



Business Restart Survey Report

JULY 17, 2020

Background

Community Futures (CF) Revelstoke and Business Information Centre partners worked to create a “Business Restart” survey to help gain a better understanding of what specific supports may be needed to aid local businesses in recovery from the CoVID-19 pandemic. CF Revelstoke will take the lead to work with community partners to create an effective approach to supporting business needs based on survey results.

The business restart survey ran from June 10 to 24th and was shared out by direct email and on social media outlets. It is important to note that the survey was administered prior to the Phase 3 opening for our province, meaning interprovincial travel during the time of surveying was still limited to essential travel only within the province.

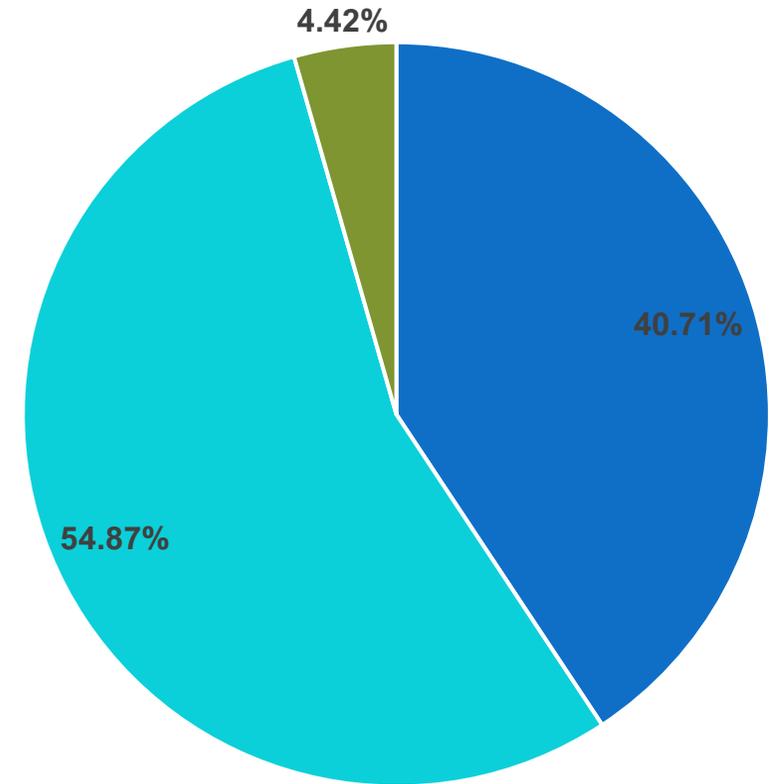
The data from this survey will be shared with community partners to create an effective approach to supporting business needs specific to COVID-19 recovery and the overall resiliency of the community.

We thank the 113 businesses, representing approximately 11% of Revelstoke businesses, that took the time to give us their feedback on successes and struggles they are experiencing.

