



BACKGROUND

A top priority during the COVID-19 crisis is to reduce the negative impact it has on local business. To help achieve this, we launched a **Business Impact Survey** which was directly aimed at the Town of Olds business community. Information regarding the opportunity to participate in the survey was shared with the business community through local business networks, social media, radio, the local newspaper, and an invitation to participate was sent **directly** to approximately 600 emails. The goal of the survey was to ask the business community how the town could further support local businesses. In addition, we hoped to gather information that could inspire, uplift, and help others. The 8-question survey was launched on April 21, 2021 and closed on April 28, 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS

A diverse cross-section of the business community was represented in the survey with 98 responses received. The survey indicates that the pandemic has had varying degrees of financial impact to businesses. 8% stated that their bottom-line was completely impacted, 28% responded to having a moderate impact, and 66% of respondents indicated only a slight impact or an actual improvement to their bottom line. 77% of respondents indicated that their immediate business needs have been addressed but noted supply chain issues and changes in provincial health guidelines were among their biggest challenges.

From the list of business supports offered by the town, programs that put dollars directly in the hands of business owners were the most popular, with waiving the annual resident business license fee and the re-opening grant being the most popular.

When asked about experiences within the community that have provided inspiration and hope, the general theme throughout the responses were that most people have been respectful of COVID-19 protocols, they have enjoyed seeing positive messaging and the feeling of community support, as well as seeing the businesses ban together to “support local”.

Areas where businesses have built resilience included increasing online marketing and their social media presence, offering of appointments and programs, and curbside pick-up.

As anticipated, frustration was expressed about government policies, changing public health measures and controversy regarding COVID-19 itself. As we have seen in this survey and over the past 16 months, COVID-19 is a highly divisive subject, with a wide range of perspectives.

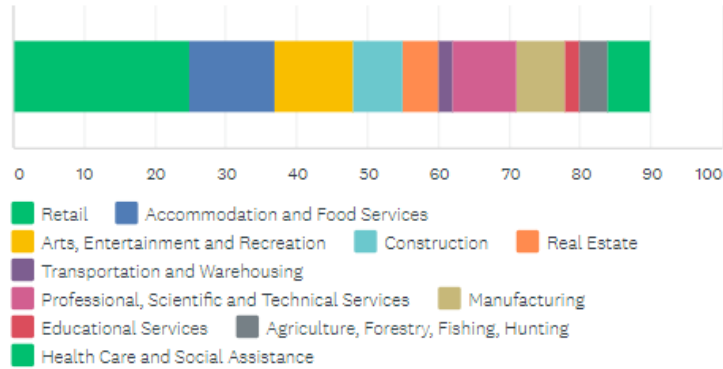
TANGIBLE ACTIONS

The feasibility of feedback received from this report will be reviewed by Administration and recommendations will be brought forward at a future date.

Question 1

What Business Sector are you in?

