist in the collection of information for the Western communities within the Rocky View County geographic region. The surveys were implemented throughout Balzac, Bassano, Beiseker, Bragg Creek, Chestermere, Crossfield, Hussar, Irricana, Rockyford, Rocky View County, Standard, Strathmore and Wheatland County between April 27 to May 9, 2020.

The survey was promoted through organic and boosted posts throughout the Community Future's regions. CF Wild Rose received 8,717 post engagements, reached 8,564 people and 114 link clicks. There are no outcomes reported from the municipalities and partners as to their reach as a result of organic and boosted posts. Bragg Creek, Strathmore, Three Hills and Langdon Chambers promoted the survey on their social media as did the municipalities and was posted to various Business Groups and hosted on Community Futures websites.

Wheatland County distributed a printed post card to Wheatland County businesses to promote awareness of the survey and where to find it. Other municipalities distributed a communication through their utility bills and business license lists to provide information on the survey.

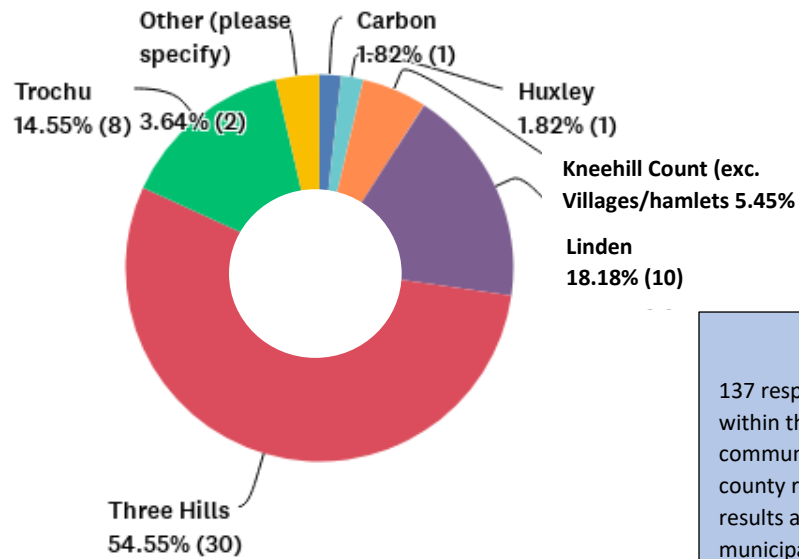
OUTCOMES

Response Rate: Rocky View and Wheatland County Regional Survey obtained 82 responses between April 26 – May 9, 2020 and the Kneehill & Regional Community Survey obtained 55 Responses between May 12 – 26, 2020. Those who entered the survey, completed the survey which resulted in 100% completion rate and took approximately 13 mins to complete.

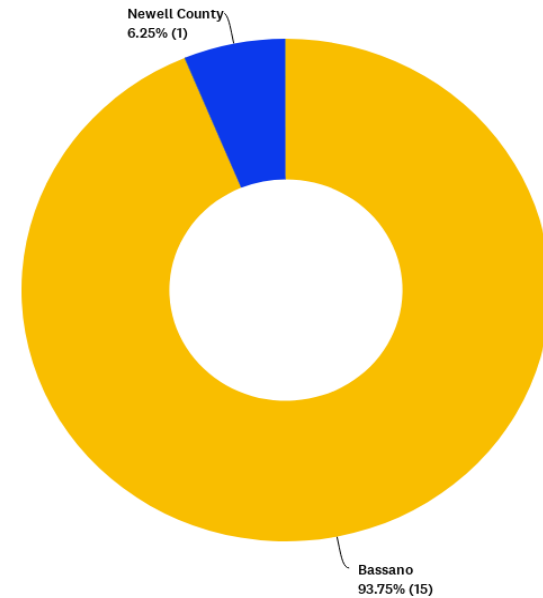
Attached you will find the response breakdowns, key findings and potential opportunities for the region to consider to address the challenges currently faced by businesses within the region. Economic Development, various levels of Government and service/support organizations will develop an action plan and strategies to address areas such as training, succession planning, labour market profiles and gaps, potential focus groups and begin the development and implementation of a second survey to track the progression and health of businesses. The key priorities and strategic actions will be gathered in the coming weeks and as developed and collaborated amongst the various stakeholders.

IN WHAT COMMUNITY IS YOUR BUSINESS LOCATED?

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

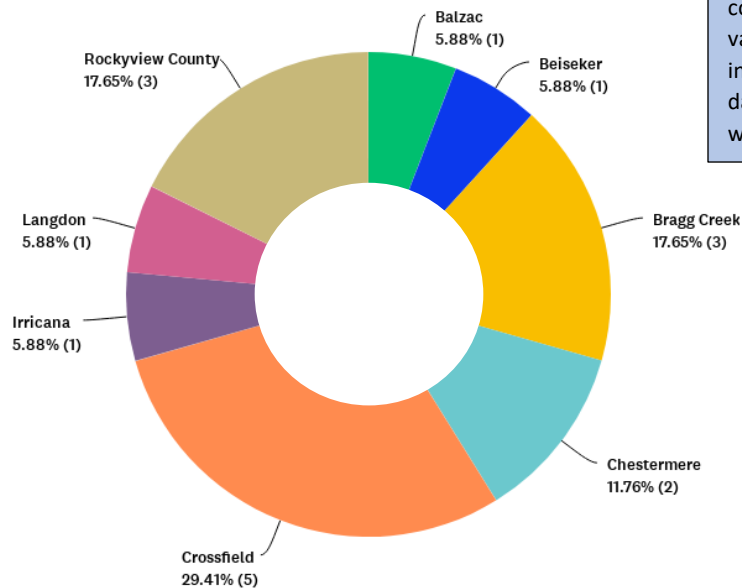


Findings

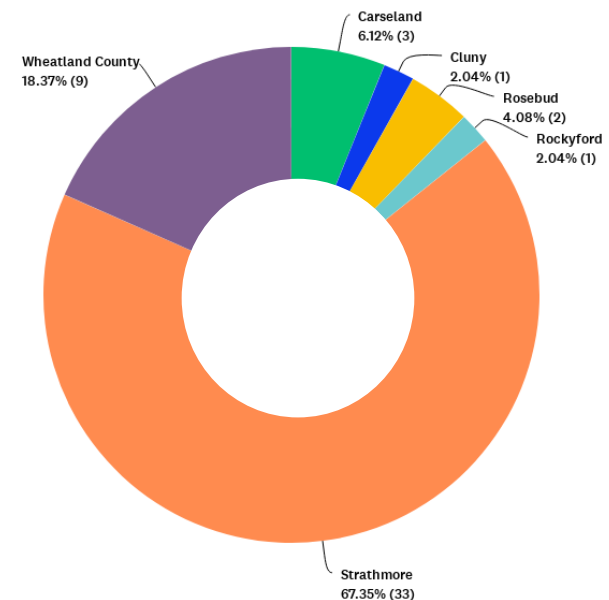
137 responses, majority within the larger communities within the county regions. Response results aligned across all municipalities regardless of response rate.

Overall, stakeholders concluded the data to be valid and representative in comparison to other data and observations within their municipality.

Rocky View County Region

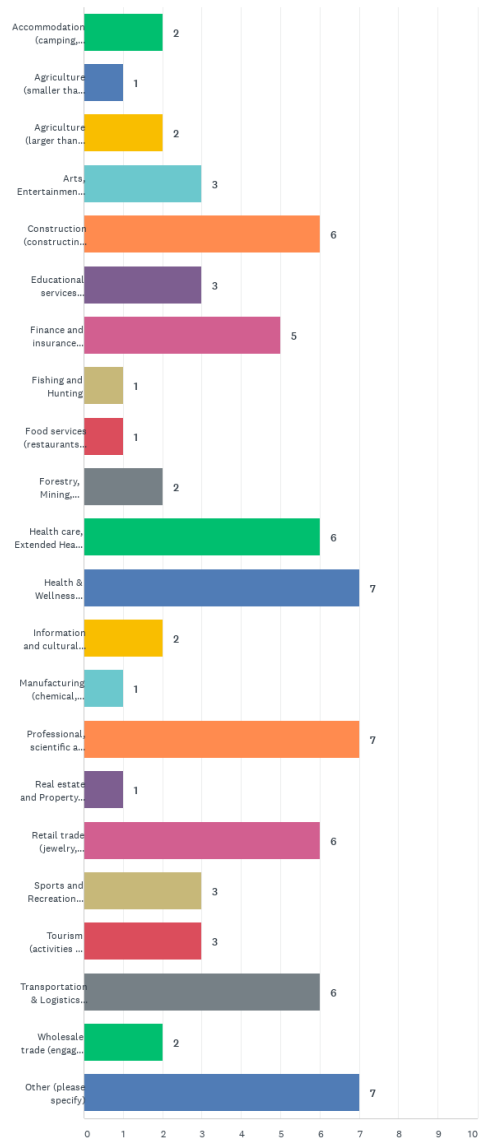


Wheatland County Region

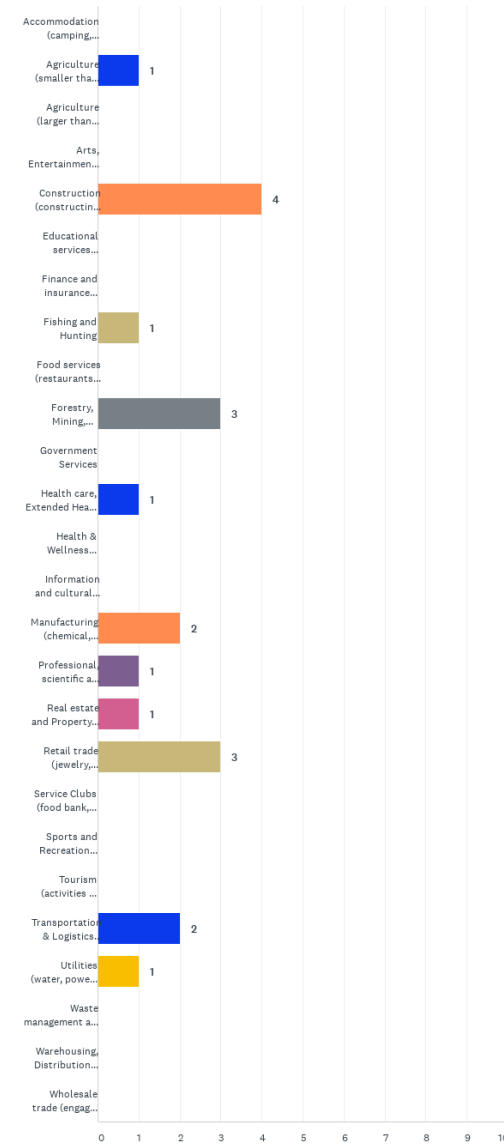


Please select the business sector (check all that apply)

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

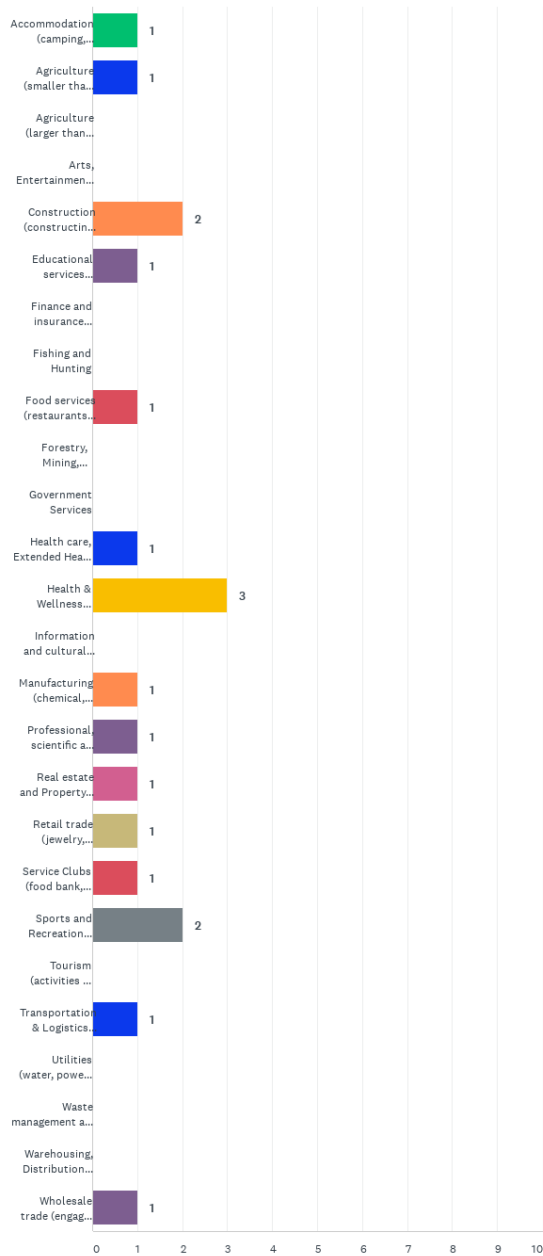


Findings

Majority of responses were obtained from construction, professional and scientific, financial and insurance and health and wellness sectors.

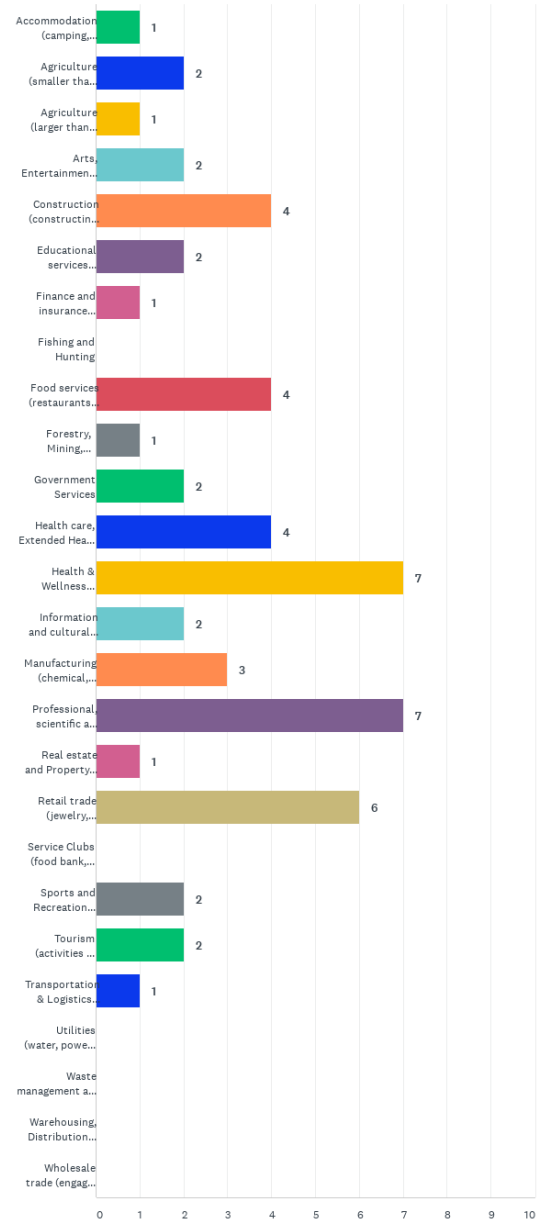
Rocky View County Region

Q2 Please select the business sector in which are classified. (check all that apply)



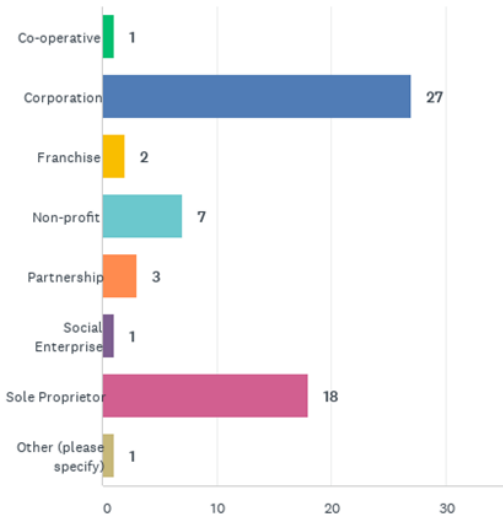
Wheatland County Region

Q2 Please select the business sector in which are classified. (check all that apply)

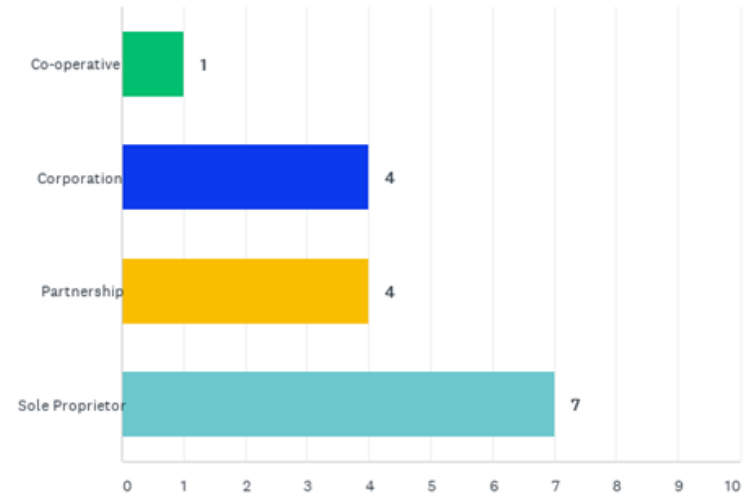


What is your business structure?

Kneehill County Region



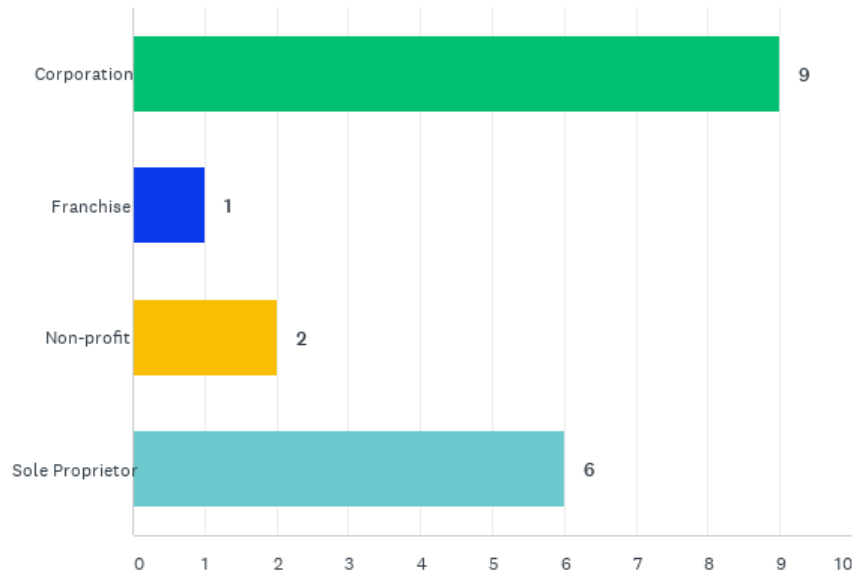
Newell County Region



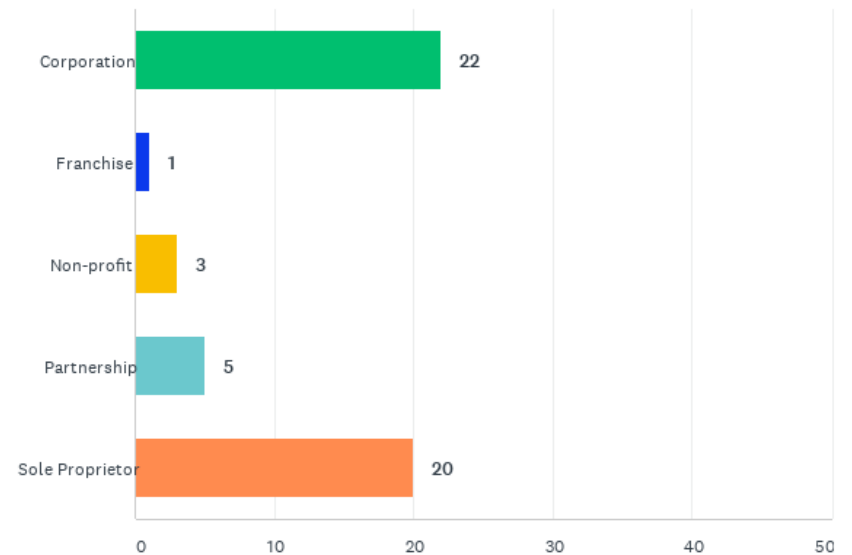
Findings

Majority of businesses are Sole Proprietorships and Corporations.