Question 1

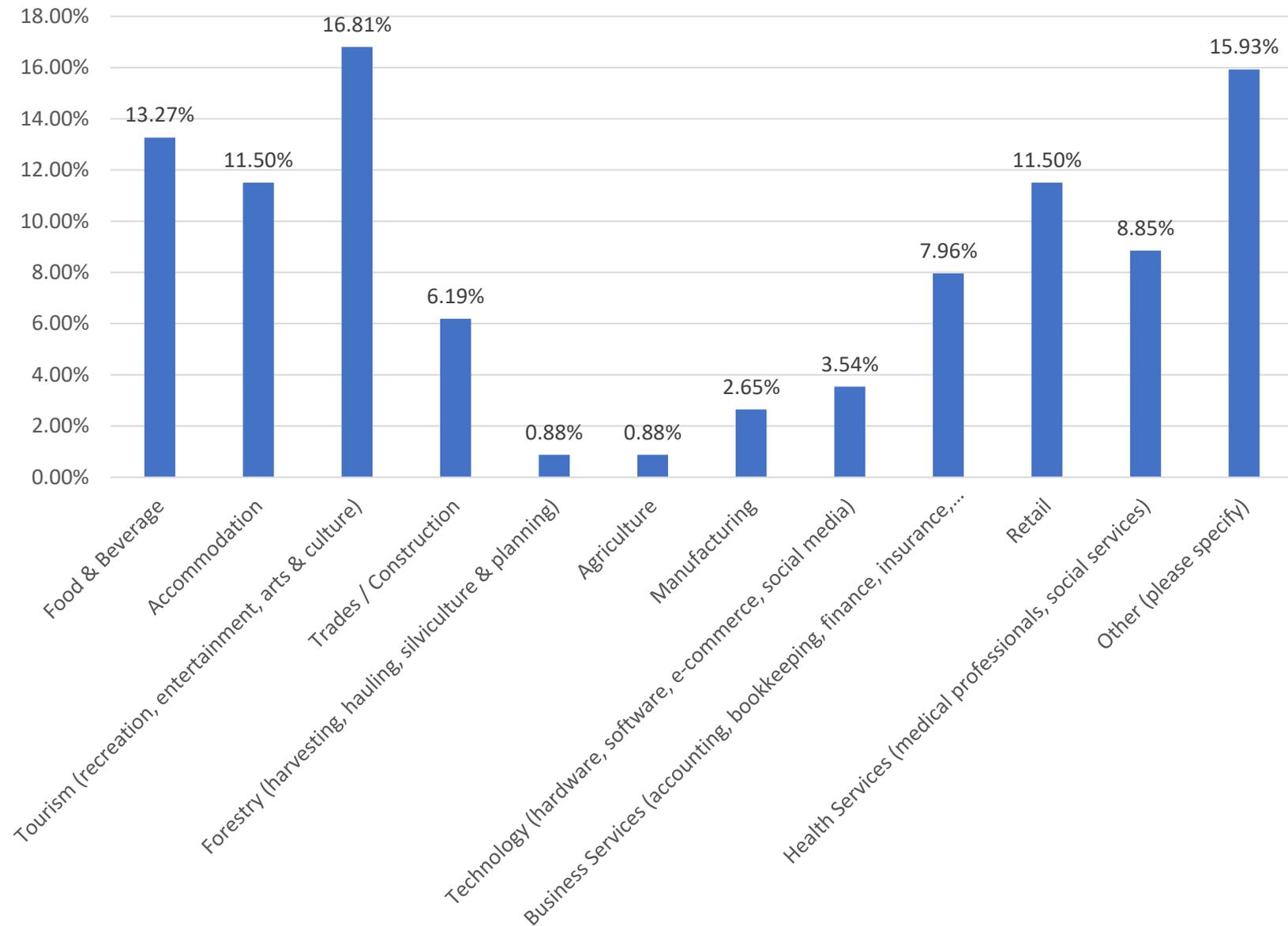
What is your business structure?

- Proprietorship / Partnership
- Limited Company / Corporation
- Not for Profit / Social Enterprise



Question 2

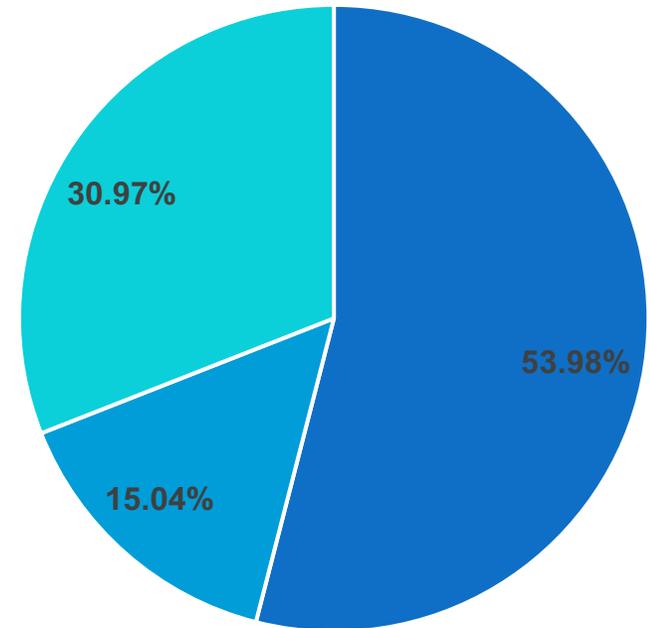
What sector is your business?



