



#cowichanstrong

COWICHAN COVID-19 BUSINESS SURVEY #1

Survey Dates: May 19 to 27, 2020

Results Published: June 16, 2020

This Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) was undertaken to assess the impact of the COVID-19 event on Cowichan business operations. The research was collectively undertaken by the CVRD and the #cowichanstrong partnership. The results have generated a Cowichan-specific snapshot that can be used to:

- Identify local business needs at a point in time
- Feed into regional economic recovery planning processes
- Allow the CVRD to lobby the Provincial Government on behalf of Cowichan businesses
- Provide data to support the work of local economic development organizations

This is the first in a series of surveys that will be launched over the coming three months to assess the progress of economic recovery within the regional district.

Key Findings:

Impacts on Cowichan Businesses

Cowichan Businesses have been sharply impacted by COVID-19.

- **56%** have **temporarily/indefinitely shut down**
- 3% (2) of the 70 businesses surveyed have closed their doors permanently
- **62%** seeing **revenue reductions of at least 75%**, compared with April of 2019
- **54%** have **reduced staff** from pre COVID-19 levels
- **37%** experienced disruptions to the **supply chain** they depend on to operate their business

Business Response

Every business surveyed has changed their business model in some way as a result of COVID-19.

- **30%** have incorporated **online ordering** options
- **24%** now offering **delivery** options
- 19% of businesses were allowing their workers to work remotely

Long-term Changes to Business Model

*Following COVID-19 changes to the business model that businesses intend to keep:

- **33%** plan for **increased participation in the digital economy**/other remote ordering options
- **36%** will keep **increased sanitation** procedures and other health precautions
- 11% expect ongoing challenges related to reduced occupancy

* The themes identified here have been drawn from responses to open ended questions. Every effort has been made to accurately reflect the spirit of the business owners' responses.



#cowichanstrong

Greatest Challenges for Businesses/Resiliency

The **greatest challenges** for businesses in returning to regular business operations are:

- **Consumer Confidence (32%), Financial (35%), Operational/Health & Safety (57%) ***
- **41 %** identified that they do **not have the tools be resilient** to future economic shocks

Mental and Physical Wellbeing of Business Owners and Staff

*Business owners identified the ways the event has **affected the wellbeing, both mentally and physically**, of business owners (and staff). The responses have been summarized.

- **26%** either feel exhausted/have no energy/overwhelmed, **experience anxiety, or depression**
- **31%** are either **stressed or very stressed**, with 3% experiencing stress related illness
- **13 %** have been **severely negatively impacted** by the event
- 11% expressed that they or their staff were fearful/worried to resume work
- **29 %** identify **no impact**/minimal impact, that they are feeling resilient, or that they “now see the light at the end of the tunnel”