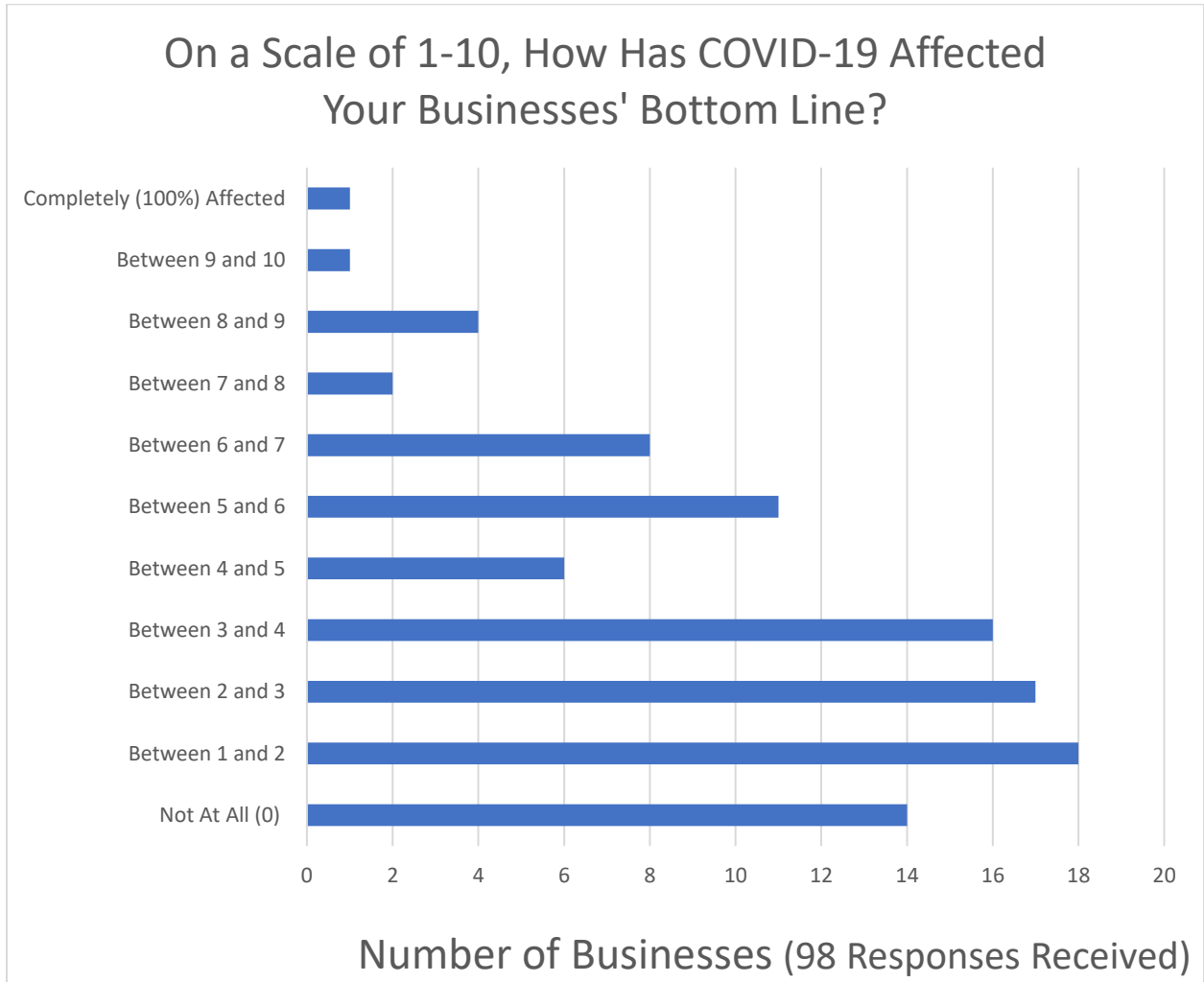
Answered: 78 Skipped: 20



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|----|
| ▼ Retail | 32.05% | 25 |
| ▼ Accommodation and Food Services | 15.38% | 12 |
| ▼ Arts, Entertainment and Recreation | 14.10% | 11 |
| ▼ Construction | 8.97% | 7 |
| ▼ Real Estate | 6.41% | 5 |
| ▼ Transportation and Warehousing | 2.56% | 2 |
| ▼ Professional, Scientific and Technical Services | 11.54% | 9 |
| ▼ Manufacturing | 8.97% | 7 |
| ▼ Educational Services | 2.56% | 2 |
| ▼ Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting | 5.13% | 4 |
| ▼ Health Care and Social Assistance | 7.69% | 6 |
| Total Respondents: 78 | | |

| Other (please specify): | |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| automotive/locksmith | Bowling center |
| Remedial Massage Therapist | Hairstylist |
| Technology | Insurance |
| Massage Clinic | Tire and rims sales and service |
| events - paint workshops | Business Services |
| Accountant | nail salon |
| Taxidermy | Oil And Gas |
| Trades | Beauty (hair salon) |
| Automotive | Hair salon - why doesn't hair, nails, etc have a category? |
| Insurance - The Co-operators | Janitorial |
| Marketing | Oil & Gas |
| towing, boosting, lock-outs, transportation | Retail and on-site technical services |
| Personal Services | Tourism |
| Hairdresser | Door to door sales of Avon and Watkins |
| Lessons and Guided Trips | Florist |