Question 3

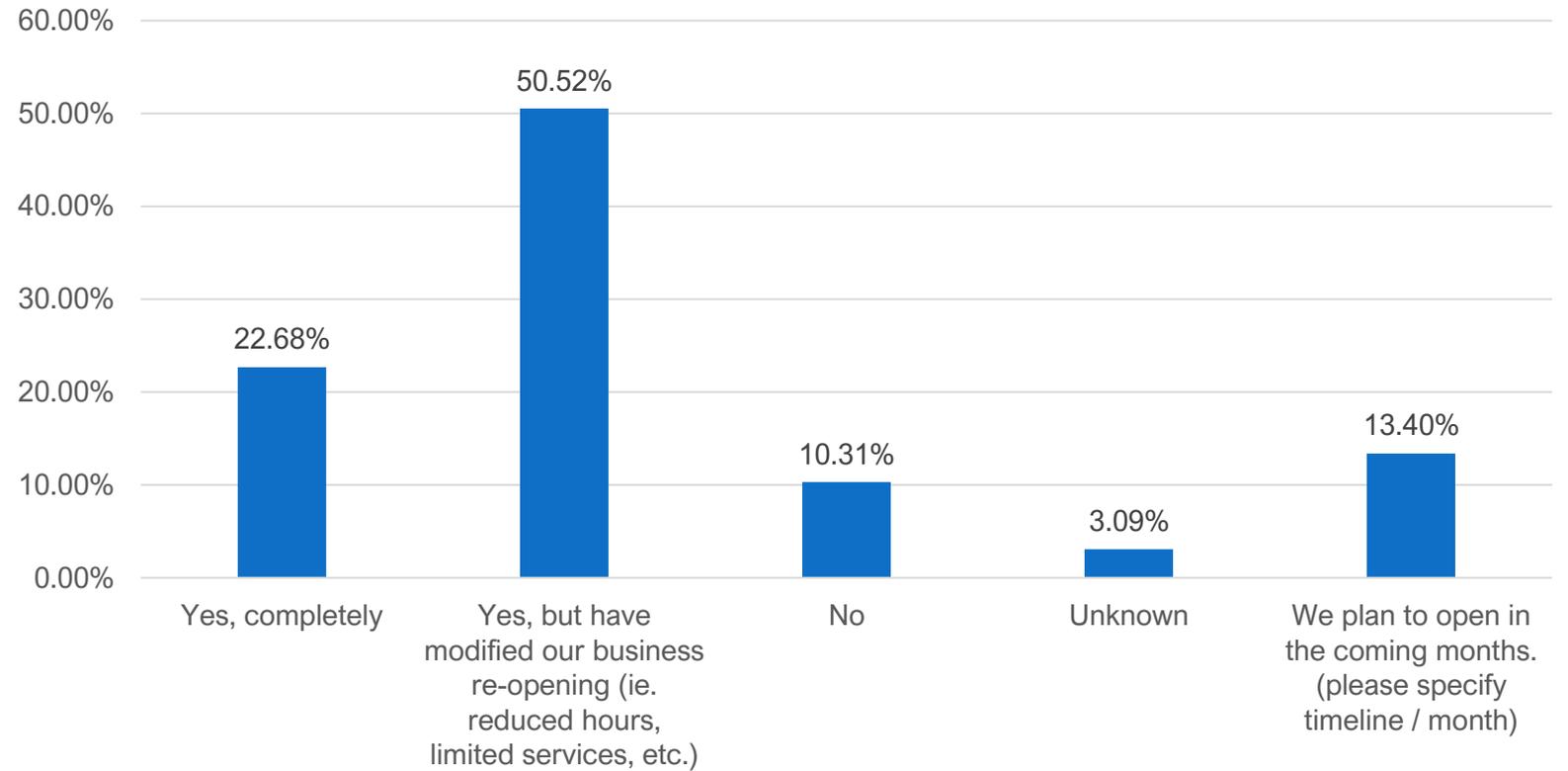
Did your business close during the pandemic?
(March 15 or after)

- Yes, completely
- No
- We modified our business model (ie. take out, curbside, etc)



Question 4

If you answered yes to question #3, have you now re-opened?



