

Municipality of North Cowichan

Committee of the Whole

AGENDA

Wednesday, September 16, 2020, 6:00 p.m.
Electronically

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting, though electronic, is open to the public and all representations to Council form part of the public record. At this time, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, public access to Council Chambers is not permitted, however, this meeting may be viewed on the District's lived stream webcast at www.northcowichan.ca/agendas.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommendation:

That the Committee of the Whole agenda be adopted as circulated [or as amended].

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3 - 4

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held September 8, 2020 be adopted, as circulated.

4. PUBLIC INPUT

The Chair to acknowledge receipt of submissions circulated to Council prior to the meeting to Agenda@northcowichan.ca and state the agenda item the public input is in relation to on this agenda.

5. BUSINESS

5.1 Economic Development Cowichan Valley

5 - 54

Purpose: Barry O'Riordan to present a summary on the Cowichan Post Disaster Needs Assessment Economy Survey #1 and #2, and provide an update on the work of Economic Development Cowichan in response to the COVID1-Pandemic.

5.2 Climate Action and Energy Plan Modelling Update Engagement

55 - 82

Purpose: To provide Council with an opportunity to consider the summarized public input on the Climate Action and Energy Plan (CAEP) emissions modelling update, and understand how public input has been used by staff and modelling consultants to further refine the CAEP model.

Recommendation:

That Council accept the Senior Environmental Specialist's September 16, 2020 report summarizing public input on the Climate Action and Energy Plan update and outlining how the emissions modelling has been updated to reflect public input.

6. NEW BUSINESS

7. QUESTION PERIOD

A 10-minute recess to be provided to give the public an opportunity to submit their questions by email to QP@northcowichan.ca regarding the business discussed at this meeting. Questions will be read out in the order they are received.

8. CLOSED SESSION

Recommendation:

That the meeting be closed to the public at ____ p.m. in order that the items, the subjects which fall under sections 90(1)(e) of the *Community Charter* pertain to the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, section (g) litigation or potential litigation affecting the municipality, and section (i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.

8.1 Minutes from the July 28, 2020 Committee of the Whole closed meeting for adoption

8.2 Closed under section 90(1)(e) land matter

8.3 Closed under sections 90(1)(g) litigation and (i) legal advice

9. RISE AND REPORT

10. ADJOURNMENT

Recommendation:

That the meeting be adjourned at ____ p.m.

Municipality of North Cowichan Committee of the Whole MINUTES

**September 8, 2020, 6:00 p.m.
Electronically**

Members Present Councillor Christopher Justice, Chair
Councillor Rob Douglas
Councillor Tek Manhas
Councillor Kate Marsh
Councillor Rosalie Sawrie
Councillor Debra Toporowski

Members Absent Mayor Al Siebring

Staff Present Ted Swabey, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Sarah Nixon, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (D/CAO)
Mark Frame, General Manager, Financial and Protective Services
Rob Conway, Director of Planning and Building
Jason Birch, Chief Information Officer
Michelle Martineau, Corporate Officer
Martin Drakeley, Manager, Fire and Bylaw Services
Rachel Hastings, Senior Bylaw Compliance Officer
Chris Bear, Inspector

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held August 11, 2020 be adopted, as circulated.

CARRIED

4. PUBLIC INPUT

The Committee did not receive any submissions from the public prior to the meeting.

5. BUSINESS

5.1 Safer Community Update

The General Manager, Financial and Protective Services, Mark Frame, provided a quick

overview before turning the floor over to the Manager, Fire and Bylaw Services, Martin Drakeley to present the update on the progress of the Safer Working Group to the Committee of the Whole. The Senior Bylaw Compliance Officer, Rachel Hastings, and Inspector Bear were on hand to respond to questions. A copy of the presentation was included in the agenda.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That staff be directed to collect better data to quantify the Corridor Safety Office and conduct a survey of businesses and residents in the patrol area to learn of the impacts from their perspective.

CARRIED

6. NEW BUSINESS

No items.

7. QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Justice called for a recess at 8:01 p.m. to allow viewers to submit questions via email on the matters discussed during the meeting. No questions had been submitted when the meeting reconvened at 8:10 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Council Justice declared the meeting be adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

CARRIED

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor



COWICHAN COVID-19 BUSINESS SURVEY #2

Survey Dates: August 5 to 19, 2020

Results Published: September 1, 2020

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COWICHAN COVID-19 BUSINESS SURVEY #2

Survey Dates: August 5 to 19, 2020

Results Published: September 1, 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 community partners. 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 second in a series of surveys that will be launched to assess the progress of economic recovery within the regional district.

To provide some context to the information, the data gathered in Survey #2 is presented in this report alongside other relevant BC, Vancouver Island, and Cowichan data from additional sources.

Key Findings of Survey #2

Business Overview

- As of December 2019, the Cowichan region was reported to have 3,040 businesses with employees and 14,736 businesses with no employees (Table 1.1)
- Survey #2 received responses from 101 businesses. Business location and annual sales levels are shown in Graphs 1.1 and 1.2
- The PDNA survey was conducted as a self-selected survey (not a random sample) where businesses had the choice of whether to participate or not and therefore no margin of error can be calculated for the resulting data
- Survey #2 received responses from a wider range of sectors than did Survey #1, resulting in a more complete and representative view of the region (Graph 1.3)
- This report makes comparisons between the goods sector and the services sector. Firms surveyed from the goods sector included construction and manufacturing companies. Firms from the services sector included accommodations, arts and recreation, food services, retail, health services, professional services, and more
- Businesses in the goods sector did not report deriving any income from the tourism sector, whereas 32% of service sector businesses reported 25% or more sales income derived from tourism. It was found that the tourism businesses followed similar trends to the services sector overall, and therefore the services sector was used as a proxy for the tourism sector in the analysis to follow (Graphs 1.4 and 1.5)



Impacts on Business

BC and Vancouver Island Tourism

In BC, the percentage of tourism firms reporting business as usual is up to 28% in this latest survey, which is still lower than the Canadian national average of 38% as reported by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. There has been a 29% reduction in staffing capacity across all firms when compared to normal times. 39.2% of businesses reported revenue decreases of at least 50% compared to July 2019.

On Vancouver Island, 62% of tourism businesses reported reduced operations and 9% were temporarily closed, leaving just 29% reporting business as usual. 38% reported revenue decreases of at least 50% compared to July 2019, and 17% reported that they had lost all revenue. The average change in revenue year over year for island tourism businesses was -53%¹.

Cowichan Specific Impacts

Cowichan businesses are reopening their doors and seeing some business return, but many have reduced staff levels and are experiencing difficulties related to external factors such as supply chain issues or cancellation of important events they depend on. (Graph 1.6)

- 55% of respondents reported a decrease in sales volumes (versus 77% in Survey #1)
- 58% of service sector businesses reported a decrease in sales volume, versus 33% in the goods sector (Graph 1.7)
- 41% have temporarily or indefinitely shut down (versus 59% in Survey #1)
- 1% of the 101 businesses surveyed have closed their doors permanently
- 27% reported decreased demand for their products and services (versus 56% in Survey #1)
- 43% have experienced disruptions to the supply chain they depend on to operate their business (versus 37% in Survey #1). Of those who have experienced supply chain issues, 23% reported investigating alternatives for purchasing product, 2% for sales and distribution, and 11% for both
- 42% have experienced cancellations of important meetings, gatherings or events they depend on (versus 40% in Survey #1)

Revenue is trending back towards typical levels, but there is still a way to go. (Graph 1.8)

- 11% seeing revenue reductions of 75% or more compared with July 2019 (versus 62% in Survey #1 as compared with April 2019)
- 26% of respondents reported no impact or increased revenue compared to July 2019 (versus 10% in Survey #1)

¹ BC Regional Tourism Secretariat COVID-19 Tourism Impact Report, July 27 to August 4, 2020
<https://tourismresiliency.ca/reports/>



Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing has improved significantly since Survey #1. (Graphs 1.9 and 1.10)

- 20% reported feeling Poor or Fair (versus 98% reporting negative consequences of the crisis in Survey #1)
- 80% reported feeling Good, Very Good or Excellent (versus 29% reporting positive feelings in Survey #1)

Employment

BC Wide

As reported in the July 2020 Labour Force Statistics Highlights published by BC Stats, the unemployment rate in BC was 11.1% in July, down 1.9 percentage points from June and up 6.6 percentage points from 12 months ago.

In July, the BC labour force continued to increase (+ 20,000) after substantial declines in March and April, while the number of jobs grew as well (+70,200). Both saw decreases compared to 12 months ago, with employment down by 192,200 and 17,000 fewer individuals in the labour force, mainly due to the implications of the pandemic.

Youth in BC have been especially hard hit, with the unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 24 years up 14.9 percentage points over July 2019, to sit at 24.1%. Differences were also seen between genders, with the unemployment rate for men down from 9.3% in June to 8.9% in July, and for women the rate was down from 11.4% in June to 8.7% in July².

Cowichan Specific

Cowichan businesses are operating with lower staffing levels than pre-COVID and expect this to continue into 2021.

- 44% have reduced staff hours from pre COVID-19 levels and 39% have laid-off employees. Survey #1 saw 54% reporting reductions in staff levels (Graph 1.6)
- Businesses in the service sector were much more likely to report reduced staff hours (46%) and layoffs (40%) than goods sector businesses (25% for both) (Graph 1.7)
- On average, respondents reported a 10% decrease in full-time employees and a 33% decrease in part-time employees compared with typical staffing levels for July 2019
- 27% of respondents have already returned to pre-COVID employment levels (Graph 1.12)
- Of those who have not already returned to pre-COVID employment levels, 33% expect to return by Spring 2021 or sooner
- 17% expect the decrease in staffing to be permanent, at least for the foreseeable future
- 50% of goods sector businesses have already returned to pre-COVID employment levels, versus 22% for the services sector (Graph 1.13)

² BC Labour Force Statistics Highlights: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/employment-labour/labour-market-statistics>



- 42% reported adjusting their hiring procedures to temporarily reduce staff levels, 15% reported permanently reducing staff levels due to reduced demand (Graph 1.14)

Business Response

Cowichan businesses have responded to the crisis in a variety of ways, both in the short-term and in their long-term business planning.

- 21% have introduced a new product or service, and 10% wish to do so in the future (Graph 1.15)
- 20% of service sector businesses have introduced a new product or service, versus 8% for goods sector businesses (Graph 1.16)
- 19% are planning to reduce the size/scope of their business, and 10% are planning to sell or close in the next year (Graph 1.15)

Long-term Changes to Business Model

The following are some changes to their business models that businesses intend to keep (Graph 1.17):

- 70% will keep increased sanitation procedures (versus 36% in Survey #1)
- 36% expect reduced occupancy to continue (versus 11% in Survey #1)
- 37% will maintain reduced hours/level of service (versus 7% in Survey #1)

Greatest Challenges for Businesses

The greatest challenges for businesses in returning to regular business operations are (Graph 1.18):

- Limits to occupancy capacity (39%), challenges in meeting WorkSafe BC requirements and provincial orders (30%), and consumer confidence (28%)
- Financial challenges were reported by 27% of businesses (versus 35% in Survey #1)

Business Resiliency

- ³Respondents reported implementation of PPE, sanitation and social distancing measures (24%), expansion into the digital economy (22%), and reduced operating hours (10%) as the biggest changes they have made to help ensure the viability of their business (Graph 1.19)
- 63% do not have time for or do not feel they need to engage in business resiliency programs (Graph 1.20)
- 20% are interested in Innovation Island's Digital Economy Restart, Recover, Re-imagine Program (DER3) (Graph 1.20)
- 15% are interested in Tourism Vancouver Island's Vancouver Island Tourism Resiliency Program (Graph 1.20)

³ 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.



Digital Economy

- 38% have introduced or increased online, digital or e-commerce operations (versus 30% in Survey #1 who had implemented online ordering options), and 66% of those businesses identified these changes as permanent. An additional 20% of businesses surveyed want to increase digital engagement in the future (Graph 1.15)
- A total of 58% of businesses have increased or want to increase their engagement in the digital economy. 31% (16) of these are interested in engaging with the DER3 Program run through Innovation Island
- 43% of businesses who have introduced online, digital or e-commerce operations have seen a decrease in sales volumes, versus 62% for businesses who have not introduced online, digital or e-commerce operations (Graph 1.21)
- 37% of companies who have increased their digital operations have also introduced a new product or service, versus 9% for those who have not increased their digital presence (Graph 1.21)
- Businesses expanding into the digital economy were also less likely to have plans to reduce the size/scope of their business (11%), or to have plans to sell or close their business in the next year (3%) versus those who have not expanded into digital (20% and 11%, respectively) (Graph 1.21)
- 36% of respondents from the service sector have introduced or increased online, digital or e-commerce operations, and 20% would like to do so in the future. Comparatively, 25% of goods sector businesses have increased engagement in the digital economy (Graph 1.16)

Government Support

Businesses are making use of available support programs, but many do not have a plan in place for when government supports end.

- 33% report not using any government support programs (Graph 1.22)
- The most popular programs are CEWS (30%), CEBA (28%), and CERB (24%) (Graph 1.22)
- This is on par with BC as a whole, which saw 35% of businesses not using any government support programs (38% island-wide), and the most useful programs as CEWS, CERB and CEBA⁴
- 13% of respondents did not qualify for government support programs (Graph 1.22)
- 43% of respondents do not know what they plan to do once government support ends (Graph 1.23)
- 29% plan to return to business as usual once government support ends (Graph 1.23)
- 11% plan to layoff or terminate employees once government support ends, 7% plan to close their business either temporarily or permanently (Graph 1.23)

⁴ BCMindReader.com COVID Impact Pulse Check #4, summary results for July 7 to 13, 2020, <https://www.bcmindreader.com/hub/posts/banner-1-network-25520864>



Regional Response Suggestions

- ⁵Respondents identified increased access to government support and services, and reducing fear / increasing consumer confidence as some of the most important actions towards recovery to be coordinated on a regional scale (Graph 1.24)

⁵ 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.



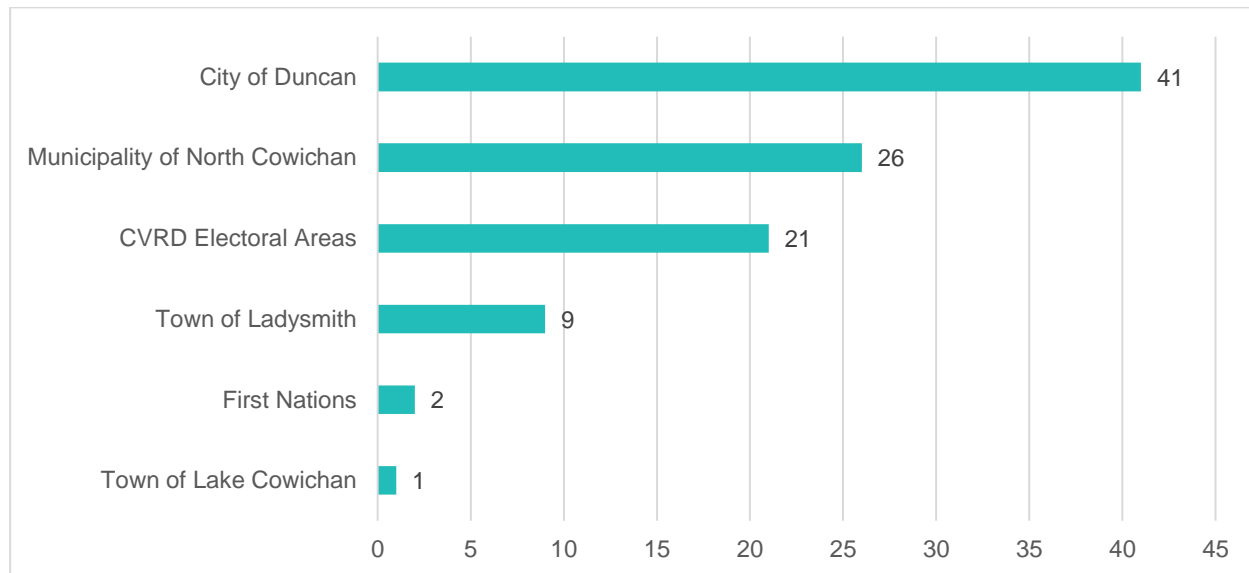
Graphs and Tables Summarizing Findings

Table 1.1 Cowichan business counts for December 2019⁶

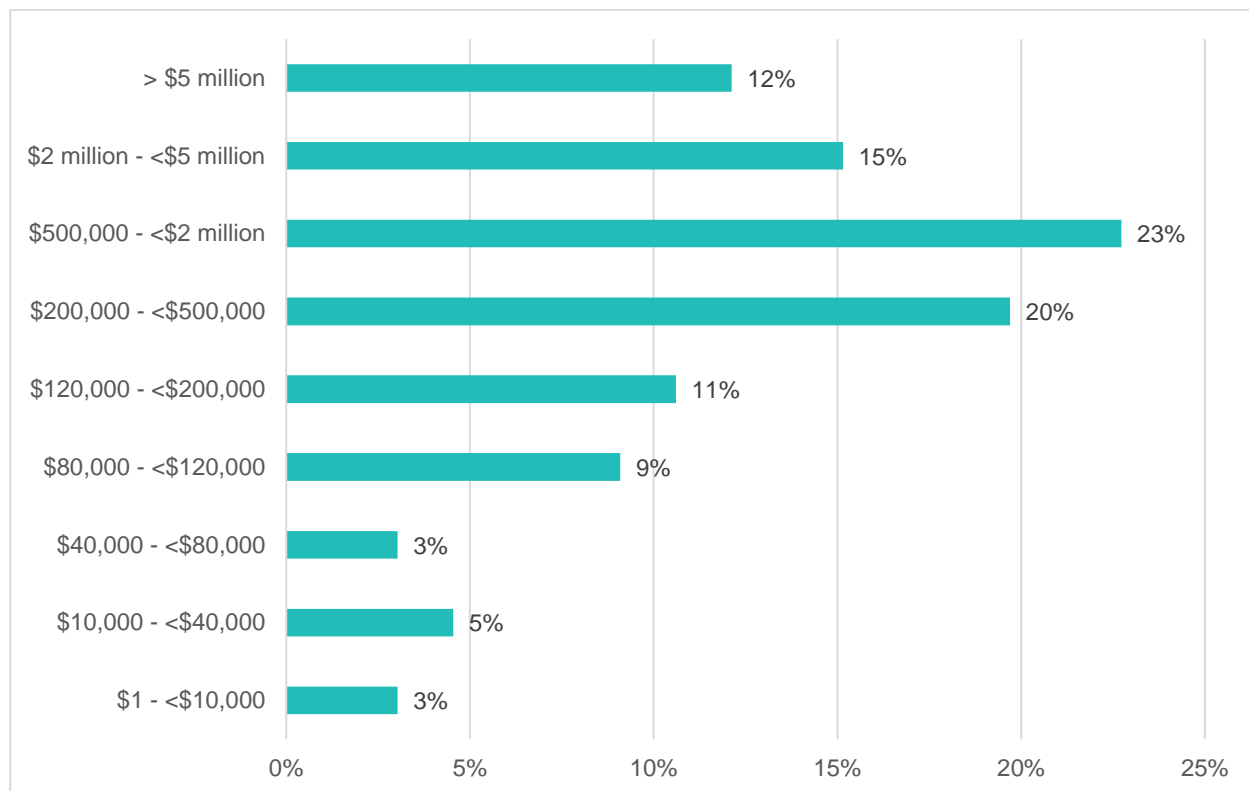
		Employment Size Range								
NAICS2 Description	No Employees	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 19	Less than 20	20 to 49	50 to 199	200+	Total with Employees	All Sizes
Total, All Industries	14,736	1,722	651	358	2,731	205	91	13	3,040	17,776
Utilities	12	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	3	15
Public Administration	2	2	7	4	13	4	5	3	25	27
Mining & Oil & Gas Extraction	19	7	2	0	9	0	0	0	9	28
Management of Companies & Enterprises	42	7	0	3	10	0	0	0	10	52
Information & Cultural Industries	142	11	3	3	17	1	0	0	18	160
Wholesale Trade	157	41	15	14	70	7	1	1	79	236
Transportation & Warehousing	243	40	19	13	72	4	2	0	78	321
Educational Services	381	18	7	4	29	2	2	3	36	417
Accommodation & Food Services	242	37	48	33	118	42	17	0	177	419
Finance & Insurance	395	48	22	15	85	13	2	0	100	495
Manufacturing	351	62	36	25	123	21	14	3	161	512
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	505	26	11	7	44	4	4	0	52	557
Unclassified	609	130	24	8	162	1	1	0	164	773
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt. & Remediation	847	65	26	9	100	8	3	0	111	958
Health Care & Social Assistance	726	185	56	35	276	15	6	0	297	1,023
Retail Trade	706	145	102	71	318	37	18	3	376	1,082
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	992	98	35	22	155	12	8	0	175	1,167
Other Services (excl. Public Administration)	1,052	155	67	23	245	5	3	0	253	1,305
Construction	1,292	312	122	46	480	20	3	0	503	1,795
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	1,547	237	34	14	285	7	1	0	293	1,840
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	4,474	94	15	8	117	2	1	0	120	4,594