Vision for the Future

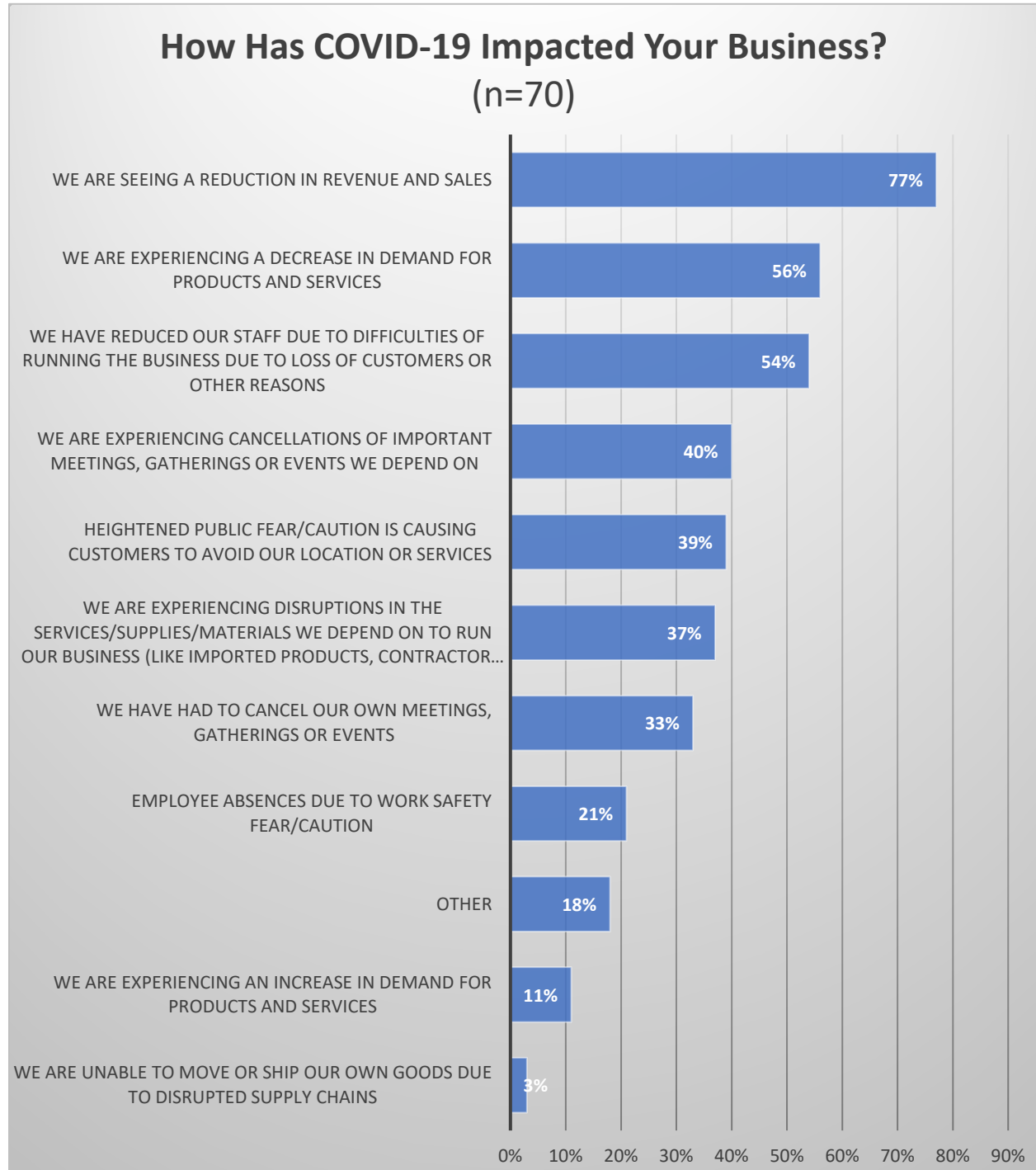
* *“What is your vision for the community we build together as we emerge from this event?”*

- **30%** identified the desire to **build community** coming out of this crisis
- **24%** want support for **buying locally**
- **16%** is hoping that public at large will be **understanding, compassionate and show kindness** to the business community in light of all the struggles all are facing

* The themes identified here have been drawn from responses to open ended questions. Every effort has been made to accurately reflect the spirit of the business owners' responses.