Notable Comments

Question 4

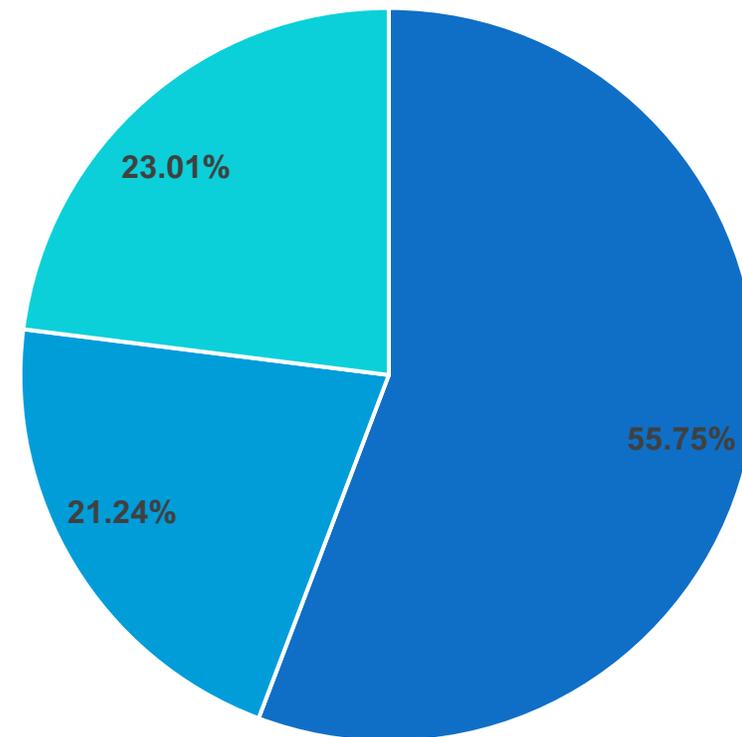
If you answered yes to question #3,
have you now re-opened?

For the businesses that were planning to reopen they varied from end of June, July, early fall, and seasonal businesses to open in the winter months.

Question 5

Have you completed a WorkSafe BC plan?

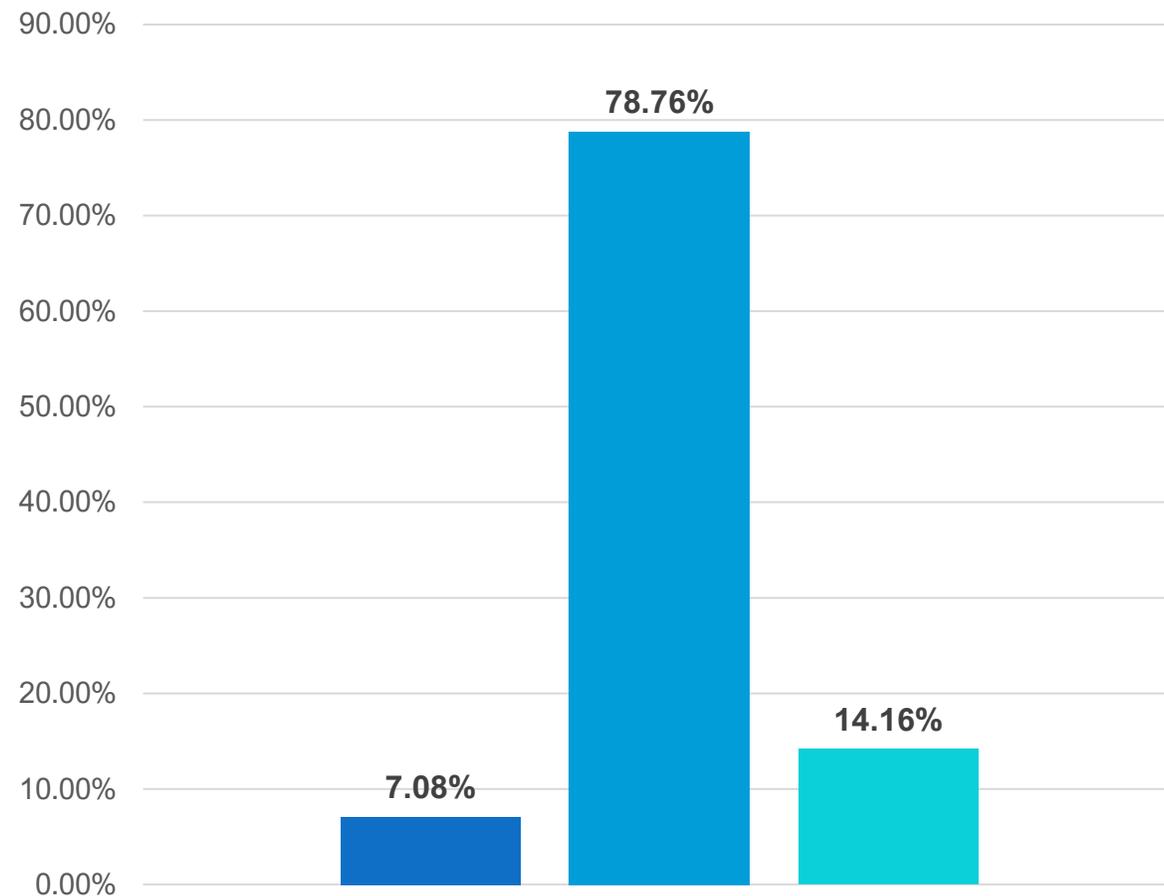
- Yes
- No
- We are in the planning stage / process