⁶ BC Number of Businesses & Employment by Industry, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/business-industry-trade/number-of-businesses-and-employment-by-industry>

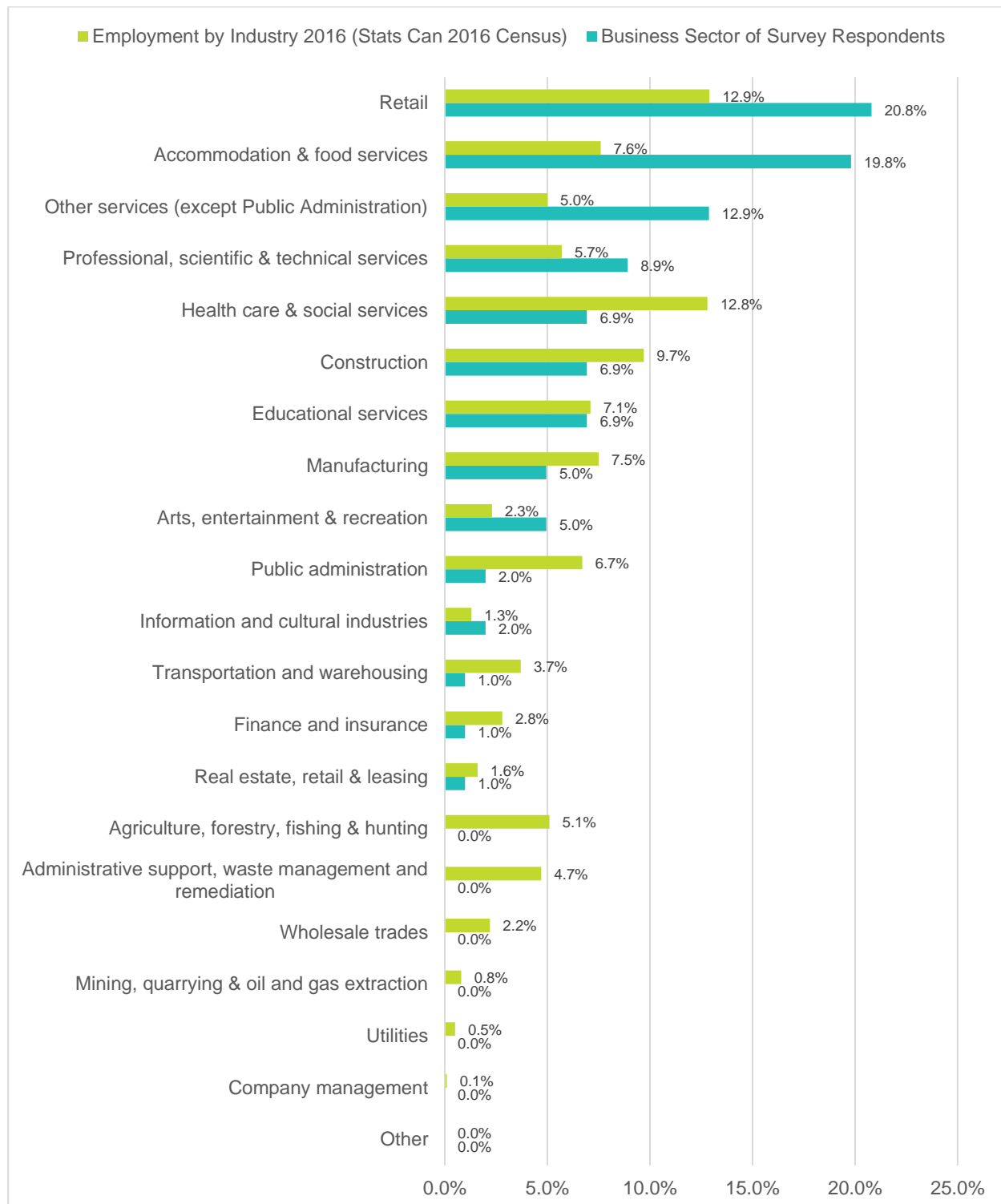
Graph 1.1 Location of businesses surveyed (n=100)



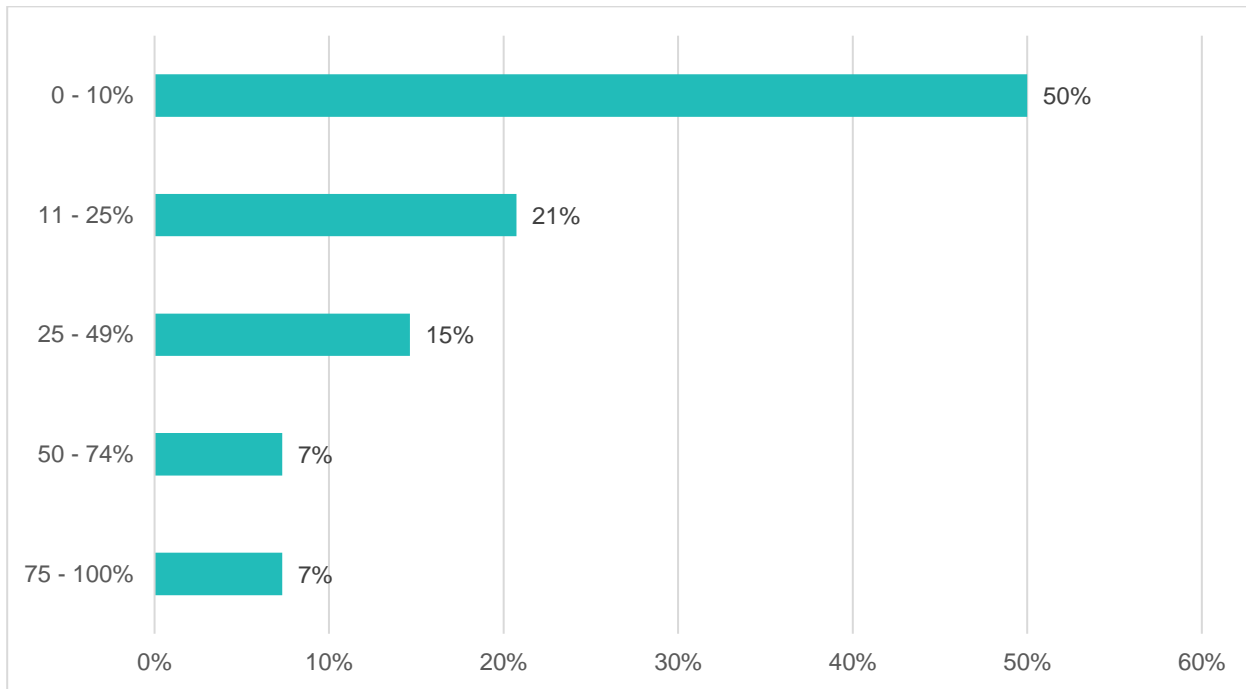
Graph 1.2 What are your annual sales levels? (n=66)



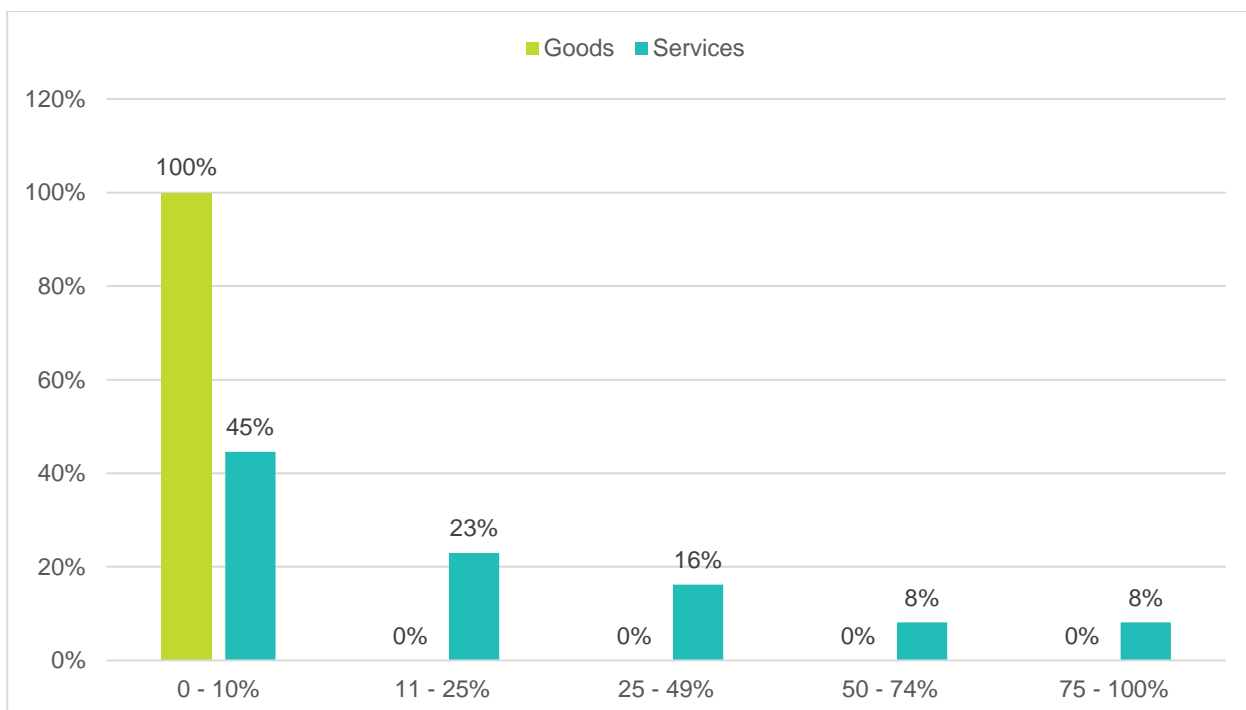
Graph 1.3 Sectors of Cowichan businesses surveyed compared to regional employment by industry



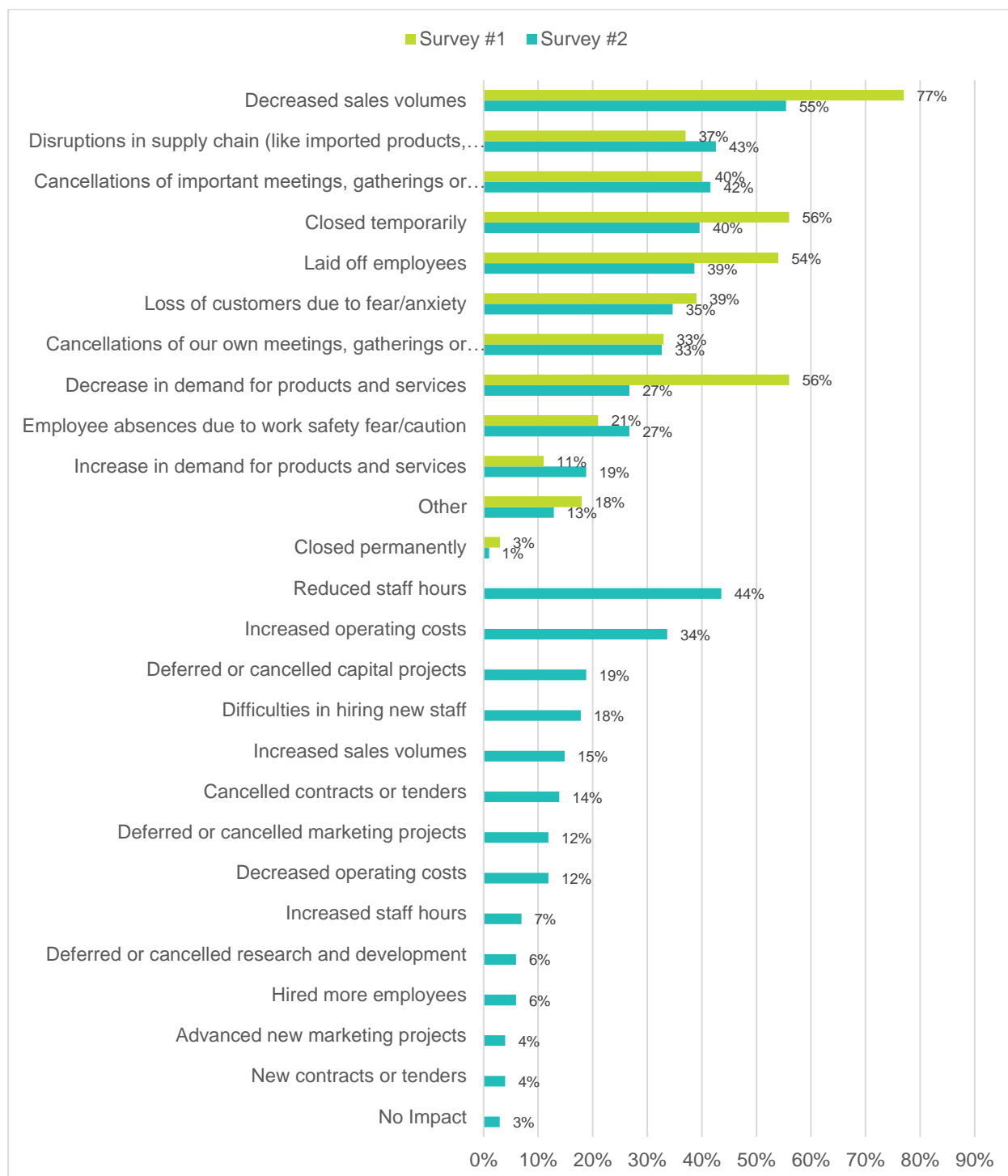
Graph 1.4 What percentage of your sales income do you typically derive from tourism, if any? (n=82)



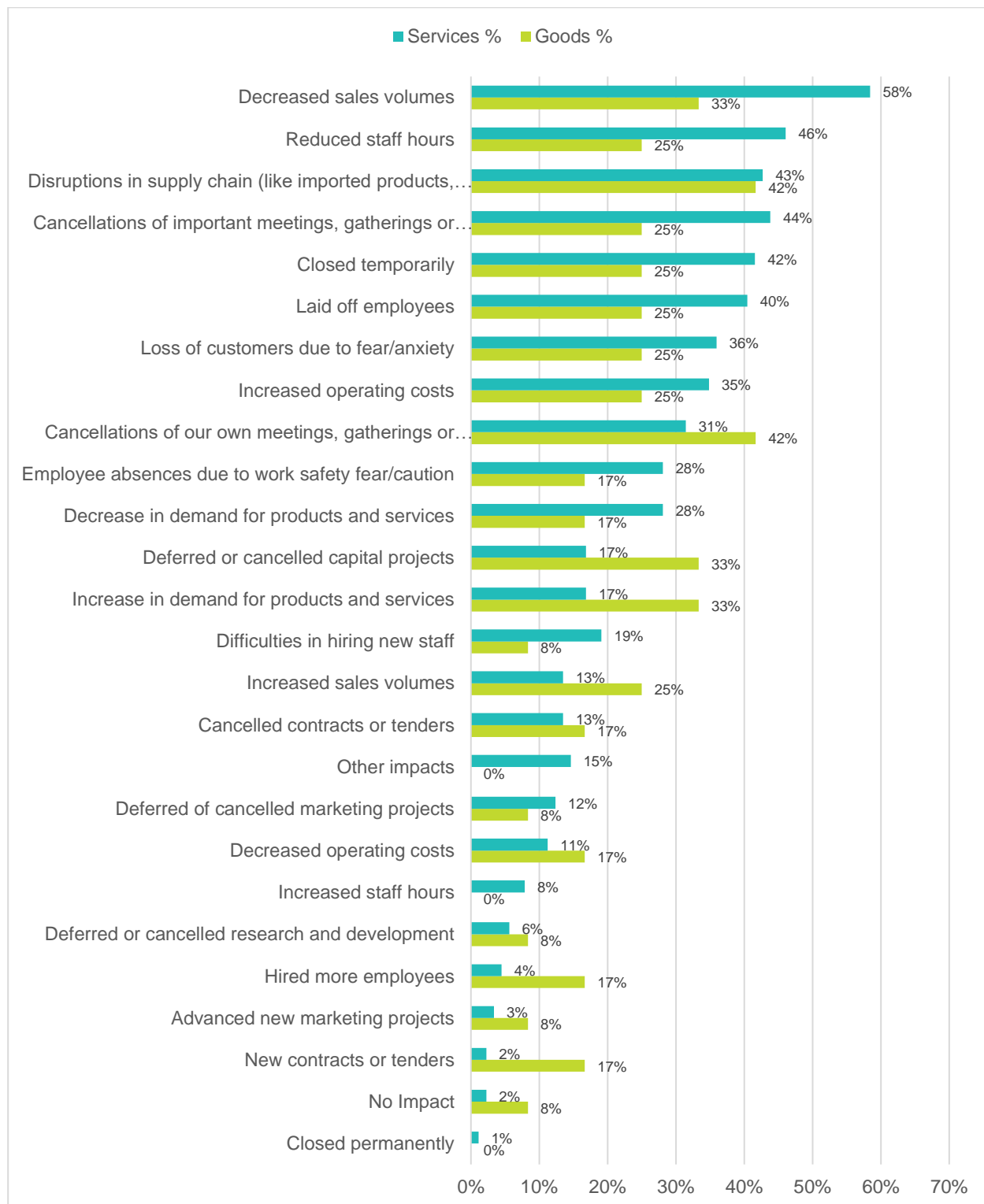
Graph 1.5 Percentage of sales income derived from tourism by sector



Graph 1.6 How has COVID-19 impacted your business? (n=101)