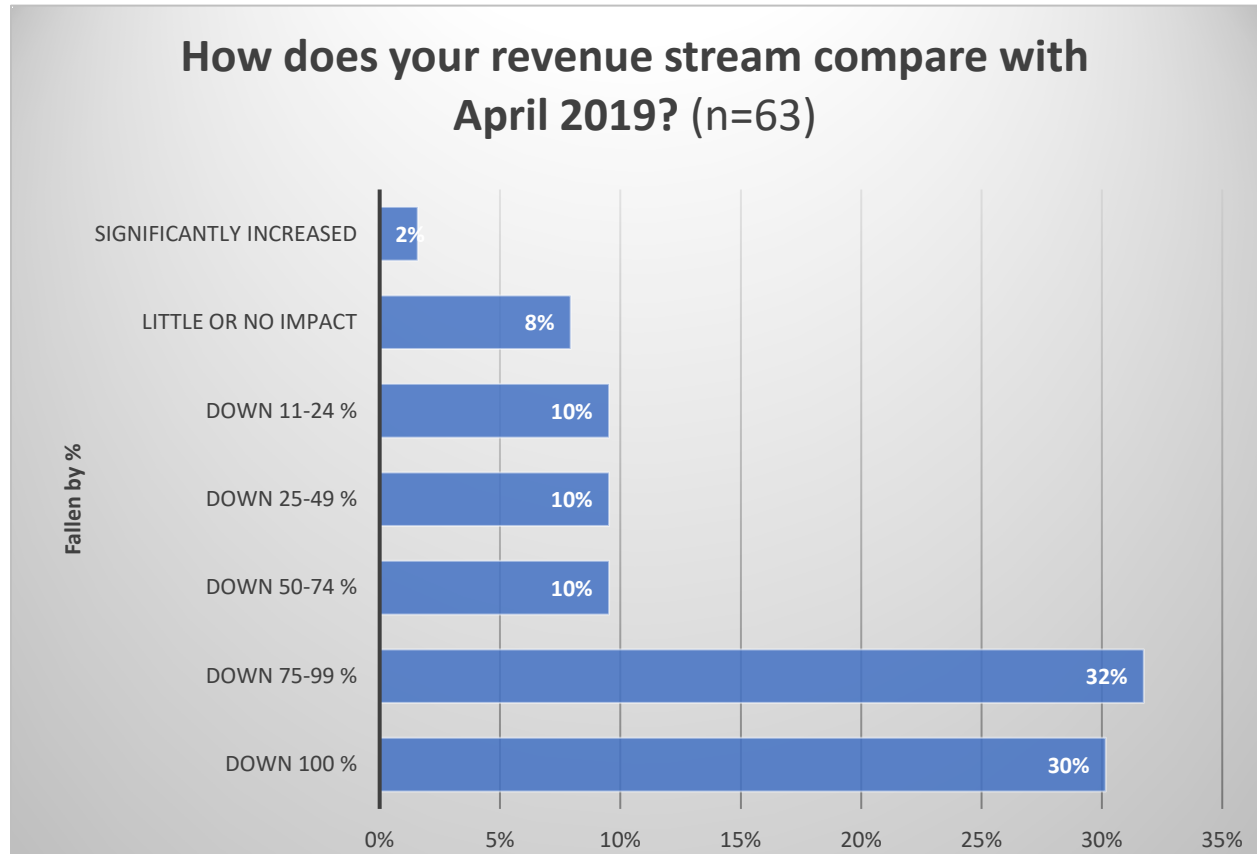


#cowichanstrong

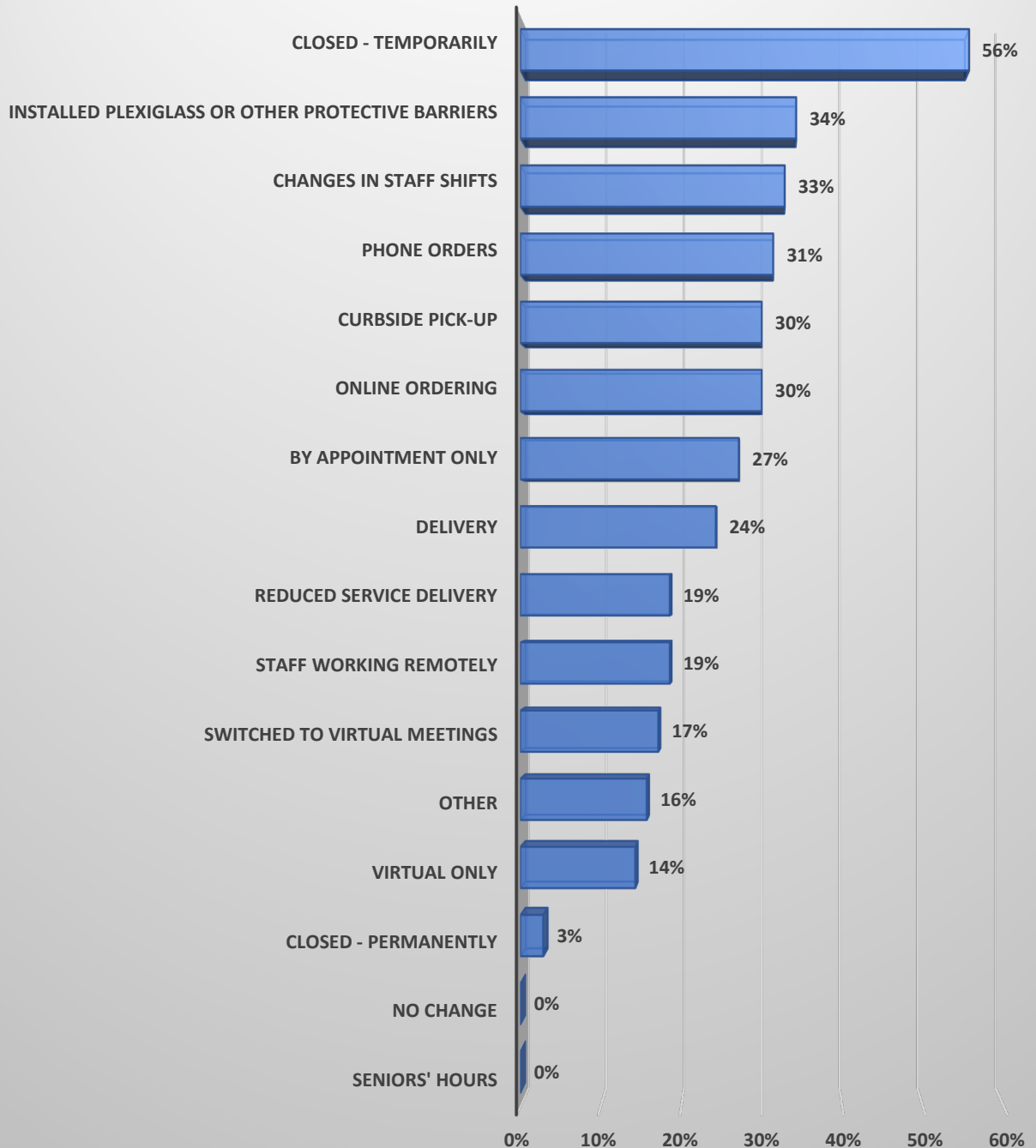