Rocky View County Region

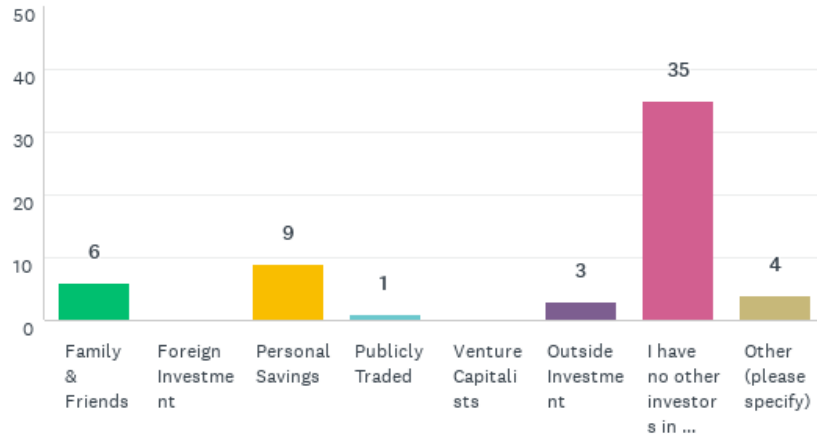


Wheatland County Region

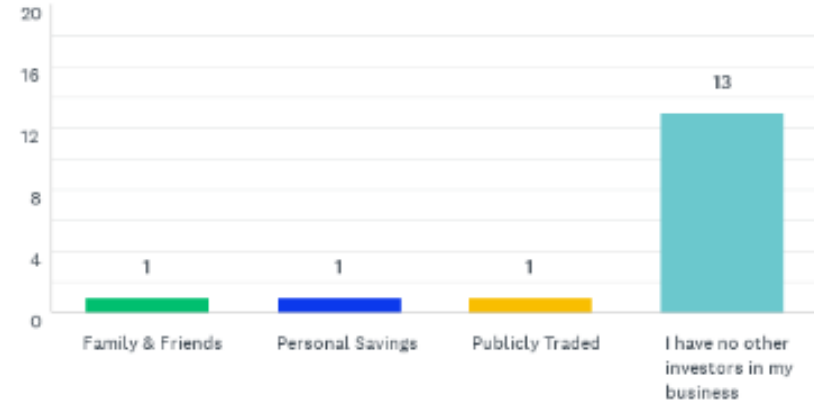


Please select any outside investment within your business?

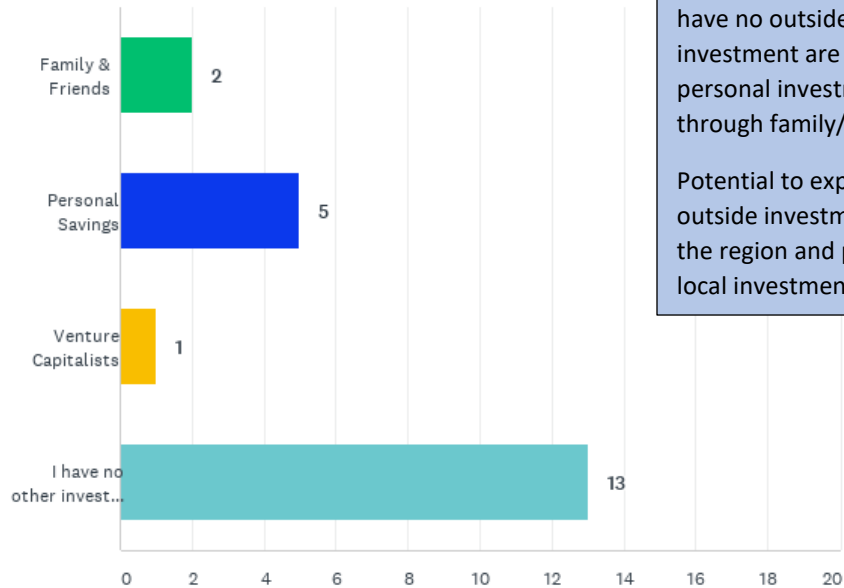
Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region

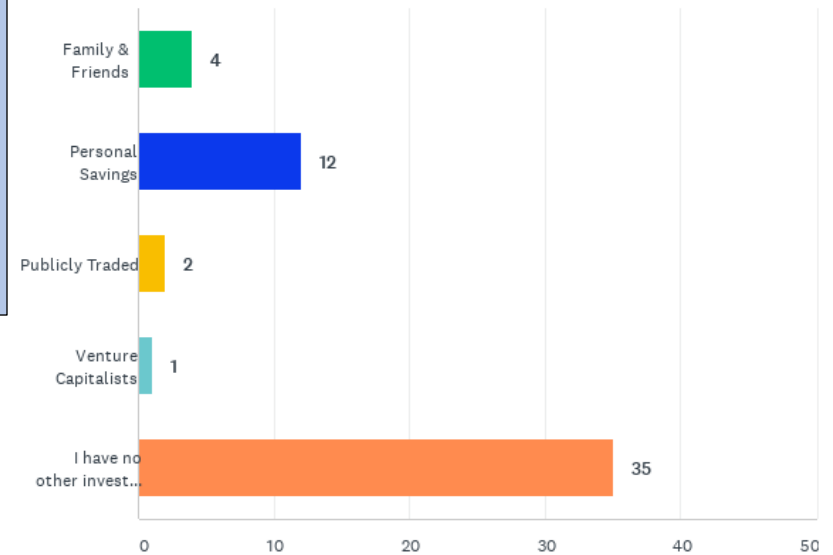


Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses have no outside investment are primarily personal investment and through family/friends.

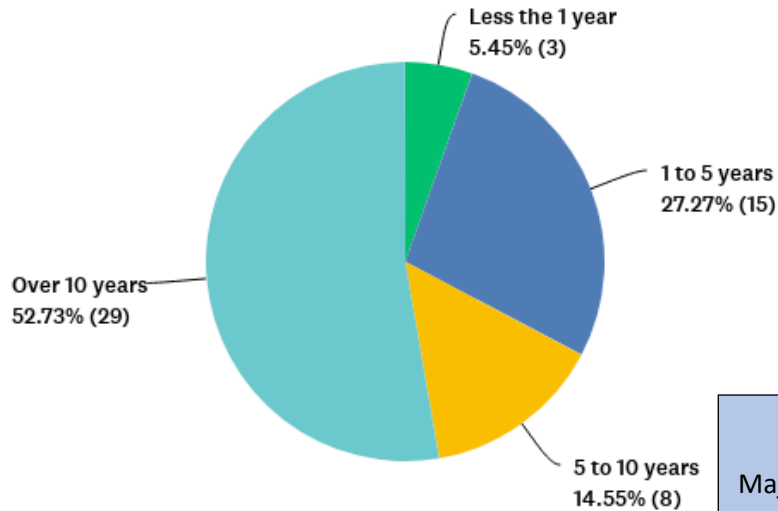
Potential to explore outside investment into the region and potential local investment.

Wheatland County Region

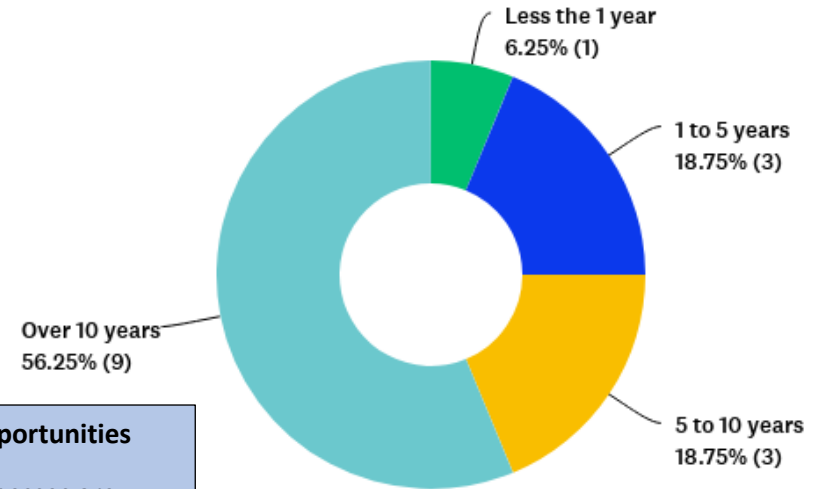


How many years have you been in operation?

Kneehill County Region



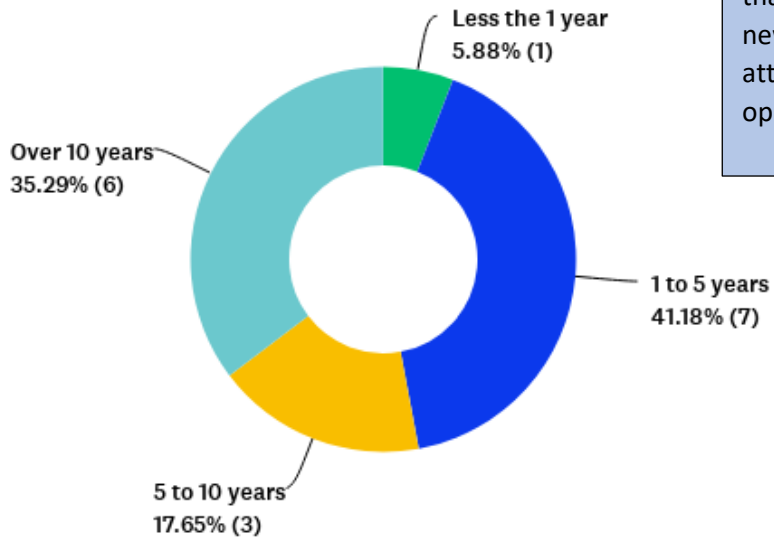
Newell County Region



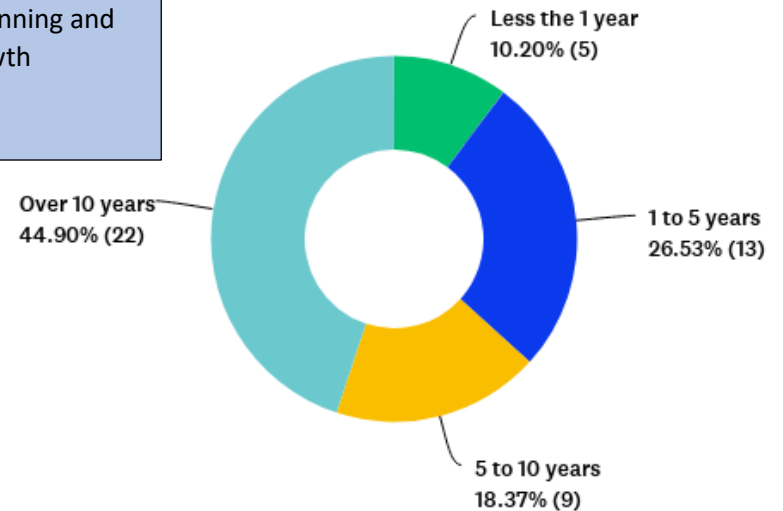
Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses are over 10 years in operation and approximately 30% in are 1 - 5 years and the remaining less than 1 year. Potential focus on new succession planning and attraction and growth opportunities.

Rocky View County Region

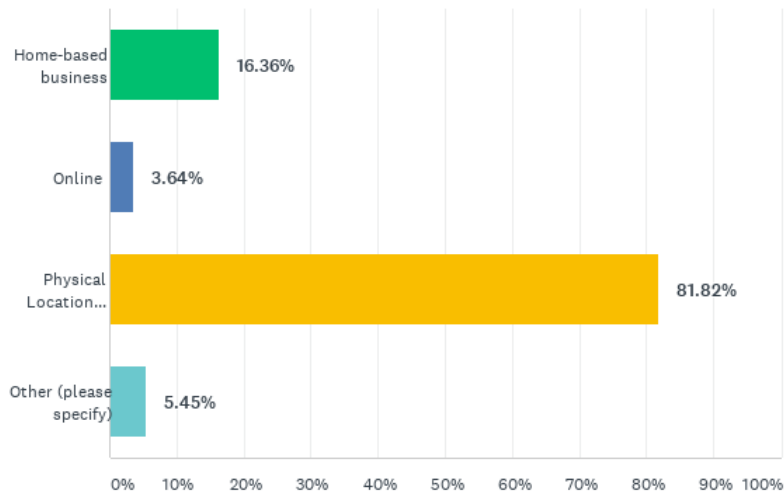


Wheatland County Region

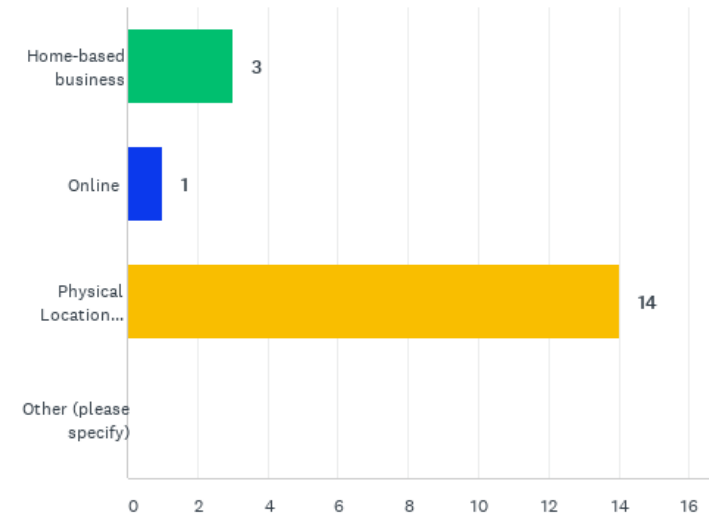


Where does your business operate?

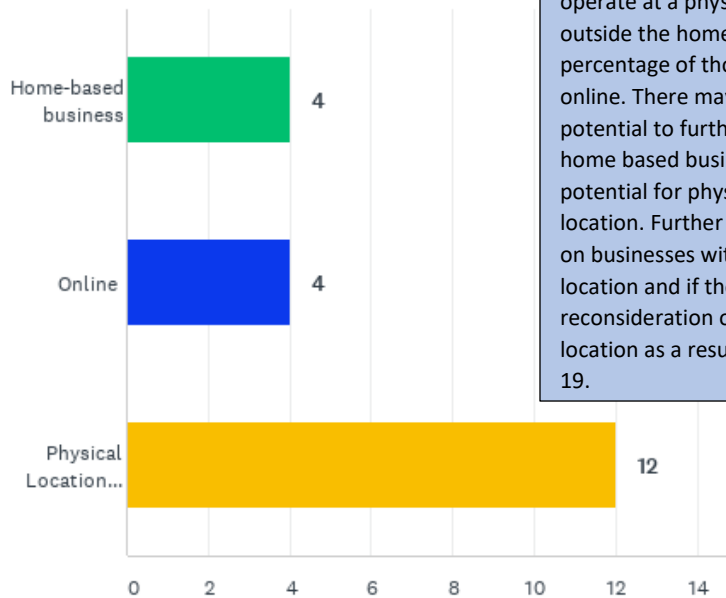
Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region



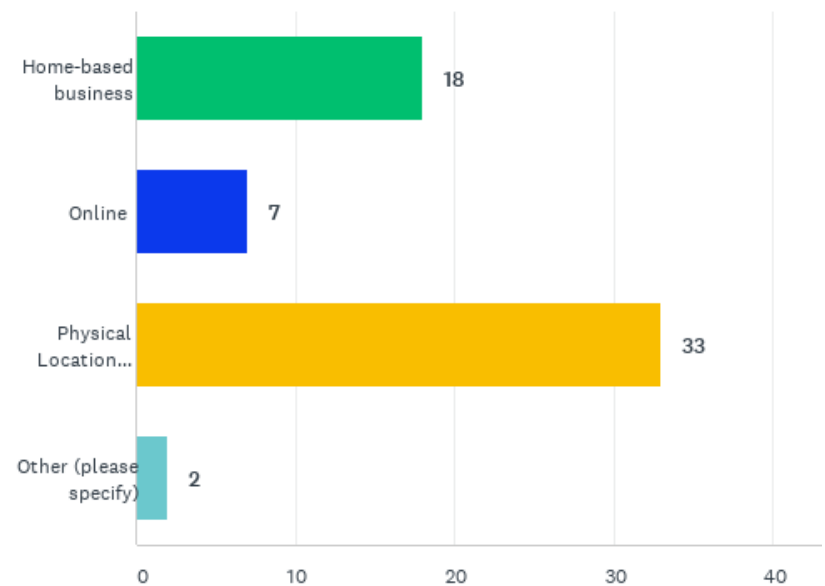
Rocky View County Region



Findings/Opportunities

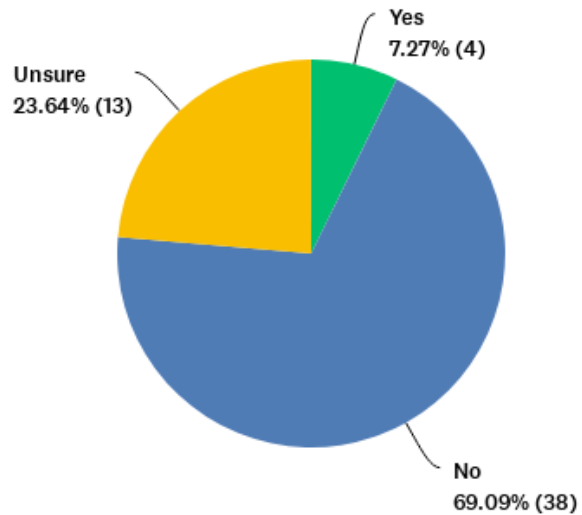
Majority of businesses operate at a physical location outside the home and small percentage of those operate online. There may be potential to further examine home based businesses and potential for physical location. Further examination on businesses with a physical location and if there will be reconsideration on operating location as a result to COVID-19.

Wheatland County Region

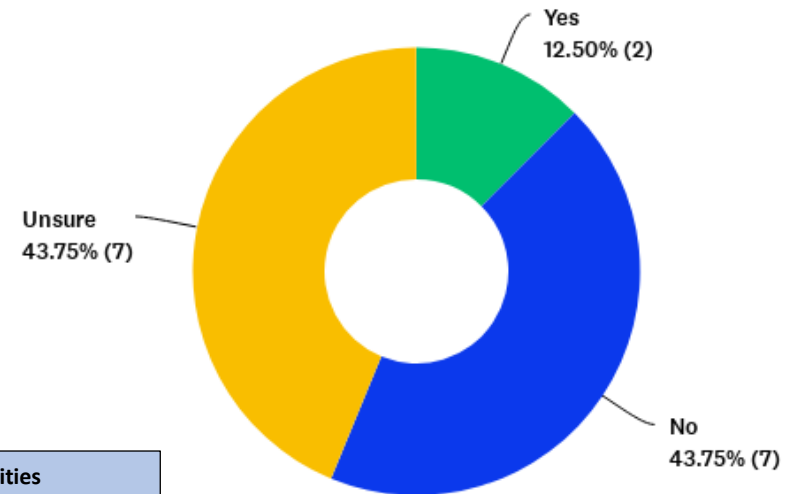


If you are NOT selling online, do you plan to sell online in upcoming 12 months?