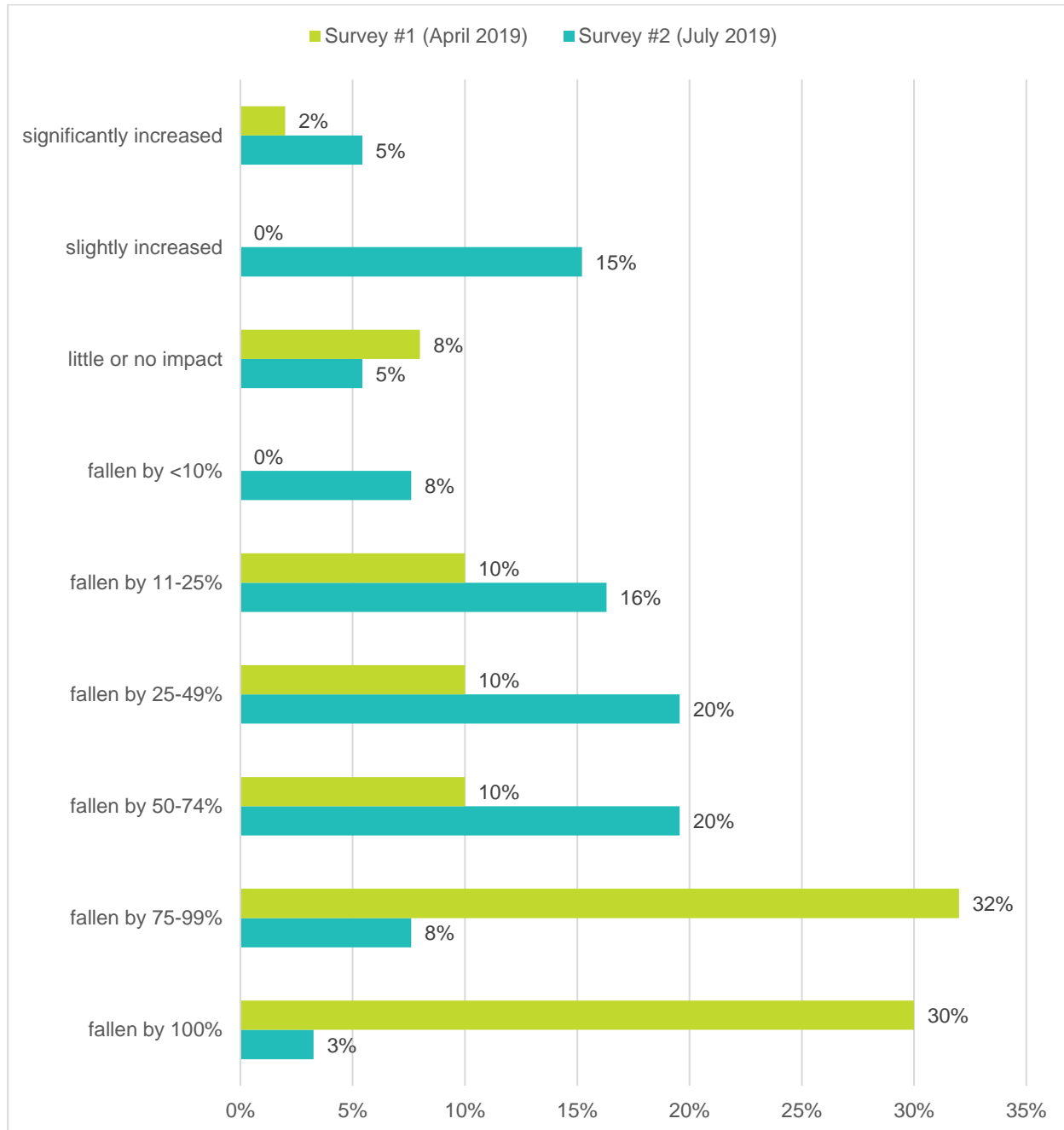


Graph 1.7 Impacts of COVID-19 by sector

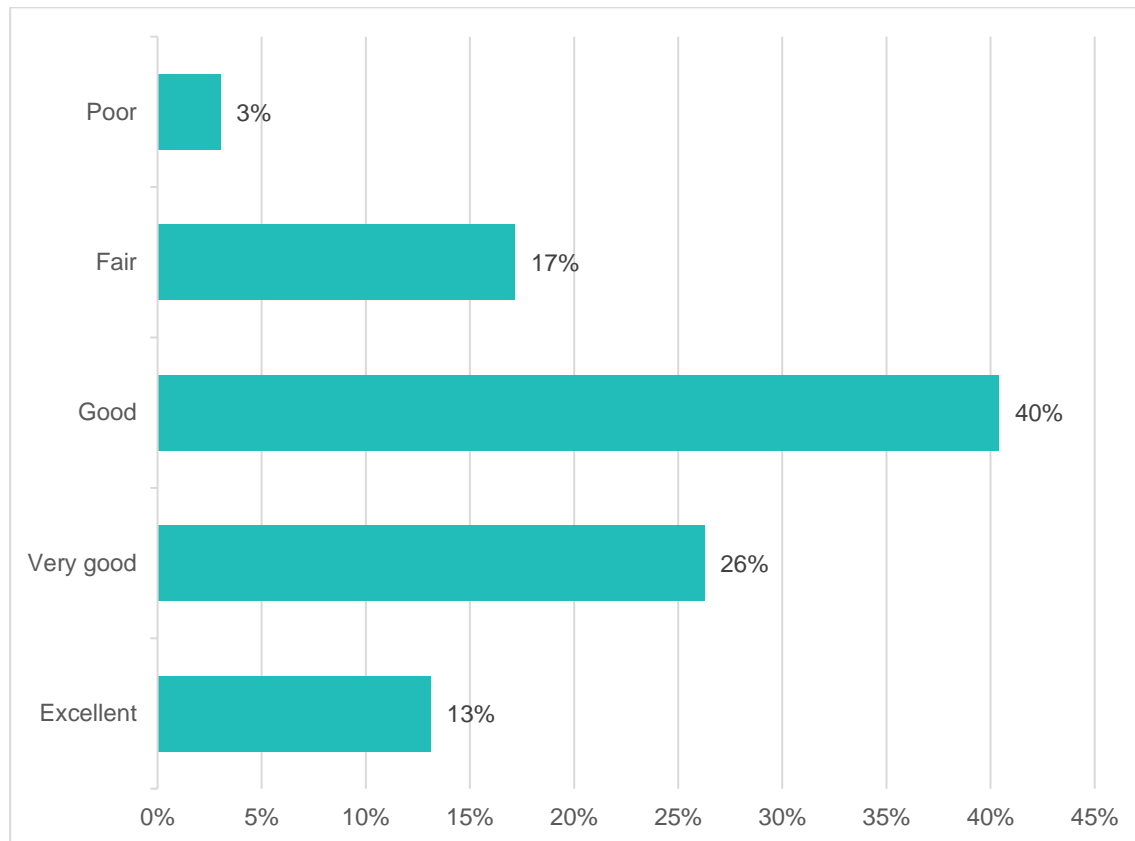




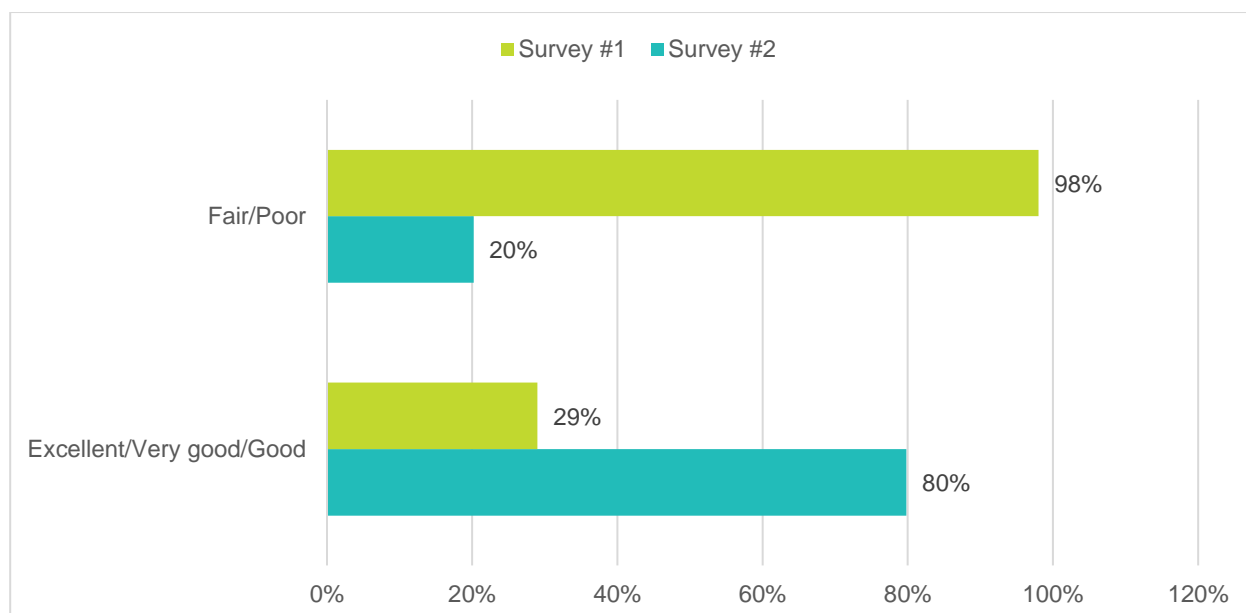
Graph 1.8 How does your revenue stream compare with July 2019? (n=92)



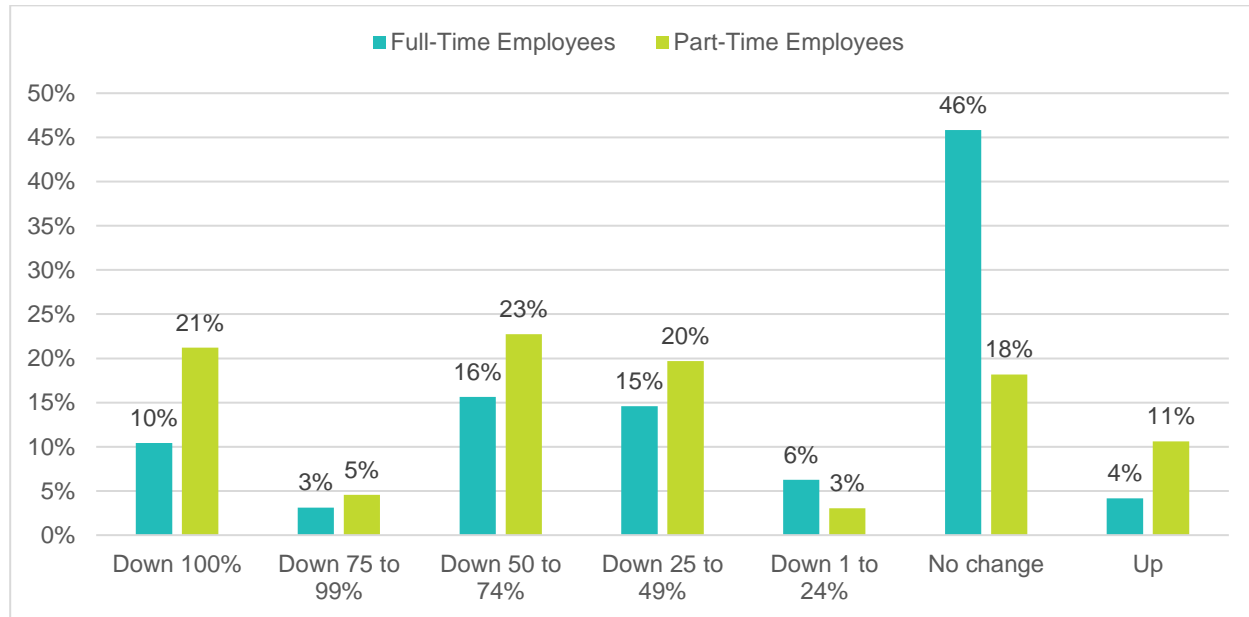
Graph 1.9 How would you describe your current mental wellbeing? (n=99)



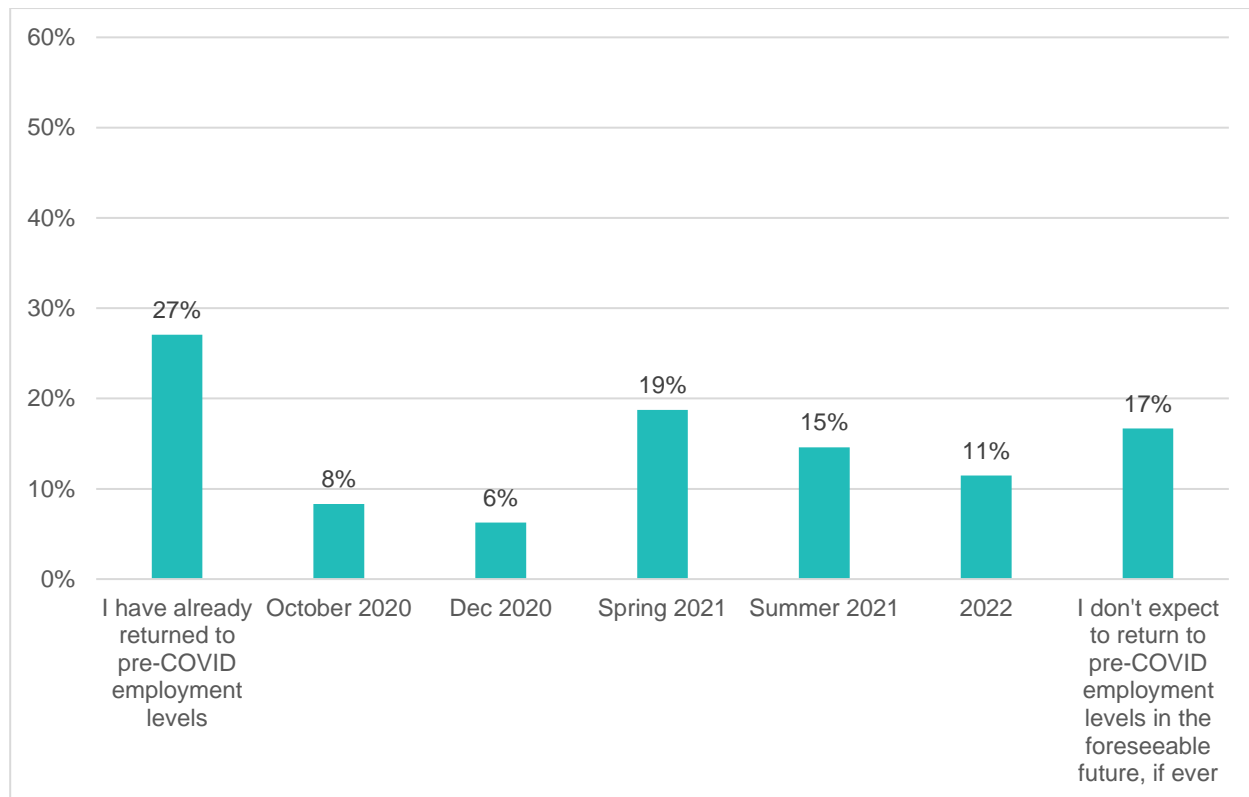
Graph 1.10 Mental wellbeing for survey #1 and survey #2



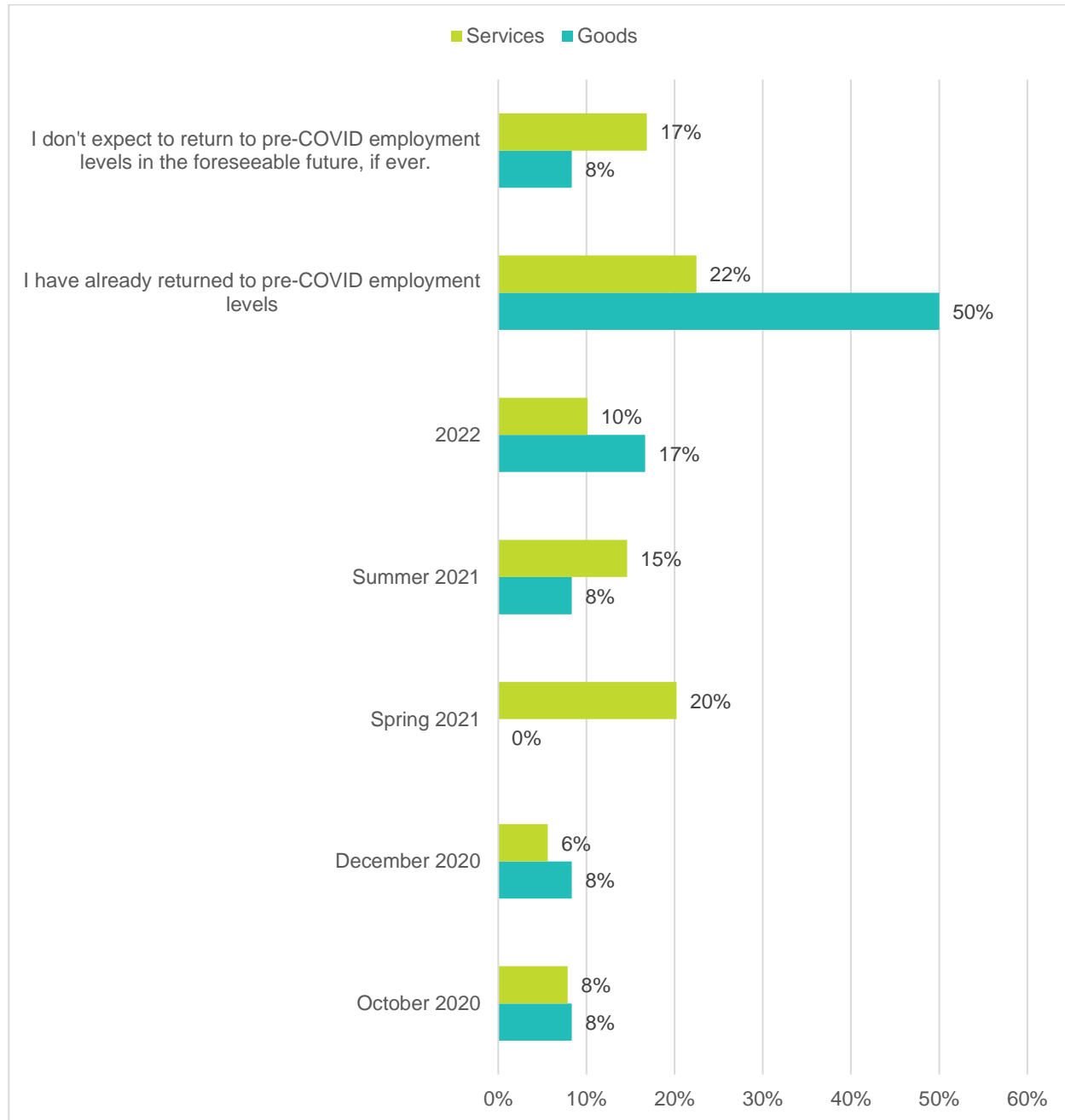
Graph 1.11 Changes in staffing levels compared with July 2019 (n=100)



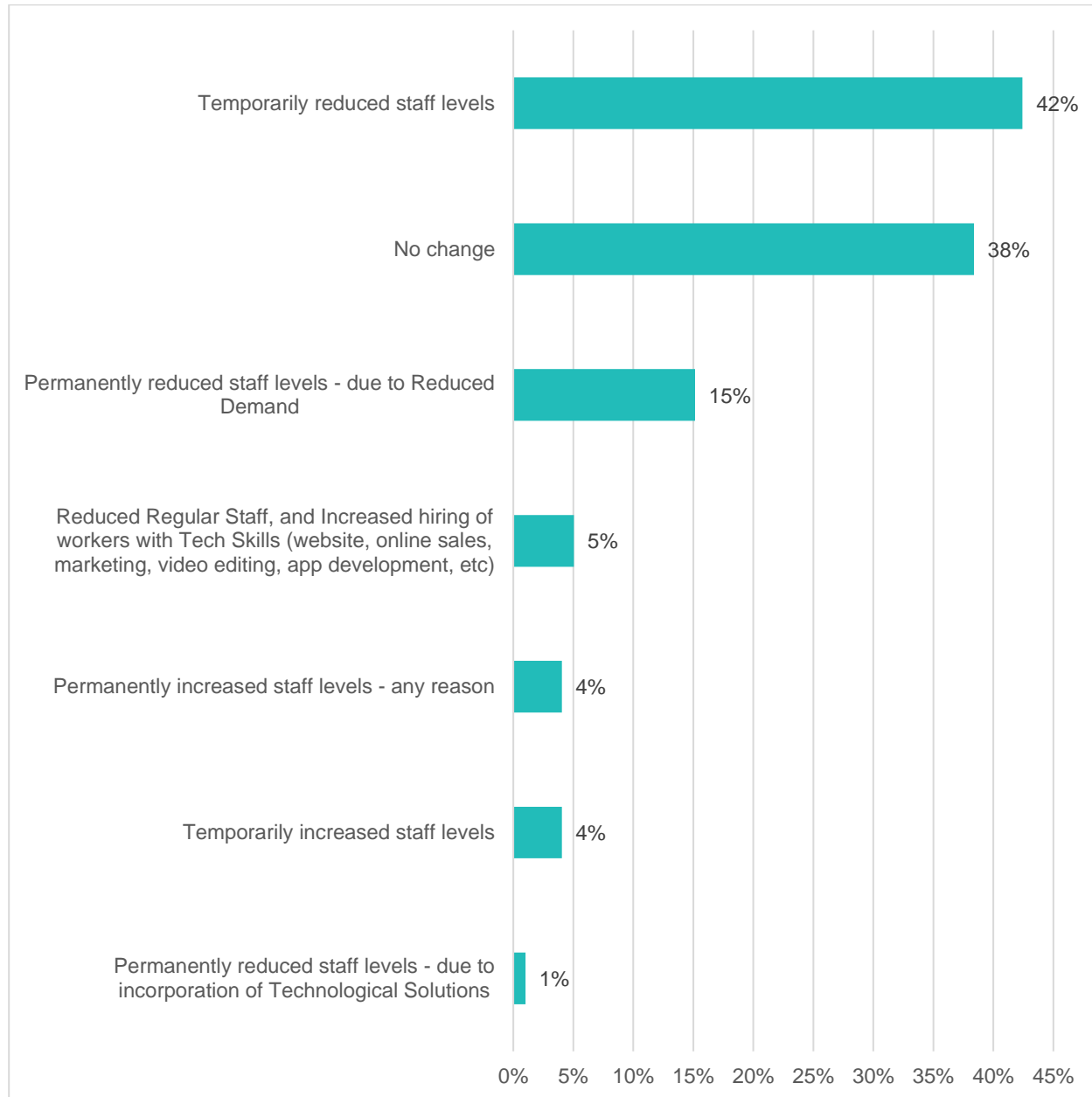
Graph 1.12 When do you expect to return to pre-COVID employment levels? (n=96)