Question 6

WorkSafe BC has issued guidelines for safely re-opening your business. Are there any guidelines that you are having or expect to have difficulty implementing? If yes, please provide any details.

- Yes
- No
- If yes, please specify.



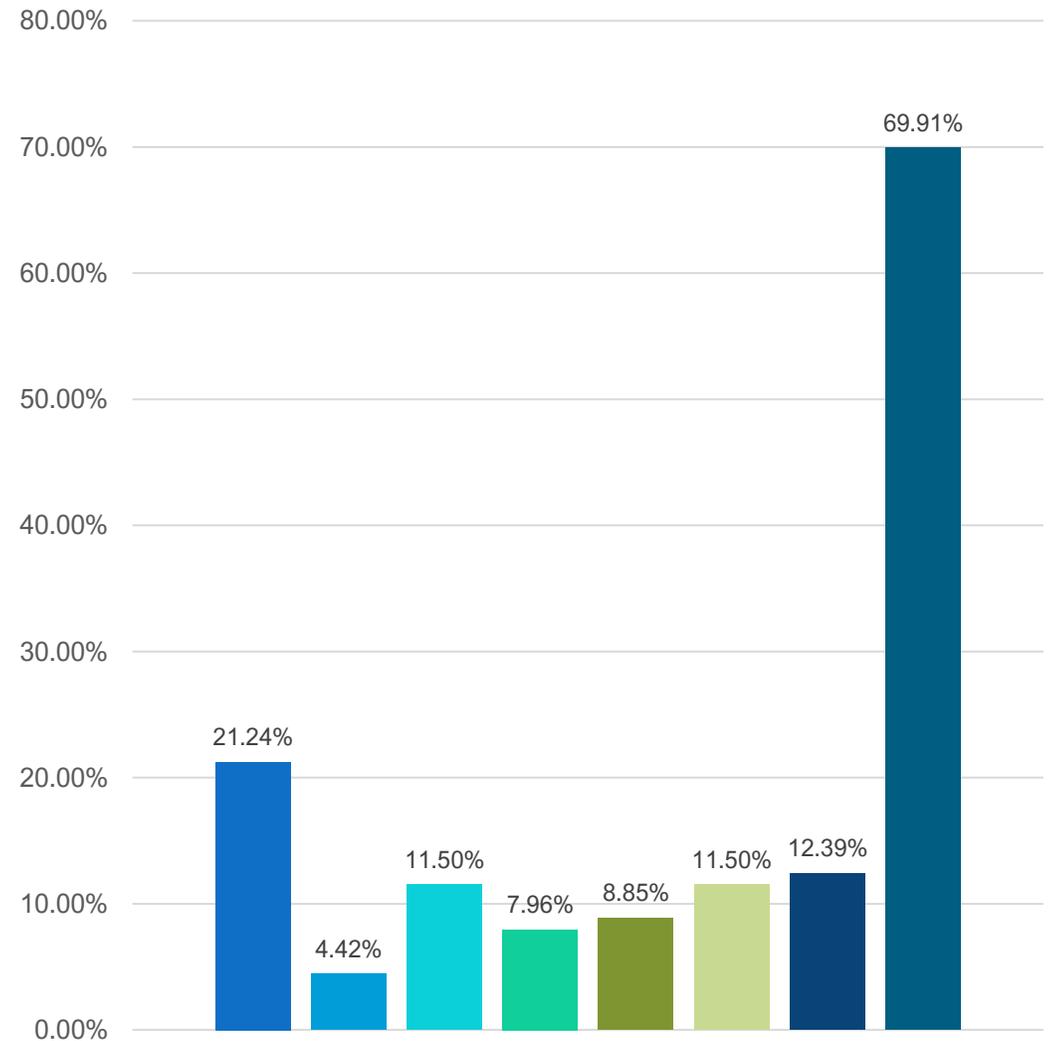
Details Provided from Question 6

- Distancing is simply impossible in our venue. guests refuse to adhere to any recommendations
- Social distancing enforcement, face masks
- We will not be able to reasonably reopen until the 2m spacing requirements are no longer required
- Social distancing is very difficult to make happen 100% of the time.
- We have to greatly limit the number of patients we can see in one day. It is difficult trying to get everyone in that needs to be seen for in-person visits.
- It is challenging to have time to operate and keep up with creating procedures
- Finding the time to record everything
- Not difficult to implement but difficult to sustain profitability
- Social distancing in a childcare setting- toddlers don't understand physical boundaries!
- Driving to remote work sites in vehicle with two or more people