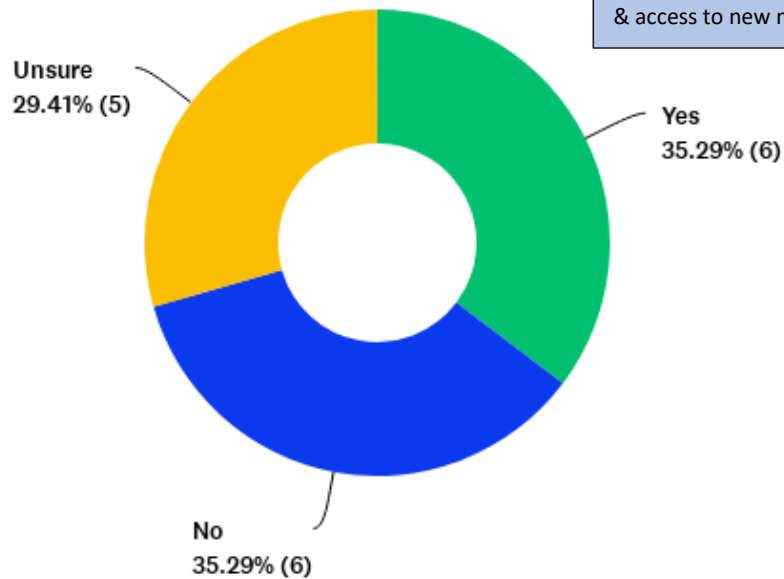
Kneehill County Region



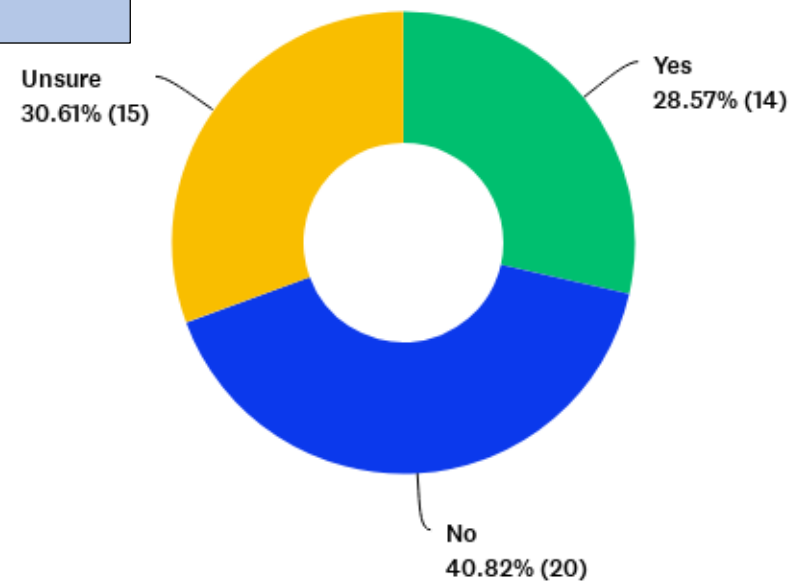
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region



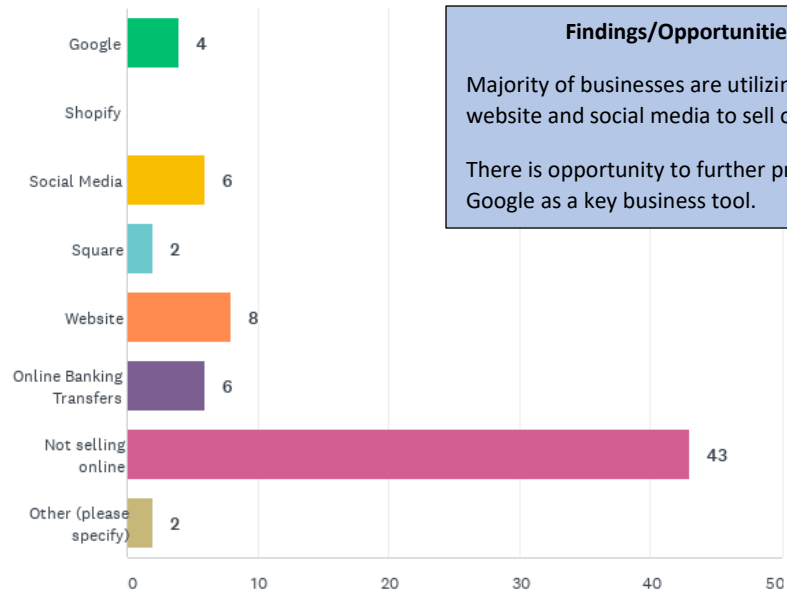
Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses do not plan on selling online in the next 12 months

Opportunity to explore options for e-commerce education and online presence & access to new markets.

If you sell online, which platforms do you use (select all that apply)

Kneehill County Region

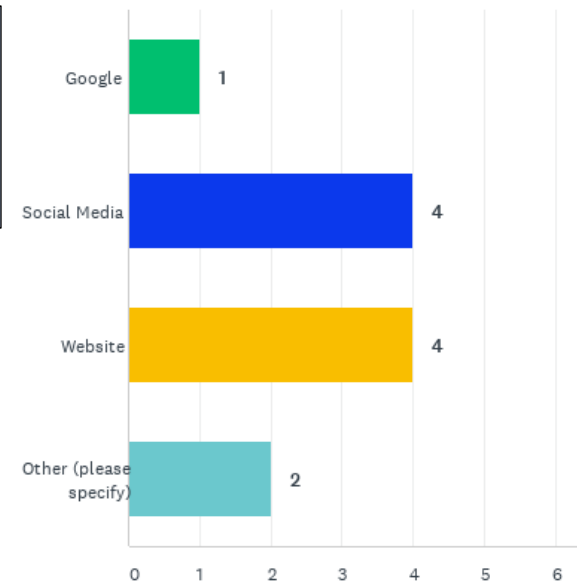


Findings/Opportunities

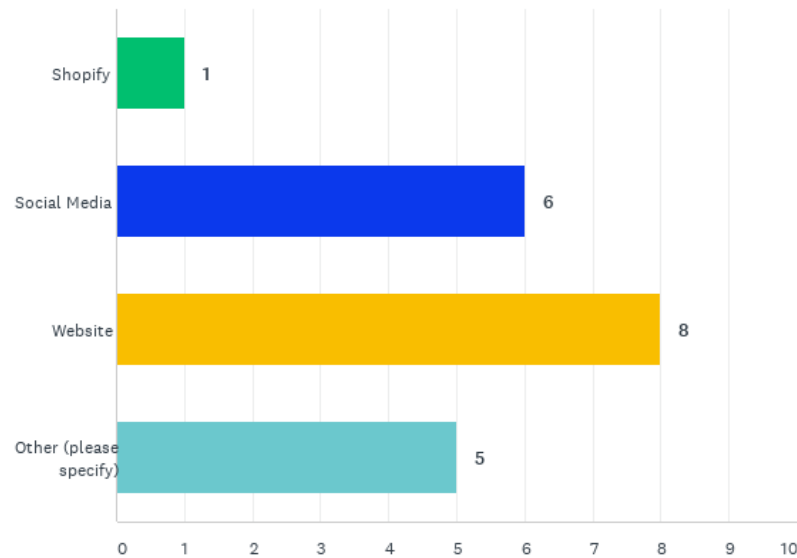
Majority of businesses are utilizing their website and social media to sell online.

There is opportunity to further promote Google as a key business tool.

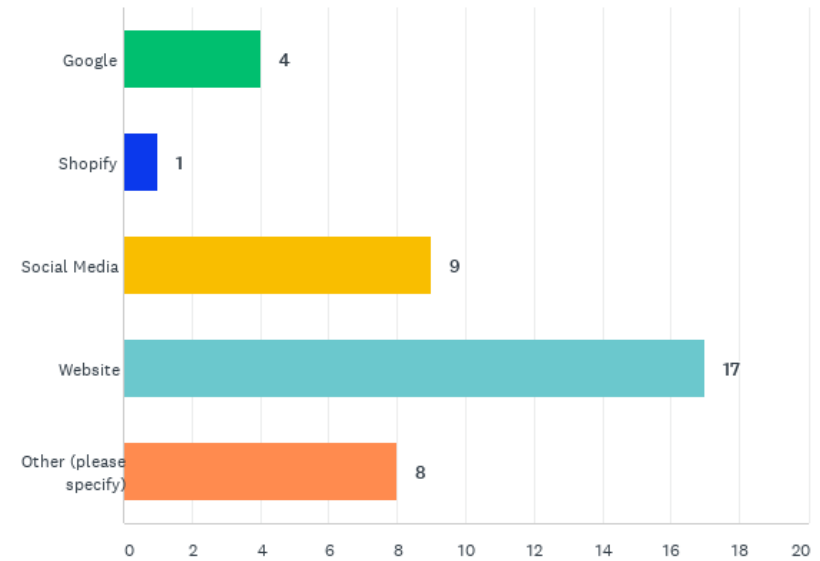
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region

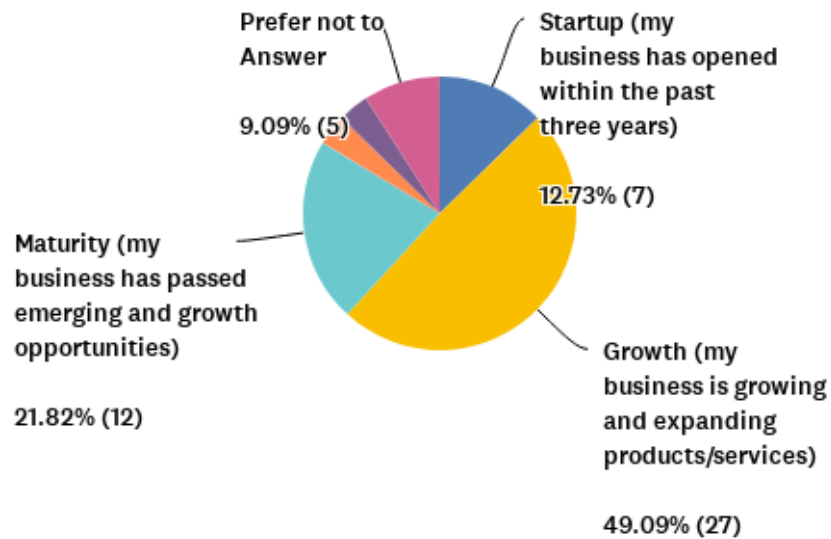


Wheatland County Region

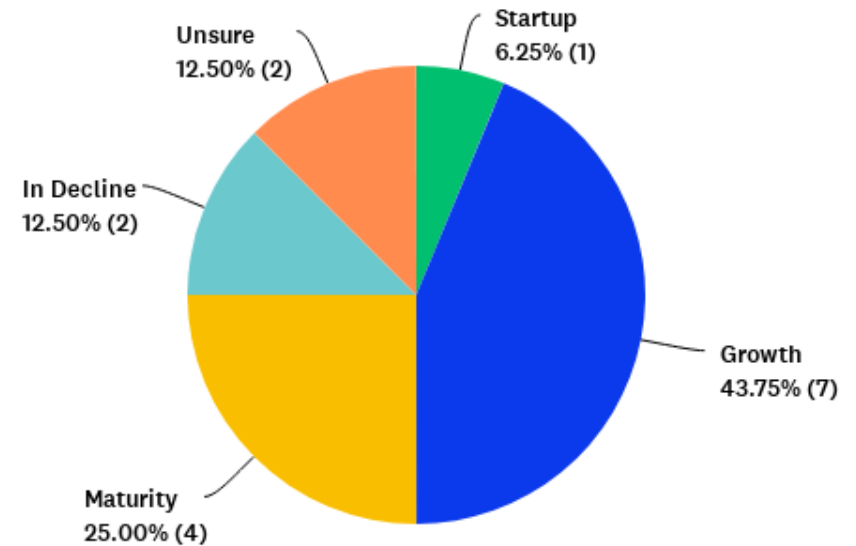


What stage of the business life cycle is your business in prior to COVID-19?

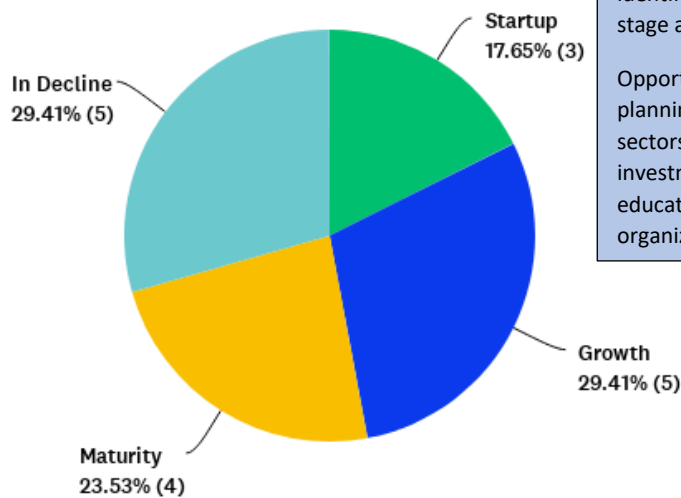
Kneehill County Region



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Rocky View County Region

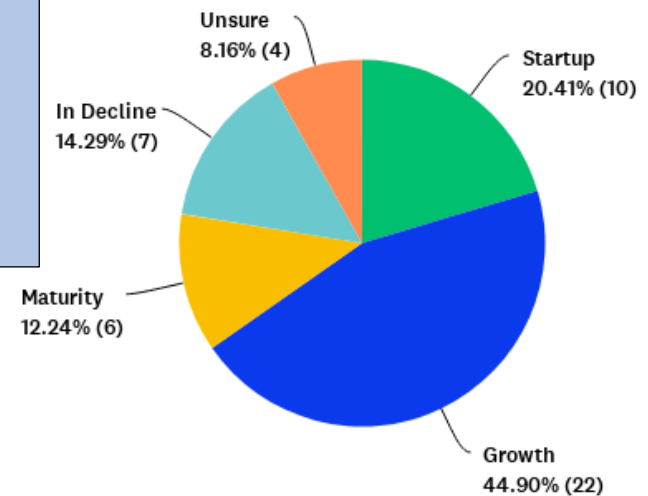


Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses have identified to being in the growth stage and maturity/decline phase.

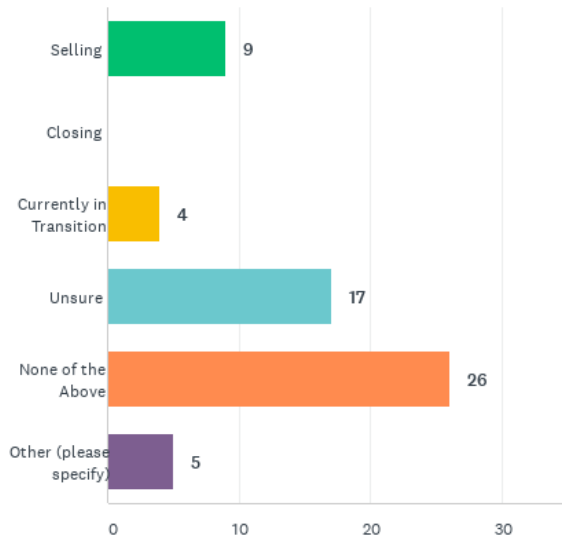
Opportunities for succession planning/matching, identify key sectors to target growth, investment attraction, and education to support start-up organizations.

Wheatland County Region

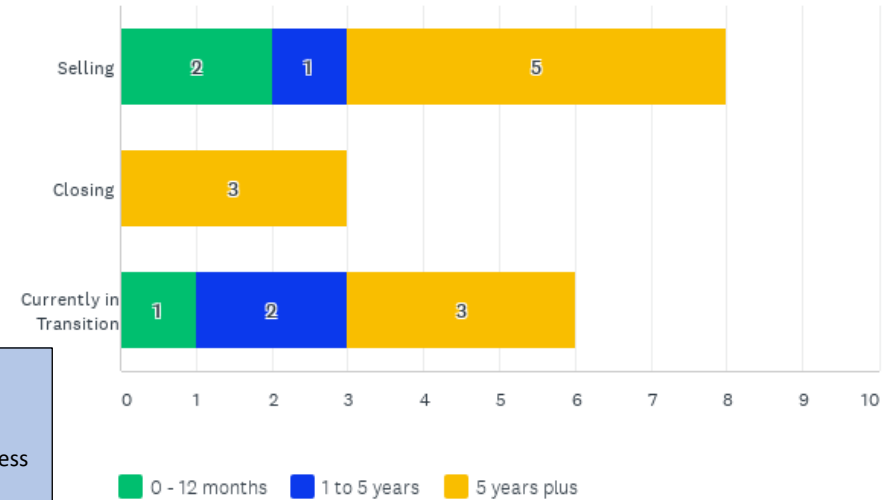


Please select the following options that apply to the succession planning and preparedness for your business. Please select all that apply.

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

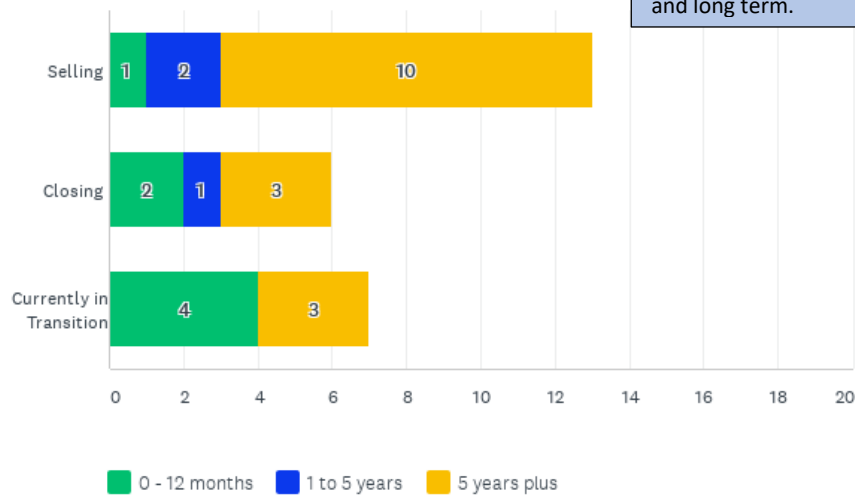


Findings/Opportunities

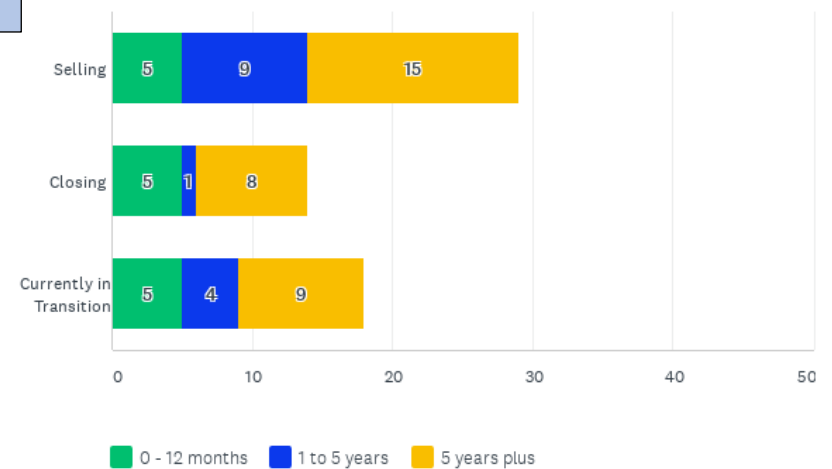
Majority of businesses are considering selling their business in 5 years plus. There are currently some in the process of selling/closing or in transition.

Opportunities surrounding investment attraction and succession planning in the short and long term.

Rocky View County Region

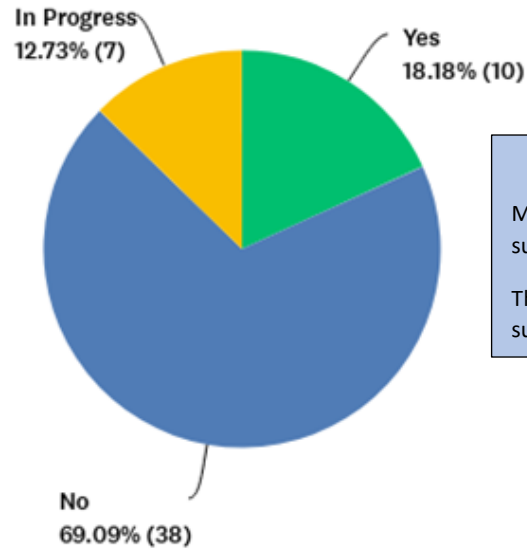


Wheatland County Region

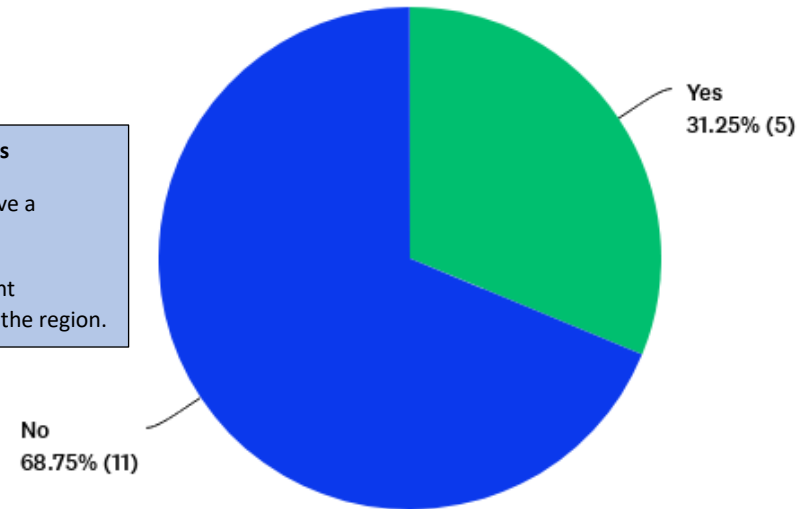


Do you have a Business Transition or Succession Plan in place?

