

REVELSTOKE.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

February 11, 2021

Re: January 2021 COVID-19 Survey Results from our Business Community

The purpose of this report is to:

- Inform Mayor and Council of the state of our business community in a timely manner, by sharing the results of the Black Press survey that was supported by the Chamber. A deeper delve into these findings is currently underway and will also be made available.
- Inform Mayor and Council of some of the response measures that the Chamber has spearheaded, supported and implemented.

The Survey:

The Chamber has worked in partnership with Black Press to support their survey to Revelstoke's businesses. This is the second in a series of surveys performed by Black Press since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020. The Chamber has helped to increase circulation, encourage participation, craft the content to garner targeted insights, and analyze the data.

Local businesses were invited via Facebook and the January Chamber newsletter to answer 15 questions between January 12- 22, 2021.

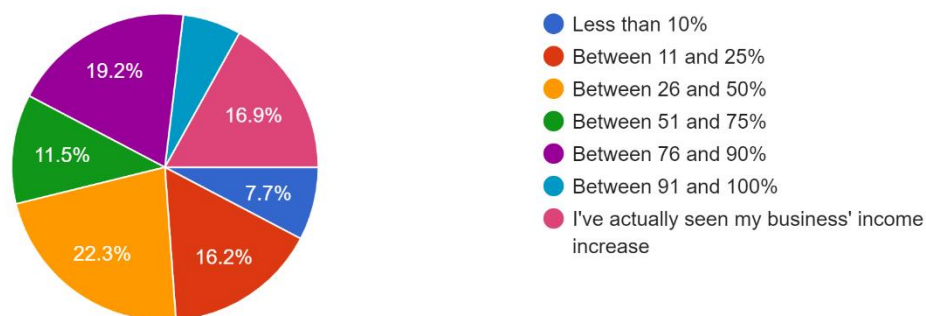
Summary:

There were 134 businesses that participated in the survey.

37% of respondents suffered a Year over Year (YOY) loss of revenue of between 51-100%.

How much has your business's income decreased due to COVID-19?

130 responses



There were 609 job losses YOY (1867 employees December 15, 2019 vs 1258 employees December 15, 2020).

The respondents of this survey reported total expenditures of \$481,800 for COVID-19 safety protocols and equipment.

REVELSTOKE.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The following support measures were used: mental health 7%, financial planning 11%, business strategy 15%, financial support 71%.

Respondents reported that they did not find the help they needed in the following areas: mental health 21%, financial planning 19%, business strategy 31%, financial support 56%.

72% of surveyed businesses anticipate their business will survive. 5% said they will not survive, and 23% don't know. 15% said existing/promised support measures should sustain them, 27% said more government support is needed, 40% just need to be allowed to return to regular capacity once the virus is contained.

Some of the greatest concerns were finances (19%), health and safety (13%), lack of tourism (7%).

A Snapshot of each Sub-Sector:

A clearer picture is formed by identifying the trends specific to each sub-sector.

Accommodators: 14 respondents

12 of 14 had to close temporarily, for reasons related to COVID-19. 6 of 14 are worried about the future of their business. 5 of 14 reported 76-90% loss of revenue YOY. 10 of 14 report that this second wave is harder on them financially than the first. These accommodators reported that in Dec 2019 they employed 183 employees, compared to 82 employees in Dec 2020 (101 job losses, workforce decreased by 56%).

Restaurants: 21 respondents

5 closed for exposures. 5 had to close more than once. 5 are reporting staggering losses of between 75-90% revenue losses YOY, and 3 reported YOY revenue loss of 51-75%. The workforce decreased 31% from 494-341 YOY. Notably, the 21 restaurants reported that they have collectively spent \$74,330 (avg \$3539) on COVID-19 safety protocols. 17 are worried about their businesses' future.

Retail: 24 respondents

The retail sector appears to be stable. 7 reported losses of YOY of 11-25%, and 7 reported loss of 26-50%. Retail is reporting job YOY job losses at 10% (100 vs 90). \$50,000 (avg \$2083) was spent for COVID-19 protocols by these 24 businesses collectively. 21 expressed confidence in their businesses' viability.