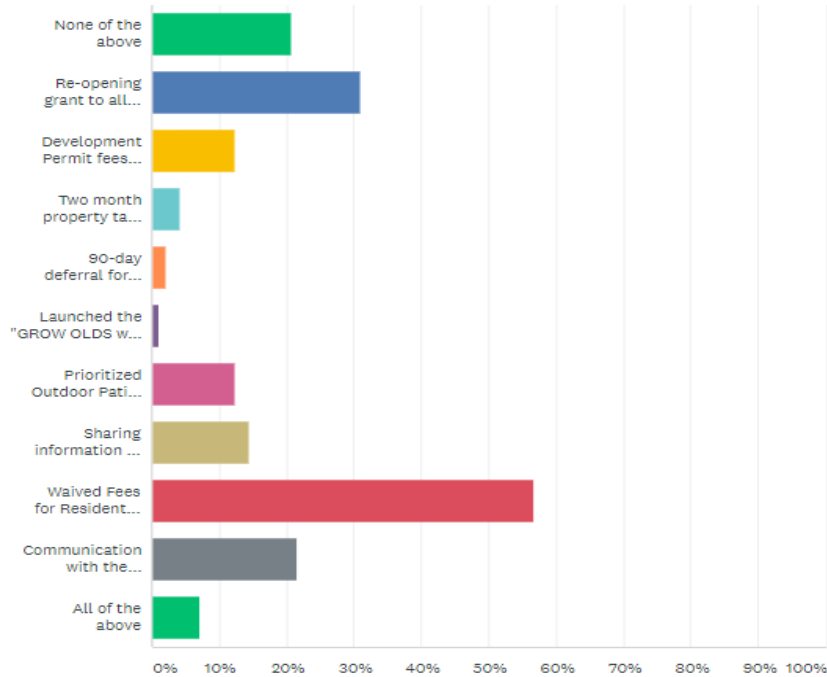
Question 2



Question 3

From the list of Town of Olds initiatives to support businesses thus far, what has meant the most to you?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 1



Other (please specify)

Posting Council meetings on-line - much more convenient way to participant.

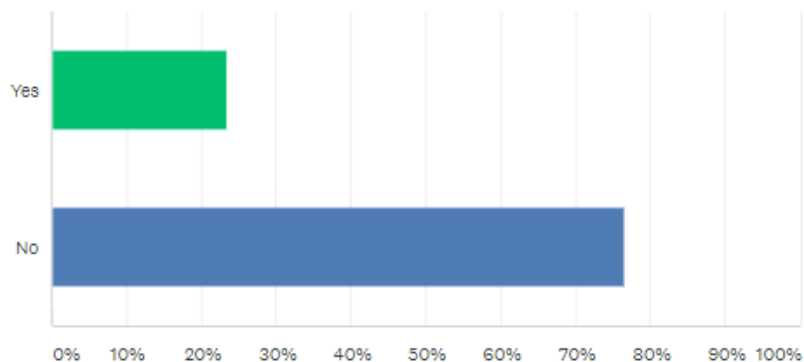
I'm going to be very blunt. If your top initiative is to save small businesses in the town then you've failed terribly. If you didn't say that was your top initiative at the beginning of this survey - I would've guessed that it was to destroy the local economy rather than support it - especially the local privately owned food service and restaurant industry. Every Town initiative related to COVID19 crisis so far has been useless and destructive to the local small business community and the community at large. It hasn't done anything to give people strength and confidence. It has created panic, fear, discrimination and unprecedented stress on business owners that is clearly destroying the small private business sector of the town while driving hoards of people to spend their money at corporate giants like Walmart, Big Pharma drug pushers (Pharmacies), corporate grocery stores, fast "food" stores, dollar stores and other box stores. An outdoor patio in April in Alberta is about the most ridiculous thing i've ever heard of!!! And you support that????????????????? What the heck!!!!!! Waiving fees and deferring taxes are a joke and just prolongs the bleeding for small businesses. The actual support business owners need is a town council who has what it takes to stand up against the obvious government plot to destroy the small business sector. I understand that the town needs to "make everyone happy" but Walmart, Sobeys and Fast Food joints have got exactly what they want; everyone stops shopping at small mom & pop shops because of unjust restrictions and

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| government strong handing and floods the doors to spend their money at these corporate stores which are designed to serve a disconnected, urban-robot culture and destroy the sense of community. Just remember where the profits from Walmart and international corporations goes...not back in the community!!!! What does it matter if you just keep following government rules. All of these programs just cost us more as tax payers and our business and customers will suffer in the long run unless the fear based rules are ignored and businesses and shoppers refuse to follow them. The best way the town can help is to open up completely and support the small businesses by using your influence to prevent AHS from killing the community. Stand up for us!!! Please!!! We don't need handouts and tax deferrals...we need a strong voice. |
| Trades business licences were waived |
| we unfortunately paid for our patio permit just before the town decided to waive the fee. we did not qualify for the reopening grant. |
| Instead of alleviating the stress of running a small business during this challenging time the town of Olds charged \$2000.00 penalty for paying property tax 10 days later than the deadline. |
| Doing all you can as fast as possible for all businesses is critical |
| We did not apply for the Re-Opening Grant, as our business wasn't suffering as much as others, but we feel that this was very beneficial for so many other businesses. |
| recognizing that we are facing unusual circumstances, with unpredictable outcomes - and responding to these as needed. |
| Town infrastructure spending, but need to change rulings to support local business, not leave a gap for outsiders. eg. a company with rate 15% lower takes town work even if their bills are higher from travel or other factors. |
| Only the 1 |
| ITS ALL A SHORT TERM FIX, NOTHING LONG TERM TO HELP BUSINESSES WITH THE COSTS. PUSHING PAYMENTS OR SHORT TERM GRANTS ISN'T A SOLUTION ITS A HINDERANCE TO THE ISSUE |