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

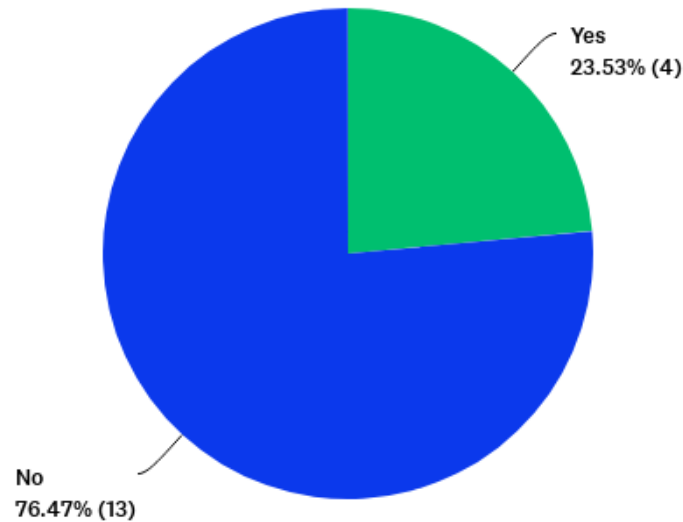


Findings/Opportunities

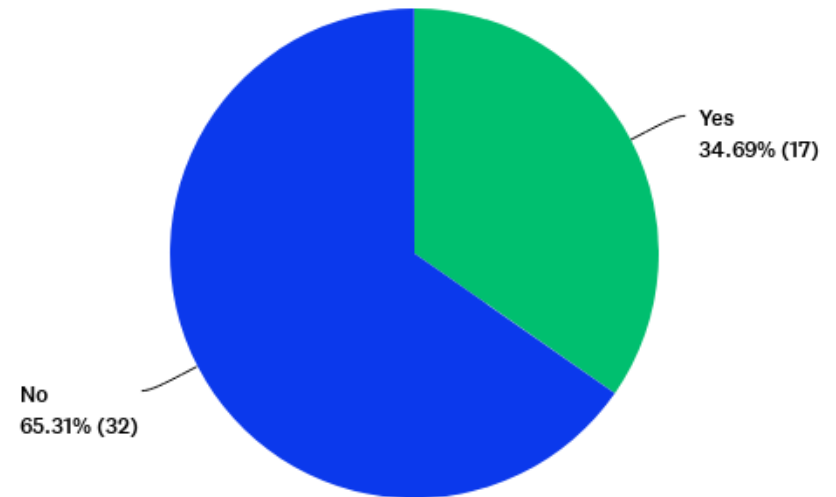
Majority of businesses do not have a succession plan in place.

There is opportunity to implement succession planning/matching in the region.

Rocky View County Region

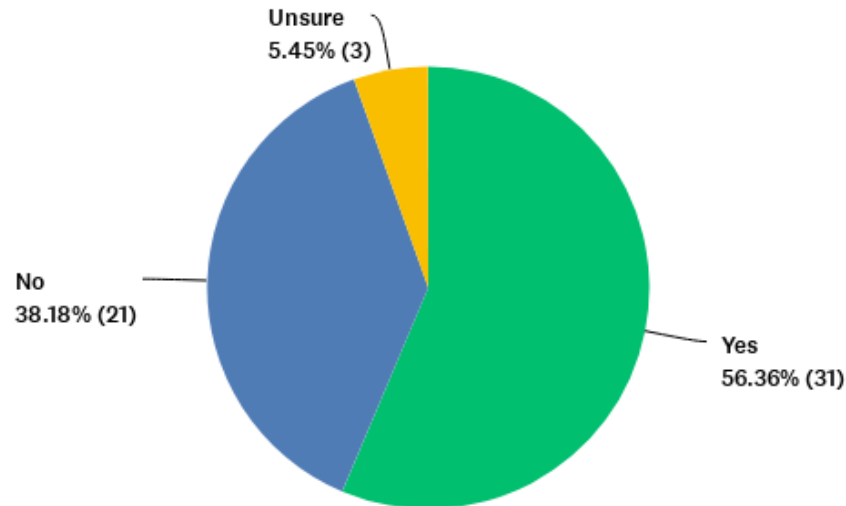


Wheatland County Region

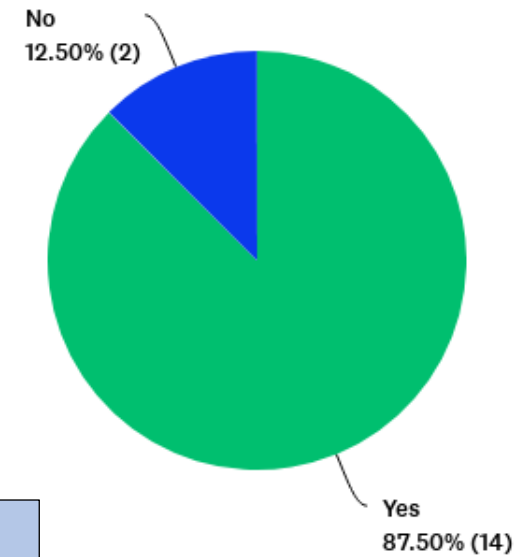


Has your business been considered an essential service to support the pandemic?

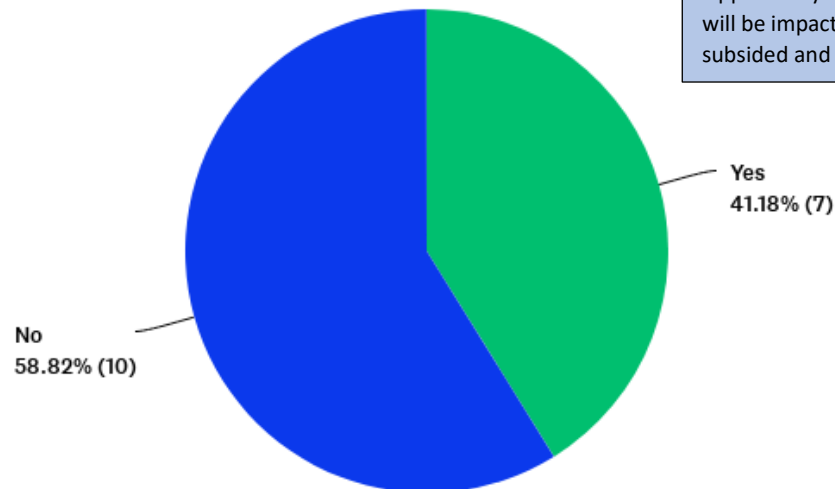
Kneehill County Region



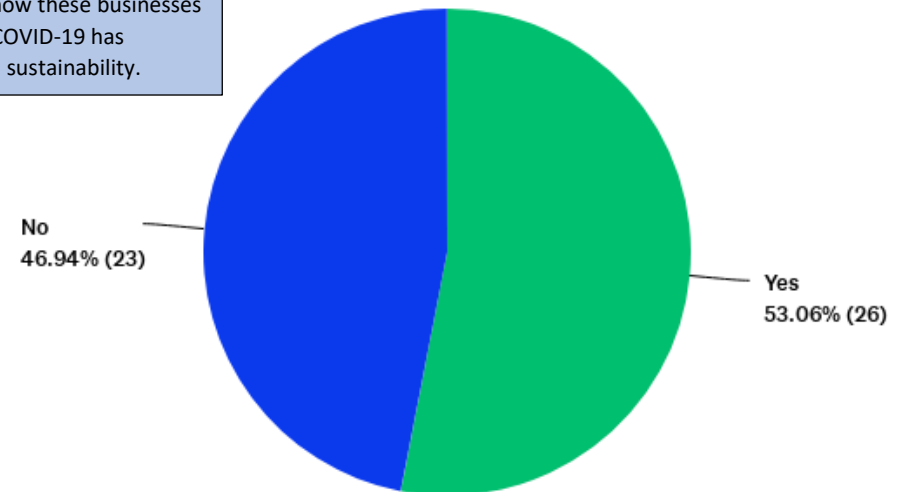
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region



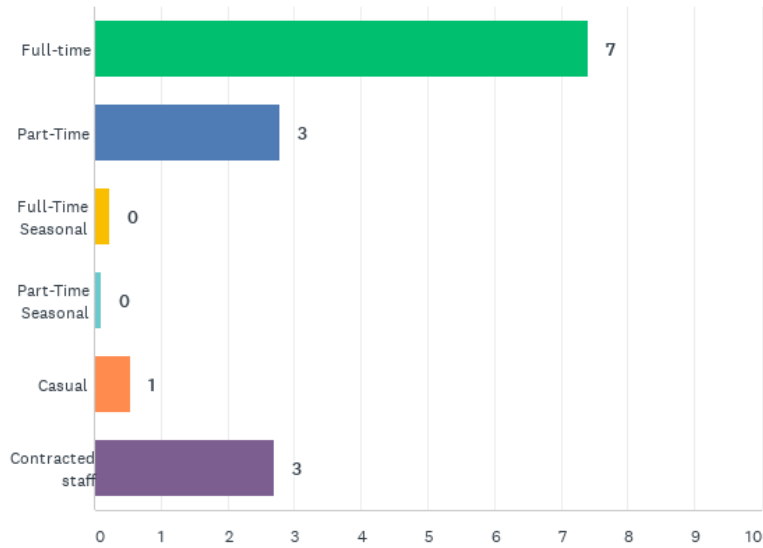
Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses have been deemed an essential service.

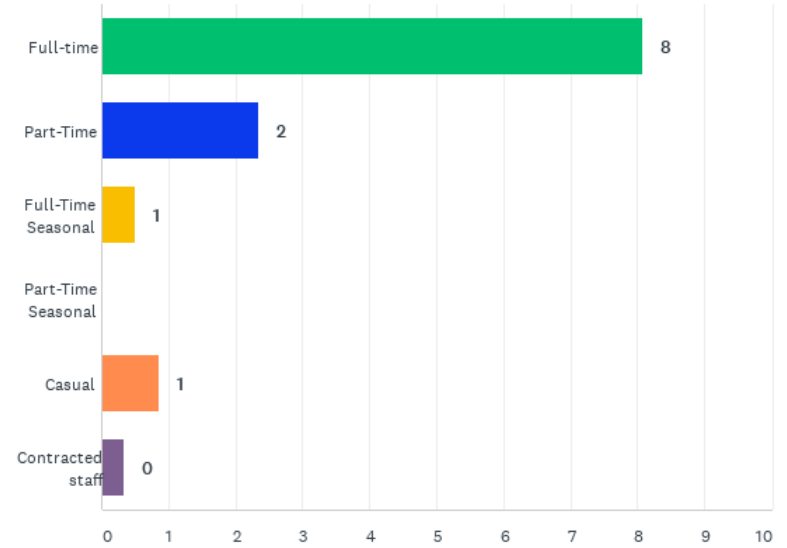
Opportunity to assess how these businesses will be impacted after COVID-19 has subsided and long term sustainability.

Please list the number of employees you had PRIOR to COVID-19 (March 12, 2020)

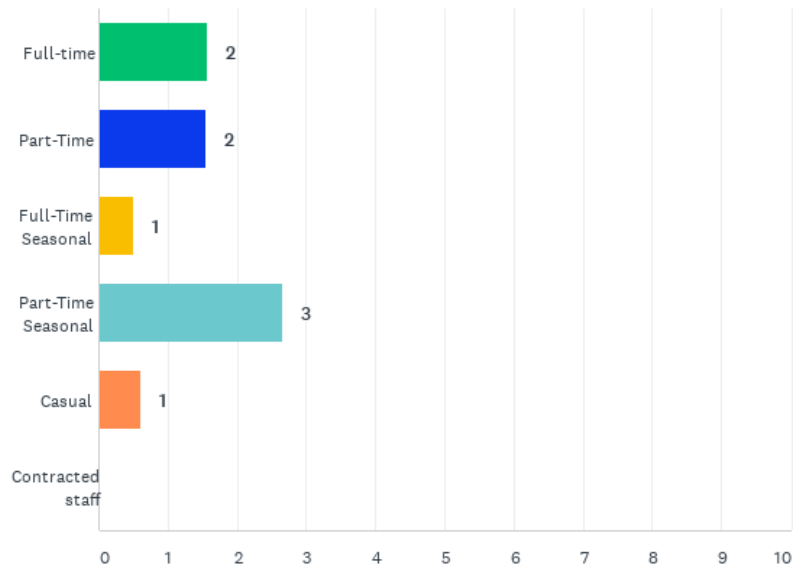
Kneehill County Region



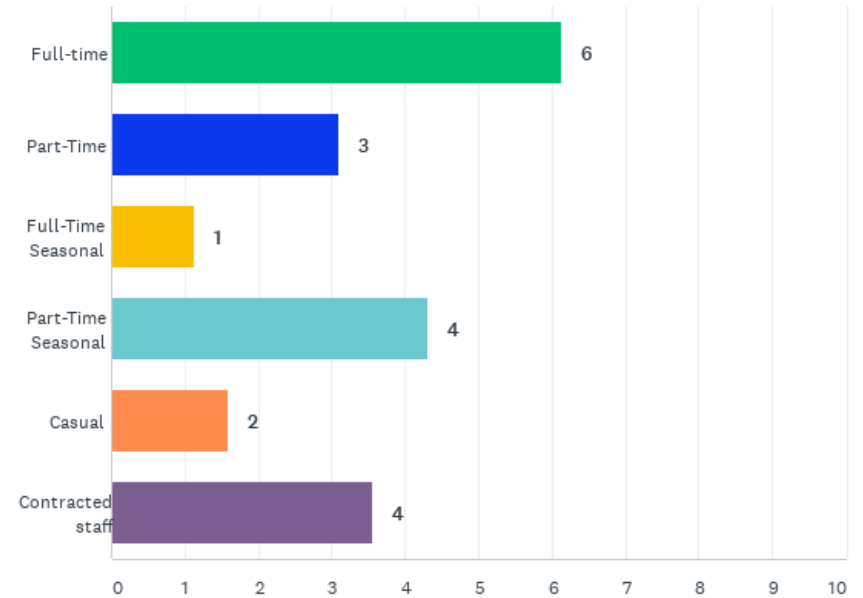
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region

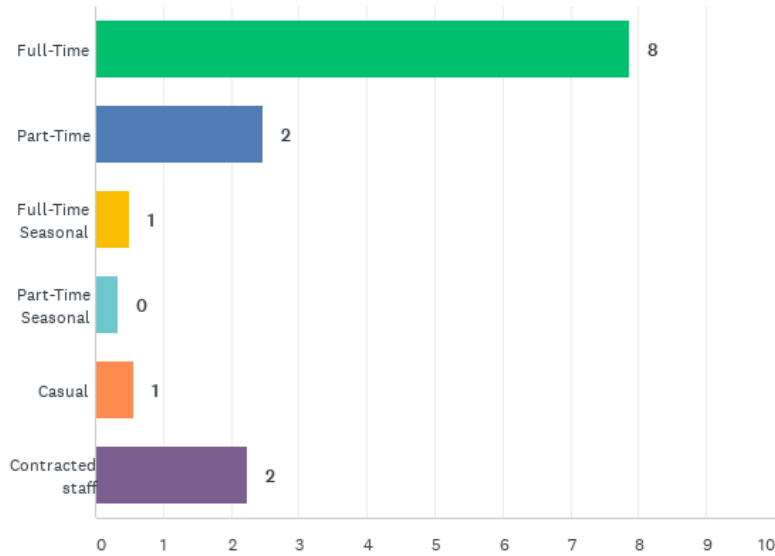


Wheatland County Region

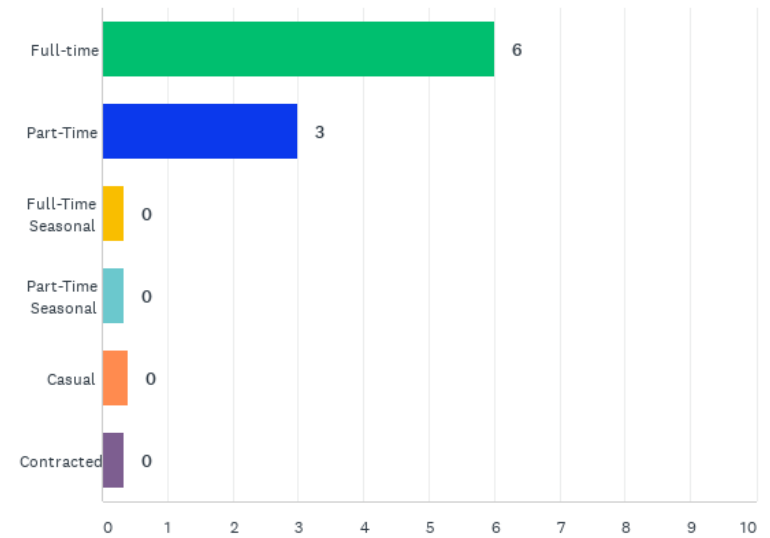


Please list the number of employees you CURRENTLY have.

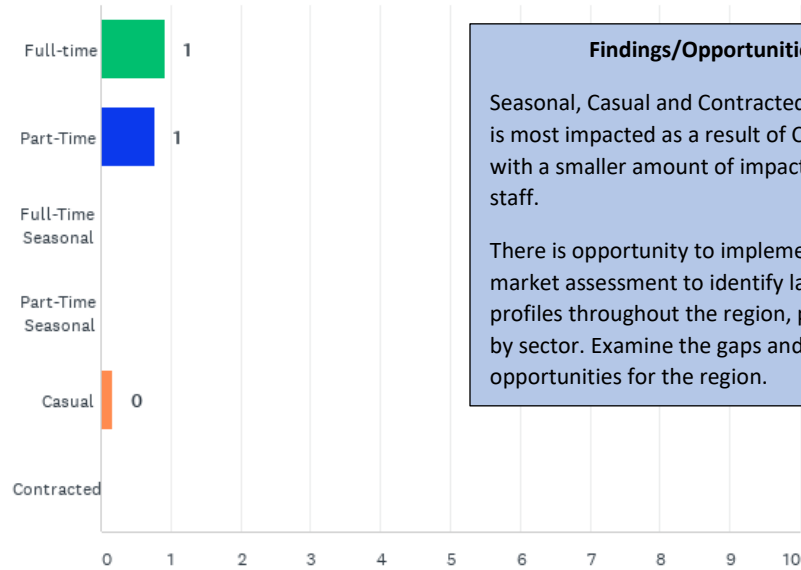
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Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region

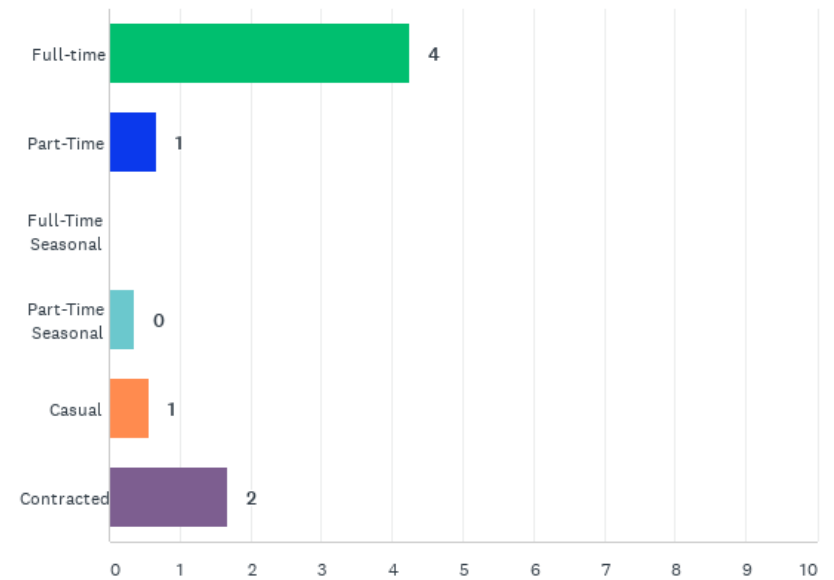


Findings/Opportunities

Seasonal, Casual and Contracted workforce is most impacted as a result of COVID-19, with a smaller amount of impact to full time staff.

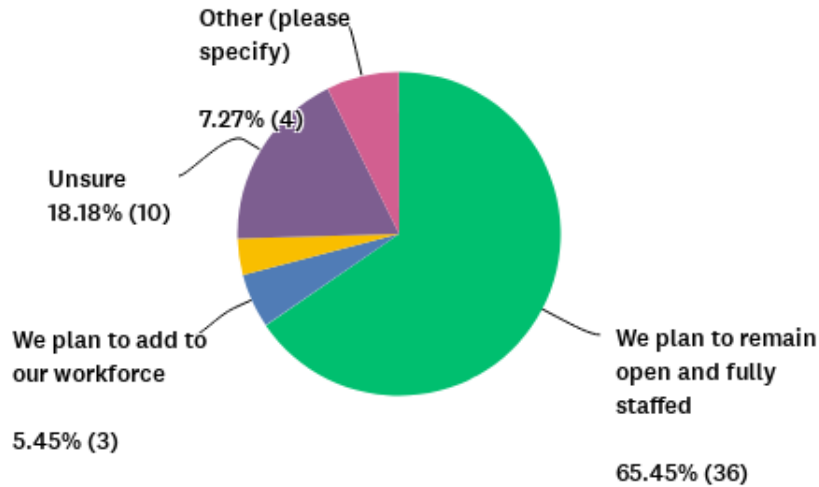
There is opportunity to implement a labour market assessment to identify labour profiles throughout the region, potentially by sector. Examine the gaps and training opportunities for the region.