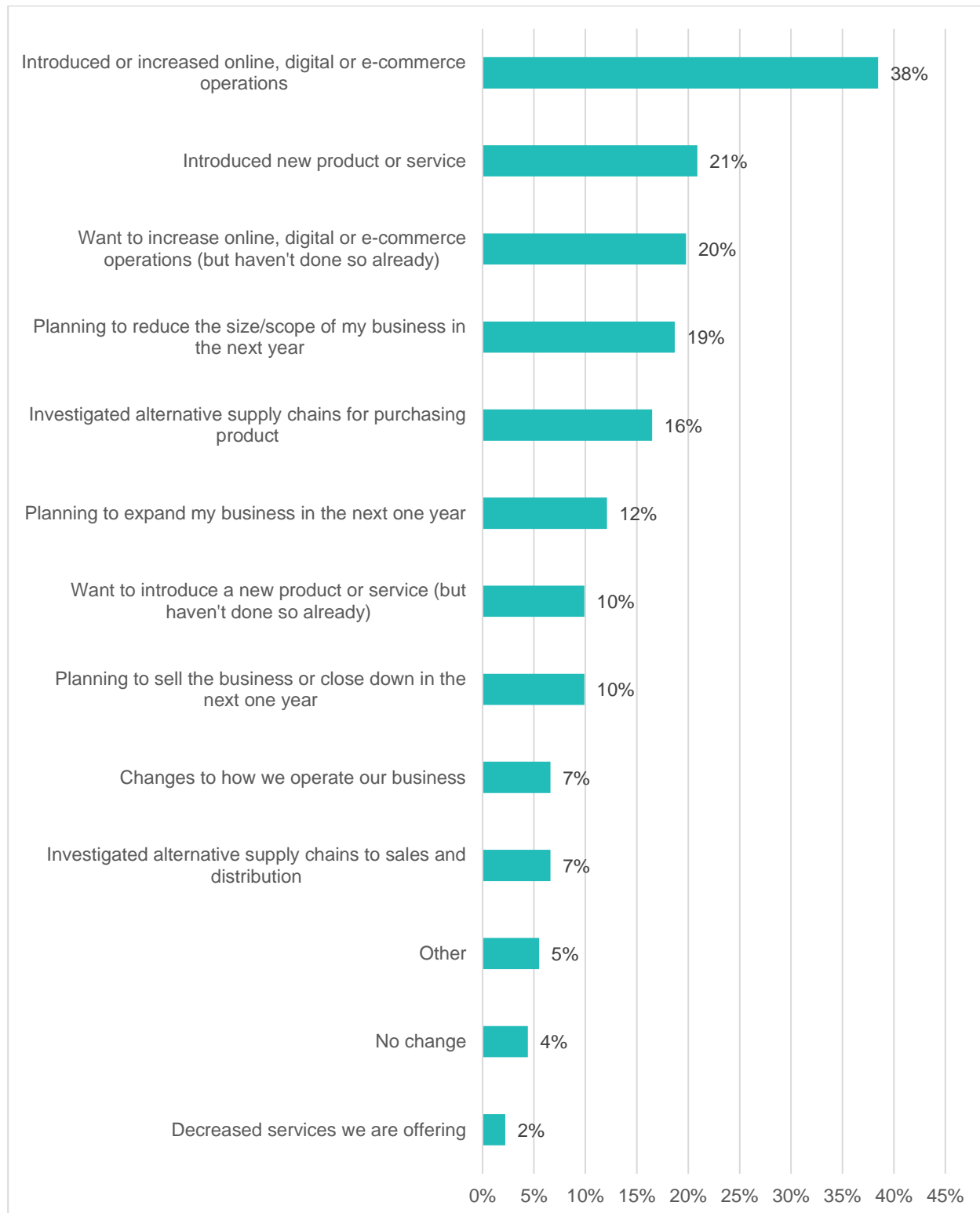
Graph 1.13 Return to pre-COVID employment levels by sector



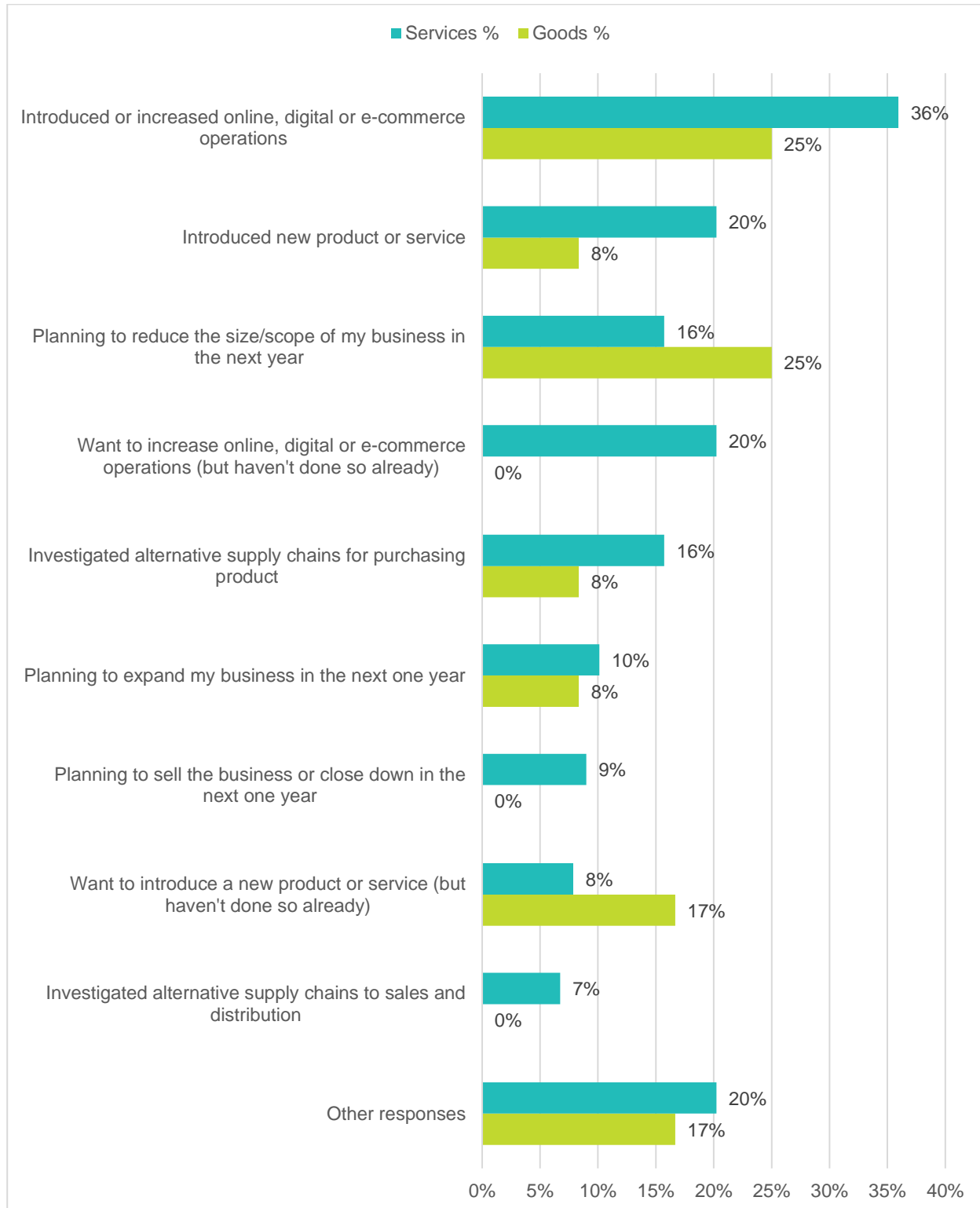
Graph 1.14 How have your hiring decisions changed as a result of this crisis? (n=99)



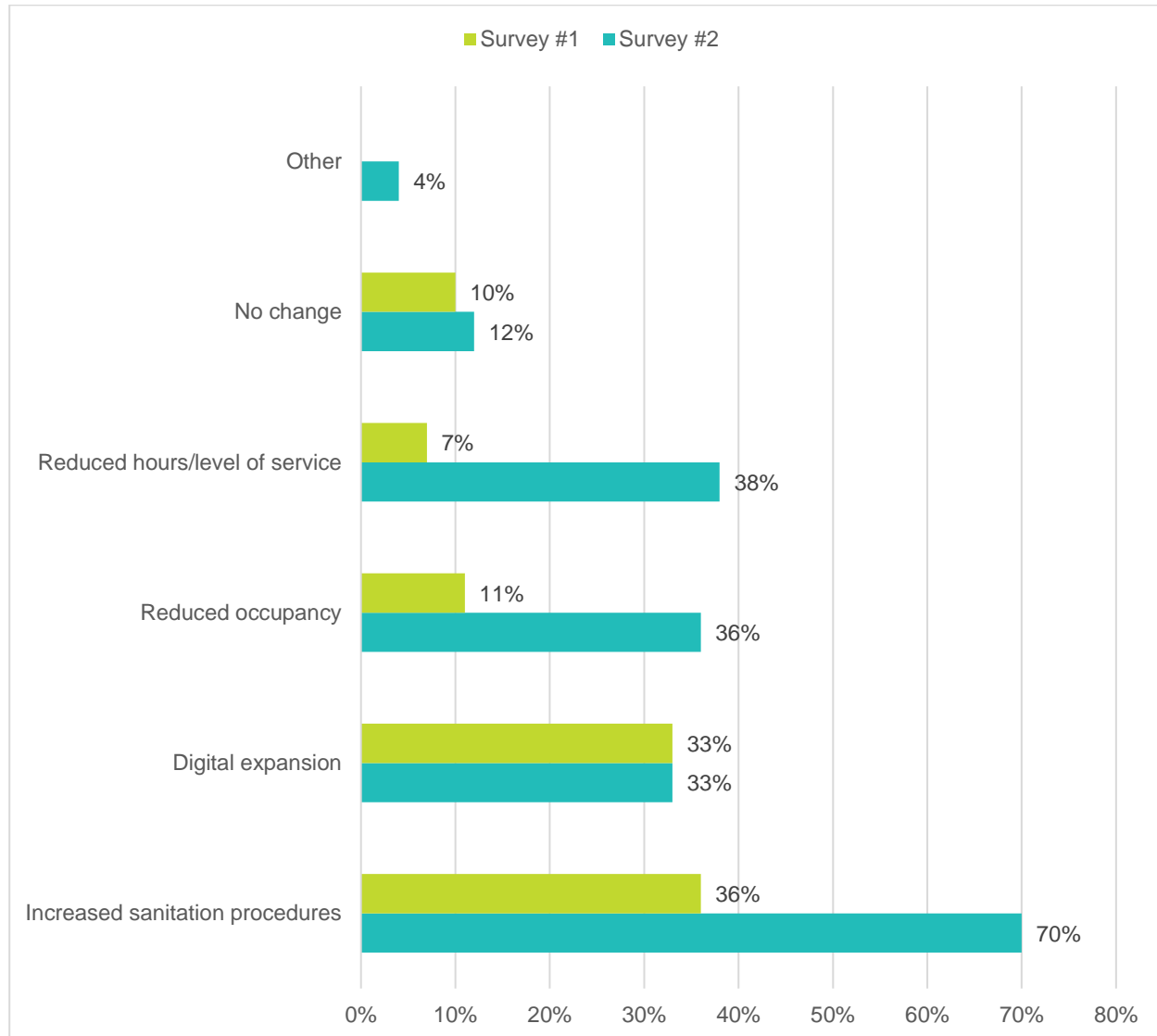
Graph 1.15 How has your business responded to COVID-19? (n=91)



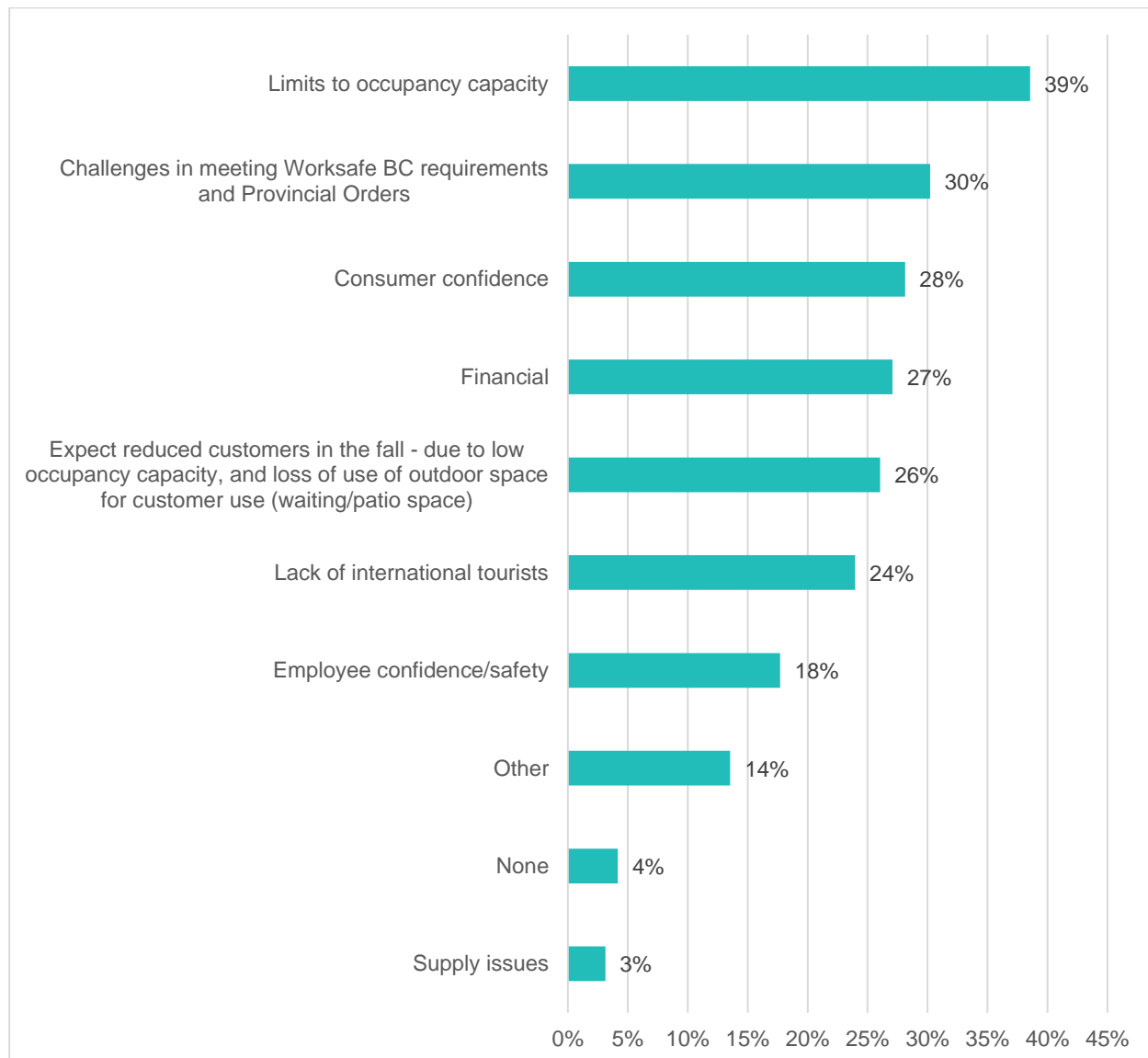
Graph 1.16 Responses to COVID-19 by sector



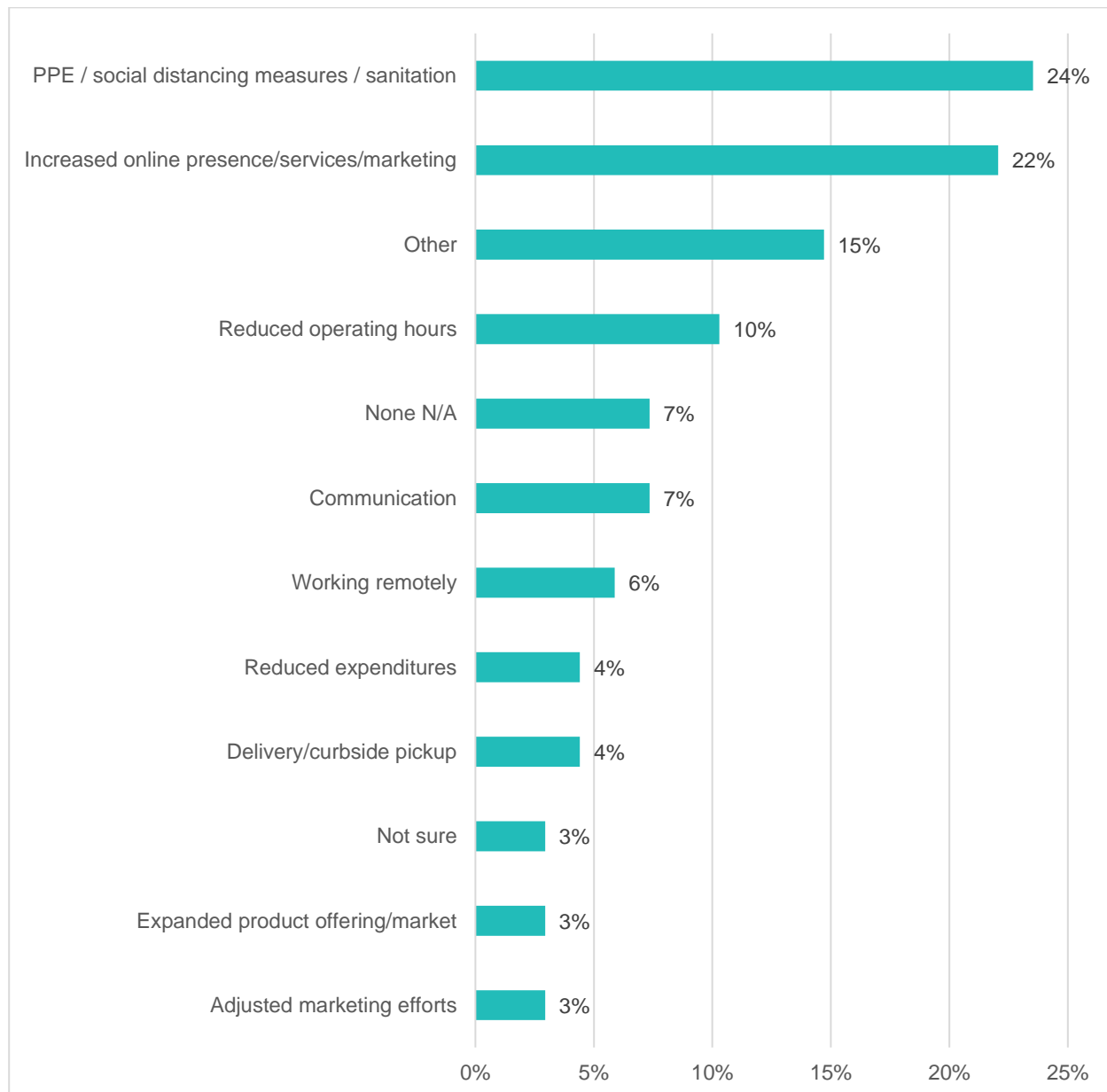
Graph 1.17 What are some permanent changes in your business model? (n=100)



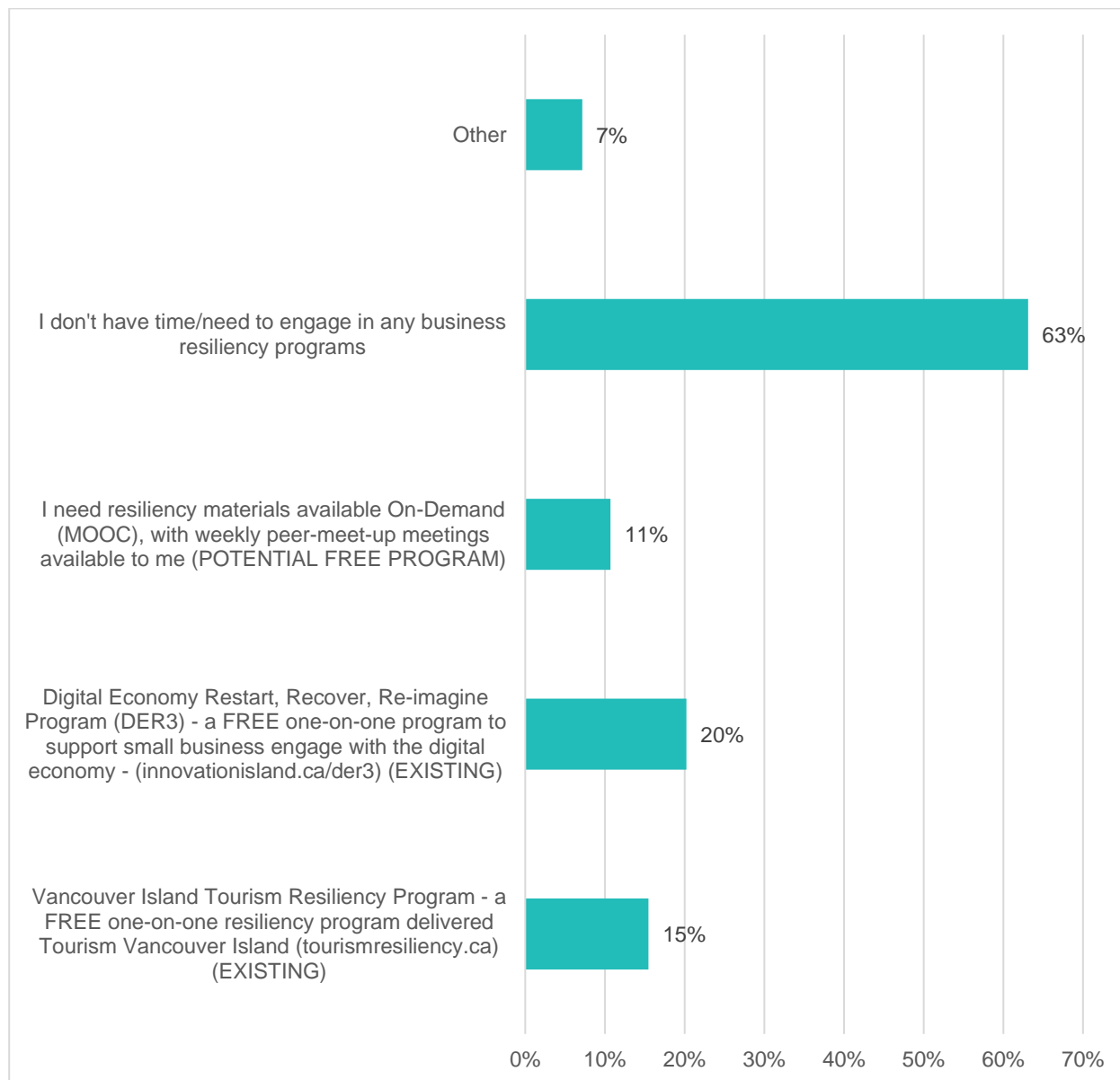
Graph 1.18 What are the greatest challenges you have in returning to regular business operations? (n=96)



