

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CURRENT STATUS SURVEY RESULTS

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CONTACT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Fort Collins Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), funded by Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act dollars and administered by the Economic Health Office, provided monetary relief to small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program provided funding to individual businesses to help offset the significant, temporary loss of revenue during this pandemic and to assist businesses in sustaining through impacts to their business from public health orders.

The City also participated in the Larimer County Small Business Relief Program, which was very similar to the SBAP program, but where the eligibility criteria were set by the State. Eligible industries included restaurants, bars, wineries, breweries, distilleries. Caterers, movie theaters and fitness/recreational sports centers.

The total number of distinct businesses that received one or both of the grants is 297.

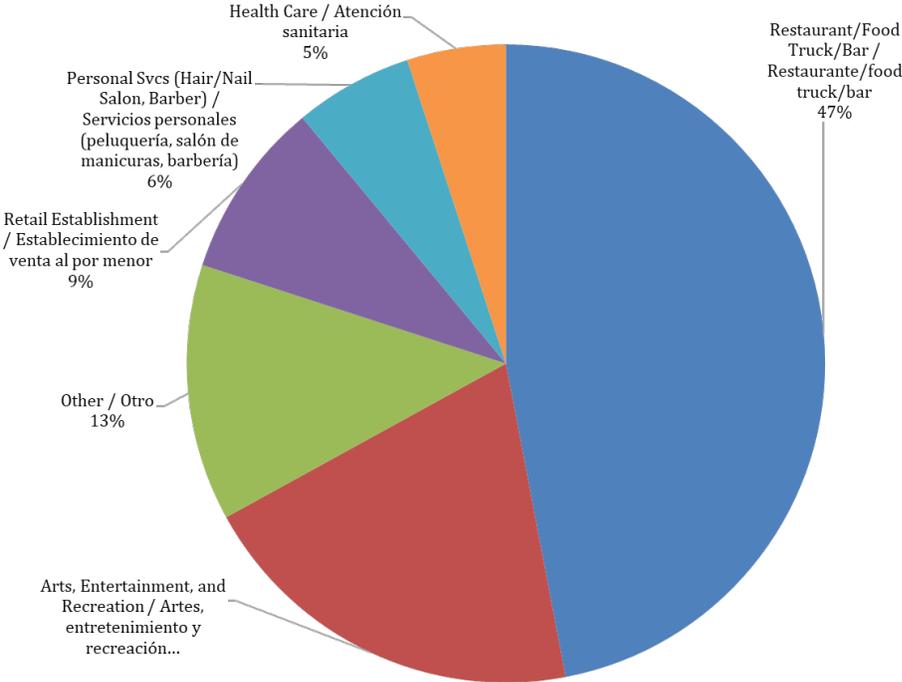
	# Businesses	Total Grant \$	Average \$/ Business
SBAP	205	\$1,899,177	\$9,264
SBR	164	\$842,238	\$5,136
Total (distinct businesses)	297	\$2,741,415	\$9,230

FALL 2021 SURVEY OF GRANT RECIPIENTS

In October 2021, the Economic Health Office sent out a follow-up survey to the businesses that received SBAP and/or SBR funding to try to get a sense of the current conditions and concerns of those businesses.