Tourism: 14 respondents

Those identifying as tourism businesses are worried about their future (12 of 14). These 14 businesses reported \$68,000 (avg \$4857) of costs for COVID-19 protocols, and the job losses were staggering (303-96 or 68% YOY). 5 of these businesses report a loss of revenue of 75-90% YOY, and 4 report a loss of 91-100%. (9 of 14 have suffered revenue loss of over 75%). This is one of the most concerning statistics to be confirmed by this exercise.

Construction: 11 respondents

Construction businesses are performing strongly. 5 are reporting that revenues have increased compared to 2019. 7 of these businesses reported no closures due to COVID-19. The workforce increased from 26-29 YOY.

REVELSTOKE.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Some have expressed concern about the supply chain reliability. A total of only \$400 was spent on COVID-19 protocols (avg \$36 per business).

Finance: 4 respondents

The respondents report a total of \$4600 spent on protocols (avg \$1150), and their workforce stable. They are concerned about the viability of all businesses as their own success depends on the status of our business community.

Personal Care: 6 respondents

These businesses were all forced to close due to health orders, but 5 of 6 had to close only once. 1 closed permanently. Revenue losses vary, YOY employee numbers stable, increasing from 14-18. Average COVID-19 protocol expenditure was \$1141 (\$6850 total).

Health: 8 respondents

6/8 are worried about their businesses' futures. All 8 closed once due to COVID-19. 1 closed permanently, and only 1 closed more than once. There was no consistent trend for comparing YOY revenues, and the number of employees decreased from 27 to 23. The 8 respondents spent \$78,200 on COVID-19 protocols (avg \$9775). 6 of these businesses received financial support to sustain them.

Additional feedback is available from other businesses that identified their categories as manufacturing, recreation, media, entertainment, child care, auto repair, delivery service, education, food production/farming, agriculture, mini storage, multi-stream logistics, pet services and rental equipment. This data was not yet analyzed at the time of report submission.

Conclusion:

The findings of this survey confirm the qualitative observations by the Chamber. Anecdotal feedback has painted a picture of a business community that is thriving in some areas and suffering in others. Construction is strong, and accommodators and tourism operators have sustained considerable revenue loss. Food and beverage is performing at a medium to slow pace, and retailers show reasonable stability. Our business owners remain hopeful but have faced harsh challenges over the past year.

Response Measures from the Chamber

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber has focussed on key areas of support for its members and the business community at large;

- Education:
 - Free webinars and engagement sessions to connect businesses with speakers to offer key information.
 - Chartered Professional Accountant
 - Lawyer, including Immigration specialist
 - Insurance Branch Manager

REVELSTOKE.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- Elected officials, including MLA Doug Clovechok and MP Rob Morrison
- Export Navigator to highlight how businesses can pivot and expand operations
- Social Media marketing
- Community Futures Revelstoke Outreach Contractor
- Communication:
 - Committed stewardship of our Facebook Page and informative newsletters/emails to our members to share the latest updates from the Public Health Officer, updates on financial support measures, education opportunities
 - Positive, informative and careful messaging to the community to encourage a culture of supportiveness and a calm approach.
- Networking:
 - Bringing business owners together online to offer crucial opportunities to connect with others
- Resource tools to deploy during peak crises such as lockdowns and the clusters/spikes that ensued:
 - Business Openings List via the RTF. A reference tool to inform residents how to support our businesses
 - RevylInfo Facebook Page, for businesses to share their operational updates
- Creative Solutions to address hardships on certain sectors
 - RevySell Takeover- a virtual Black Friday Event in response to the sudden cancellation of Moonlight madness. One retailer reported over 80 transactions from this event. This concept sparked Community Futures Revelstoke's idea for the Revy Open for Business FB group.
 - Revy Open for Business initiative from Community Futures, which the Chamber supported with conceptual input and graphic design.
 - Ongoing collaboration with Community Futures and their Outreach Contractor to deliver projects to support our businesses
- Health and Safety:
 - Distributed 20,000 REYV. masks from the Visitor Information Centre, while collecting almost \$10,000 in cash donations for the Community Connections Food Bank
 - Distributing 25,000 4-ply disposable masks from the Visitor Information Centre
 - Addressing concerns from the community regarding businesses and compliance. Follow-up using a support approach and an offer of resources.
 - REYV. Rules poster distribution and support for design