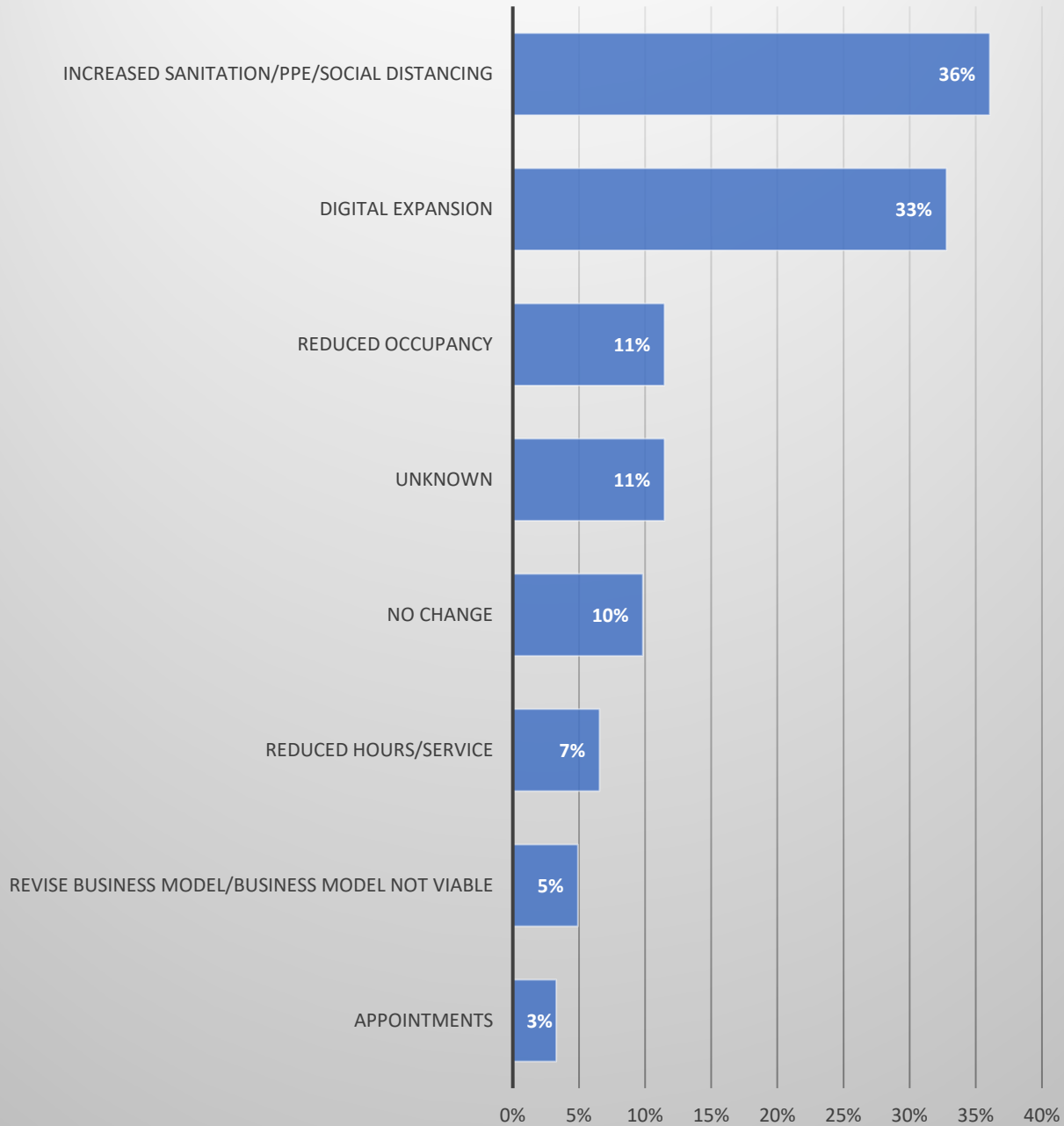
#cowichanstrong



How have you changed your business model to adapt to this crisis? (n=70)