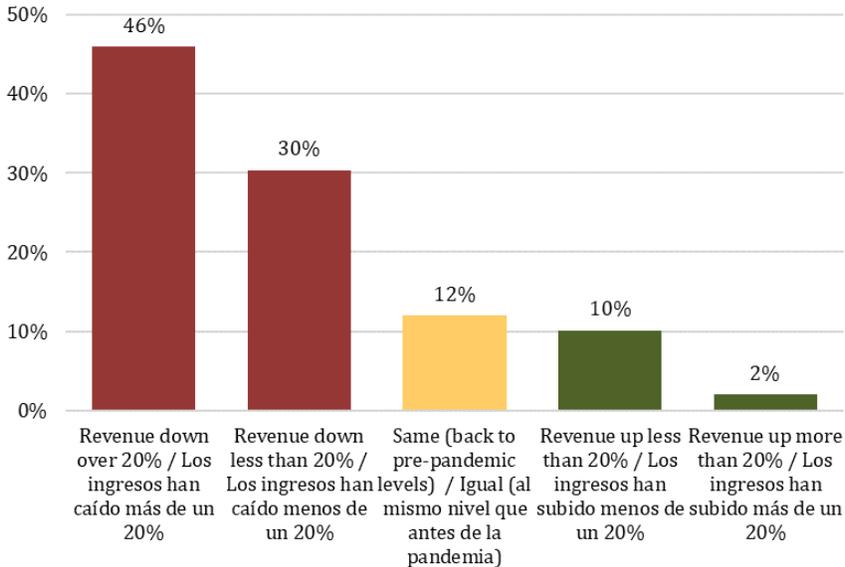
INDUSTRY CATEGORY

We received a total of 81 responses to the survey (27% response rate).

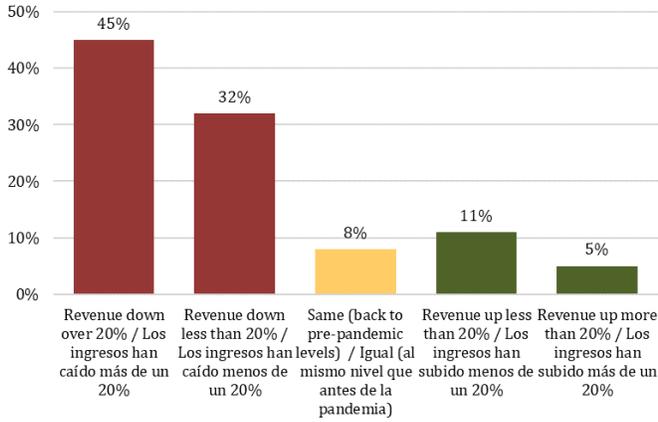


BUSINESS REVENUE LOSS

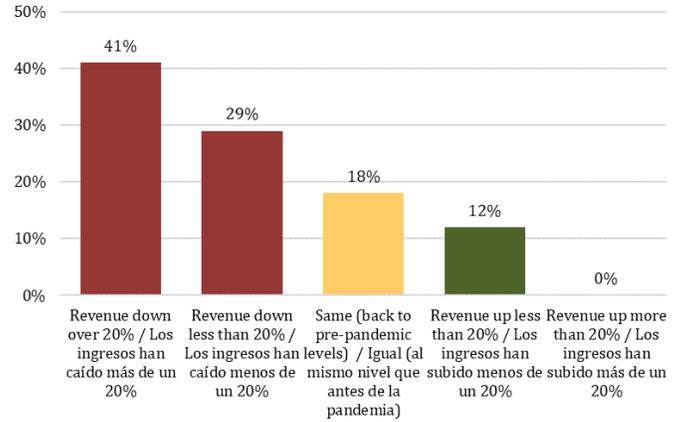
Businesses were asked “How is your current business revenue compared to pre-pandemic revenue (approximately)?” – 74% of businesses stated revenues are still down compared to pre-pandemic levels.