- My business is in live events. From the BC plan, Live events will be the last phase to re-open. This is not likely to occur until a vaccine has been introduced. 2+ years away

Question 7

If your business is not currently open, what is holding you back from re-opening?
(check all that apply)

- Market conditions
- Unclear on re-opening requirements
- Cash flow / working capital
- PPE / disinfection supplies not in place
- Nervous about re-opening
- Lack of staff
- Consumer confidence
- Other (please specify)



Question 7

“Other (please specify)”

Responses indicated that seasonal and tourist-based businesses were having the most difficult time due to travel restrictions and lack of visitors to the community. Additionally businesses are dealing with concerns from employees around their personal safety while working. This poses a challenge to businesses re-opening.

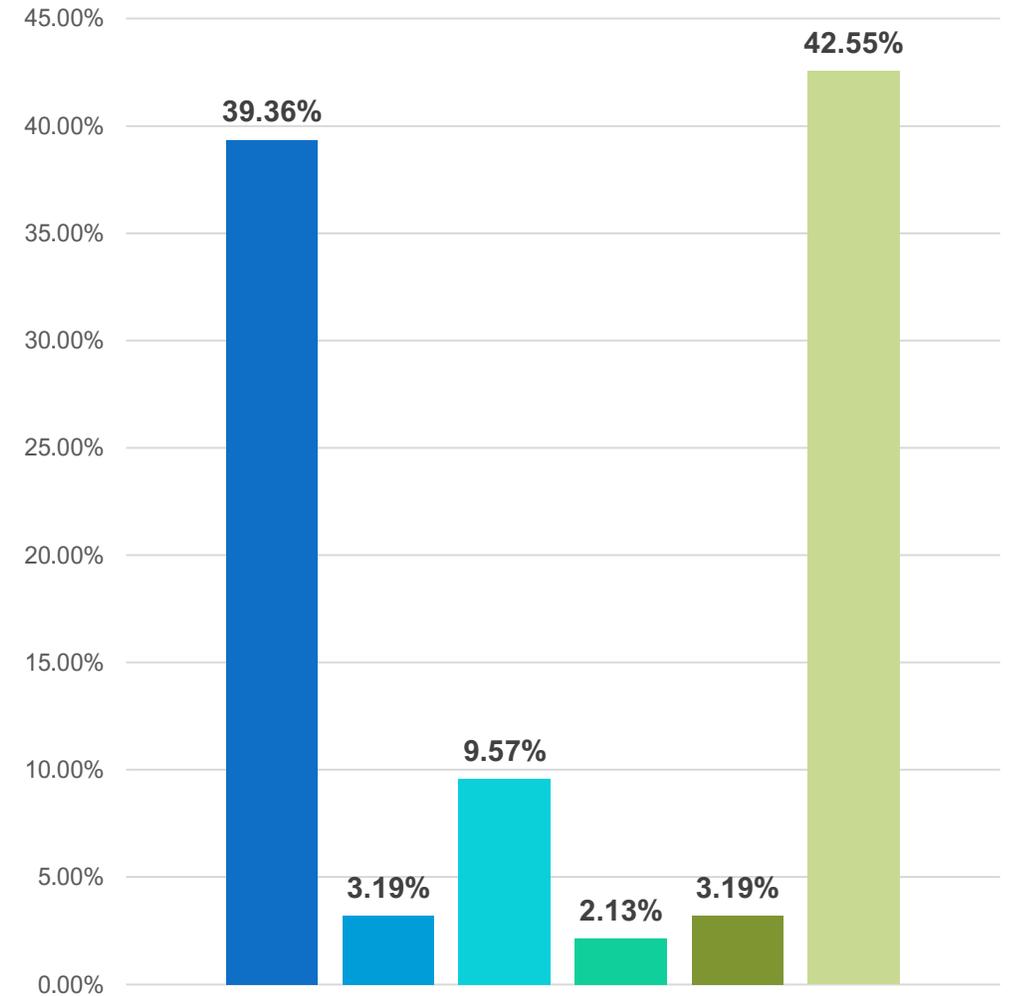
“Many employers are struggling attracting frontline employees because the earning potential has been seriously eroded and risk has gone up. So inviting a bunch of tourism into your business without very capable staff who feel safe and can handle more stress doesn’t make sense.”