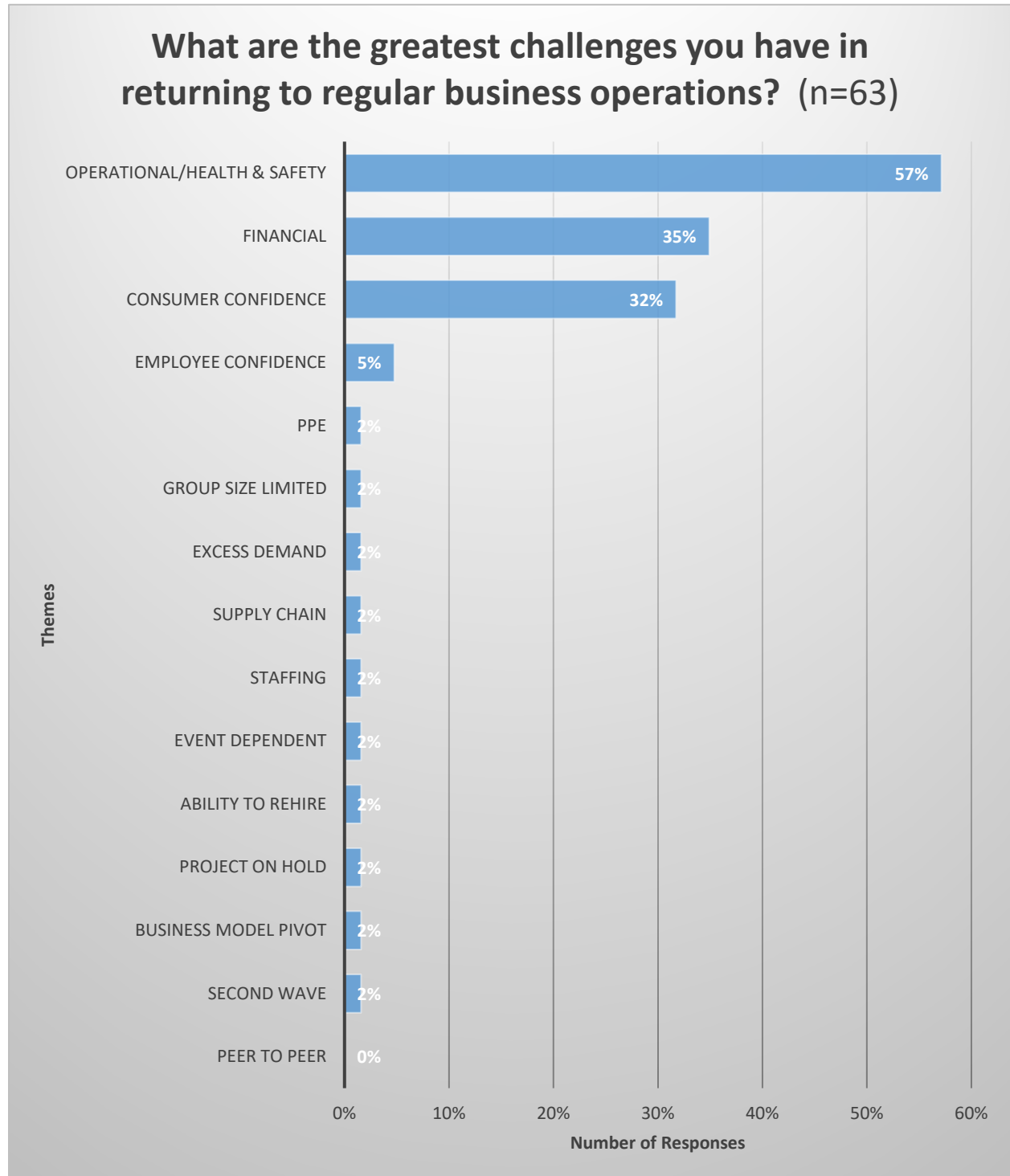


What changes to your business model do you intend to keep following COVID-19? (n=61)