Question 4

Do you have immediate business needs that you have not been able to address?

Answered: 94 Skipped: 4



If so, explain.

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| Rapid testing for COVID |
| I rob Peter to pay Paul |
| Funding to grow the business. |
| instability - really hard to grow a business when we are opening and closing all the time |
| We need a strong position from the town to support those businesses who are being threatened and shut down by AHS. Without a strong small business community in Olds I feel we are headed toward a town of poverty that looks more like a big trailer court in the walmart parking lot than a thriving community. |
| Marketing on-line programs |
| Expanding my market beyond Alberta |
| I have not been able to go to the Zoo!!!! |
| Material is short due to covid |
| Just finances. We and the theater been closed more then other business in town. And when we were open briefly it was with huge restrictionsre then |
| Reduced hours of work |
| I'm struggling with things starting to fall apart on me and because of the loss of income, I cannot afford to replace. |
| Have closed to follow protocols by AHS. However no income but bills continue |
| Just being able to get the cranes out working so we can keep business open |
| We are still shut down and cannot move fitness/yoga outside completely, with AB weather |
| The on again off again studies at Olds College have really impacted our business. Students don't know if they are going to school or not. |
| Stock and instore supplies are not available when we need them. |
| Can I run fitness classes in the park? |
| How do you address peoples fear. We offer one on one services in close proximity and that does create some fear for people that although they would benefit from the service are scared to use it. |
| I work by myself and have my business for over 30 years, costumers know me and pass on the info to others. |
| Loss of income from choir accompaniment (Olds Community Chorus and June Chittick's Harmonizers) |
| THE PEOPLE AND THEIR INCOMES ARE A HUGE FACTOR OF WHY WE HAVE LOST BUSINESS, THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO SUPPORT LOCAL SO WERE FORCED TO SHOP AT BIG CHAINS. THIS IS NOT RIGHT. |
| Well, it has very limited things to do with town office but for most part, we are struggling with supplies for Patio and later on, with permits. |

Question 5

Have you had experiences within the community that have inspired you or are given you hope? If so, please share.

Answered: 37 Skipped: 61

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| Student Youth Empowerment group spray-painting 54th Ave with inspirational messaging. Fantastic reminder every day to and from work. |
| N/A |
| I have felt the community support both from individuals and from other businesses. |
| No |
| Community is respectful of Covid protocols and generally supportive of them. |
| The people that are supporting local businesses has been encouraging - we felt a lot of support before christmas - not as much now |
| No |
| Yes, the people who do not wear a face diaper and the businesses who choose not to participate in government rules that would destroy their business. That's what gives me hope. |
| Businesses banding together to stay open. |
| Most people seem to be trying to support local |
| No |
| Johnny is still going strong |
| Community support. Other business support. |
| Patios and community coming together |
| Not with this covid |
| Liked seeing the pop up patios around town |
| Loving all the patio set-ups. |
| excellent community support of the restaurant by the residents and town staff. |
| There is always a feeling of support from our community |
| Supporting restaurants during this hard time. |
| I appreciated the creativity of local restaurants to open and expand to patio access since the restriction of indoor dining. |
| Yes, there are some courageous business owners in this town that have dug in to survive in spite of the globalist grandstanding of some of the town council and mayor. |
| We hear and are finding that the community really wants to support local |
| The general positive attitude I've come across |
| Heart goes out to first line workers still unable to get vaccine. |
| Most of our business is shipping to US and rest of Canada. |
| No |
| Most people are pleasant |
| Slowly old customers have started calling again, |
| Nope |
| The Restaurants supporting each other on Social Media and the town fast tracking Patio Permits for them. We all need to support each other! |
| Love the makeshift patios. |

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| No |
| I love the ability of the restaurants to create patio's and keep in operation! |
| FINALLY THE PEOPLE ARE STANDING UP TO THIS NON SENSE, NOW ITS JUST A MATTER OF POLITICS TO EVER TO DECIDE TO BE WITH THE FREEDOM OF PEOPLE. |
| A lot of people have reached out with positive reinforcement messages. That is always good. Some support with take out business as well. |

Question 6

Have you implemented any initiatives to build resilience to support your business? If so, please explain.