Question 8

If your business is directly impacted from tourism, please answer this question. If it not impacted by tourism please go to question #9.

Recognizing that all businesses are in a different state of opening, can you provide a time frame of when your business is ready to invite visitors/tourists again?

- Now, we have been open for tourism business
- June 15
- July 1
- August 1
- September 1
- Other (please specify)



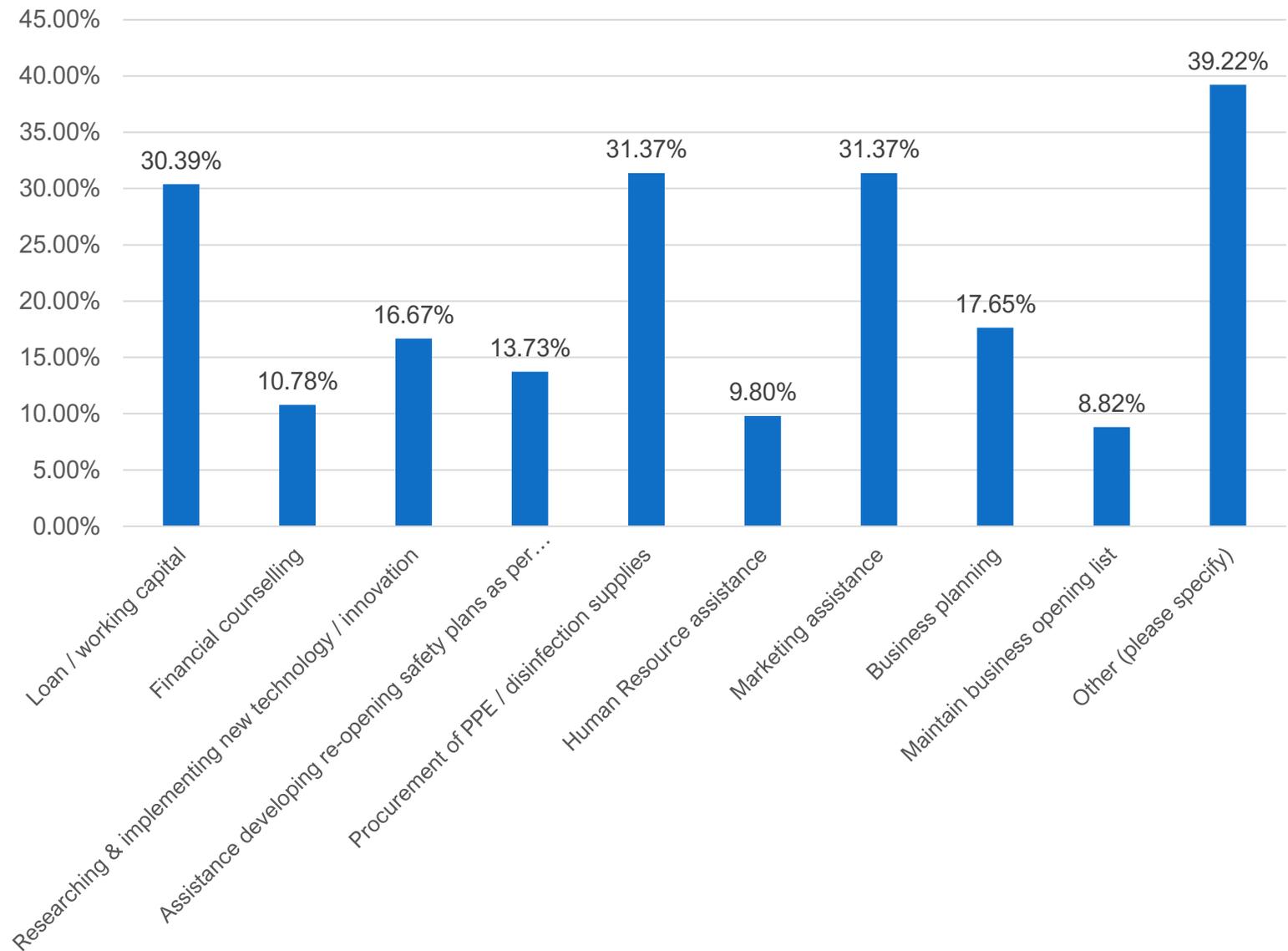
Question 8

“Other (please specify)”

Comments noted that many respondents had winter only business models. Other businesses are facing possible permanent closure due to travel restrictions and lack of customers.

Question 9

What assistance would help your business recover? (Please check all that apply)



Please provide any additional information not covered in this survey.

There were 24 additional comments submitted by businesses and the consistent themes are captured below:

- Extension of wage subsidy from the federal government; changes to CERB (employees not wanting to come back to work)
- Let visitors know the community is open and they are welcome
- City to communicate more on business fees and what has been waived or reduced; speed of license approval
- Challenge of purchasing masks specifically
- Mental health supports for business owners
- Tourism focused business support (mainly winter operators)

Do you have other comments or feedback as it relates to Revelstoke businesses reopening? Email info@revelstokecf.com

Key Findings

- Businesses are encountering difficulty in implementing physical distancing guidelines while at the same time having their business operate in a viable manner.
- Restrictions on travel has greatly impacted several local business. Tourism focused businesses consistently identified the challenges of being able to open without visitors.
- Staff safety and their willingness to come back to work (CERB) is a significant challenge.
- The City of Revelstoke was mentioned numerous times in qualitative responses suggesting the need for clearer communication on opportunities available to the business community (i.e. patio licenses).
- Working Capital, Procurement of PPE and Marketing were identified as the top three areas businesses require assistance. Business Planning followed by Innovation and technology are also notable areas where businesses could use support. Mental health was identified in comments several times as another area business require support.