Wheatland County Region

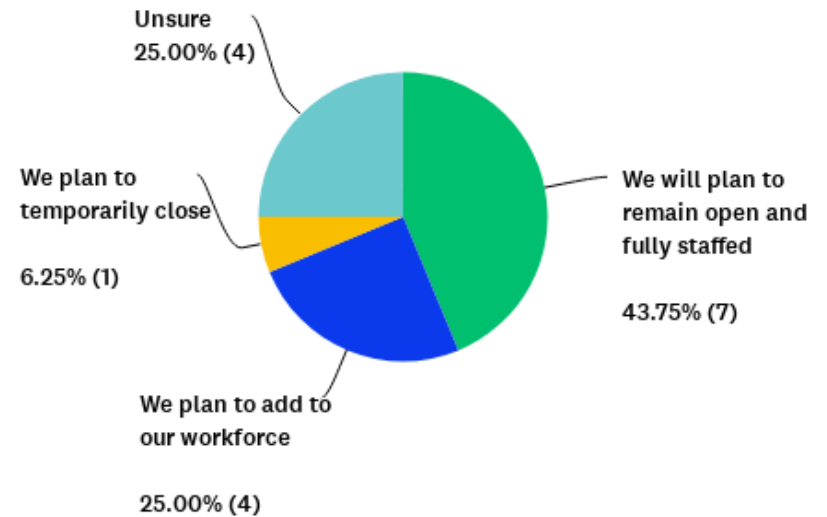


What do you expect the future status of your workforce to be in July 2020?

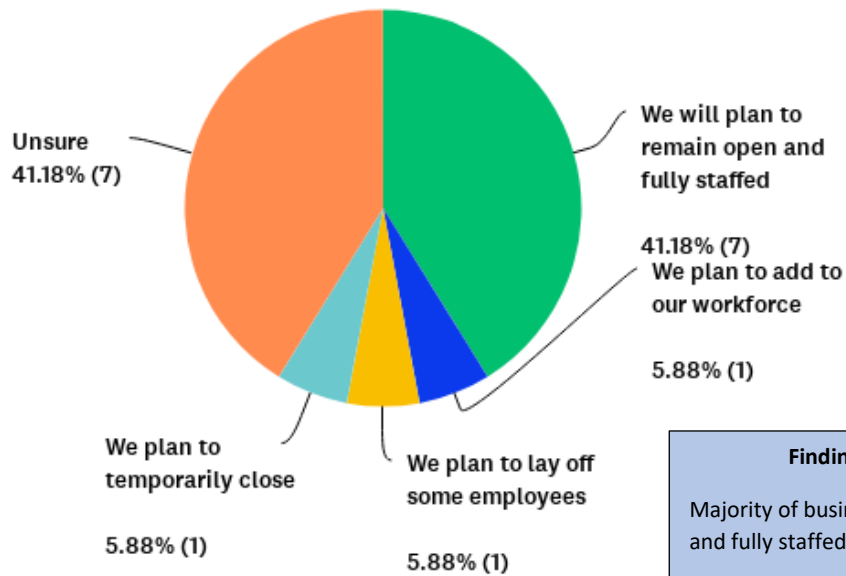
Kneehill County Region



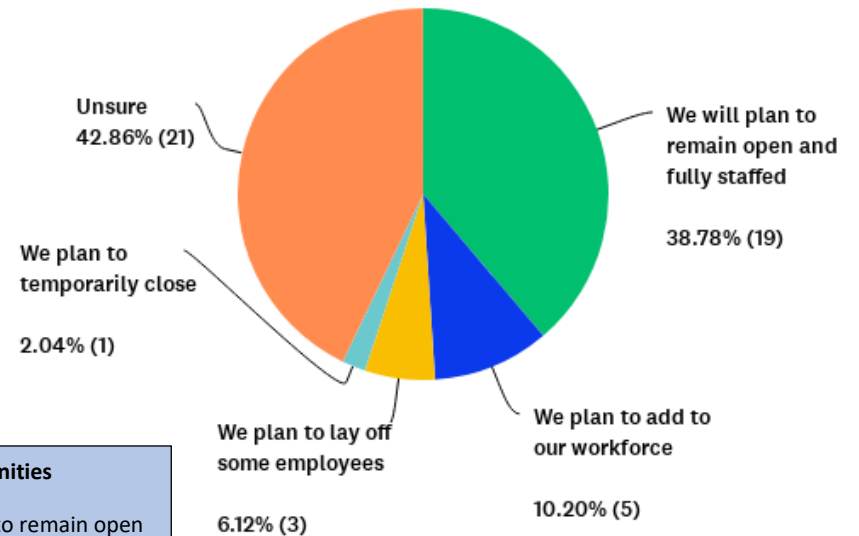
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Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region



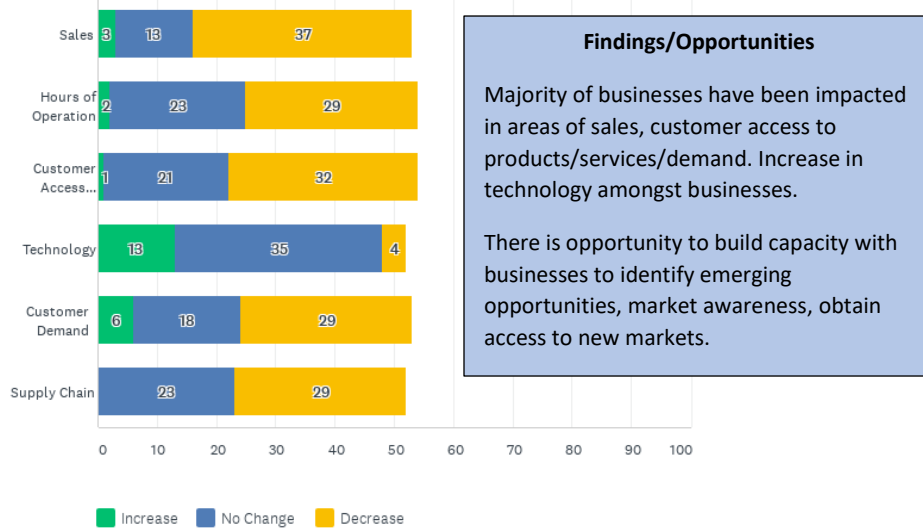
Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses plan to remain open and fully staffed.

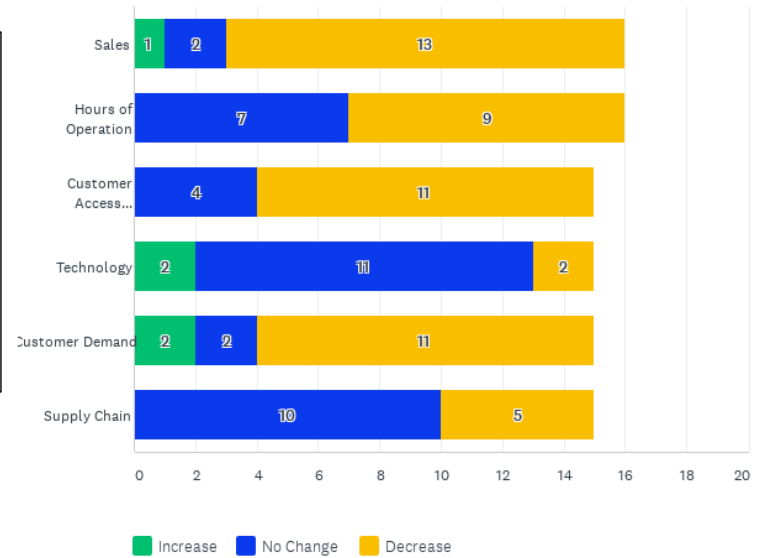
Opportunity to do a labour market profile and assist businesses in training and retention strategies.

What areas of your business have been impacted as result of COVID-19?

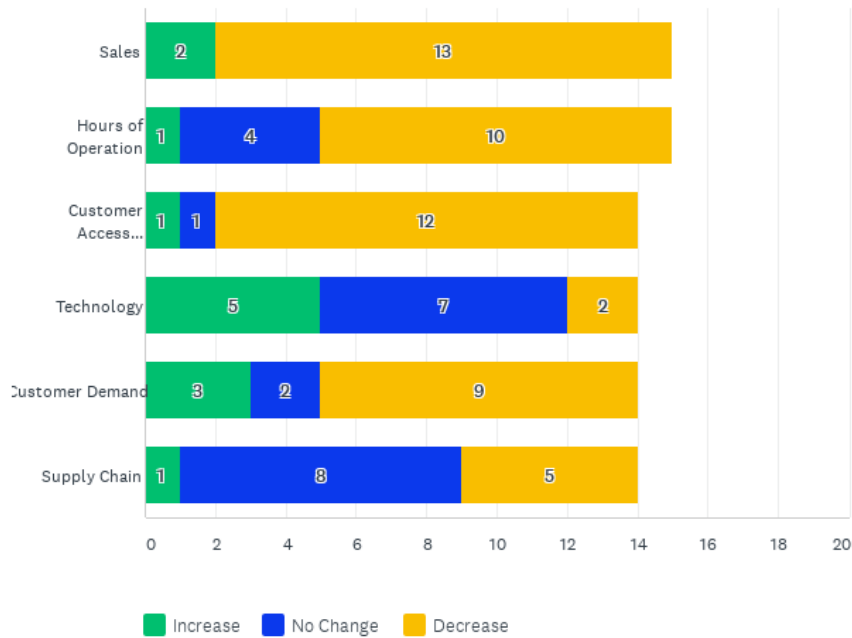
Kneehill County Region



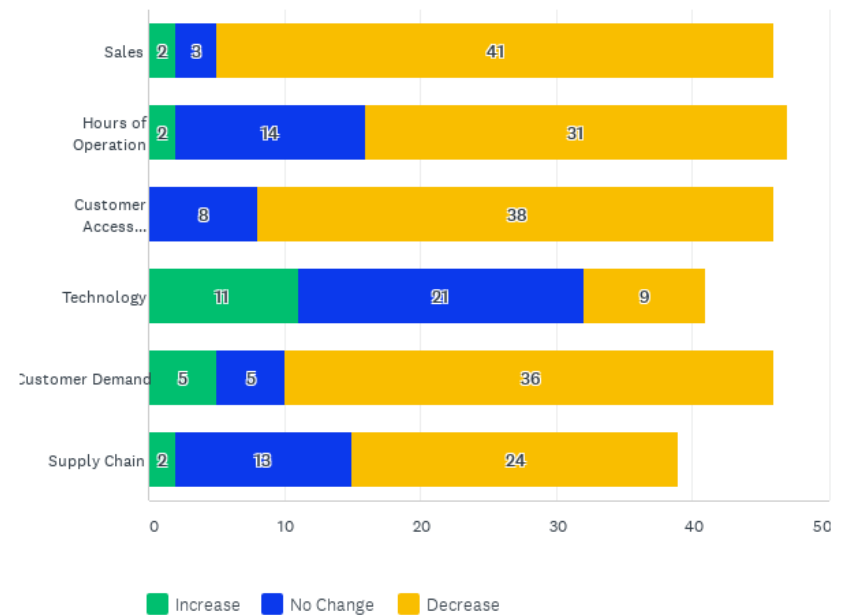
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region

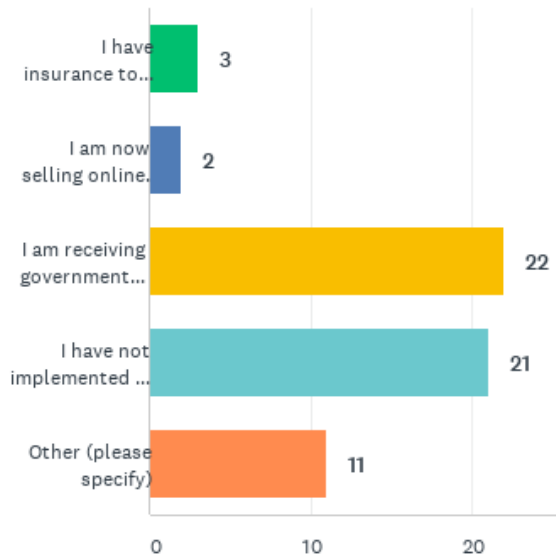


Wheatland County Region

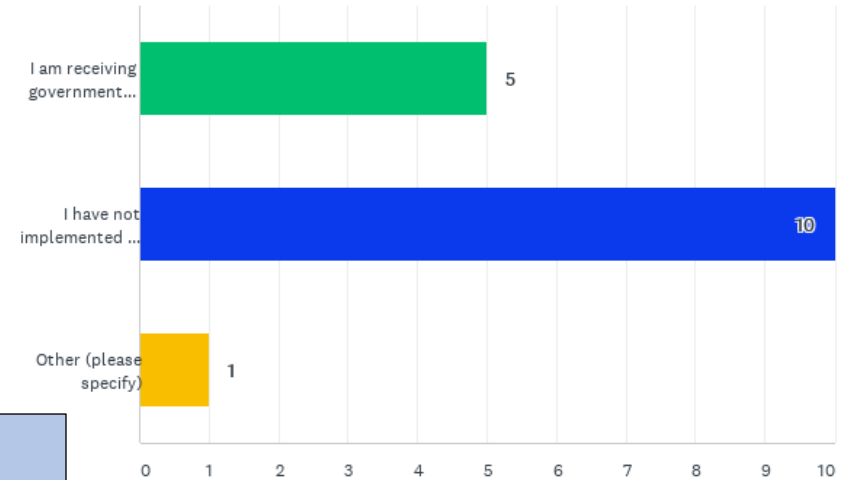


What business continuity measures have you implemented in response to COVID-19

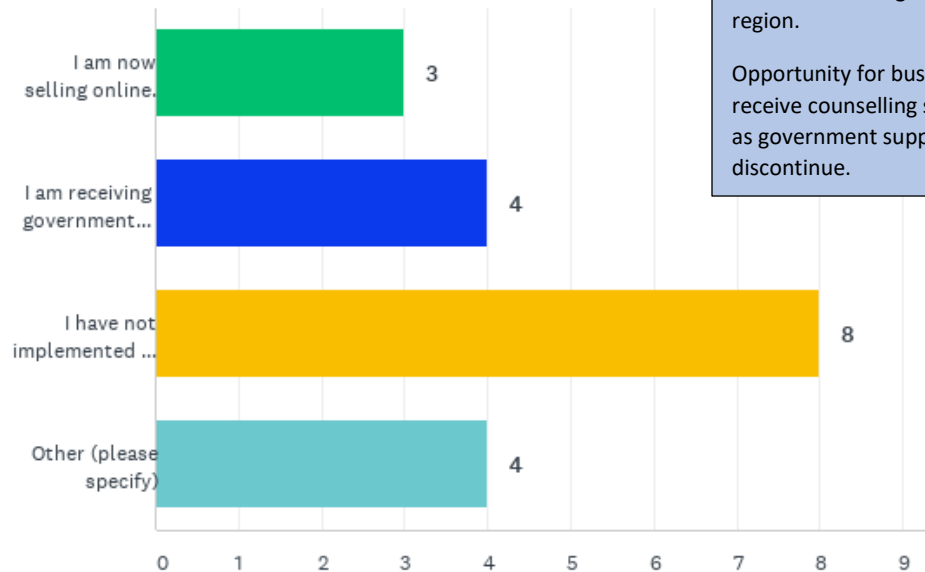
Kneehill County Region



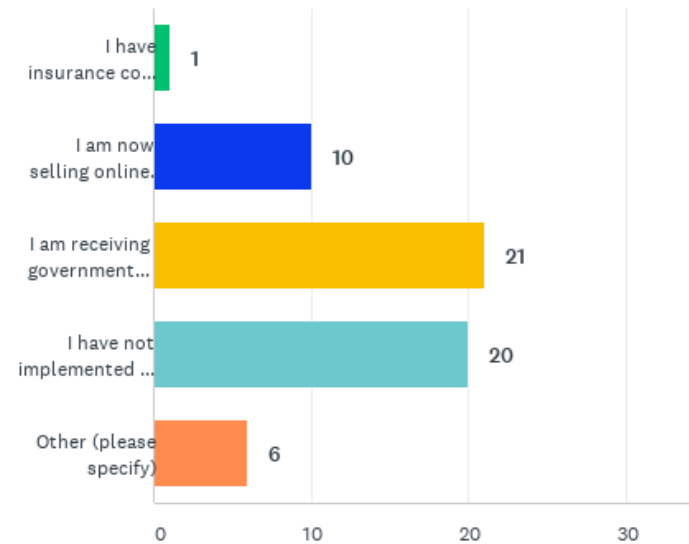
Newell County Region



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Wheatland County Region



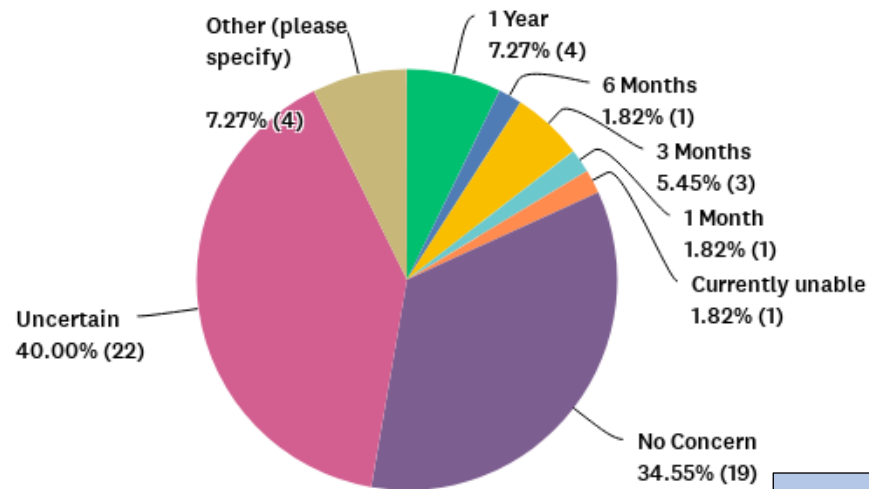
Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses are receiving government supports and have not implemented any measures. There was an increase in e-commerce throughout the region.

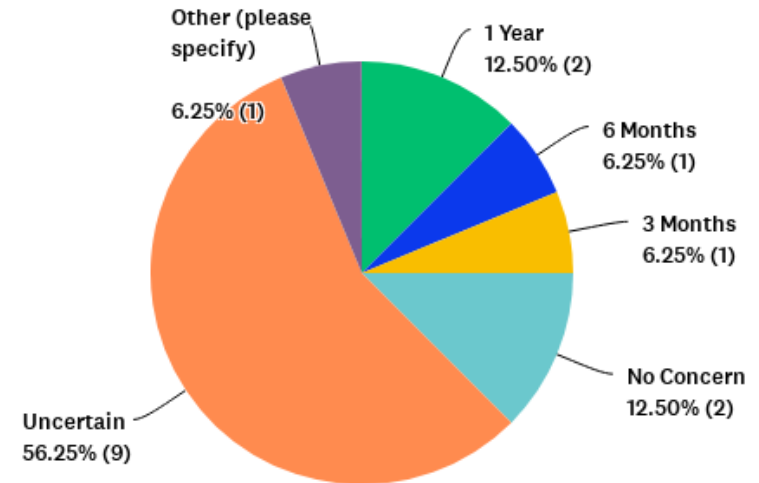
Opportunity for businesses to receive counselling supports as government supports discontinue.