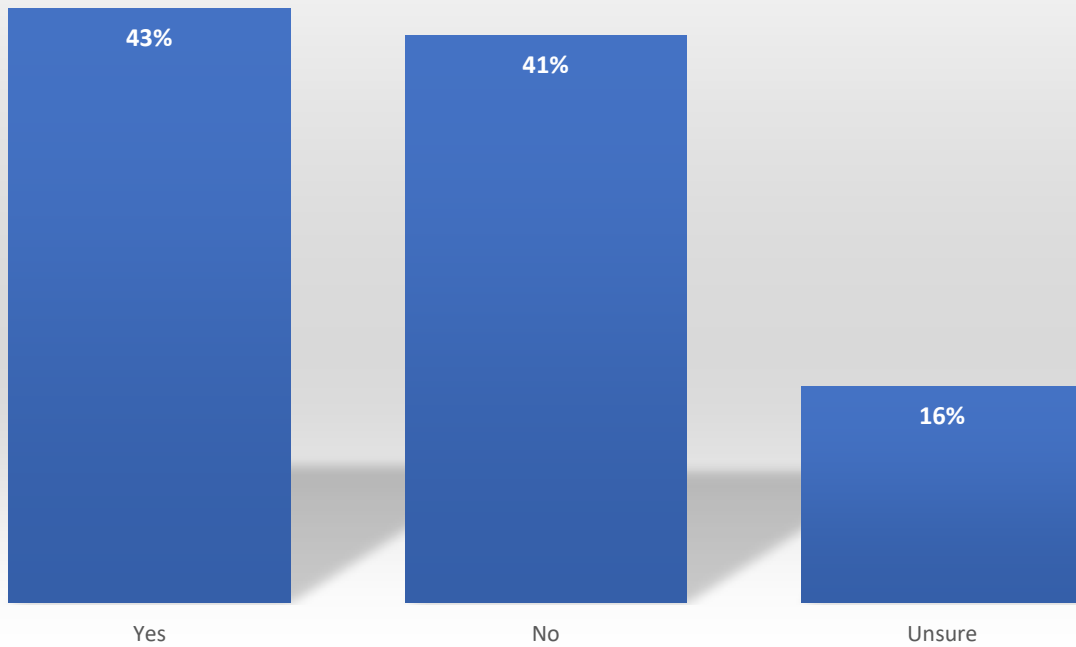




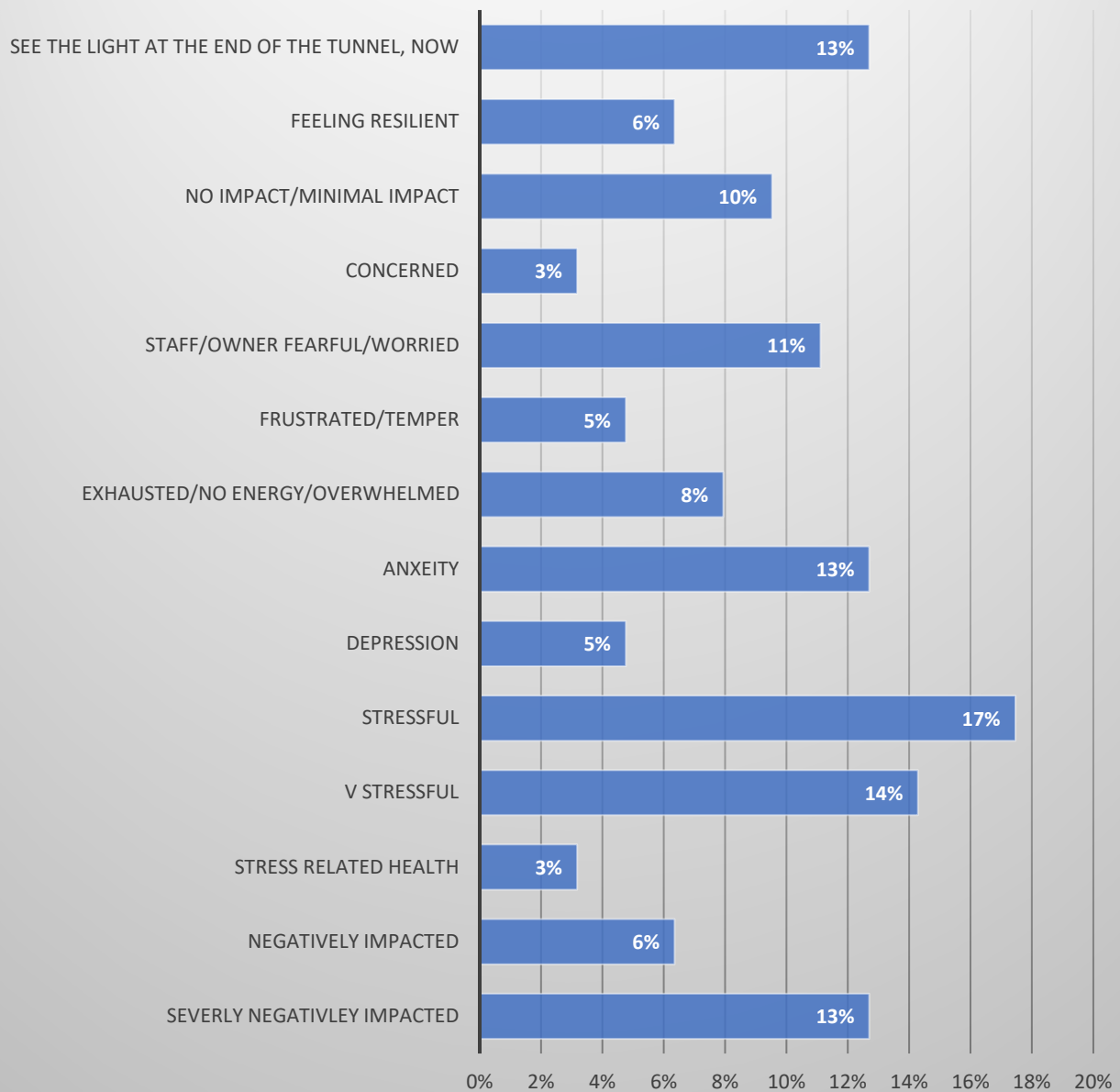
#cowichanstrong

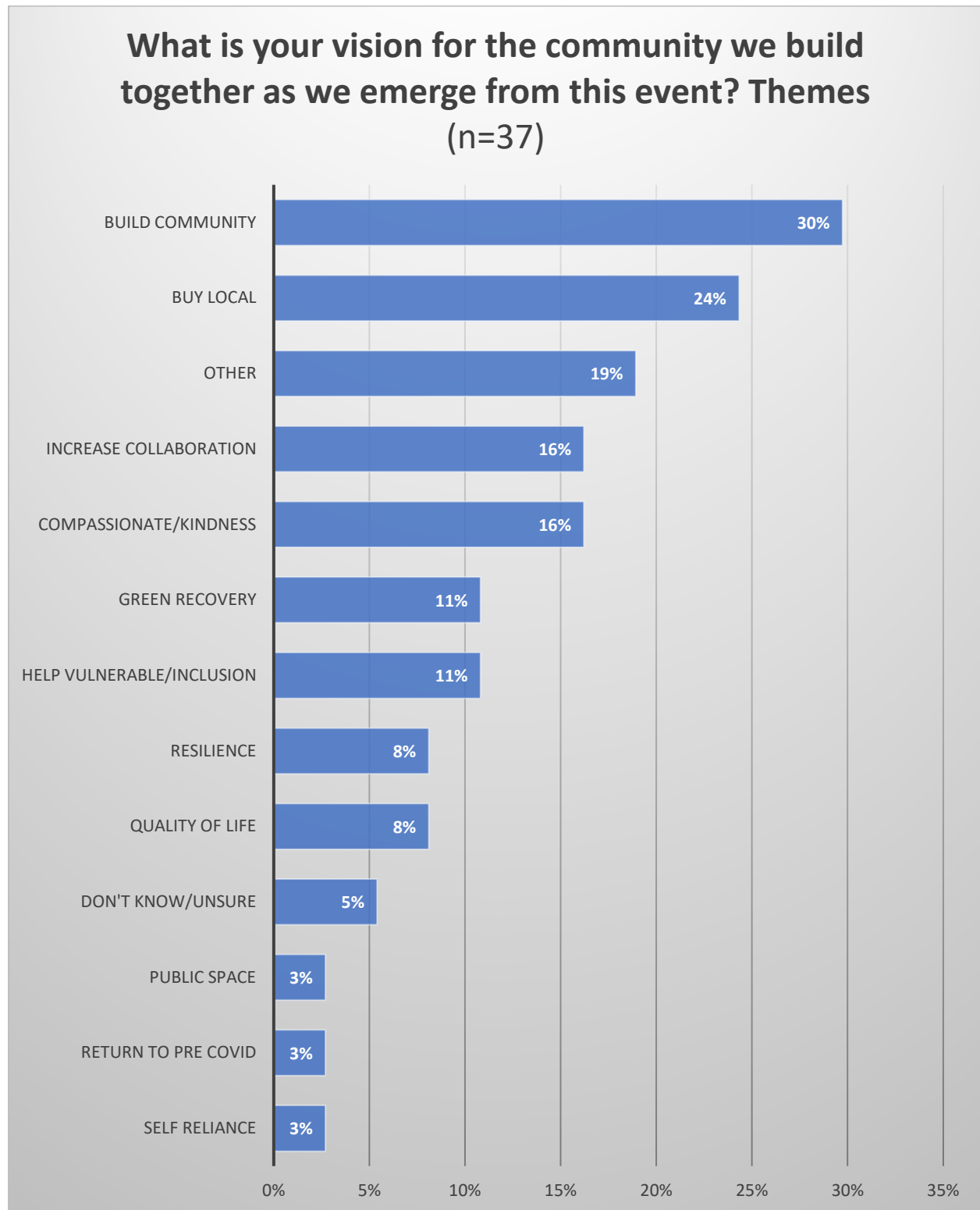


Do you have the tools with which to plan to make your business resilient to future economic shocks? (n=51)