- The proposed Mackenzie Avenue Closure was only mentioned in two individual comments in the entire survey suggests that this is an issue that is not a high priority to local businesses

Recommendations

Based on key findings CF Revelstoke recommends:

- The business community continues receiving the proper information and education they need for their restart efforts. Community Futures and other community partners need to continue communicating available supports.
- Marketing assistance related to the need for a community campaign about Revelstoke being a welcoming and safe place to visit.
- The City of Revelstoke continue to evolve their communication with the business community.
- Inventory and communicate available resources to support businesses in identifying and implementing new technology to help their business recover (i.e.. Basin Business Advisor Technology adoption).
- Further development of mental health supports for entrepreneurs.
- Working in collaboration with Tourism Revelstoke to engage with tourism focused businesses to better understand their unique business needs and provide support.
- Lobbying the Federal Government to extend the Wage Subsidy program for businesses.
- Developing a local mentorship group to support businesses in planning their physical distancing measures.

Updates

A limitation of the survey is the timeliness of gathering the feedback and reporting back the findings given the ever-changing business climate. Since the survey closed, the Province announced Phase 3 of the BC Restart Plan welcoming domestic visitors to travel safely in BC this summer. There have been many other initiatives put into motion that align with what we heard from the business community through this survey:

- Wage subsidy extension - announcement from Federal Gov't July 13
- City of Revelstoke developed information sheet with RTF input on patio and parklet extensions
- Small Business BC launched a [non-medical PPE Marketplace](#) to help businesses source PPE
- Revelstoke Recovery Task Force has initiated a “Welcome Visitors” video project to feature local businesses welcoming the travelling public to Revelstoke
- Mental health workshops hosted by CF Revelstoke – March, April & May 2020 were successful; workshops now planning Fall 2020 workshops

Questions?

If you have any questions on this survey or would like more information please contact info@revelstokecf.com