Under current market conditions, how long will you be able to manage your operations (select only one)

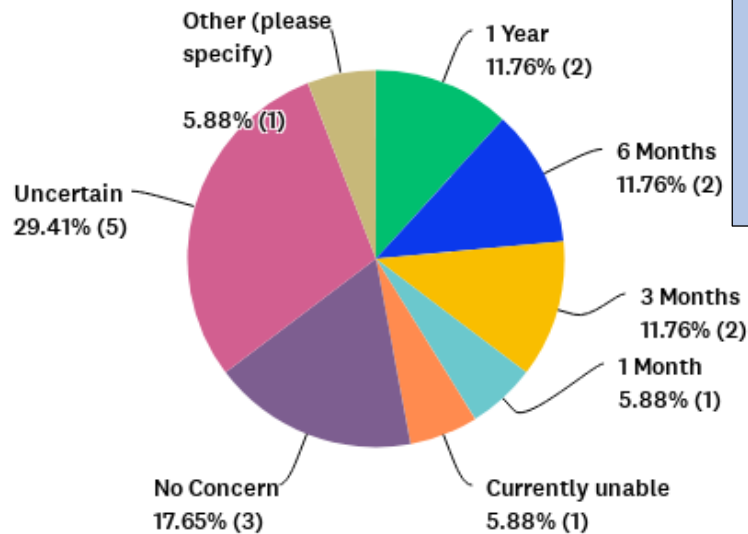
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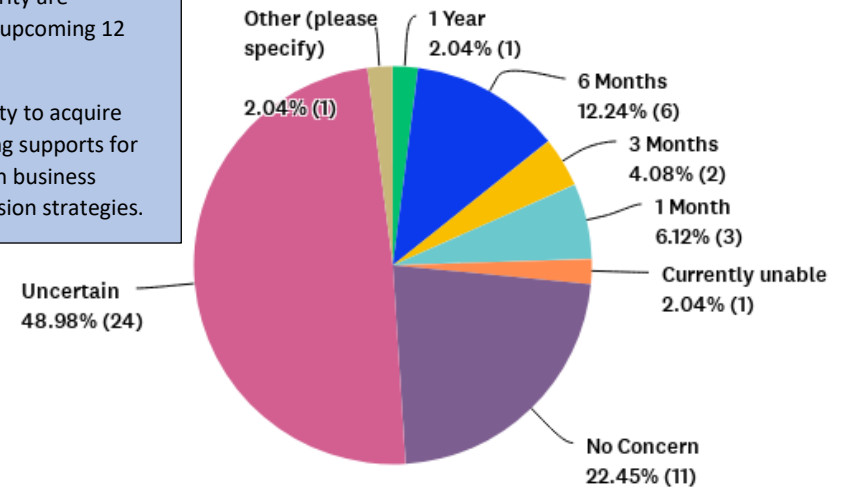
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region



Findings/Opportunities

Majority of businesses are uncertain as to how long they will be able to manage operations as well a strong majority are concerned for the upcoming 12 months.

There is opportunity to acquire training/counselling supports for businesses through business retention & expansion strategies.

What are the training needs you require? (check all that apply)

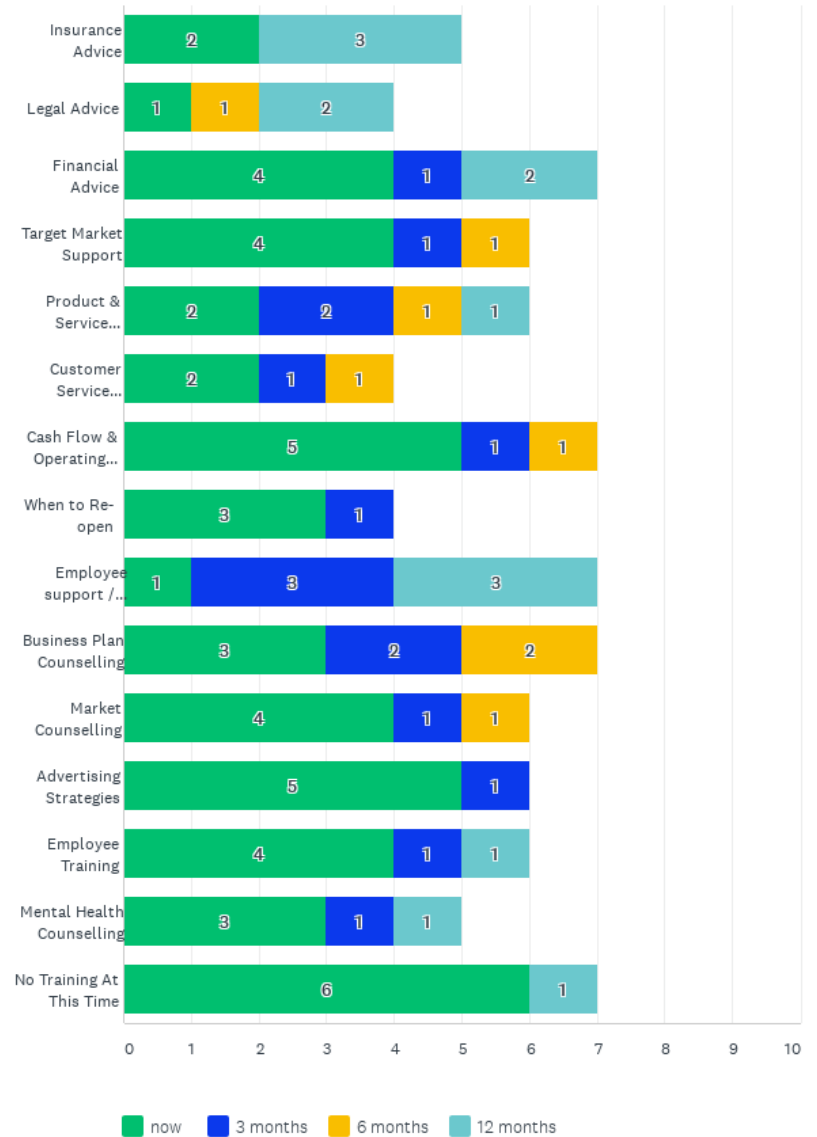
Kneehill County Region



Findings/Opportunities

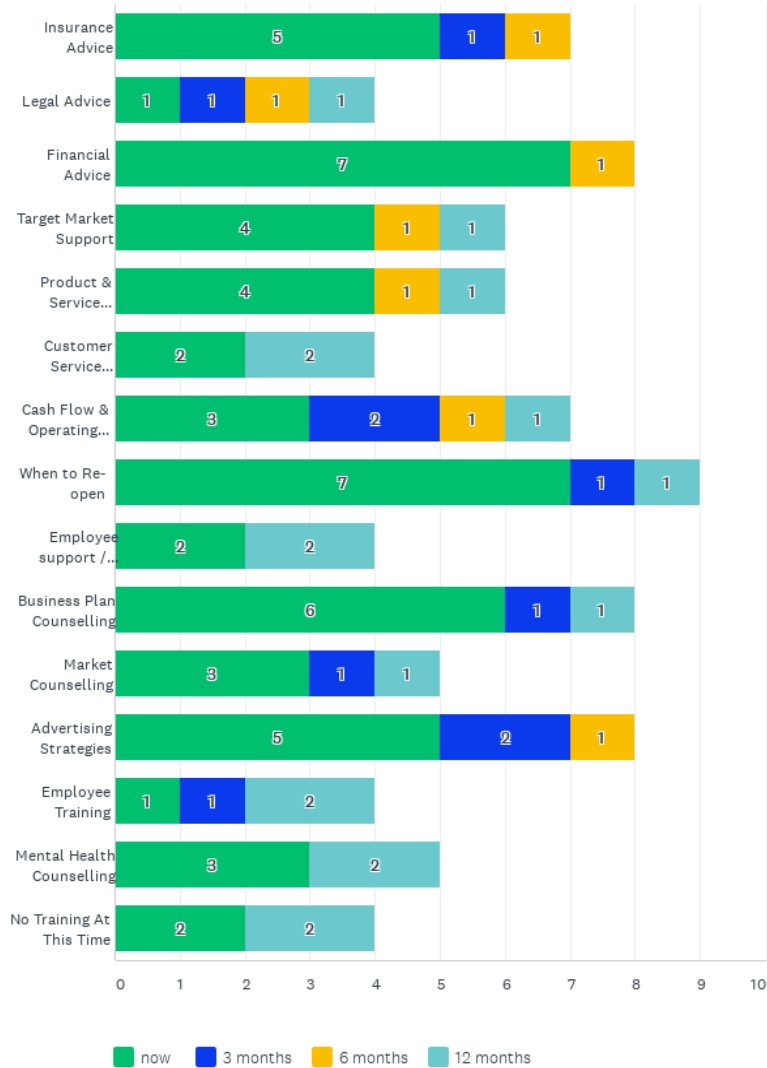
Majority of businesses in Kneehill responded that no training was required, however, those respondents identified that financial advice, customer service training and when to re-open were areas of interest. Newell, Rocky View and Wheatland region responded similarly to training needs with the addition of training to address components within the marketing plan.

Newell County Region

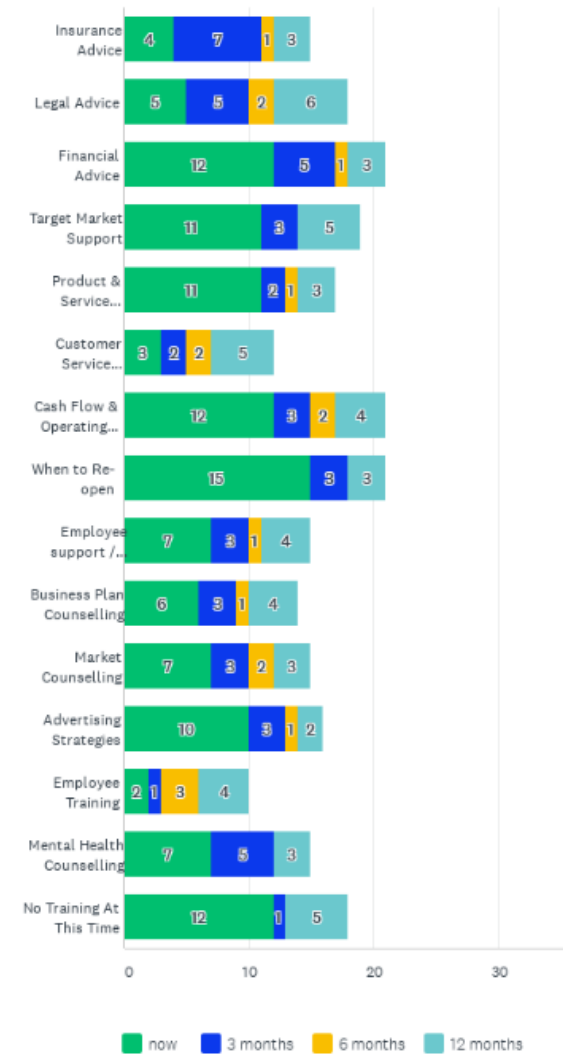


What are the training needs you require? (check all that apply) - Continued

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

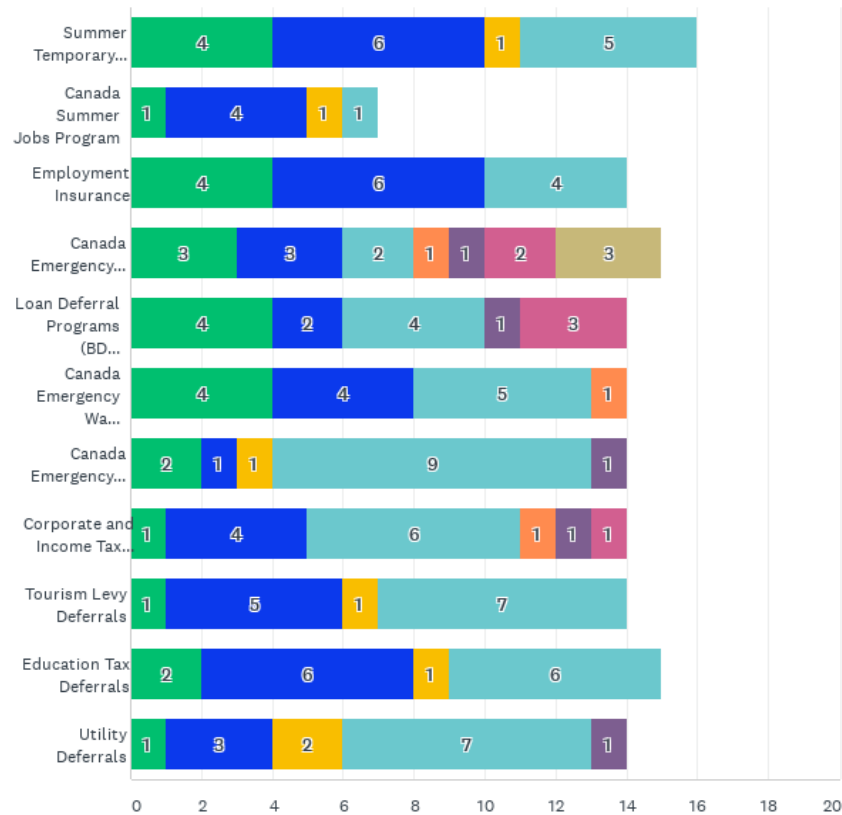


Opportunities

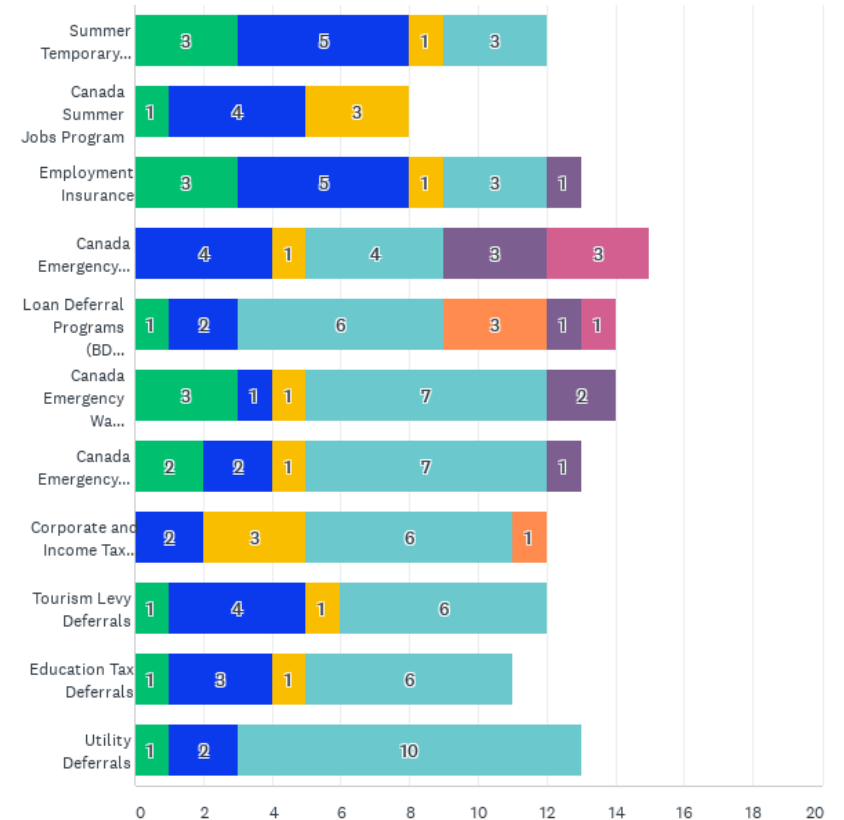
Explore potential of regional, targeted training programs to address the needs of entrepreneurs.

Please indicate which COVID-19 relief programs you accessed and/or are receiving and their effectiveness of each. (select on rating per program)

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

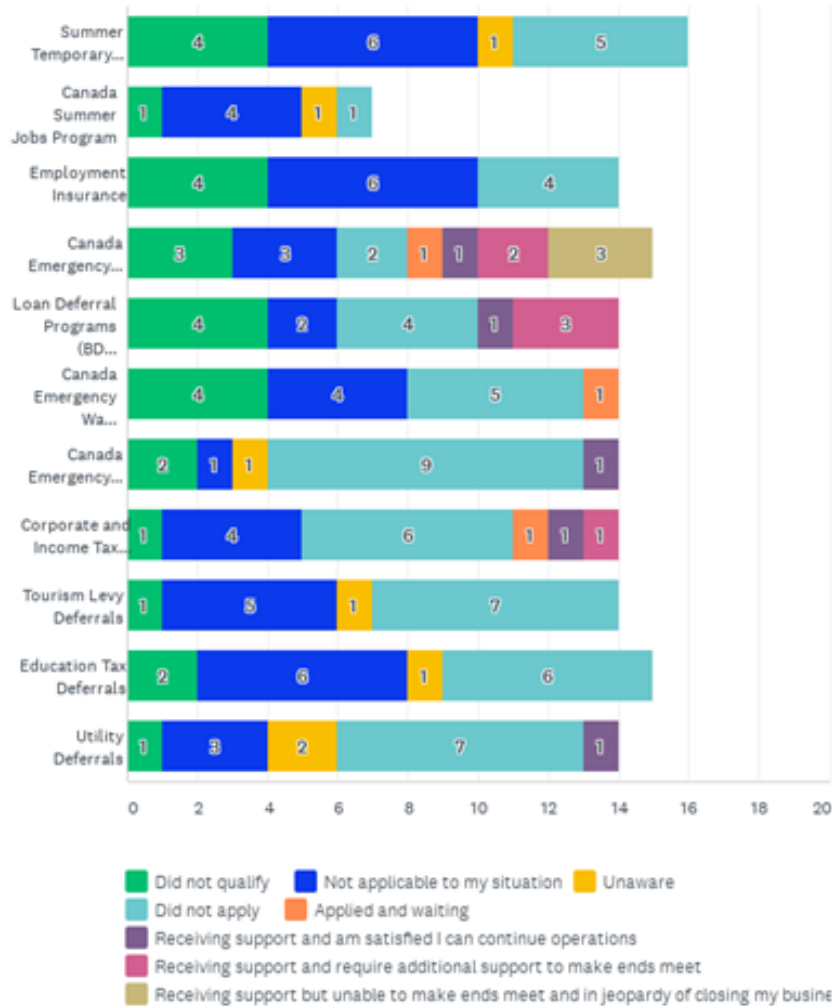


Findings

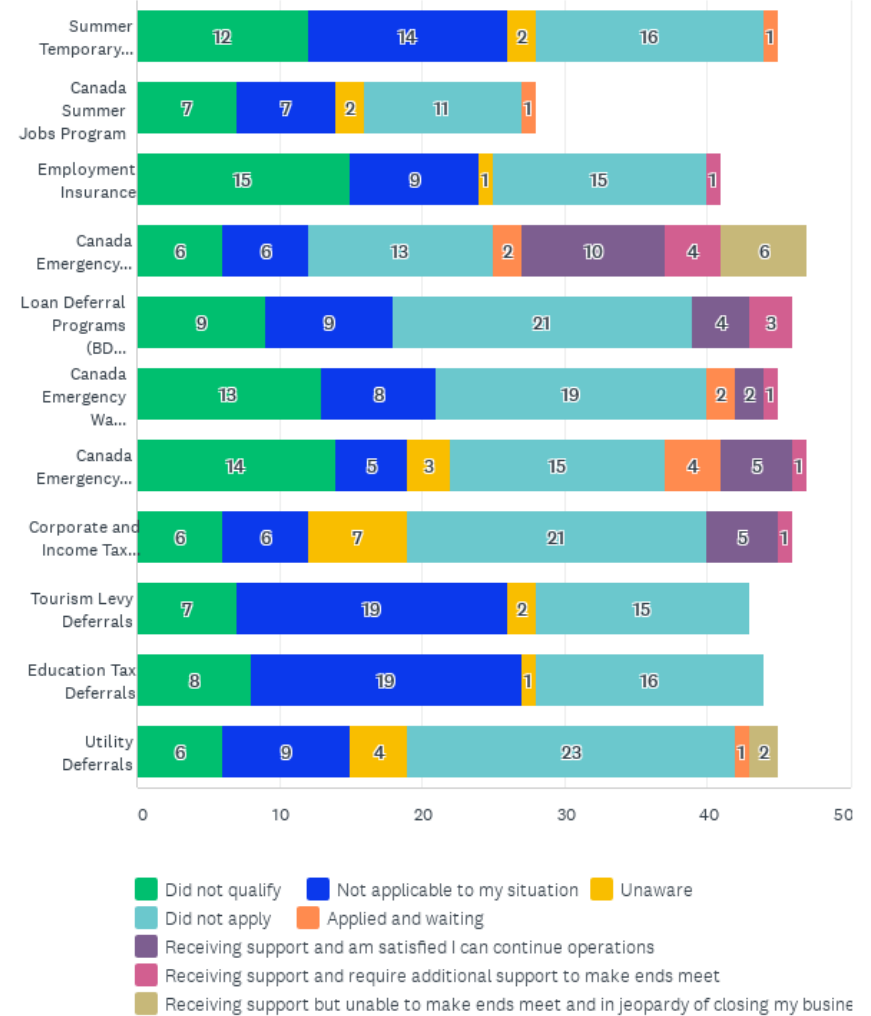
Majority of businesses did not qualify or apply for funding or were not applicable. There were few who did apply and were waiting for funding and those who received funding were satisfied they could continue operations. Small portion who received funding required additional help and some are in jeopardy of closing their business.