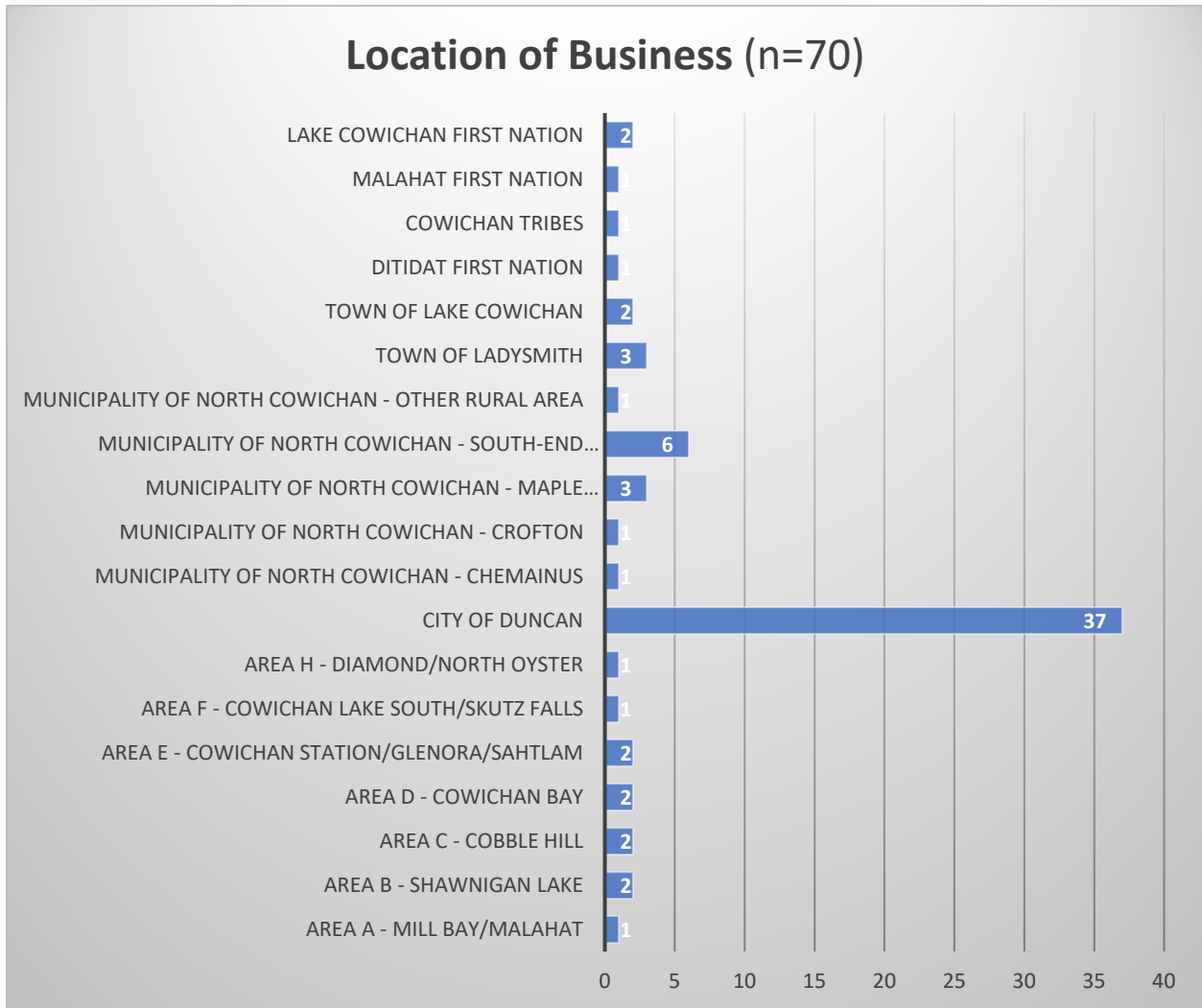


**How has this event affected the wellbeing, both mentally and physically, of yourself or your staff?
Themes (n=63)**





Appendix A: Firms Surveyed





#cowichanstrong

Which of the Following Best Describes Your Business Sector?