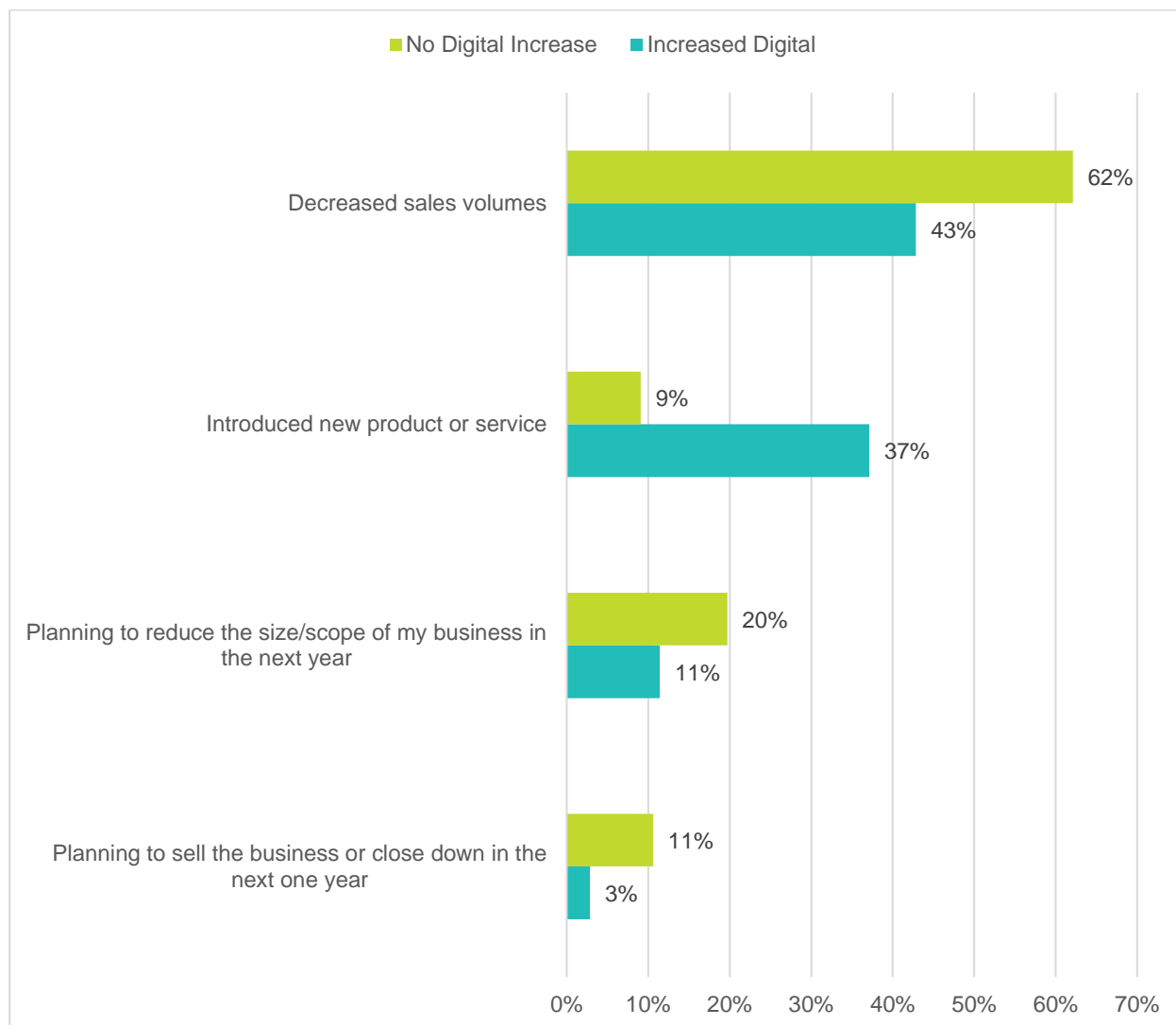
Graph 1.19 What is the biggest operational change you have made to help ensure the viability of your business (that others could learn from)? (n=68)



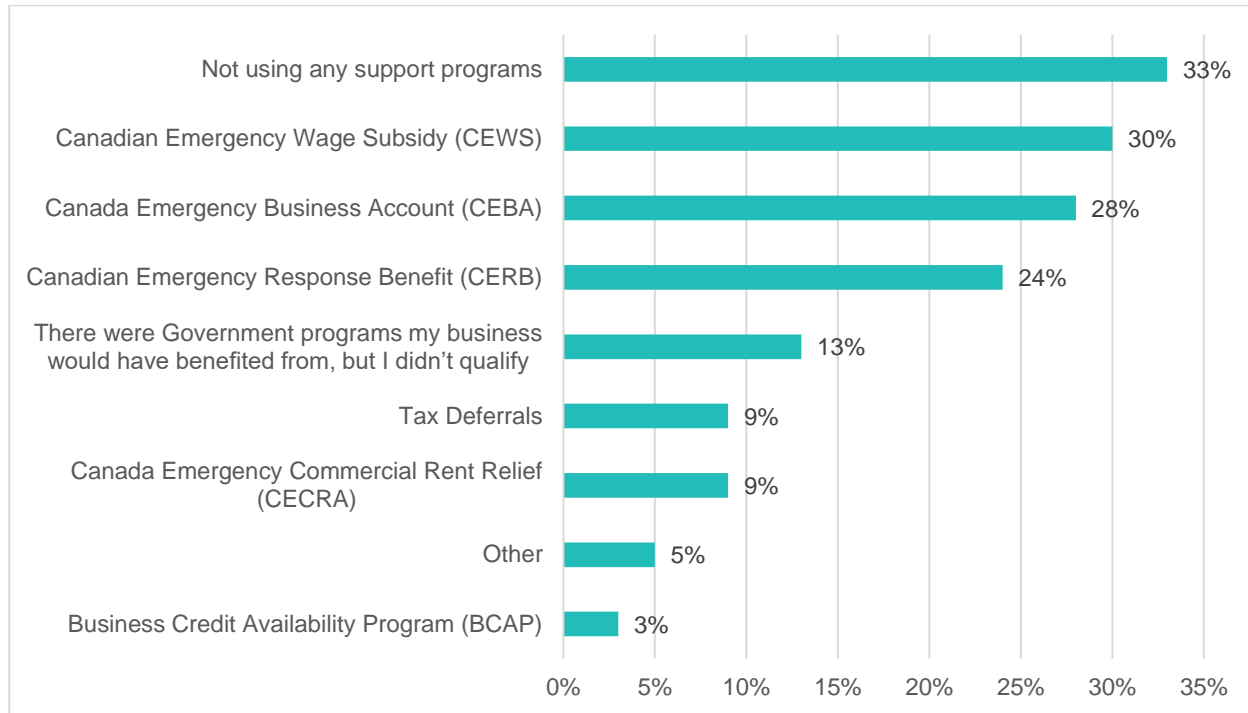
Graph 1.20 Which business resiliency programs are you most interested in? (n=84)



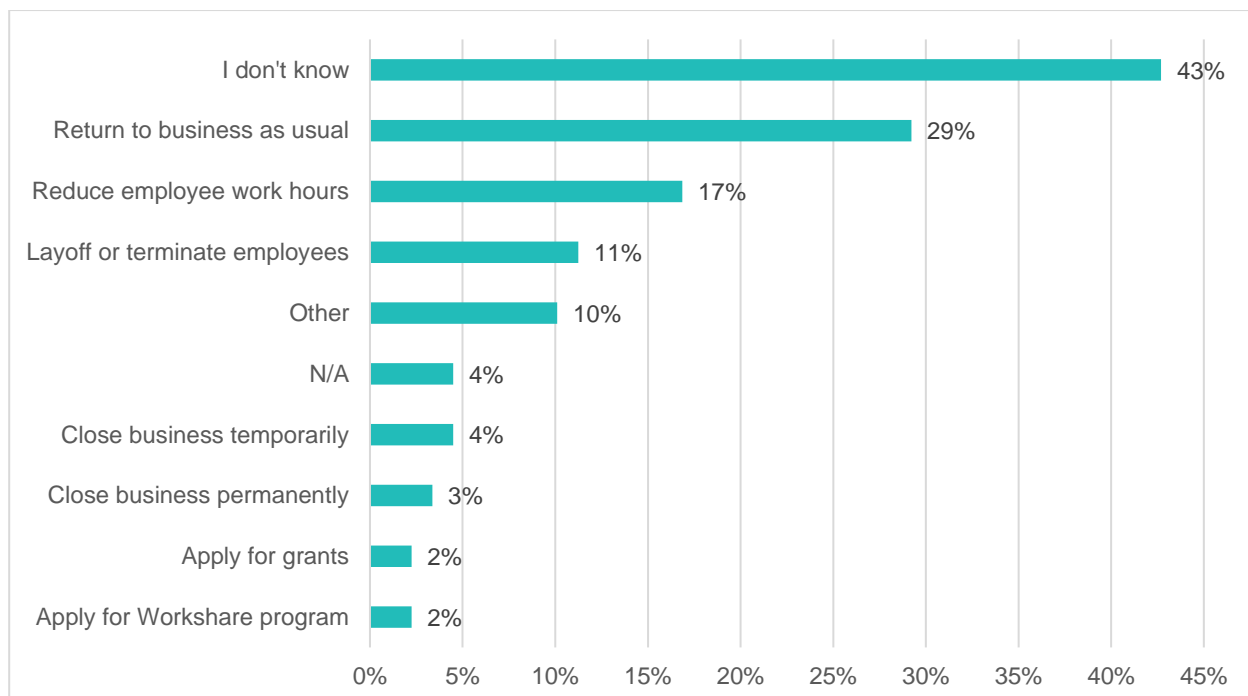
Graph 1.21 Relationship between engagement in the digital economy and response to the crisis



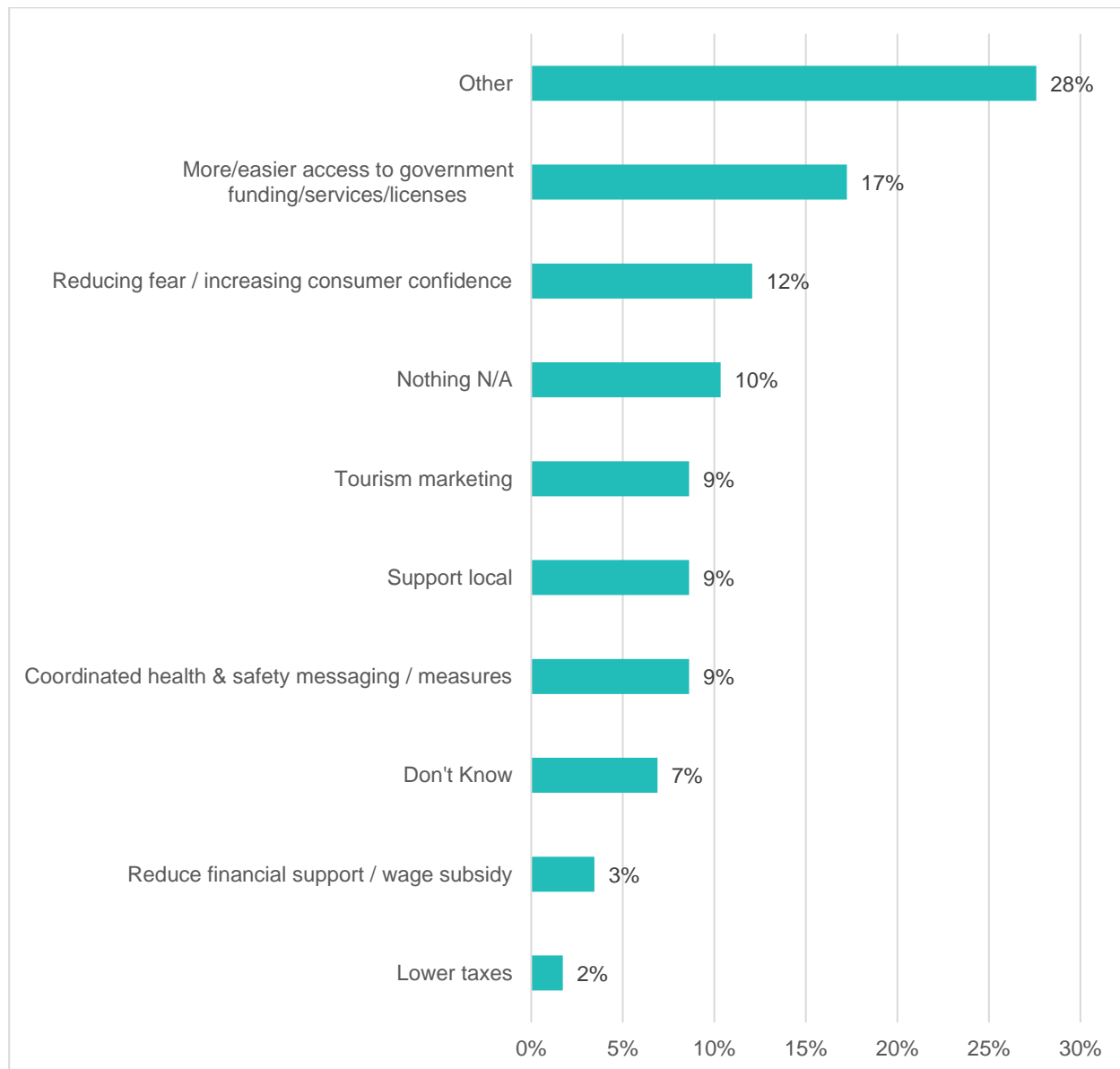
Graph 1.22 Are you using any government support programs? (n=100)



Graph 1.23 What is your business planning to do once government support ends? (n=89)



Graph 1.24 What actions/initiatives coordinated on a regional scale would greatly support the recovery of your business sector or that of the regional economy? (n=58)





Appendix A: Open Ended Responses

Below are the responses to two open-ended questions, entered as free text in the survey. Each bullet is an individual response. Text that may identify the author has been removed to maintain survey privacy.

What is the biggest operational change you have made to help ensure the viability of your business (that others could learn from)? (n=68)

- *Not sure. We've done everything but no product means no sales*
- *Diversification in service. Expanded awareness via recommendations*
- *Use of masks in my office*
- *Expanded the floor space to accommodate in an attempt to allow (at least) the same number of customers as pre-COVID*
- *Expanding online services*
- *Being informed*
- *Put attractive permanent markings on the floor (my logo) to help people keep their distance safely. Slightly reducing hours to be less dependant on staffing challenges, but still maintaining adequate opening hours to be profitable*
- *Closed my office, switched to online work*
- *Focus on customer immediate needs to bridge the current situation*
- *Internet advertising*
- *Reduced store hours. Now closed 2 days per week*
- *Limited operating hours*
- *Word of mouth marketing aggressively*
- *Create a safe environment that patients feel comfortable visiting - protocol is universal precautions (treat all as if infected)*
- *More online presence*
- *We are switching to a more digital media environment to attract new clients and better support existing clients*
- *Employees now working mostly from home offices. Shortened work week to 4 days.*
- *Be proactive in reducing expenditures*
- *Streamlining products*
- *Requiring customers and staff to wear a mask and sanitize their hands before entering the store*
- *We have reduced the number of days and the number of hours the shop is open*
- *No changes*
- *Connect with other owners*
- *Staff work remotely from home*
- *Reduced our hours and staff*
- *Allowing only one family at a time as opposed to previously 2*
- *Increasing digital platform - not for sales but marketing. Picking up more clients outside of BC*
- *Needed to have a strong supported vision with the desire to see the success through a transition. Go public and explain the situation*
- *Online sales and delivery*
- *Sanitation*
- *Expanded into new areas*



- *Went from 25% digital to 90%*
- *Communicate better with your staff and customers*
- *Sanitation!*
- *Was going to retire. Can't as we have to lay off staff and continue working. As owner of the business, we currently do not take a wage in order to keep the business running.*
- *Downsized*
- *Trying to trim costs*
- *Expansion into online sales (for both mail order and curbside pickup)*
- *Outdoor classes only, reduced number of students per class, more online teaching (where possible)*
- *Availability through online presence and response (social media, emails, texts, etc.)*
- *Reducing hours, we are open to the public to allow staff to perform some of their duties before store hours (ordering, stocking, cleaning)*
- *Social media marketing - one staff person responsible*
- *Good communication of expectations*
- *Employees do multiple roles (Front Desk also prepares breakfast; housekeeping also does some pool and grounds tasks)*
- *Window service only*
- *Creative use of social media for social action campaigns, outdoor services*
- *Worked with other businesses to become hyper-local*
- *Quicker turnover of tables*
- *Working from home offices and adapted our services and products*
- *Increased communication with the public/our members regarding hygiene within our facilities*
- *Sanitization is key*
- *Developed with all employees' input a COVID plan for us all to abide by*
- *Sanitized stations throughout the building. Feel safe doing that. Also sanitizing first thing in the morning and once in afternoon good habit to get into*
- *Not to let the Government executed scare tactic of COVID become a mindset within our employees. We instill safety and preventive measures with consciousness and awareness of COVID*
- *Directional arrows, queuing spots*
- *Positive attitude*
- *COVID control measures*
- *Gone online*
- *Establish sanitation and other COVID protocols*
- *All visitor interactions using masks on both sides*
- *Still not clear*
- *Instagram posts*

What actions/initiatives coordinated on a regional scale would greatly support the recovery of your business sector or that of the regional economy? (n=58)

- *Not sure*
- *Remove fear in the general population*
- *More regional grant opportunities*
- *Everyone wearing a mask always while in public*



- *Shop Local - Shop Local - Shop Local*
- *Ensure local government shops locally*
- *Affordable housing*
- *Help tourism rebound to Vancouver Island*
- *Rules that allow the breaking of leases from landlords who refused to access rent relief*
- *As a sole proprietor of a small business, I did not qualify for most of the supports. I'm not sure what kind of support would help me to not fall through the cracks as I have*
- *Support hospitality business with flexible bylaws, support small businesses with equipment and materials to improve COVID safety and reduce their expenses towards this*
- *Do not know*
- *Stop the financial supports*
- *Support from local governments*
- *Creating a culture of outdoor shopping and dining like they have in Europe. Many cities in Europe close the city centre streets at certain times or permanently and allow shops and restaurants onto pavements and roads to trade, even pre COVID. The outdoor farmers market is the only time we see anyone in our downtown now. It's become a ghost town as people are scared.*
- *N/A for our business*
- *Increased media messaging with community letting them know that it is safe to resume previous activities if all COVID safety measures are in place and respected by all*
- *Help lower fixed costs for businesses wherever possible*
- *Consumer confidence*
- *Not sure*
- *Encourage tourism with visitors from other parts of the island and the rest of Canada*
- *My sector is stable*
- *Coordinated messaging in safety*
- *Easier wage subsidy qualifications*
- *Free advertising*
- *More support for sole proprietors. The \$40k loan is impossible to get as many of my fixed costs are eligible*
- *Don't know*
- *Reduce the wage subsidy*
- *Reduce Property Taxes*
- *A super focused local marketing program*
- *CVRD planning dept needs to implement cannabis retail zoning changes approved by the board last fall*
- *Staff education about sanitary procedures*
- *Access to business resources such as financial advisors, bookkeepers and planners as well as funds*
- *Support for staff who need to be off if they or their children are sick*
- *CVRD help with parking; still the biggest problem in Cowichan Bay*
- *Research into what contributes to consumer confidence*
- *Encouraging local travel*
- *Collaboration with key stakeholders for community sharing/distribution of emergency funds which we have done and most stakeholders collaborated but a few were self-serving*
- *Creating hyper-local incentivization, marketing, assistance in 'hubbing' businesses as much as possible. Creating business pods*