Please indicate which COVID-19 relief programs you accessed and/or are receiving and their effectiveness of each. (select on rating per program) - Continued

Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region

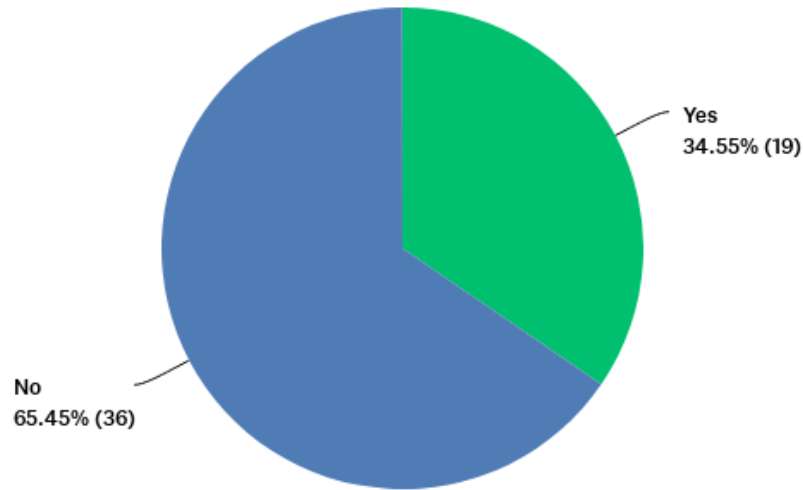


Opportunities

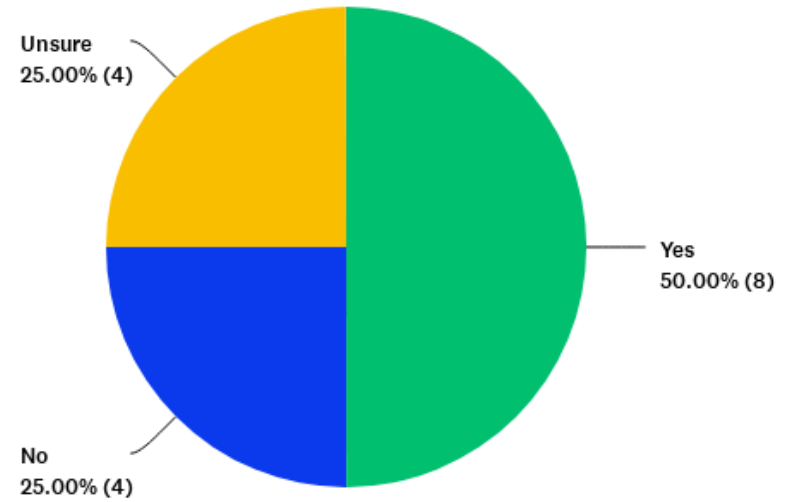
Connect with those businesses who are struggling to identify solutions through counselling, training and access to capital as needed. These initiatives can be targeted through business, retention and expansion strategies.

Do you require additional funding?

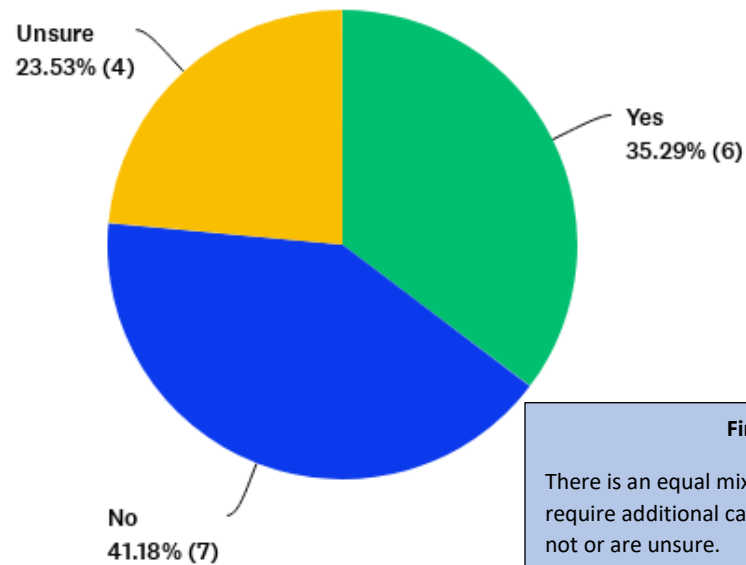
Kneehill County Region



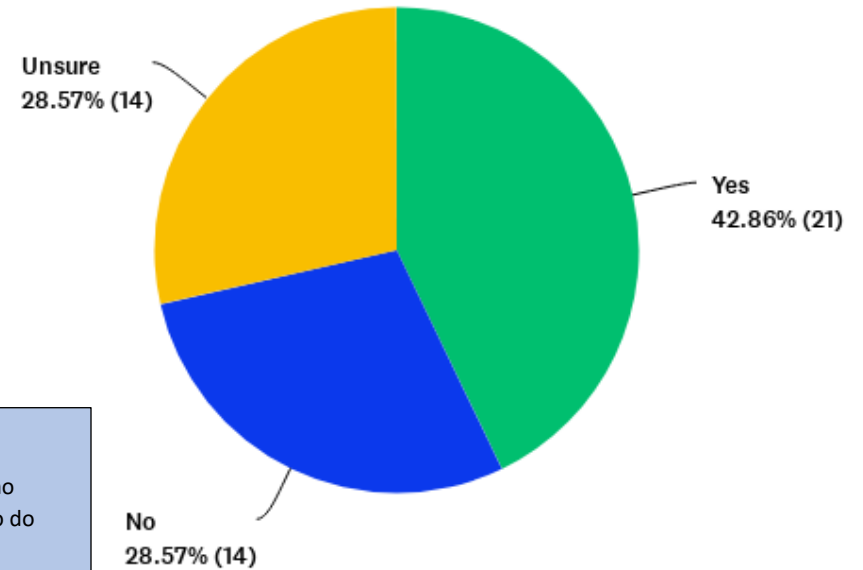
Newell County Region



Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region



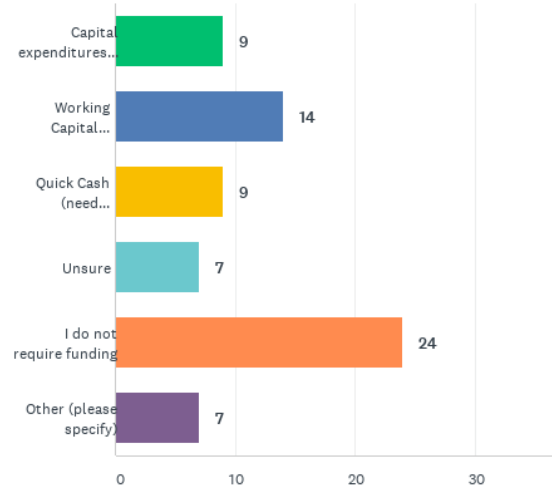
Findings

There is an equal mix of businesses who require additional capital to those who do not or are unsure.

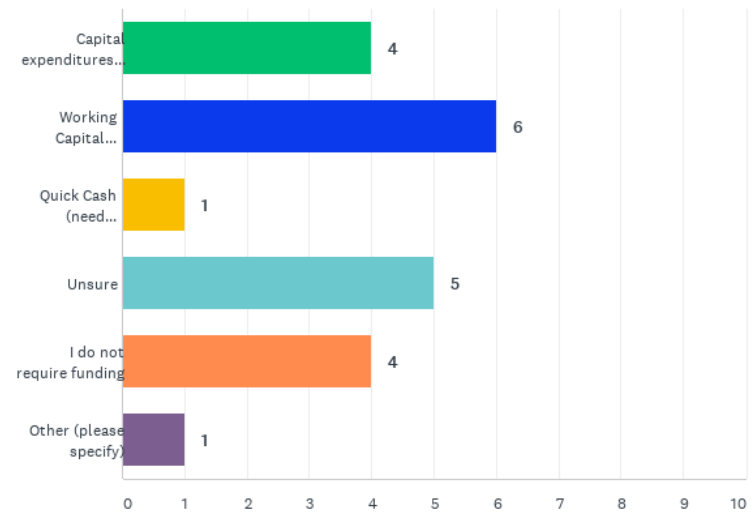
There is opportunity to explore with growth businesses to identify potential expansion opportunities or those who require capital to support operations.

If you require funding for your business, what will you require funding for?

Kneehill County Region



Newell County Region

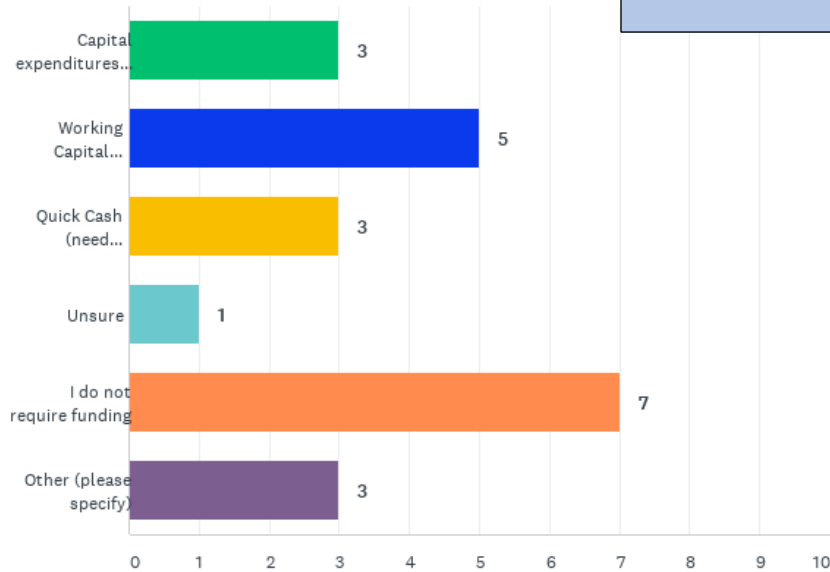


Findings

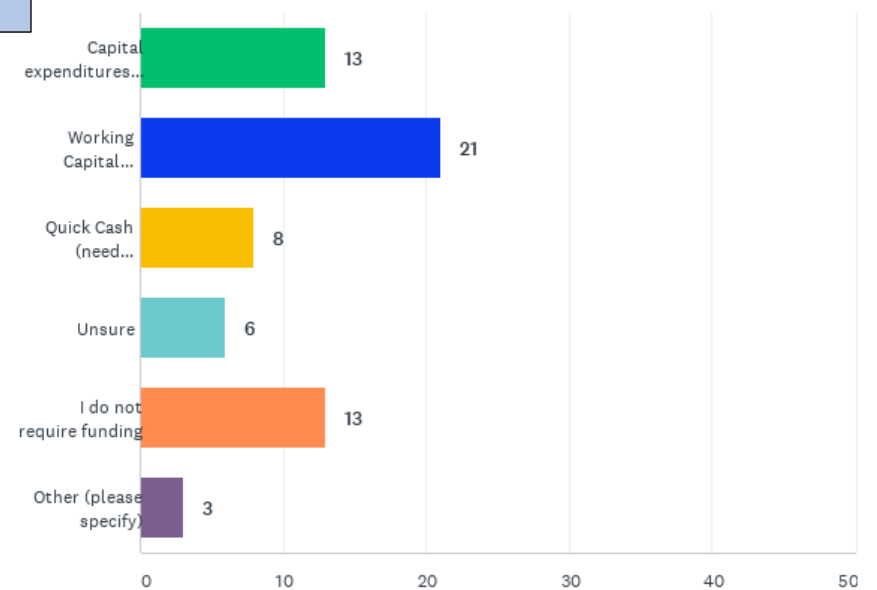
Majority of businesses require working capital to sustain operations and an equal majority do not require funding.

Opportunity to explore business counselling and capital programs with lenders.

Rocky View County Region

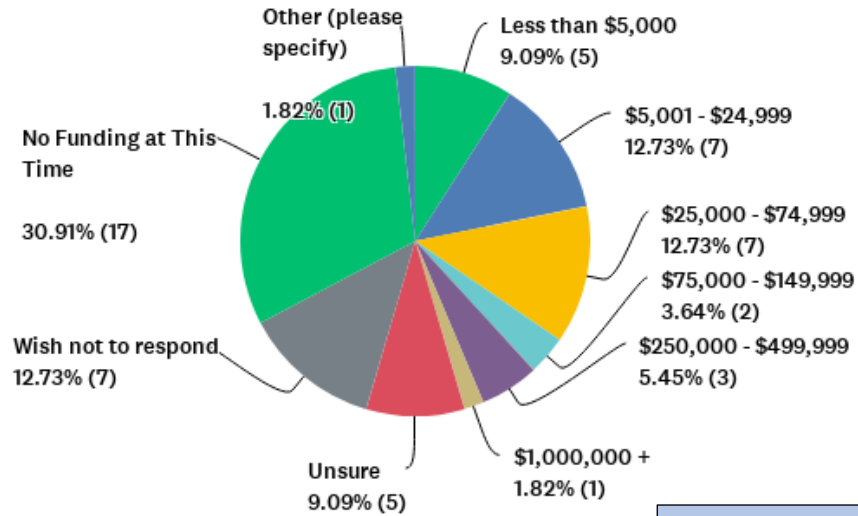


Wheatland County Region

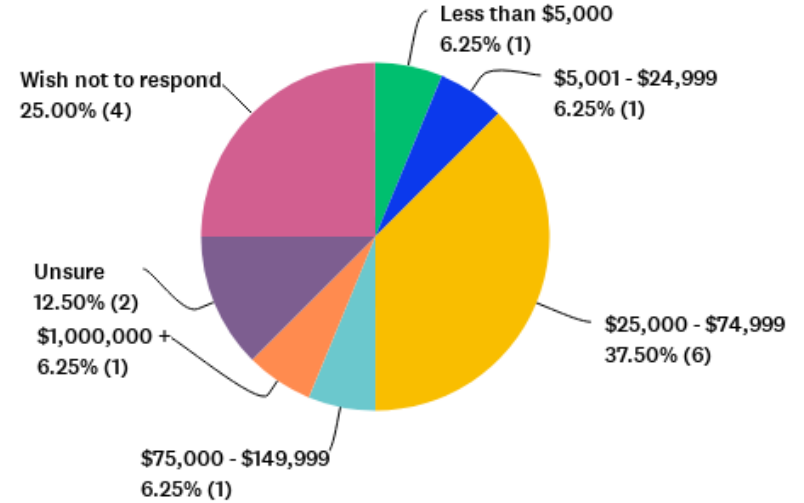


What is approximate value in capital that you will require for 2020?

Kneehill County Region



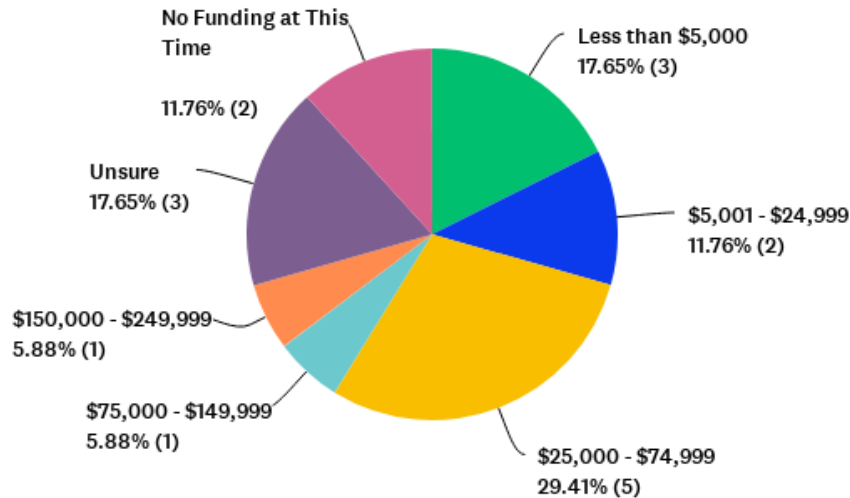
Newell County Region



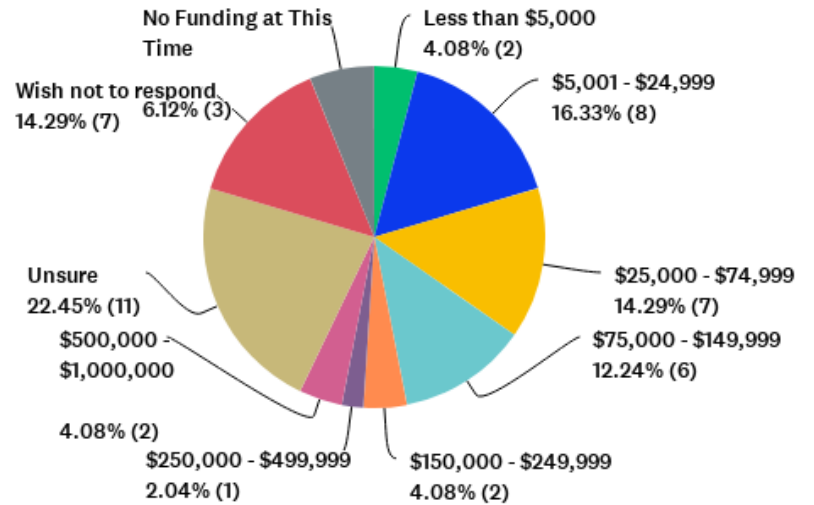
Findings

Majority of businesses require capital in the amount of \$25,000 – 75,000.

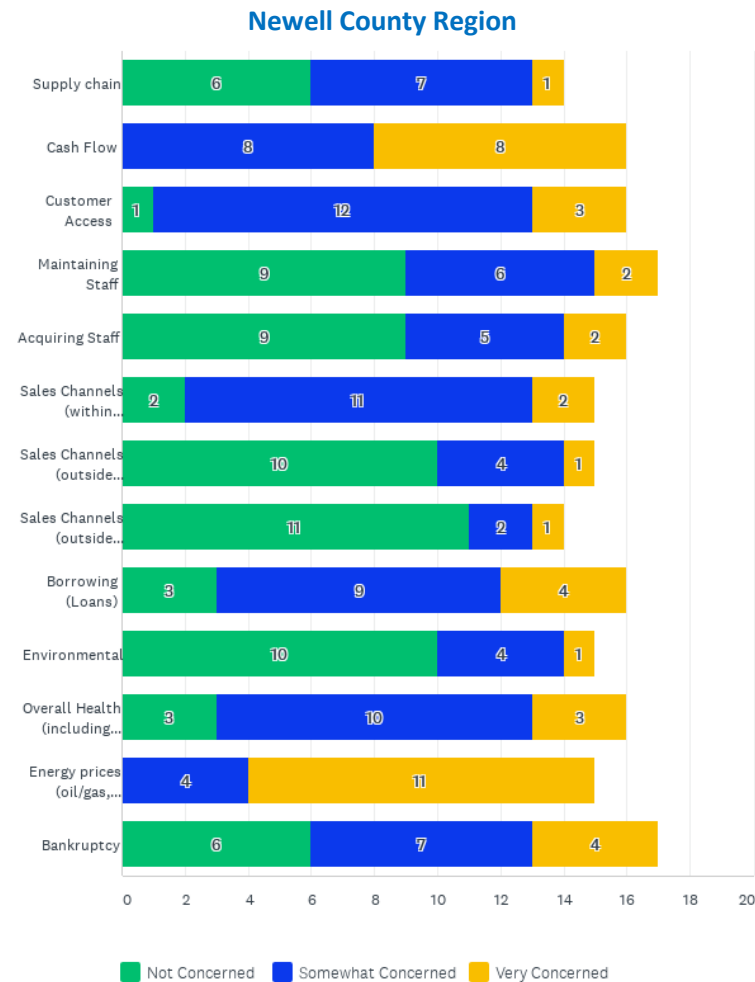
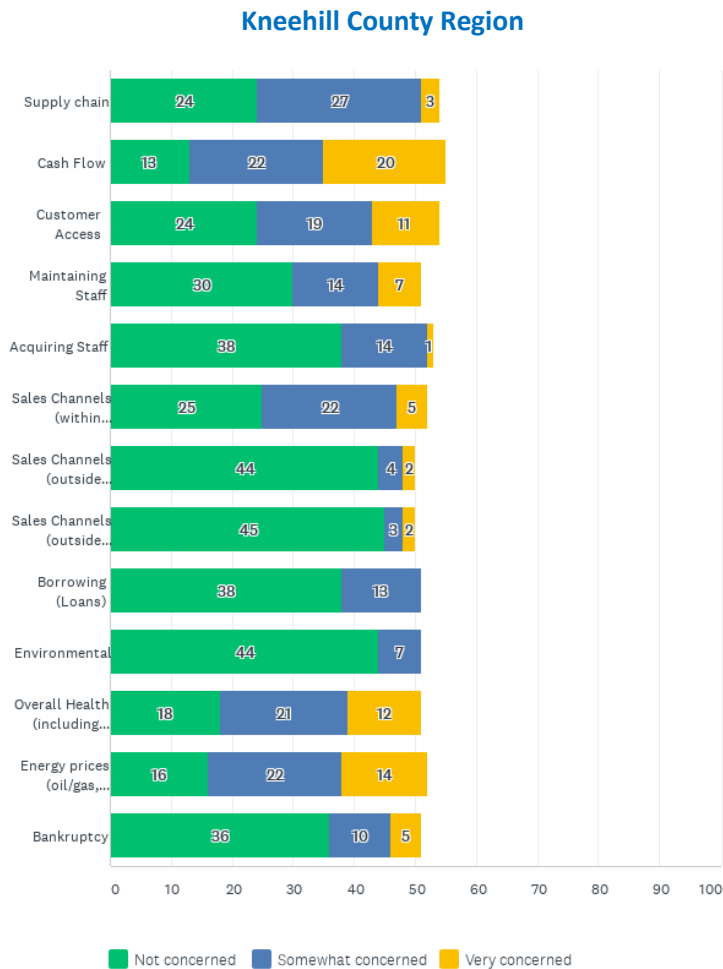
Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region