Answered: 41 Skipped: 57

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| Increase on-line marketing, communication. Still dis-like Zoom but I think it will be a tool that is here to stay - far more efficient than travelling all the time for business. |
| Implementing any initiatives , then to have AHS change the rulings is almost impossible. We can not afford to pay for initiatives just to have any chance of cost recovery pulled out from under you . |
| Stayed open, with Public Health protocols in place. Made changes and adjustments including moving to a better location. |
| Yes. Diversified. Added new service line. |
| Be frugal. Cut cost wherever possible. |
| we now offer online ordering & curbside pickup |
| We've been putting a lot of work into our online store. |
| We've chosen not to participate in the unlawful AHS communist rules and that's the only thing that is saving our business. |
| Developed on-line programs until I can open in-person classes |
| Online components |
| Nothing really that we can do unless we completely open up. |
| Staffing adjustments |
| Discounts maybe |
| We have diversified our business to include more services in order to get around restrictions and to stay afloat amidst covid-19 conditions. |
| We do a lot of virtual appointments now |
| No. |
| we are working on catering menus for small boutique type weddings and events this summer if restrictions allow. Addition of patio |
| I'm on maternity leave, so not yet. |
| Following restrictions for my business and clients |
| Yes. Be patient and wait for truth to prevail over fear mongering. |
| We pivoted from selling wholesale to online retail. We've hired a social media company and a business coach. We recently did a virtual audition with Dragon's Den, although we didn't make the cut for the live pitches, it was good exposure |

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| currently taking an on-line course to learn how to promote and sell through social media |
| Keeping debt down |
| Mental health awareness |
| try to advertise as much as possible |
| become more efficient serving our customers, consolidated labour so that more responsibilities are shared between fewer employees, reduced expenses by being more efficient covering our out of town/province service routes |
| Yes, I have started posting on social media every day to help get my business out there more. |
| Diversified |
| We have promoted the online store our supplier has to keep clients able to purchase the products but really there isn't much an in person hands on business can do when closed |
| Done our safety book, stayed away from ppl so we can go to work and know we are Covid free! And just patiently waited as what else can we do? |
| Online options for the past year. |
| No |
| expanded our type of business to be more diversified |
| Changed our focus from renting our rooms to students to more of a long-term approach to working people. |
| We have not been able to. A lack of stock and shipment delays means we can't take our store online, or even take full advantage of increased market demand for our products. |
| More focus on guided hikes. Lost my job at the gym |
| not sure what initiatives would help. We have of course implemented all the directives from AHS including PPE and cleaning although cleaning has always been there we have just upgraded it a bit to try to prevent fears. It would be good to put in an air filtration system to give further peace of mind but the expense of it for medical grade is more than I'd like to spend without knowing we can stay in operation for the long haul with additional waves. |
| HOW CAN I PROVIDE INITIATIVES WHEN WERE BARELY MAKING DUE OUR SELVES. - WAY TO PUSH YOUR SURVEY TO A BIAS INDICATION THAT THIS IS HAPPENING. |
| We continue to do take out and delivery. Also, we are building a patio soon to open some dine on patio again. |
| We have expanded to online sales, shipping and delivery |

Question 7

The Town of Olds has written to the province that while we continue to abide by the Provincial guidelines - we must ensure our businesses can withstand this pandemic. Keeping in mind matters such as Public Health Restrictions are a Provincial responsibility, what is one action that the Town of Olds could take to improve your current situation?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 52