- *Creating a vaccine so we can have tables closer than six feet and do larger functions*
- *Greater transition into digital services*
- *Nothing*
- *It should be mandatory to wear masks*
- *More tourism marketing*
- *Clear all the extra and normal red tape for permits and licences so one can proceed efficiently with projects. More expedient inspections. Have tools and resources in place that help businesses to weather the impact of any disasters. We have to keep the country running. Shutting it down should not be an option. The impact affects people more disastrously than the Pandemic itself.*
- *Support local initiatives*
- *It is time to work together and implement the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous People in all aspects; prenatal to Elderhood.*
- *Reduce taxation at the municipal level*
- *Reduce the size of local government, North Cowichan to take over the City of Duncan*
- *None needed*
- *Unilaterally adopted COVID protocols*
- *Mandated mask-wearing and efficient and thorough contact tracing to keep COVID rates low so people have the confidence to go to restaurants and hotels*
- *Working with School Districts to enroll High School students in online courses and practice groups for diversity education*
- *The supply chain for shipping and receiving needs to be mended!*
- *Confidence in the fact that there is not a 2nd wave of COVID-19*



Appendix B: Other Resources

BC Mind Reader COVID Impact Pulse Check Surveys -

<https://www.bcmindreader.com/hub/posts/banner-1-network-25520864>

BC Tourism Resiliency Network Research - <https://tourismresiliency.ca/reports/>

Statistics Canada July 2020 Labour Force Survey - <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200807/dq200807a-info-eng.htm>

BC Stats July 2020 Labour Force Highlights -

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/employment-labour/labour-market-statistics>

Business Council of British Columbia Surveys - <https://bccbc.com/insights-and-opinions/how-are-b-c-s-large-employers-faring-through-covid-19-results-from-our-fourth-survey>

Business Council of British Columbia, The 2020 Shutdown: How Deep is the Economic Hole? -

<https://bccbc.com/reports-and-research/the-2020-shutdown-how-deep-is-the-economic-hole>

Business Council of British Columbia, News Release: Stronger Tomorrow, Starting Today Charts a Course to Rebuilding British Columbia's Economy and Personal Prosperity -

<https://bccbc.com/media/news-release-stronger-tomorrow-starting-today-charts-a-course-to-rebuilding-british-columbias-economy-and-personal-prosperity>

Emerging Economy Task Force final report released -

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020JEDC0009-000854>

Canadian Federation of Independent Business - <https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/en/research/survey-results/investigating-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-independent-business>

Economic Development Cowichan September 2020 Update

Presentation to Municipality of North Cowichan

Barry O’Riordan, Economic Development Cowichan



CVRD

Economic Development Cowichan

Update Topics

- Strategic plan
- Looking back
- Then COVID-19 happened...
- COVID-19 Response to Recovery
- Measuring Success

EDC Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Goal 1: Business Retention Expansion and Attraction

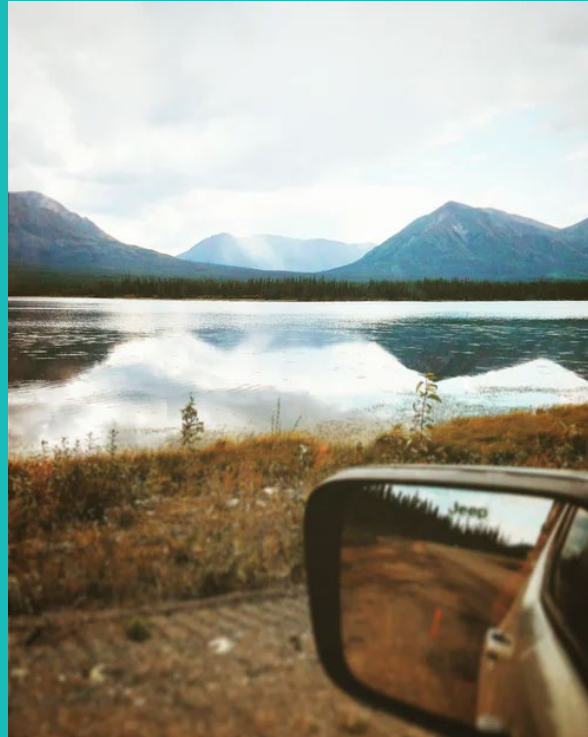
Goal 2: Sector Development

Goal 3: Strengthening Communities

Goal 4: Communicating our Story, and

Goal 5: Alignment with CVRD Strategic Activities

Looking Back...



CVRD

Economic Development Cowichan

Looking Back...

- Cowichan Tech Strategy (2017)
- Industrial Land Use Strategy (2019)
- Air Transport Study (2019)
- Heritage Symposium (2019)
- Island Agriculture Show (2020)
- Shawnigan Lake Design Charrette (2020)
- Ladysmith Investment Attraction App (2020)
- Food Processing Feasibility Study (2020)

Then COVID-19 happened...



EDC COVID-19 Response Activities

Initial COVID Activities:

- Regional Emergency Operation Centre (REOC)
- COVID-19 Resource Page
- Economic Development/Business Support Organizations join forces
- Buy Local Cowichan Partnership (formerly, Cowichan Strong)
 - Weekly coordination, project development and sharing of best practice

EDC COVID-19 Response Activities

Buy Local Cowichan Partnership Activities:

- COVID-19 Business Resource Website
- Weekly Webinars/Coffee Chats
- Buy Local Cowichan Marketing Campaign
 - Website, social, video, TV, billboard, print
- Business Survey x 2
- Island Good support
- Supporting Regional Initiatives:
 - Digital Economy Restart, Recover, Reimagine Program (DER3), and BC Tourism Resiliency Program

EDC COVID-19 Response Activities

Other Activities:

- Film Cowichan paused –restarted in August
- Participating “Cowichan Task Leaders” weekly call (coordinated by Our Cowichan Health Network)
- Supporting non-profits and agricultural organizations
- VICEDA – Coordination calls, Tech attraction website techisland.io

COVID-19 Response to Recovery



COVID-19 Response to Recovery

- COVID Specific Responses – upcoming:
 - Enhancing Buy-Local-Cowichan
 - Ongoing Business Surveys
 - Recovery Dashboard
 - Spurring Innovation – tech, industrial, food/beverage
 - Other projects in development



COVID-19 Response to Recovery

- Accommodations Strategy

Recommend postponement – reassess need post COVID-19

- Tech Strategy – Implementation

Connectivity Strategy – Recommended for 2021

High School/VIU – Tech Training

Tech Networking – Enhanced DER3

- Agriculture and Food Innovation

Food Processing Hub, Business Incubation

Island Ag Show 2021 (tbt)

Cannabis



COVID-19 Response to Recovery

- First Nation Relations

Strengthened Communication, Aligned focus, Partnerships

- Industrial Land Use Strategy – Implementation

Sector Development, Support OCP policy options

- Sub-Regional Strategy/Design Charrette Support

Shawnigan, Ladysmith, Cow Bay, Cobble Hill, Lake Cowichan



COVID-19 Response to Recovery

- Inspiring Innovation – Business & Ecology
Circular Economy, Doughnut Economics
- Film Cowichan
- Working with Partners
Tourism, Chambers, BIAs, First Nations, Non Profits
- EDC Strategic Plan Review



Measuring Success



Measuring Success

- Business Surveys, Recovery Dashboard
- Action on Recommendations of Tech, Industrial Land Use, Food Processing and other studies
- Response to Communications and Outreach
- Action in response to COVID-19



Economic Development Cowichan

Thank you!


ecdevcowichan.com



CVRD

Economic Development Cowichan

Report

Date	September 16, 2020	File:
To	Council	
From	Dave Preikshot, Senior Environmental Specialist	Endorsed: 
Subject	Climate Action and Energy Plan Modelling Update Engagement	

Purpose

To provide Council with an opportunity to consider the summarized public input on the Climate Action and Energy Plan (CAEP) emissions modelling update, and understand how public input has been used by staff and modelling consultants to further refine the CAEP model.

Background

The Climate Action and Energy Plan (CAEP) update is a project that improves carbon emissions modelling for North Cowichan to identify the full scope of our community emissions. This project uses the latest emissions estimation methodology and aligns our emissions estimations with national and provincial reporting standards. The original CAEP emissions modelling was done a decade ago and this update will help us understand changes in our emissions during that time, and likely emissions patterns in the future. The CAEP update will be used help North Cowichan assess policy options for managing emissions reduction and climate adaptation under the under the Climate Action Plan, adopted by Council in January 2020.

On 19 July, 2017, Council adopted a motion directing Staff to:

... apply to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) for up to \$80,000 in co-funding (project value up to \$100,000) for the purpose of updating the Climate Action and Energy Plan's greenhouse gas emissions model.

Staff applied to the FCM for funding under the Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program. This application was successful and the CAEP modelling update was initiated in the summer of 2019, identifying the following project goals:

- Update the assumptions used in the current GHG model in consideration of technological changes (e.g. renewable energy, electric vehicles etc.) and the costs of those technologies
- Develop a new GHG emissions model
- Remodel existing scenarios and resultant implementation plan actions to assess efficacy of actions, assess any new potential actions, and revise the implementation as required
- Using the new model to assess the District's progress towards its' current GHG reduction target and, if necessary, recommend an alternate target(s)
- Develop a more functional and user-friendly tool for ongoing modelling of GHG reduction strategies and monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions

Council wanted staff to consult with both stakeholders and the broader community on the project to update the CAEP emissions modelling, and resolved during the June 17, 2020 Regular Council Meeting: as follows:

That Council direct staff to proceed with a digital engagement session with the proposed list of organizations and stakeholders, staff, and the consultants for participation in the Climate Action Energy Plan digital information and engagement session.

Public Engagement Process

The organizations and persons shown in **Appendix A: List of participants in the CAEP update digital engagement** all agreed to review documents related to North Cowichan CAEP emissions modelling being done by Sustainability Solutions Group. Members of this engagement group were provided with:

- reference material on the data used to set up the emissions model
- assumptions used to parameterize the model
- preliminary estimates of baseline emissions
- forecasts of likely emissions by 2050
- current and forecasted emissions and energy use by different sectors of the community
- presentations by staff and consultants, for the July 27 engagement session

After reviewing these materials, the identified stakeholders and regional government partners were invited to provide feedback and questions to North Cowichan staff and our modellers before a digital engagement session that was held on July 27, 2020. Participants were also encouraged to ask questions or provide comments during the engagement session. Advertising to the broader public occurred on social media platforms. Members of the general public were also encouraged to watch the engagement session and send in questions and comments.

A PlaceSpeak page was created after the engagement session, to serve as a forum at which the participants and the public could continue discussing aspects of the CAEP update modelling. The PlaceSpeak page contains:

- the reference materials described above
- video of staff and consultant presentations from the engagement session
- video of the questions and comments from the engagement session
- a summary document of responses to all questions and comments that arose from the engagement group before and during the engagement session
- a discussion page with five topics reflecting questions and comments from the engagement group members on the following modelling issues:
 - general comments/questions
 - transportation emissions
 - land use
 - alternative energy and
 - energy efficient housing

Public Engagement Outcomes

The July 27 engagement session had 27 participants and almost all submitted questions or comments during the presentations and the Question and Answer session. At the time of this report's preparation, the PlaceSpeak page had 274 Visitors, with 21 discussion threads. Staff received a high volume of meaningful feedback in the form of questions and comments sent in by participants before and during the engagement session. The question and answer document, available in the resources section of the PlaceSpeak page (www.PlaceSpeak.com/CAEPupdate) and on the project web page (<https://bit.ly/3bNYnjs>) has 64 questions, each with a unique response from staff or our consultants.

These questions, comments and answers can be seen in Appendix B.

Participants were also very interested in how the different management policies of the Municipal Forest Reserve (MFR) could affect emissions accounting and climate planning. Although the model does account for this, environment staff have had three meetings with the MFR modelling team to compare results and include the most recent results in each other's work. Several questions and comments led to actions by staff and consultants that will improve emissions modelling. **Details on these improvements can be seen in the consultants report in Appendix C.**

Several comments pointed out new policy options to be considered during and after the economic modelling phase and ways to improve existing policy, from the original CAEP. Comments on strengthening existing policy or introducing new policies was also part of discussion on the PlaceSpeak forums.

Given the feedback from our engagement group our consultant has devoted significant time and effort to make modifications to the emissions modelling to reflect the public input received. Staff are looking forward to proceeding with the next phase of the project, following Council endorsement at a future meeting.

Next Steps

Staff will return to a Council meeting in the near future to seek approval to proceed to the next phase of the CAEP modelling update, which is economic modelling. In this phase, the costs and benefits associated with different emissions scenarios, policies and sectors in the community are simulated. This analysis will provide North Cowichan with the means to assess the economic and social viability of different policy options as well as their efficacy in reducing carbon emissions by the community.

Recommendation

That Council accept the Senior Environmental Specialist's September 16, 2020 report summarizing public input on the Climate Action and Energy Plan update and outlining how the emissions modelling has been updated to reflect public input.

Attachment(s):

Appendix A: List of participants in the CAEP update digital engagement

Appendix B: 2020 Climate Action Plan Modeling Engagement – Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix C: North Cowichan Climate Action and Energy Plan Update Public Engagement Summary (prepared by Jeremy Murphy, Sustainability Solutions Group)

Appendix A: List of participants in the CAEP update digital engagement

Organisation	Contact Person
Chemainus Chamber of Commerce	Laurie Frankson
Chemainus Residents Association	Christina Godbolt
City of Duncan	Michelle Geneau
Climate Scientist	Geoff Strong
Cowichan Energy Alternatives	Brian Roberts
Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation	Goetz Schuerholz
Cowichan Green Community	Judy Stafford
Cowichan Land Trust	Stephanie Cottell
Cowichan Stewardship Roundtable	Genevieve Singleton
Cowichan Tribes	Tracy Fleming
Cowichan Valley Naturalists	Bruce Coates
Cowichan Valley Regional District	Austin Tokarek
Cowichan Valley Regional District	Coralie Breen
Cowichan Valley Regional District	Kate Miller
Duncan Cowichan Chamber of Commerce	Karen Bresler
Duncan Cowichan Chamber of Commerce	Pam Stover
Former EAC Member	Cameron Campbell
Former EAC Member	Doug Fenton
Former EAC Member	Peter Nix
Former EAC Member	Sandra McPherson
Halalt First Nation	Caitlin Kenney
Maple Bay Community Association	Sheila Kitson
One Cowichan	Jane Kiltnei
One Cowichan	Matt Price
Quamichan Lake Neighbourhood Association	Marilyn Palmer
Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society	Elodie Roger
Youth Earth Guardians	Katia Bannister

2020 Climate Action Plan Modeling Engagement – Public Engagement Comments, Questions and Answers

Note that Staff and consultants have combined questions with a similar theme to reduce repetition in the document and keep this document to a digestible size.

General Themes / Comments from Engagement Session:

- *Several comments were made in regards to the modelling exercise not explicitly describing definitive policy options to reduce emissions*

A: Specific policy options, projects and actions have not yet been specified at this stage in the project. The purpose of this session was to provide an update on the status of the project, review the methods and assumptions used in the modelling software, to show where the community's emissions are being generated, and how the emissions profile may change over time. Overall, the main objective was to show where there is a potential for reductions and start a discussion on how we can achieve our emissions reduction targets. Actions and policy option development are the next phase of the project.

- *Participants would like to see more action on things that can be influenced by municipal policy like transportation mode and land use and promoting regenerative agriculture and forestry*

A: The modelling update includes energy and emissions considerations that are within and outside of direct municipal influence as it is the proper approach to energy and emissions inventories and planning. The primary focus of the updated CAEP will be on factors under municipal control, but we cannot meet our emissions reduction targets without efforts from other levels of government affecting factors in their jurisdictions. Staff are very interested in investigating regenerative agriculture to learn how this may help reduce GHG emissions from our agriculture sector. There is a possibility of forestry for managing emissions either through sequestration of preserved forests or more carbon neutral harvesting, but the decisions on which of these policies are adopted will be in the purview of Council and dependent on advice from the Forest Committee and consultation with First Nations.

- ***The Climate Action Plan doesn't address preservation, access, and maintenance of ground and surface water supplies for our rising population***

A: While there are areas in the Cowichan Valley Regional District where water supply is a growing concern, the source water supplies for residents connected to North Cowichan water systems are currently showing stable trends. The CAEP modelling is not meant to address climate adaptation projects like water storage as it was originally scoped as a GHG emissions mitigation exercise (which is the purpose of the FCM funding provided). However, as we advance the discussion and move into developing management policy under the Climate Action Plan, a significant amount of work will be devoted to storage of water in reservoirs to maintain surface water supplies in the summer. There will also be potential applications of stored water to protect fish and fish habitat, recreational opportunities, and water quality in Somenos and Quamichan Lake.

Staff implement water restrictions in the warmer summer months for a variety of reasons:

1. Based on the Provincial Governments direction via the Regions Drought Code.
2. As a precautionary measure to limit our impact on infrastructure, surface water and groundwater supplies.
3. Reducing peak demands in the summer months can help to reduce operation, maintenance and capital costs relating to water delivery (ie. If the peak water demand goes up significantly, bigger pipes, pumps and water supplies are required to adequately serve our residents). Reducing peak demands delays the premature need to complete expensive upgrades on our water systems in the future.

- ***More focus and resources need to be dedicated to getting a better idea of what potential GHG reduction projects are viable here in DNC, how many tonnes of reductions they may be able to contribute and how the most feasible projects can be supported in a way that helps to transition the local economy to a sustainable/low carbon.***

A: The CAEP and its modelling update are focused on actions that are viable in the local context. For example, local wind and hydro power generation have not been considered in the modelling as there is little opportunity for these approaches. The actions explored through the modelling update will each have associated emissions reductions (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) and financial estimates.

Questions from Engagement Session:

1. Why does the modelling exercise not explicitly describe definitive policy options to reduce emissions?

A: The purpose of the engagement session was to provide an update on the status of the emissions modelling, review the methods and assumptions used in the modelling scenarios, to show where the community's emissions are being generated and how the emissions profile may change over time. The engagement will thus help identify where there are potential areas for other reductions and to start a discussion on how we can achieve our emissions reduction targets. Policy options will then be developed to reinforce those from the original CAEP or to create new actions when/where possible.

2. Why is there not more action on things that can be influenced by municipal policy like transportation mode, land use, promoting regenerative agriculture, and forestry?

A: The modelling update includes energy and emissions considerations that are within and outside of the sphere of direct municipal influence, as it is the best practice in accounting for energy and emissions inventories. The primary focus of the updated CAEP is on factors under municipal control. However, it is acknowledged that we will not be able to meet our emissions reduction targets without efforts from other levels of government affecting factors in their jurisdictions. For example, based on suggestions from the public, staff are interested in investigating regenerative agriculture to learn how this may help reduce GHG emissions from our agriculture sector. There is also a possibility of managing emissions through the Municipal Forest Reserve either through sequestration of preserved forests or more carbon neutral harvesting. The decisions on which these policies are adopted will be in the purview of Council and dependent on the feedback received through the public engagement process, consultation with First Nations and advice received from the Forest Committee.

3. Why doesn't the CAEP update address preservation, access, maintenance of ground and surface water supplies for our rising population

A: The CAEP update modelling is not meant to address climate adaptation projects like water storage as the CAEP update is scoped as a GHG emissions mitigation exercise. However, as we advance the discussion and move into developing management policy under the Climate Action Plan, a significant amount of work will be devoted to storage of water in reservoirs to maintain surface water supplies in the summer. There will also be potential applications of stored water to protect fish and fish habitat, recreational opportunities, and water quality in Somenos and Quamichan Lake.

In our current policy, staff implement water restrictions in the warmer summer months for a variety of reasons:

1. Based on Provincial Government direction via the Regions Drought Code.
2. A precautionary measure to limit our potential impact on infrastructure, surface water, and groundwater supplies.

3. Reducing peak demands in the summer months can help to reduce operation, maintenance, and capital costs relating to water delivery, i.e., if the peak water demand goes up significantly, bigger pipes, pumps, and water supplies are required to adequately serve our residents. Reducing peak demands delays the need to complete expensive upgrades on our water systems in the future.