Rate your level of concern in how these items will impact your business operations within the next 3 months (select one response per item)

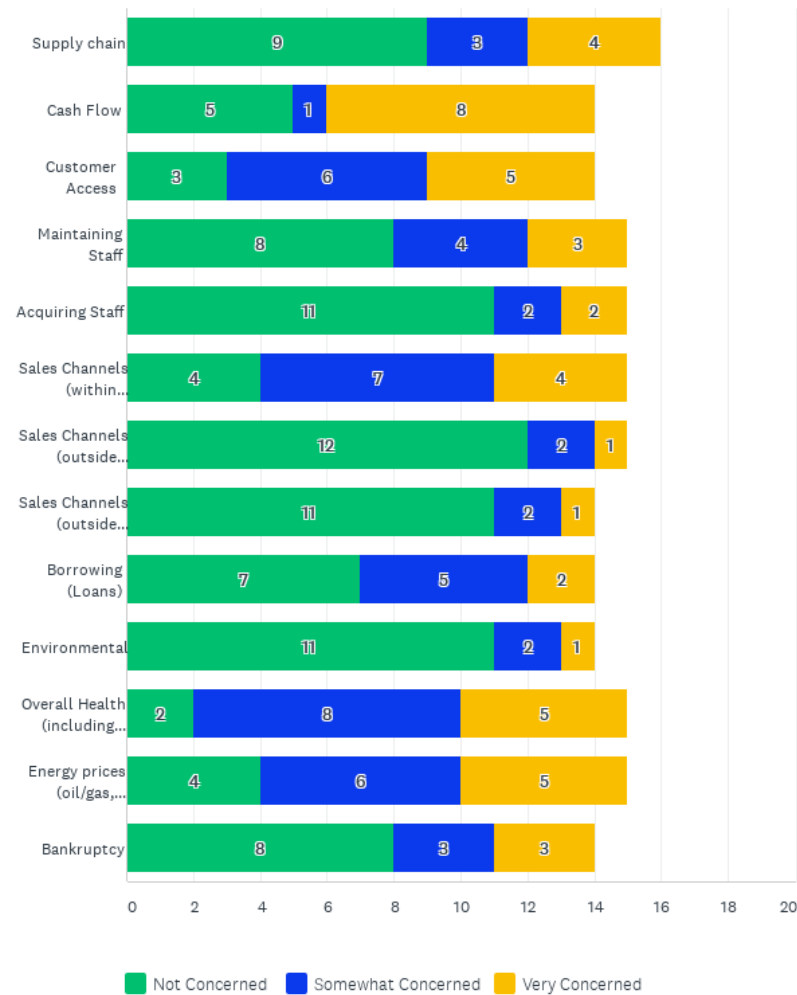


Findings

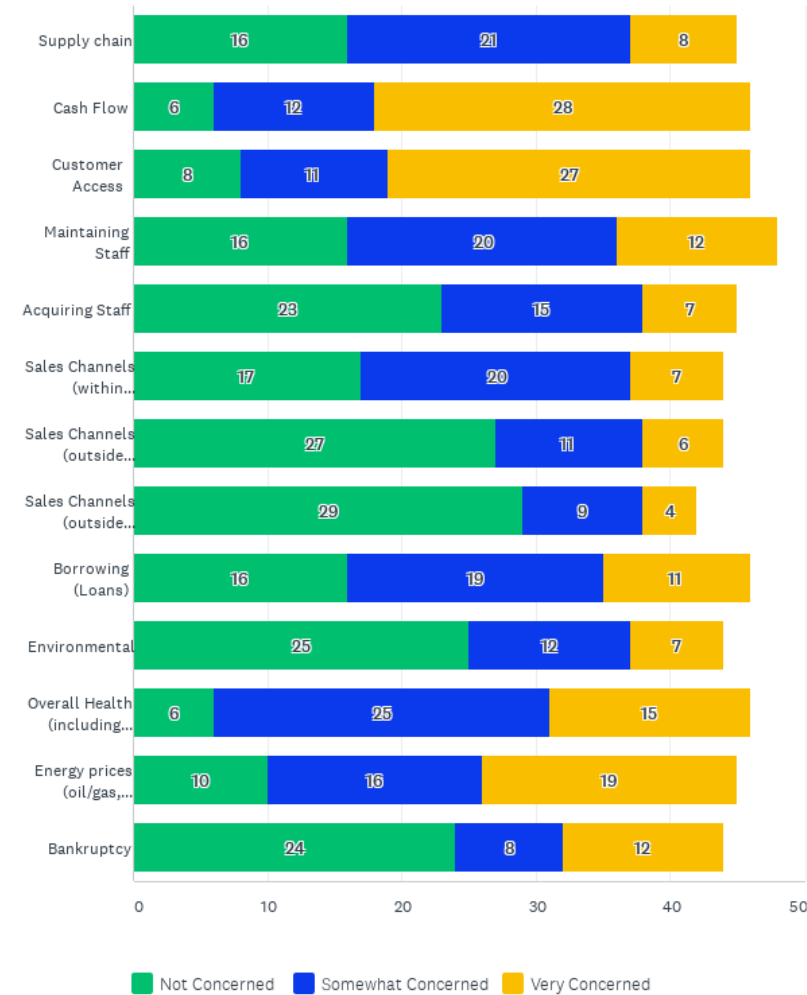
Businesses are equally concerned and somewhat/very concerned overall about their business health overall within the next 3 months.

Rate your level of concern in how these items will impact your business operations within the next 3 months (select one response per item) - Continued

Rocky View County Region



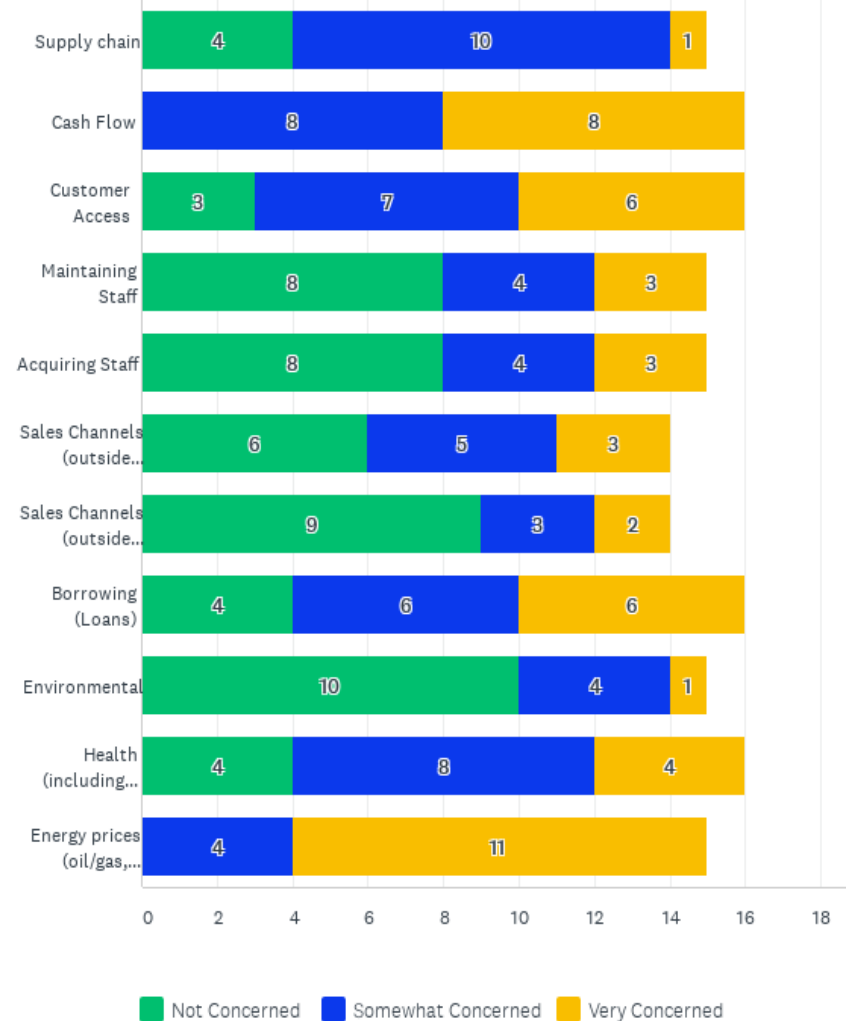
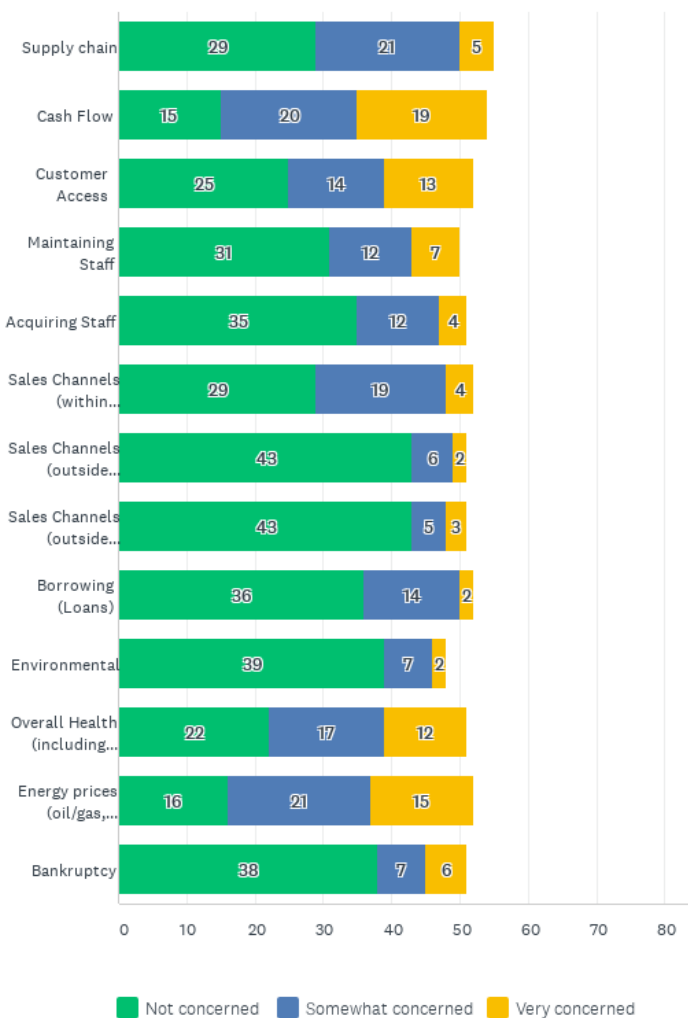
Wheatland County Region



Opportunities

Ensure there is access to counselling and training services and supports.

Rate your level of concern in how these items will impact your business operations within the next 4 – 12 months (select only one response per item)

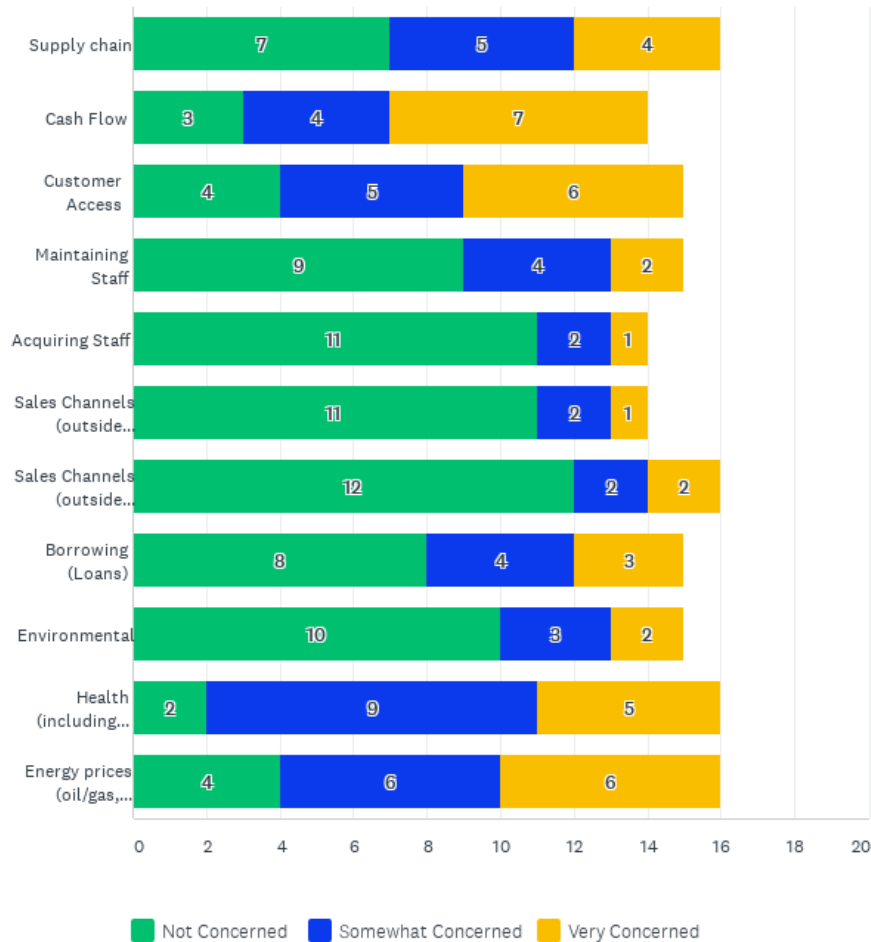


Findings

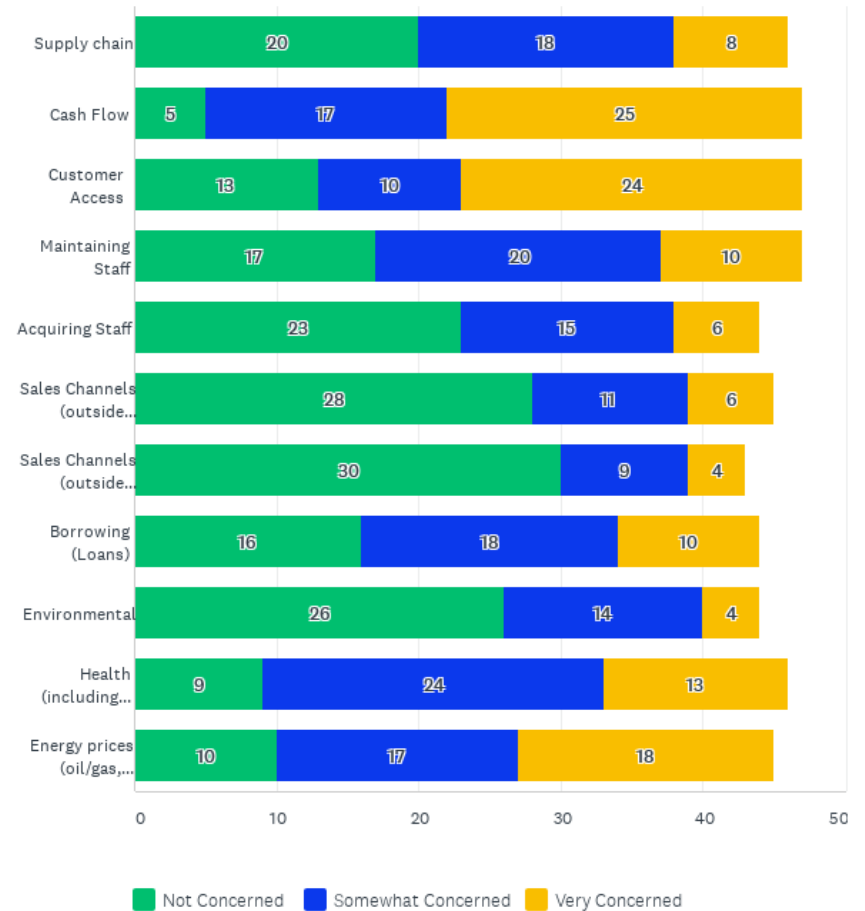
Businesses remain concerned over the financial position of their business in addition to Health (including mental health), as well as oil and gas prices over the next 12 months.

Rate your level of concern in how these items will impact your business operations within the next 4 – 12 months (select only one response per item) - Continued

Rocky View County Region



Wheatland County Region

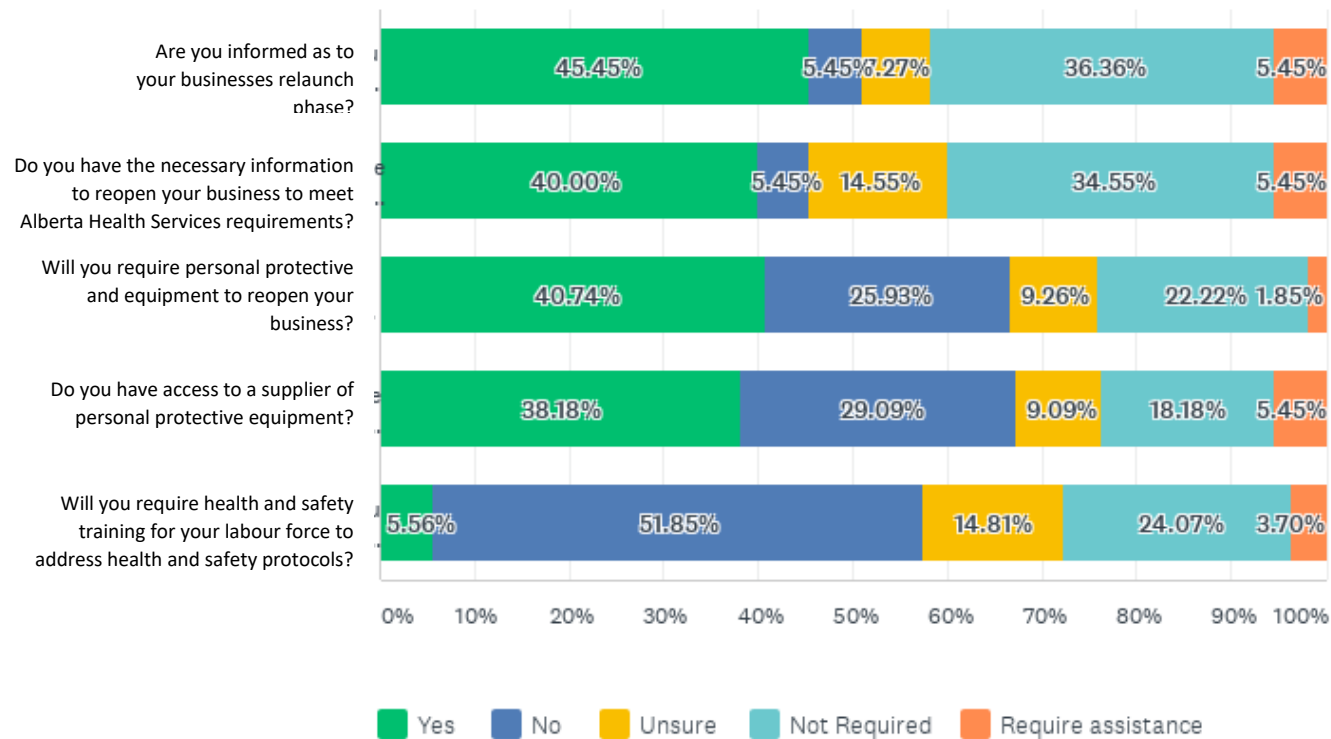


Opportunities

Opportunities for government, service and support organizations to provide access to counselling supports to address financial position, overall business health, mental health, labour, and supply chain. Potential to access labour market partnerships and funding to address these challenges.

The following question was included ONLY in the Kneehill County Regional survey. At the time of the survey, the Government released its relaunch strategy and the region felt it necessary to examine the responsive by business community. Below are the results.

Q26 Please select the following statements that best suit your business as it relates to Alberta's Relaunch Strategy.



Findings

Majority of businesses feel they are informed and have the necessary requirements related to the re-opening of their business. Businesses will require PPE to reopen with some of them with no access to it and some will require training to meet requirements.

Opportunities to engage with AB Health Services and Government to ensure access to training and PPE as well as assistance with how businesses will reopen their business.



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