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| Availability of rapid testing for business |
| I think a mandate by the town regarding wearing masks is required. Depending on the provincial one has proven to not work. |
| Enforce bylaws for those ignoring gatherings that spread the virus |
| Done more to promote/educate the public/enforce health measures, last showing of public discourse likely didn't help COVID numbers, which will only prolong the impacts to our community. AHS is stretched too thin. Proactively - keep promoting local business and tourism. Make Olds a destination of choice. |
| Go to bat against the restrictions placed upon businesses in Alberta . |
| We recognise that we have fared better than many. |
| Nothing. |
| The Town is already very proactive in helping businesses during this crisis. |
| End mask mandates and lockdowns Stand up for the what's right. Get involved to support business the lockdowns are unconstitutional. You are there to protect our rights not help take them away. Next election will look a lot different. |
| Lockdowns should be ended but seeing as it's not up to the Town of Olds, The Town of Olds could be providing resources to businesses to help educate them on their constitutional rights and freedoms and the extent of AHS authority. We would love to see things open up again. If the town of Olds is running a snitch line, it needs to be shut down - it is turning neighbours against neighbours. The Town of Olds could also promote the local small businesses a lot more and support them a lot more by shopping local and spreading the word about good local businesses that make up Olds. It will be sad if many won't be able to stay open and no longer around soon. It is going to happen if the lockdowns continue, unfortunately. |
| Help the small businesses |
| I believe that If the town continues to "abide by the Provincial Guidelines" the situation will continue to get worse. |
| Help promote my on-line services |
| Put an end to the restrictions. |
| Stop shutting in the small businesses!! Large corps are fine to keep open and no tracing is being done to them....just not a fair approach, absolutely criminal! |
| Hurry up with funding! Taking too long to launch. |
| Stop any restrictions it is all wrong |
| Not much due covid |
| reduce your costs, reduce taxes, stay out of our way |
| Not sure. Seems like so much is out of our control I haven't thought past it. |

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| lobby federal government for financial assistance for businesses that opened after March 2020. It was missed in the recent budget. We qualify for nothing on the federal level in regards to payroll assistance, rent assistance and had to lay off all the staff again except for one person. |
| Be nice to open with restrictions on occupancy like everyone else. I dont believe that bowling or playing pool causes spread any more then opening coolers at stores or pushing shopping carts around. Our seniors and hdcp need there bowling back as it is a huge part of there life and social structure. I feel that the burden of the virus should have been shared equally for businesses. We should all be open with restrictions on occupancy. Spread the people out makes more sense then picking and choosing what they feel is risky or not. I would like to see where the cases come from. |
| You guys are doing great |
| Reimburse the penalty. |
| Use your influence as elected public officials to initiate support for Olds businesses. |
| Host markets for small business/vendors. |
| hmmm . . . is there an online fundraiser that an artist could participate in that is facilitated by the town? |
| Remove the unnecessary masking requirements |
| Open all businesses and let them figure out how to meet the safety concerns of their customers. |
| not charge businesses a fee for business licenses since business is super slow |
| Just keep on doing what you are doing! |
| Free advertising to help future clients hear about us! |
| For those of us that have family run store front businesses that are compelled to close because of close contact with active cases.... limbo is a tough place |
| Use town companies and not outside companies for work! And stay local for all work not just shoppers and food |
| Help advocate for yoga to return face to face. Fitness and workouts can be done through Zoom and outdoors, but yoga studios throughout AB are closing. |
| Nothing |
| helping businesses enforce protocols - too many citizens not following mask policy |
| Being in Health Care, we support following all provincial health guidelines and restriction measures to fight the pandemic. Health is more important than Wealth. Unfortunately one has to temporarily suffer to gain the other. |
| continuing to offer financial assistance |
| Start instilling confidence in people and less fear. Project a positive attitude and a business as close to normal as you can make it. |
| Provide better guidance on how to meet legislated requirements for Covid protocols |
| Fight back- say no! Contact MLA Support local! |
| What the government is doing does not seem to be working. Ongoing waves is not sustainable and with the vaccinations, it is unclear if this will prevent lock downs or not as people may still get sick. I am not sure the right answer as I do not have access to stats but it would seem that there is lack of consensus in the medical community so we should be comparing stats with what we are doing in AB and what is being done in countries or even states in which they have either not, or discontinued the use of lockdowns. Encouraging a more transparent government |

would be best as there is a complete lack of trust in what is being handed to us based on lies as well as their own lack of following the rules. Reminding the government that Rural and Urban living is significantly different. I worry about the political agenda when the government tells us lies to get us to follow them; I do not feel government has the best interests at heart any longer.

REMOVE ALL MASK MANDIATES THAT ARE HURTING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF ALL CITIZENS AND NOT CREATE THIS NEW NORMAL. ITS DISCUSTING THAT THE PROVINCE IS ONLY HEARING WHAT 1 DOCTOR HAS TO SAY.. WHAT ABOUT THE MILLION OTHER DOCTORS THAT ARE NOT FOR ANYTHING HINSHAW SAYS.

Not sure what could we recommend as Town office is trying the best to support local businesses. But, there is so much they can do.

Question 8

How many people do you currently employ at your business?

Answered: 98 Skipped: 0