4. *The assumptions related to transitioning to Electric or low emissions vehicles are too optimistic.*

A: We have assumed an arguably ambitious EV uptake target for the low-carbon scenario modelling. The Provincial target is already ambitious and we wanted to explore what emissions reductions are possible under a slightly more ambitious approach to demonstrate the scope of the challenge and to estimate what efforts may be required to meet our emissions reduction target. The Schedule for uptake of EVs and zero emissions vehicles in the model also reflects targets set by Transport Canada to reflect Canada's emissions reduction obligations. This suggests that senior levels of government are prepared to be part of the effort to develop infrastructure for such a transition.

5. *Why isn't there more focus and resources dedicated to getting a better idea of what potential GHG reduction projects are viable here in North Cowichan, how many tonnes of reductions they may be able to contribute, and how the most feasible projects can be supported in a way that helps to transition the local economy to a sustainable/low carbon.*

A: The CAEP and its modelling update are focused on actions that are viable in the local context. For example, local wind and hydro power generation have not been considered in the modelling as there is little opportunity for these approaches, as established in the original CAEP. The actions explored through the modelling update will each have associated emissions reductions (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) and financial estimates incorporated in later phases of the project.

6. *Why has there been a shift from a focus on actions that can be taken municipally to actions that are under provincial or federal jurisdiction?*

A: The intention is that policy or actions coming out of this process are focused on things that the Municipality can actually control or has some ability to influence or change at higher levels of government. In order to meet our emissions reduction targets, however, we also must consider what other levels of government are capable of supporting in North Cowichan.

7. *Where does urban planning and creating compact, walkable communities to reduce carbon emissions and make services more accessible to all peoples fit in?*

A: This is in line with the underlying objectives of the Climate Action Plan and is established in our current OCP. These policies are presently implemented through development decisions (i.e. zoning and subdivision approvals) made in compliance with our OCP, but will be more widely implemented in the coming years through anticipated review of the Zoning and Subdivision Servicing Bylaws. The

update to the OCP will further explore this value and how it can be improved. Find out how you can get involved now by visiting www.northcowichan.ca/OCP, or follow the Municipality on social media.

8. *How does improving public transit infrastructure and education fit into the Climate Action and Energy Plan?*

A: This was modelled in the Low Carbon Scenarios and any specific policies will have to be implemented in collaboration with the Cowichan Valley Regional District and BC Transit. Furthermore, the modelling included information on the current transportation of students via School District 79.

9. *What about biking infrastructure? In this plan, how are greener travel and transport alternatives being put forward to reduce our emissions?*

A: Bike infrastructure is a consideration to the active transportation mode shift in the modelling update. In the next phase of the project, discrete actions like building new bike infrastructure will be explored as a means to achieve the bike mode shift explored in the modelling. Exploring alternative transportation options will also be part of the OCP update discussions.

10. *LCS Assumptions: Why does Crofton have 5% growth in new buildings while the others have 30%?*

A: This assumption was based on current patterns of new building permit applications in different areas of North Cowichan and staff anticipation of future trends for these.

11. *How does the modelling update justify a drop in transportation emissions in the baseline (business-as-usual scenario)?*

A: Several factors are anticipated to contribute to a vehicle emissions decline over the next 30 years, including: low emission vehicle uptake, improved fuel efficiency and carbon content standards, and a decrease in overall car ownership.

12. *How is 100% electric vehicle sales by 2030 possible?*

A: While this may be an optimistic target, the most recent available data for car sales shows that in the later half of 2019, 15% of new cars purchased in BC were electric or low emissions vehicles, and it is very likely that the portion would be even higher on Vancouver Island. Transport Canada has assumed similarly ambitious targets for new car sales in Canada in order to meet our national carbon emissions reduction targets (<https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/innovative-technologies/zero-emission-vehicles>). The aggressive assumption for uptake of EVs and ZEVs is also based on the developing price parity between internal combustion engine and electric engine vehicles arriving soon, the use of federal and provincial subsidies and incentives, and partnerships with dealerships.

13. *Why isn't transportation modal shift in itself a big move?*

A: Mode shift assumptions are included in the modelling. Please see the Data Methods and Assumptions Manual for more details.

14. *Does this project take into account electric bikes?*

A: Not explicitly. Although, they are included in bike mode share considerations.

15. *Why is the timeline for 10% approval of single-family homes so long?*

A: This is an assumption and could be changed to an earlier year if it is thought to be reasonable.

16. *Has North Cowichan made increases in the Step Code mandatory through to 2032, and how can it mandate net zero by 2030?*

A: Council gave first, second, and third reading to an amendment to the Building Bylaw that will require all new construction in North Cowichan to comply with Step 2 of the BC Energy Step Code, as of January 1, 2021. In conjunction with this, Council approved a policy to implement a staged rebate program for new builds in North Cowichan that voluntarily comply with Step 2 (or higher) of the BC Energy Step Code. Rebates for voluntarily reaching Step 2 will be offered until compliance with this step is mandatory in 2021. Council allocated \$30,000 from the Climate Action Reserve Fund to provide rebates on a first-come-first-served basis until funds are exhausted. Two information sessions on the new rebate program will be held digitally over the summer, dates will be confirmed and posted on our website soon.

17. *North Cowichan has shown leadership through the CAEP tax levy. What % of corporate GHG emissions reduction has there been since its inception? How can this achievement be leveraged to accomplish more?*

A: Corporate GHG emissions have been quite stable, despite increases in staffing and infrastructure. We will, therefore, devote significant effort to bringing these numbers down. Staff is currently assessing ways to speed up fleet electrification and installing electrical vehicle infrastructure to support this move.

18. *How do CVRD policies influence North Cowichan?*

A: North Cowichan staff work closely with the CVRD and there are many synergies in policies with respect to solid waste management, public transit, climate adaptation and mitigation, and most importantly, growth management. However, specific policy adopted by North Cowichan most effectively governs climate action within North Cowichan.

19. *Why is there no mention of, or action foreseen, for the Cowichan Estuary, even though the northern half falls within the jurisdiction of North Cowichan?*

A: All areas within the Municipal boundary are considered in the modelling. Specific actions and policies will be identified in later phases of the project.

20. *Why not ban any type of clear-cutting of municipal forests?*

A: The Municipal Forest Reserve is a carbon sink and is included in the modelling as such. The Operational Forestry Management Review is currently underway by the UBC Partnership Group who will be providing Council potential options for future forest management for their consideration. More information can be found on the MNC website at: www.northcowichan.ca/forestry. The results of this review, in conjunction with public input and a government-to-government consultation with local First Nations, will help Council determine the best future direction of the Municipal Forest Reserve.

21. *Why not adopt a strict tree bylaw for North Cowichan which applies to public and private land?*

A: At this stage in the project, specific policy options and actions have not yet been outlined yet. This type of policy could be considered in later phases of the project.

22. *Why not prevent urban sprawl, concentrating on attractive strata development and multi-family, affordable housing instead?*

A: This is assumed in the development assumptions in the modelling. Please see Data Methods and Assumptions Manual for more details.

23. *Why not adapt building codes to energy efficient and environmentally friendly structures?*

A: The BC Energy Step Code and net zero building efficiencies are considered in the modelling. Please see the Data Methods and Assumptions Manual for more details.

24. *Why not provide property tax incentives for retrofitting older buildings and attracting green and sustainable industry?*

A: The Clean BC Better Homes program incentivises retrofitting existing housing stock and Council provided funding and directed staff to partner with the provincial government on this program. Please see the Data Methods and Assumptions Manual for more details. Further incentives to encourage energy efficient retrofits may be developed in the future.

25. *Why not more emphasis on energy efficient public transport and safer bicycle lanes?*

A: Electrified transit is included in the modelling. Protected bike lanes aren't considered in the modelling, but the expanded use of bikes is.

26. *The models under discussion fail to provide budgets and well defined time-lines for each proposed action*

A: Financial modelling and timing are part of the next phase of the project.

27. *Please explain the differences regarding the projected number of new homes in North Cowichan. In the CAEP Update assumptions it states there will be +867 new homes by 2050, whereas in the OCP Gap Analysis it states that the number of homes in North Cowichan will go from 12,800 in 2017 to 16,300 in 2050 an increase of 3,500. In the Strategy and Policy document of the CAEP update, it says that North Cowichan's low density will still apply to 90% of the housing stock in 2050. But, if the 3,500 figure is true, then more than 20% of North Cowichan's 2050 is yet to be built, much of which could be located in a manner to densify (or "thicken") existing neighbourhoods.*

A: We will be speaking with the OCP consultants and Sustainability Solutions Group to make sure that we have an agreement between the two projects in their forecasts of likely numbers of new homes and dwelling types. The energy and emissions modelling will be updated if it is found that the currently used housing numbers are inappropriate. Providing amenities closer to existing communities or nodes, i.e., "Thickening Neighborhoods") is desirable in terms of GHG emissions reductions and often comes as a result of densification of existing neighborhoods.

28. *Why is carbon capture and storage not emphasized more in the plan? Why is there not a big emphasis on protecting, increasing and improving green space?*

A: Given that the preliminary analysis completed by the UBC Partnership Group shows that protecting the ~5,000ha in the MFR has the potential to generate approximately 20,000 tCO_{eq} sequestration per year, (roughly 5-6% of community emissions) it will be tough to find other places to do enough habitat remediation that stores a large amount of carbon. Therefore, with respect to managing individual carbon capture projects, the Municipality needs to be careful that money spent on carbon capture is not being unnecessarily diverted from potentially more efficient uses in lowering emissions or mitigating climate change effects. However, there are other habitat protection and remediation reasons to pursue greening the community as well as benefits from shading local watercourses that will be investigated.

29. *Why are electric bikes and electric mobility scooters not included?*

A: Electric bikes and scooters are considered in the transportation modelling and goals around modal shift. Developing alternative modes of transportation will be an important way to reduce emissions from transportation if we do not think we can achieve the conversion to 100% Zero emissions vehicles by 2030.

30. Compact housing: Why not more emphasis on existing lots including in-building another house, adding suites, and speeding up the process for coach houses on already existent property?

A: Making communities more walkable and encouraging alternative transportation is a key aspect of reducing our emissions and will also be addressed in the OCP. Converting to these alternative modes of transportation will also be encouraged by denser housing strategies as recommended in the original CAEP, and the OCP. Compact housing includes a range of housing types from small-lot single family subdivision, cluster housing, up to apartments. In recent years North Cowichan has pre-zoned most single-family neighbourhoods to allow for secondary suites, and many also have the ability to develop coach houses. The CVRD is currently undertaking a Housing Needs Assessment that will identify what number and type of housing exists today and what we'll need in the future. This data will be generated at the local level, and we'll be working to incorporate it into our OCP update. Be sure to follow both topics on [Placespeak](#).

31. What is Sustainability Solutions Groups cost to taxpayers?

A: The Climate Action modelling project has a \$100,000 budget, with \$80,000 of the funding coming from The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). The remaining 20% came from the Municipality's Climate Action Reserve Fund.

32. Why is North Cowichan's annual industrial emissions higher than Victoria's?

A: North Cowichan began as a resource based economy so there is a lot of mining, manufacturing, forestry processing, and associated activities. The comparison is based on data presented in Victoria's climate action plan so it is unknown what assumptions were used to derive the reported emissions by that sector. It may also be that a significant portion of Victoria's industrial emissions occur on federal land, e.g., transport Canada, national defence, coast guard, etc. and are not accounted for in their emissions inventory.

33. Why have the tonnes of carbon sequestration not yet been valued for the Municipal Forest Reserve?

A: This estimate is included in the forecast but, even under the most optimistic assumption, will only account for 5-6% of current emissions. The carbon sequestration potential of the Municipal Forest Reserve is currently being modelled by the UBC Partnership Group and a potential sequestration range is included in the modelling and can be updated later based on the actual harvest /sequestration policy that is adopted. At this point in Technical Review on the Municipal Forest Reserve, the figures developed by the UBC Partnership are still preliminary and no decisions have been made by Council as to the direction of the Forest reserve. A copy of the UBC Partnership Groups "Carbon Feasibility Assessment" report can be found here:

<https://www.northcowichan.ca/EN/main/community/current-topics/municipal-forest-reserve/carbon-feasibility-assessment.html>

34. *Why have housing development plans not included commercial nodes to reduce number of vehicle trips to shopping centres in Duncan for example?*

A: The modelling includes estimates of daily number of trips and trip lengths. Expected commercial and retail building floor area per year estimates are also included in the modelling considerations. Like residential development, they are distributed to certain areas of North Cowichan in the spatial modelling.

35. *What are "fugitive" Emissions?*

A: Fugitive emissions are the volumes of lost product during the distribution of natural gas, which is, itself, a powerful greenhouse gas.

36. *In October of 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change update clearly stated that we need to reduce emissions (at all levels of government and industry) by 50% by 2030 and reduce emissions to net zero by 2050 in order for warming to remain at or below 1.5 degrees Celsius and avoid the looming catastrophic impacts of the unfolding climate crisis. Will North Cowichan's Council be looking at the emissions reduction target which, at 80% below baseline by 2050, is very much out of date with the analysis of the current peer reviewed climate science?*

A: An important legacy of the CAEP modelling update will be the ability to track emissions more meaningfully as we move forward. We will thus be able to make better assessments of how our emissions policies are succeeding or falling short. This will be crucial in helping with adaptive management of emissions if we, as a community, become more proactive in our desires to pursue emissions reductions. Adopting an emissions reduction target based on 1.5 degree warming would require Council approval.

37. *The Climate Action Plan has 6 strategy areas. Why is Land Use not one of those? It has a major influence on emissions, and is TOTALLY under municipal control, unlike agriculture, industry and transportation, for instance.*

A: Land Use is integrated into four of the six strategic areas of the Climate Action Plan (items 1, 2, 4, and 5) and a fundamental component of the OCP.

1. Encourage transition to electric vehicles and less carbon intense transportation
 - Install charging stations at municipal facilities
 - Encourage charging stations in new developments
 - Support installation of charging stations in existing neighbourhoods
 - Encourage biking and bike paths
 - Develop walkable neighbourhoods and amenities
 - Adapt transportation to accommodate e-Bikes and scooters
 - Work with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to reduce congestion of through traffic

2. Taking corporate leadership in lowering emissions
 - Partnerships with other local government on planning local amenities and transportation
 - Improving energy efficiency in municipal buildings
 - Seek ways to use renewable energy in municipal buildings
 - Promoting low carbon energy production opportunities
4. Support Ecosystems and promote carbon capture
 - Develop blue carbon storage in salt marshes and eelgrass beds
 - Rebuild Forests
 - Restore Wetlands
 - Preserve streams, ponds, and lakes
5. Adapting to new Climate norms
 - Seeking opportunities for water storage
 - Preserving and planting trees
 - Planning for changes in sea level
 - Assess and mitigate risks to infrastructure

38. *I see the Municipality has an Active Transportation Plan. Great! Does it include pushing for the conversion of the E&N Railway corridor into a trail? This would greatly encourage alternative transportation, and provide better access for Cowichan Tribes, especially.*

A: This idea involves a much broader discussion with Cowichan Tribes, the Provincial Government, Cowichan Valley Regional District, City of Duncan and Island Railway Corridor Foundation not to mention all the community organizations that would like to see a rail system re-established. The Active Transportation Plan does identify this as a potential multi-use trail connection in the future.

39. *Are there any examples of a municipality in BC regulating small-emitter industrial GHG emissions? Under what legislative authority and how would that be done, practically? Same question with agriculture.*

A: Great question! The importance of dealing with small-scale industrial emissions even though the municipality has relatively limited options to regulate energy use in this sector is a challenging issue. We will investigate if there are examples of such work in other communities in BC. However, we also recognize that it may be necessary to introduce incentive programs and work with other levels of government to move the dial on this emissions sector.

40. *When will North Cowichan implement GPS for Municipal vehicles to better track use of vehicles and to improve efficiency of vehicle use thus reducing emissions?*

A: Although there is some GPS tacking on vehicles in the municipal fleet already, switching fleet vehicles to lower emissions sources of fuel (e.g. Electric Vehicles) or purchasing more fuel efficient vehicles will provide a better opportunity for emissions reductions.

41. *Staff presentations referred to Bonsall Creek Watershed Management Plan – What specifically has been done to make improvements? What is being done to clear out the Creeks from gravel, silt build-up?*

A: One of the priority recommendations from the plan is to complete a hydrological assessment of the watershed as a first step. This is a component of staff business plans for 2020 and staff are planning to put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) in regards to this effort later in 2020. Management and protection of surface water is an important component of North Cowichan's climate adaptation planning but has a small impact on emissions as modelled.

42. *In regards to agricultural emissions due to livestock as an assumption, What about soil / carbon emissions due to use of fertilizers, tilling? Many world experts such as Vandana Shiva are saying that regenerative agriculture practices can sequester the carbon needed to make a huge impact on mitigating the climate crisis.*

A: One benefit of this project is updating our modelling to utilize the Global Protocol for Community Scale GHG Emissions. The assumptions used in developing emissions estimates use the same methodology as the Government of BC and Canada in reporting to the UN on our obligations under the Paris Accord, see <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/greenhouse-gas-emissions/inventory.html>.

43. *What about the promotion of biogas on farms for generating electricity and producing their own fertilizer in the form of liquid digestate?*

A: Investigation of Biogas will be undertaken but the potential of this to mitigate emissions in North Cowichan is unknown at present. Addressing fertilizers is going to be a much tougher prospect because the BC Ministry of Agriculture will be bringing in much stricter regulations on nutrient management by farms over the next few years. Export of nutrients is known to be a significant contributor to high phosphorus levels and blue-green algae blooms in both Somenos and Quamichan Lakes. These dynamics will need to be addressed if farmers are to be asked to adopt new fertilizer sources while also converting to new fertilizer management

44. *What relationship does a municipality have with BC Hydro in constructing District Energy systems?*

A: Exploration of opportunities for District Energy Systems will involve multiple partnerships and could involve some complex agreements with utility providers and/or private enterprises. Depending on the type of system implemented, many factors could change. Future exploration of this topic would need to involve a feasibility assessment by a specialized consultant.

45. *Do you have a framework for reaching out to let other Local Government (LG) bodies know you have data to share and where are the opportunities with other LGs; i.e.. Island Trust; Conservancies & NGOs*

A: Not currently, but the engagement session on July 27, 2020 is a start to this process and this will be explored further in later phases of the project.

46. *Are you exploring funding opportunities for research around local indicators and other related tools specific to North Cowichan?*

A: This will be explored further in later phases of the project. Reliable and more frequently updated sources of data (e.g. Stats Canada) were used to generate the assumptions in the model so that proper comparisons can be done when monitoring progress in the future.

47. *Are you working with Penelakut FN, Lyackson FN, Halalt FN at all?*

A: North Cowichan's land is located in the traditional territory of 7 local First Nations. Those Nations were invited to participate as rights holders in the July 27th engagement session and will be provided an opportunity to engage further in the future, if there is a desire to do so.

48. *Climate Change and shoreline erosion...are there shifts in strengthening the building along the shorelines of Chemainus, Crofton, and Maple Bay.*

A: The Cowichan Valley Regional District has conducted GIS based modelling to forecast these changes in our area. North Cowichan will need to consider shoreline effects as part of our climate adaptation planning, however, this has a limited impact on emissions modelling.

49. *Where do you stand on natural asset inventories? Has North Cowichan started to include them in financial statements?*

A: Natural Asset Management is listed as one of council's priorities in their Strategic Plan and will be investigated by Environment Staff in 2021.

50. *How do you plan on incorporating policy that will preserve natural assets? I.e. Wetland preservation or restoration.*

A: Staff are currently inventorying and mapping our vegetated stormwater management infrastructure. Staff have also created partnerships with Cowichan Estuary Nature Center and Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society and done several ecosystem rehabilitation projects in riparian areas as well as creating the Constructed Wetland on Beverly St. As mentioned above, further work on formalizing natural asset management will occur in future years and will be part of our climate adaptation policies.

51. *Rain Water Harvesting / Grey recycling - will this be part of North Cowichan's future?*

A: The CAEP update modelling is not meant to address climate adaptation projects like water storage or water supply as it was originally scoped as a GHG emissions mitigation exercise (which is the purpose of the FCM Funding provided). However, Council may consider and direct staff to look into this in the future.

52. *In regards to home heating, how will you mandate the need for adequately insulating new homes to scale?*

A: The CAEP modelling update explores increases to home energy efficiency for new and existing buildings. The development of associated policies are part of the next project steps.

53. *The new BC Energy Step Code was outdated before it was implemented, how do you see home retrofitting to meet the needed energy reductions by 2050?*

A: The BC Energy Step Code is one of Canada's most aggressive iterative new building energy efficiency frameworks. With it, the construction industry is accelerating changes in their practices to create lower emissions buildings. The low carbon scenario in the modelling update assumes that all new homes built in 2030 onward are net zero emissions (not just net zero ready). By combining this framework with the CleanBC programs for retrofitting existing housing stock, North Cowichan is using all available resources within the provincial governance framework to reduce emissions from this sector.