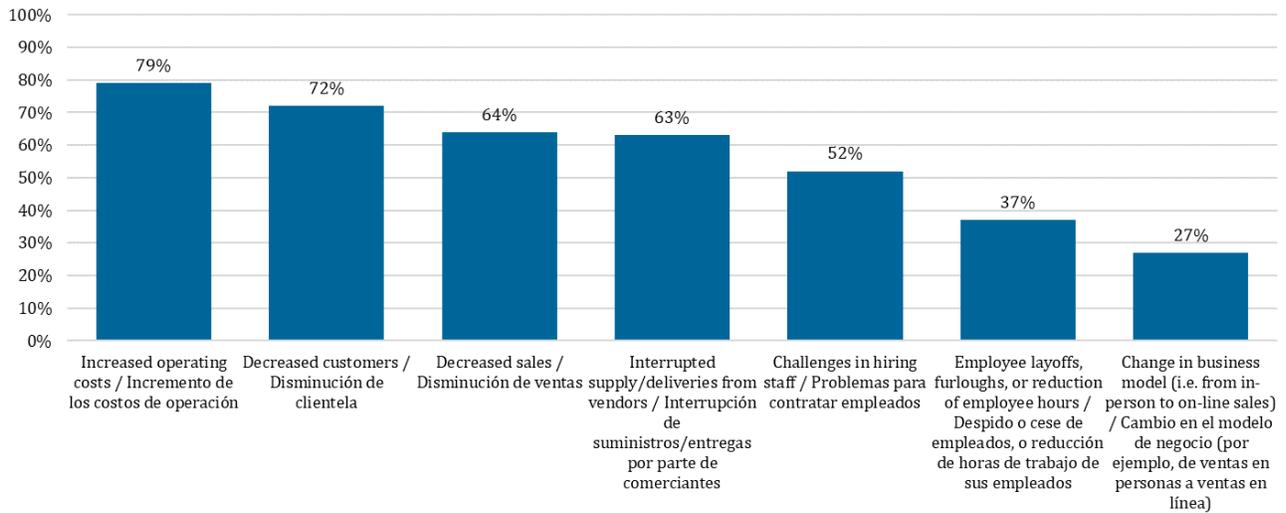
Restaurant/Food Truck/Bar



Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation

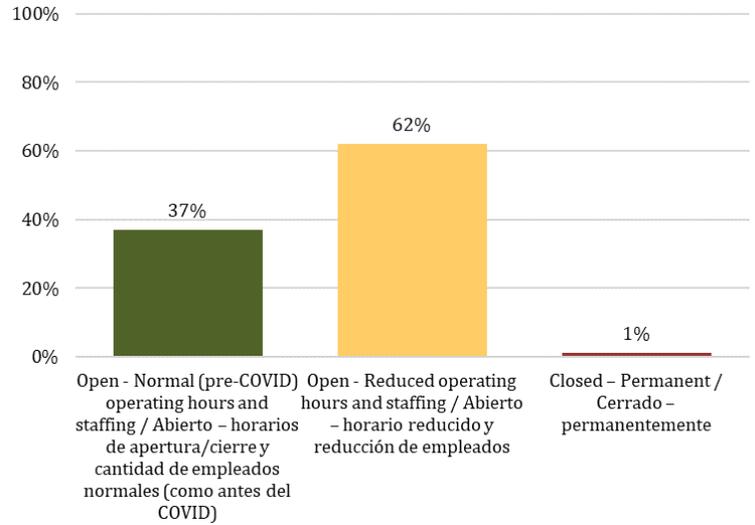


CURRENT IMPACTS TO BUSINESSES COMPARED TO PRE-COVID OPERATIONS



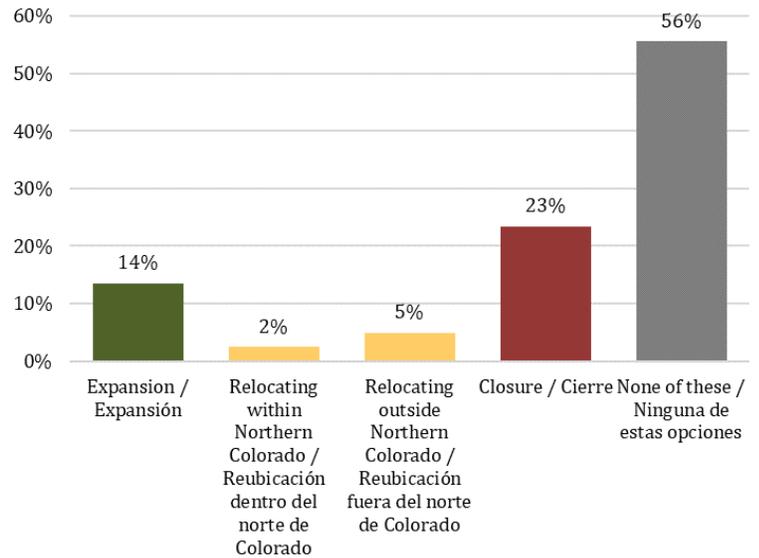
CURRENT STATUS OF BUSINESS

A significant percentage of businesses are still not operating at pre-COVID hours or staffing. One business closed for reasons not related to COVID.