54. *How are you accounting for the COVID-19 factor? The future where we cannot use public transit and single person/vehicle?*

A: The modelling assumptions do not currently account for potential long term COVID-19 effects as their uncertainty at this time is too great to practically consider.

55. *How will you prevent farm fields, forests and, greenspace from becoming photovoltaic farms?*

A: This is a policy creation and application consideration. Photovoltaic solar siting policies will include restrictions on their deployment.

56. *How will BC Hydro adapt to these assumptions?*

A: The electricity grid is an important supplier of energy to North Cowichan. With all policies and actions concerning local electricity generation and electricity procurement, BC Hydro will be consulted. BC Hydro is aware that water storage and power supply conditions will change in the future and is actively planning to address this.

57. *How will grid consumption decrease when there is a huge assumed increase in EV's, which need to be charge, and greatly increased hydrogen use, which needs lots of electricity to produce it?*

A: Despite increased electricity demand in some sectors (like EVs), grid consumption is mostly estimated to decline due to increase electricity use efficiencies in building heating as systems are converted from resistor coil (e.g. baseboard) systems to heat pumps systems which are typically more than 300% efficient by comparison. From an emissions perspective, the vast majority of energy in BC's is generated by Hydro electricity and therefore near carbon neutral. This means that jurisdictions in BC can leverage the use of Electric Vehicles to reduce emissions more than those that rely on other forms of fossil fuel based energy generation. The relatively mild winters common to Vancouver Island only enhance this potential for increased electric vehicle adoption. Staff and consultants feel that that electric bikes, scooters, walking and other alternative transportation are more likely to be part of the future transportation network than hydrogen based modes.

58. *Does carbon sequestration in Municipal Forests assume plantations will NOT be cut down in 50-60 years?*

A: The carbon sequestration model used by UBC and 3GreenTree to calculate different scenarios of carbon sequestration in the Municipal Forest Reserve compares a baseline Historical Average Annual Cut, i.e., average volume of wood harvested, to different scenarios involving reduced amounts of harvesting (50% harvest, No harvesting, etc.) that could occur in the future. At this point in the Technical Forest Management Review, the figures used are still preliminary. Because no management decisions have been made by Council a conservative range was used in the Greenhouse Gas Modelling which can be amended in the future. A copy of the UBC Partnership Groups "Carbon Feasibility Assessment" report can be found here:
<https://www.northcowichan.ca/EN/main/community/current-topics/municipal-forest-reserve/carbon-feasibility-assessment.html>

59. *How does potential carbon capture in the Municipal Forest Reserve only provide a 6% contribution to the model? How did the choice not to develop in Chemainus (Echo Heights) have such a HUGE effect in 2016 for a decision not to develop 20 acres, while the MFR at ~12,500 acres has so little effect on the overall model?*

A: The large apparent offset referred to from not developing Echo Heights was applied to the municipality's corporate emissions (usually around 1400 t CO₂eq/y), which are less than 1% of the community's emissions (~340,000 CO₂eq/y). If the offset from Echo Heights was applied to community emissions it would have not been noticeable in our emissions estimates. Therefore, while the municipal forest reserve is much larger than Echo heights, it likely will only offset about 5% of community's emissions (assuming the no harvest model which forecasts about 20,000

CO₂eq/y being sequestered). Therefore, one year of max sequestration from the municipal forest reserve would offset about 15 years of North Cowichan corporate emissions. A copy of the UBC Partnership Groups "Carbon Feasibility Assessment" report can be found here:

<https://www.northcowichan.ca/EN/main/community/current-topics/municipal-forest-reserve/carbon-feasibility-assessment.html>

- 60. *3GreenTree are suggesting that selling Carbon Credits on the MFR might yield the same amount of revenue that logging does now. What would it look like if we sold some or all of these carbon credits to ourselves? This way we might eliminate or at least reduce the complicated/expensive need for accounting/accreditation to quantify/qualify the project's Credit's required before sale to an external buyer.***

A: Specific actions and policy options regarding the Municipal forest reserve should be explored in that process. The potential application of carbon credits from policies that evolve from those discussions, therefore are dependent on the choices made to managing the cut in the MFR. However, accreditation would be a one time cost and so, over the life of a sequestration program not, a significant obstacle to administration of the project. Third party verification of potential carbon credits is required in any scenario and the decision on how to utilize any credits or revenue from selling credits lies with Mayor and Council. A copy of the UBC Partnership Groups "Carbon Feasibility Assessment" report can be found here:

<https://www.northcowichan.ca/EN/main/community/current-topics/municipal-forest-reserve/carbon-feasibility-assessment.html>

- 61. *To log or not to log; how can emissions in the model remain the same for each? Logging uses contractor vehicles, trucks, skidders and equipment, burns slash piles, etc.... and the sequestered CO₂ is immediately lost. Or is it?***

A: For specifics on this separate modelling project please consult the UBC Partnership Groups "Carbon Feasibility Assessment" report can be found here:

<https://www.northcowichan.ca/EN/main/community/current-topics/municipal-forest-reserve/carbon-feasibility-assessment.html>

- 62. *Will you have incentives for residents to help achieve goals (electric cars, home retrofits, etc.)? With an increasing senior population, is this being accounted for (home retrofits, etc)? How will these become policy?***

A: Provincial and Municipal government incentives for making new and existing homes more energy efficient already in place for the residents of North Cowichan. North Cowichan has partnered with the provincial government to offer rebates to home owners on upgrading heating systems from fossil fuel based to electric heat pumps. There are also rebates available for improving home energy

efficiency. North Cowichan will also be offering rebates to developers to encourage rapid uptake of efficiency standards under the BC Step code. With regards to electric vehicle adoption, provincial and federal incentives for vehicles and charging infrastructure are currently being offered as well. Staff foresee more opportunities for municipal partnerships with higher levels of government in these areas in the future. The next steps of the project are to explore potential climate action policy and actions that leverage these opportunities.

63. *Monitoring will be an important part for achieving goals, but costs money, so will North Cowichan budget accordingly, starting immediate budgeting? What plans for monitoring progress are in place?*

A: Part of the scope of this project is to develop a program for monitoring and tracking emissions over time. The intention is that Municipal staff will be able to monitor progress regularly through normal work.

64. *Has NC considered partnering with other local governments including Cowichan Tribes to create solar energy farms and energy storage grids, etc.?*

A: Community energy programs such as a solar farm project are still quite capital intensive. It is likely that as technology improves and affordable electrical energy storage becomes available a community solar project will be more feasible. North Cowichan Staff are exploring ideas like solar and other district-level energy projects as a way to reduce emissions.

North Cowichan Climate Action and Energy Plan Update

Public Engagement Summary

Prepared by Jeremy Murphy, Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG), August 31, 2020

Introduction

The modelling update to North Cowichan's Climate Action and Energy Plan (CAEP) includes public engagement components with the objectives of:

- Informing the public about the Municipality of North Cowichan's (MNC) progress in CAEP implementation;
- Involving the public with updating data and modelling approaches that inform the modelling update;
- Collaborating with the public on modelling approaches and climate change action considerations with which to update the modelling process; and
- Consulting with the public on action implementation prioritization.

Engagement is being performed online due to the circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, which inhibited in-person engagement activities. Four in-person activities were originally proposed to occur in Phase 3 of the project:

- 3.1 Inventory/BAU presentation and actions review (community)
- 3.2 Prioritization workshop (staff and stakeholders)
- 3.3 Implementation roundtable planning (community)
- 3.4 Phase 3 interim report

These activities were modified to be delivered safely via digital means while still while producing similar engagement outcomes to those originally planned. The revised activities included:

- Distribution of CAEP update modelling assumptions and outputs documents to stakeholders and local government partners in advance of the online session to promote an informed dialogue;
- Hosting an online presentation to provide information on the CAEP update goals, progress in implementing the original CAEP and the Climate Action Plan, and updated modelling outputs;
- Receiving and replying to questions and comments on these documents (before, during, and after the presentation);
- Posting all project information sent to stakeholders (including a recording of the online presentation and Q&A session) on the MNC's website and PlaceSpeak page for access by the broader community
- Hosting a PlaceSpeak discussion forum, open to stakeholders and the community at large, on key energy and emissions sectors; and

Participation was encouraged with direct emails to an engagement group of stakeholders and local government partners, who were identified by staff and approved by Council. In addition, a social media post directed people to the online engagement session and 3 social media posts were created to direct the broader community people to the PlaceSpeak page.

Engagement Elements Summary

CAEP materials distribution

Background materials were distributed to approximately 35 stakeholders. The materials included:

- A CAEP Update: Strategy and Policy document (prepared by staff);
- A Climate Action Plan Update presentation (prepared by staff);
- A CAEP Update Climate Change Background Notes document (prepared by SSG);
- A Data Methods and Assumptions Manual describing the modelling approach, assumptions, and inputs (prepared by SSG);
- A Modelling Assumptions document detailing the assumptions for the modelled actions in the business as usual and low-carbon scenarios explored through the modelling update; and
- A presentation of the modelling results.

Questions and comments on the materials were encouraged via email to MNC staff. In all, 75 questions and comments were received. MNC staff and SSG responded to all questions and comments in a document that is now available on both MNC's webpage and the PlaceSpeak forum. Most of the questions were also discussed by MNC staff and SSG during the online presentation.

Online Engagement Session

The CAEP Modelling Update online engagement session was held on July 27, 2020 over 2.5 hours. During the first half of the engagement session, MNC staff and SSG presented the materials that were previously distributed to stakeholders. The second half of the session was dedicated to answering emailed questions, including previous and new submissions. The question and answer session was facilitated by an SSG staff member and about 20 questions were addressed. A recording of the session was posted to the CAEP Update PlaceSpeak page and web page following the engagement session.

Questions and comments on the distributed materials and during the online engagement session focused on the following themes.

General Comments

- Several comments were made in regard to the modelling exercise not explicitly describing definitive policy options to reduce emissions
- Some participants would like to see more action on things that can be influenced by municipal policy like transportation mode and land use, promoting regenerative agriculture and forestry
- Some people felt that the updated modelling focuses too much on sectors like agriculture and industry, which are largely outside of municipal jurisdiction
- At least one person felt that more focus needs to be dedicated to determining the viability of specific local climate actions
- Some people enquired as to the progress of MNC on municipal corporate emissions reductions
- At least one person asked about the effect of the Cowichan Valley Regional District policies on the MNC
- Some people expressed interest in the financial implications and implementation timelines of the modelled actions
- At least one person was concerned about the modelling update not adopting the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommended net-zero by 2050 emissions target
- One person was interested in examples of other BC municipalities regulating small-emitter industries and agricultural operations

- One person was interested in MNC exploring funding opportunities for research around local indicators and other related tools
- Some were interested to know if the MNC was working with local First Nations on this project
- Some were interested in MNC's accommodation for the COVID-19 conditions in the modelling
- At least one person wondered about how progress on emissions reductions would be monitored
- There were several questions and comments about items that are out of scope for the project (e.g. environmental and ecosystem considerations)

Transportation

- Some are concerned that the assumptions related to transitioning to electric or low emissions vehicles is too optimistic
- Some participants stressed the importance of transit and bike infrastructure and mode shift considerations in plan development
- Some concern was expressed about the assumptions for electric vehicle (EV) uptake rates being too high or that the modelling outcomes had too high a focus on aggressive EV uptake assumptions accounting for a large part of emissions reductions
- Some people wondered about the inclusion of e-bikes and e-scooters in the modelling considerations
- At least one person was interested in seeing more trail development
- One person was interested in whether MNC was going to implement GPS tracking in the municipal fleet to improve vehicle use efficiency

Land Use

- Many comments were made stating the desire to ensure land use planning, infill development, and compact, complete community planning are central to the modelling
- There were some concerns about the modelling assumptions around expected development distribution and low-carbon scenario development distribution
- Some comments focused on considerations for tree bylaws, forestry management and tree planting for carbon sequestration
- At least one person pointed out a discrepancy between the assumed number of new housing developments for this project versus the value for the OCP updated
- Some people were concerned that there is not enough emphasis on carbon sequestration in the modelling considerations
- At least one person wanted to confirm the inclusion of commercial buildings in the modelling
- Some comments focused on potential approaches to agricultural emissions reductions
- Several comments were made concerning a perceived shift away from land use actions that are a focus of the current CAEP

Alternative Energy

- At least one person was interested in district energy systems and BC Hydro's support for them
- One person suggested biogas generation using small digesters on farms
- One person asked about how solar energy farms and agricultural lands could coexist
- One person enquired about local governments and First Nations partnership potential for renewable energy projects

Energy Efficient Housing

- There were some enquiries about the MNC's implementation of the BC Step Code timeline
- Some people stated the need for housing retrofit incentives
- Some people asked how the updated plan would address home energy efficiency retrofits
- Some wondered about whether home retrofit support programs would be forthcoming from the MNC

PlaceSpeak Engagement

All materials that were distributed to stakeholders were also posted on the MNC PlaceSpeak page under the Climate Action and Energy Plan Modelling Update topic. Online forums were hosted for 45 days for discussion on the elements addressed in the modelling update. Each forum was seeded with sample questions. The following is a summary of the forum topics, their seeded questions, and the discussion posts by members of the public.

Transportation Emissions (4 comments)

What transportation improvements are needed in North Cowichan to inspire more residents to make more trips with lower emissions vehicles or by alternative modes of transportation (Walking, biking, E-bikes, utilizing transit etc.)?

A significant amount of discussion focused on providing safer active transportation infrastructure like bike lanes and trails, as well as programs for bike and e-scooter sharing. In this vein there was a suggestion that MNC provide incentives for e-bike purchases. It was also contended that MNC has little influence on the creation of alternative fuel vehicles or transportation emissions attributable to pass-through TransCanada Highway traffic. It was also stated that retirees do not contribute many transportation emissions as they don't drive very much. Therefore, the ways that transportation emissions evolve will reflect the demographic changes that the community experiences as well as the neighbourhoods in which people live.

Land Use (3 comments)

What areas of North Cowichan do you think are good candidates for increased residential density, commercial development and places you go to in between work/school and home?

Discussion focused on where new development could be located and what type it should be. There was encouragement for mixed-use developments and new grocery stores in underserved areas. Suggestions for location included:

- James street area for mixed-use
- Bell McKinnon Road area, along with the new hospital
- Maple Bay Road area

Alternative Energy (5 comments)

What is required for you to install solar panels on your home? Are there any other forms of renewable energy generation or storage that you are considering installing on your home?

Discussion focused on solar PV panel installations, including support for new projects and for local installation companies. Some comments indicated the need for incentives to make installations viable. There was one mention of the importance renewable electricity storage will play in the near future as technologies evolve.

Energy Efficient Housing (4 comments)

What is required for you to switch your home's current space and water heating system to an energy efficient heat pump? What is required for you to upgrade your home insulation, doors, and windows?

Discussion focused on retrofitting homes to increase energy efficiency, noting that there are provincial incentives to support such efforts. Some were concerned about the costs of home retrofits while others expressed the need for local expertise in this sector. One comment suggested that a higher stringency of the provincial Step Code be adopted immediately.

Engagement Tally

A total of 95 questions and comments were received by email, during the presentation, and via PlaceSpeak to date. Figure 1 details the distribution of questions and comments by theme. Figure 2 shows the percentage of each type of question or comment by theme.

Figure 1: Questions and comments by theme.

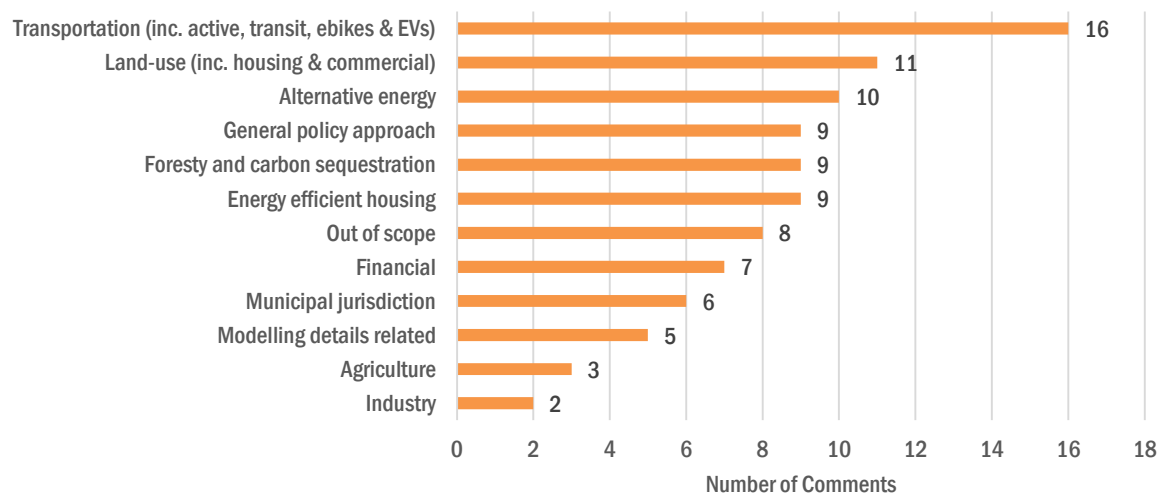
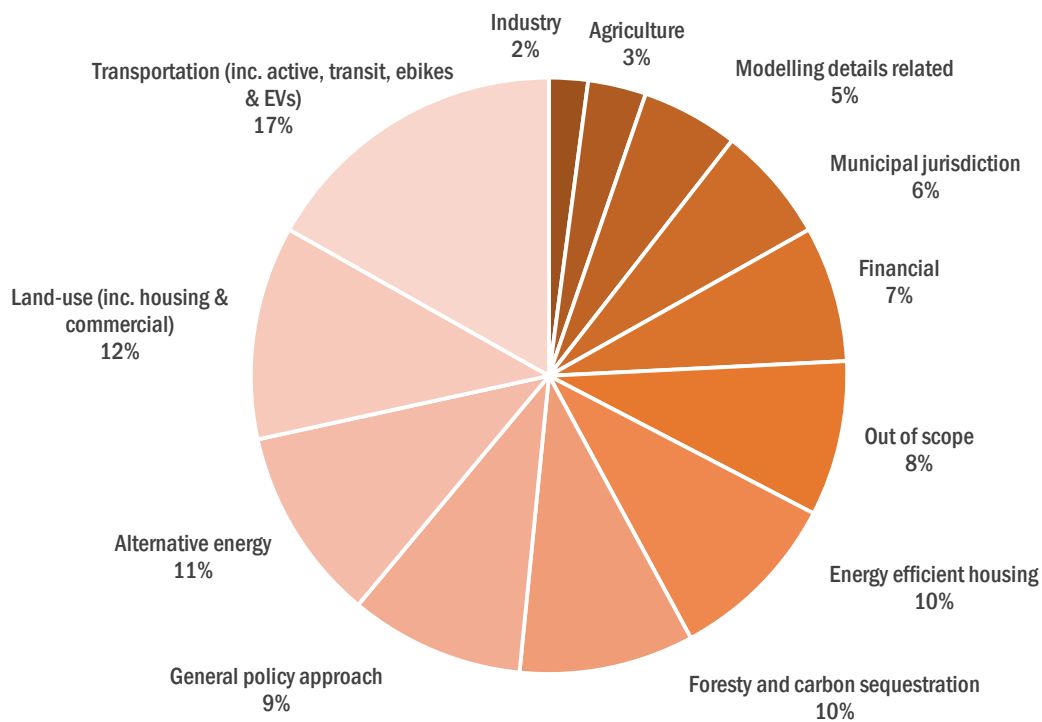


Figure 2: Questions and comments by percentage.



Incorporating Public Input

Responses to all comments and questions from the run up to the engagement session, and the session itself, were posted on PlaceSpeak and the MNC webpage. The following considerations were made in the modelling in response to some of the input received:

- The number of new housing developments assumed was updated to align with those assumed in the OCP update
- The distribution of new housing developments was slightly modified to reflect more accurate distribution estimates
- Other land-use components of the modelling, such as housing density, commercial building location, development effects on transportation (active, transit, personal vehicle), etc. were verified for accuracy
- Agricultural emissions inventory numbers were updated for accuracy
- Electric vehicle uptake modelling assumptions were verified and deemed to be consistent with market predictions
- E-bike and e-scooter modelling considerations are included in the active transportation modelling considerations
- Carbon sequestration opportunities, especially from the municipal forest reserve, were incorporated into the modelling

In addition to these modifications, other comments and questions relating to the project approach and modelling considerations are already addressed in the current modelling approach.

Several questions and comments correspond to upcoming project components, like financial modelling, inventory tracking, and implementation considerations. These questions will be addressed in the next phases of the project as their associated tasks are performed, including a climate action prioritization and implementation survey.

Next Engagement Steps

The next phases of the project include low-carbon action and policy refinement and prioritization, financial impact modelling, and plan implementation considerations. The final project engagement steps are being refined and will address these elements this fall.