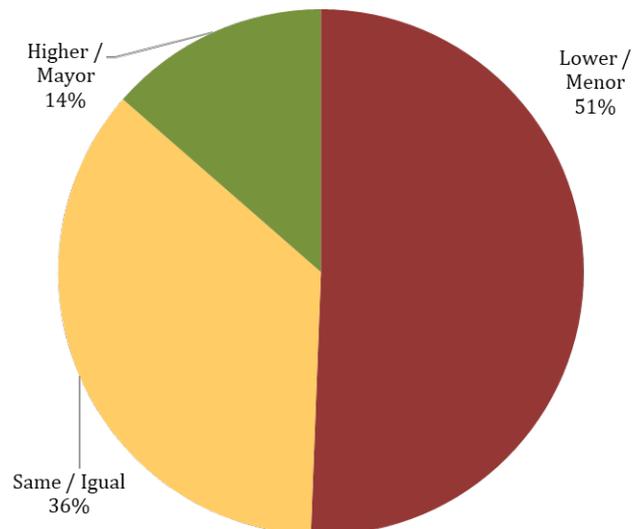
ANTICIPATED CHANGES TO BUSINESS

Businesses are still very concerned about the ability to continue after COVID.



EMPLOYEE COUNT COMPARED TO PRE-COVID

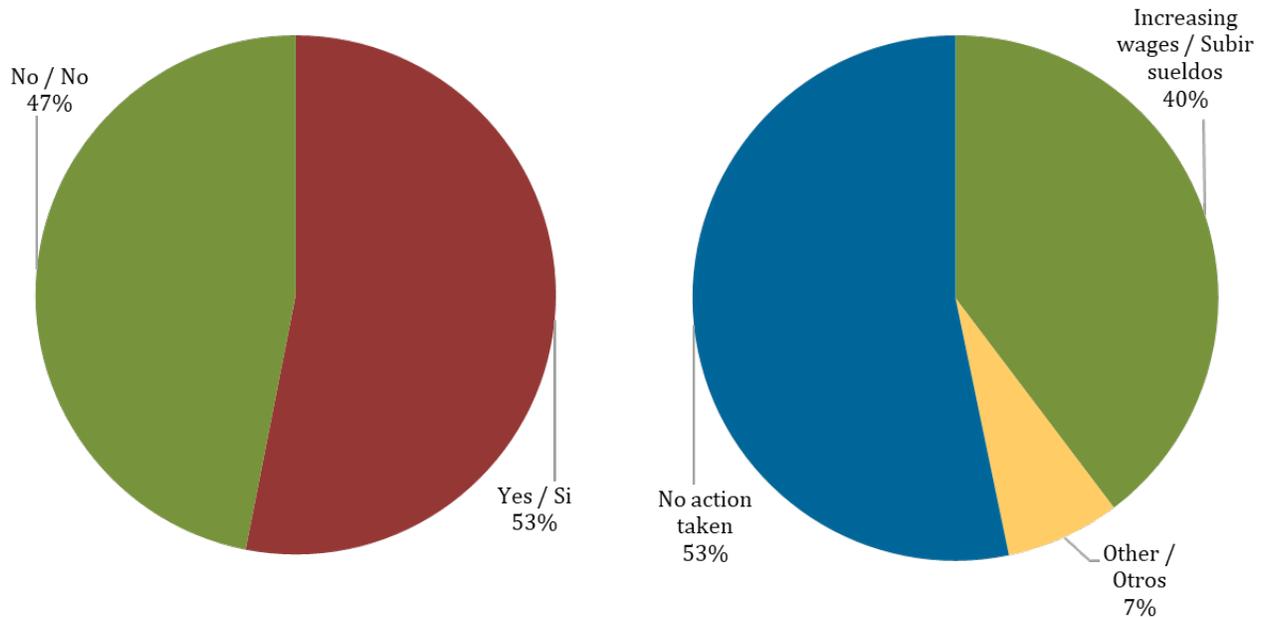
Over 50% of businesses are not at pre-pandemic staffing levels.



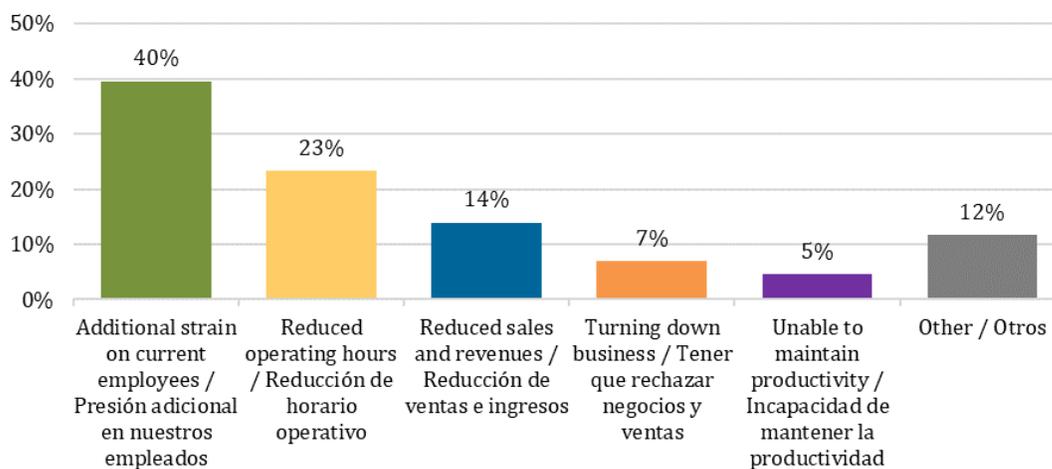
CHALLENGES RECRUITING OR RETAINING EMPLOYEES

Challenges with staffing continue. Reasons are a complex, overlapping web of factors including concerns of health safety at work, ongoing childcare concerns and a readjustment their preferences.

In response to the challenges in recruiting and retaining employees, 47% of survey respondents have taken action to address the issue.



Shortage of employees' impact on business (for respondents for whom it is an issue).



WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPFUL OVER THE LAST 18 MONTHS?

Below are the most common responses from businesses.

- Clearer and more timely information on local vs. county vs. state regulations.
- More direction on how to implement new mandates and more lead time to do so.
- Continued sales tax and property tax forgiveness and/or reductions.
- Expanded use of outdoor space for a variety of entertainment.
- Funding for additional outdoor dining equipment, like heaters.
- More money.
- Work with landlords regarding rent for when businesses were closed.
- “The biggest help was the grant I received from the city to keep my business afloat financially.”

WHAT RESOURCES OR TOOLS DO YOU NEED TODAY?

Below are the most common responses from businesses.

- Additional funds to help until costs of supplies and workforce return to normal.
- Assistance negotiating a lower rent to allow us to stay in current facility.
- At home COVID-19 tests for the artists currently performing and rehearsing.
- Community job board would be helpful to find people in the area looking to fill jobs.
- Continued support of the temporary patio expansions throughout the next year.
- Funds to develop outdoor area
- Employees and training.
- Marketing and education of the public to shop early and to shop local.
- No more mandates/fewer restrictions.
- “We made a big pivot and can’t really return to pre-pandemic ways so just continued support for these new ways is greatly appreciated.”

WHAT WOULD MAKE FORT COLLINS MORE RESILIENT/STRONGER?

Below are the most common responses from businesses.

- A sales tax holiday in times of crises.
- An investment in non-profit arts organizations.
- Encourage development and businesses outside of downtown.
- Greater community and connection across intersectionality of minority businesses, especially single-employee businesses.
- Have plans and preparations in place in the event that what happened to our communities last year happens again/rainy day fund.
- More support in dealing with customers in challenging times.
- More B2B collaborations.
- More effective social safety net.