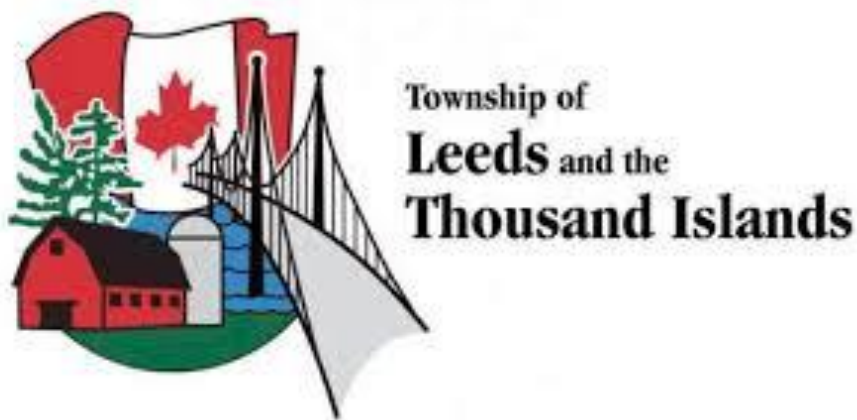


# **Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands**

## **Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes**

### **Business Survey: COVID-19 Report**



**Survey Timeframe: March 30 – April 3, 2020**

#### **Prepared by:**

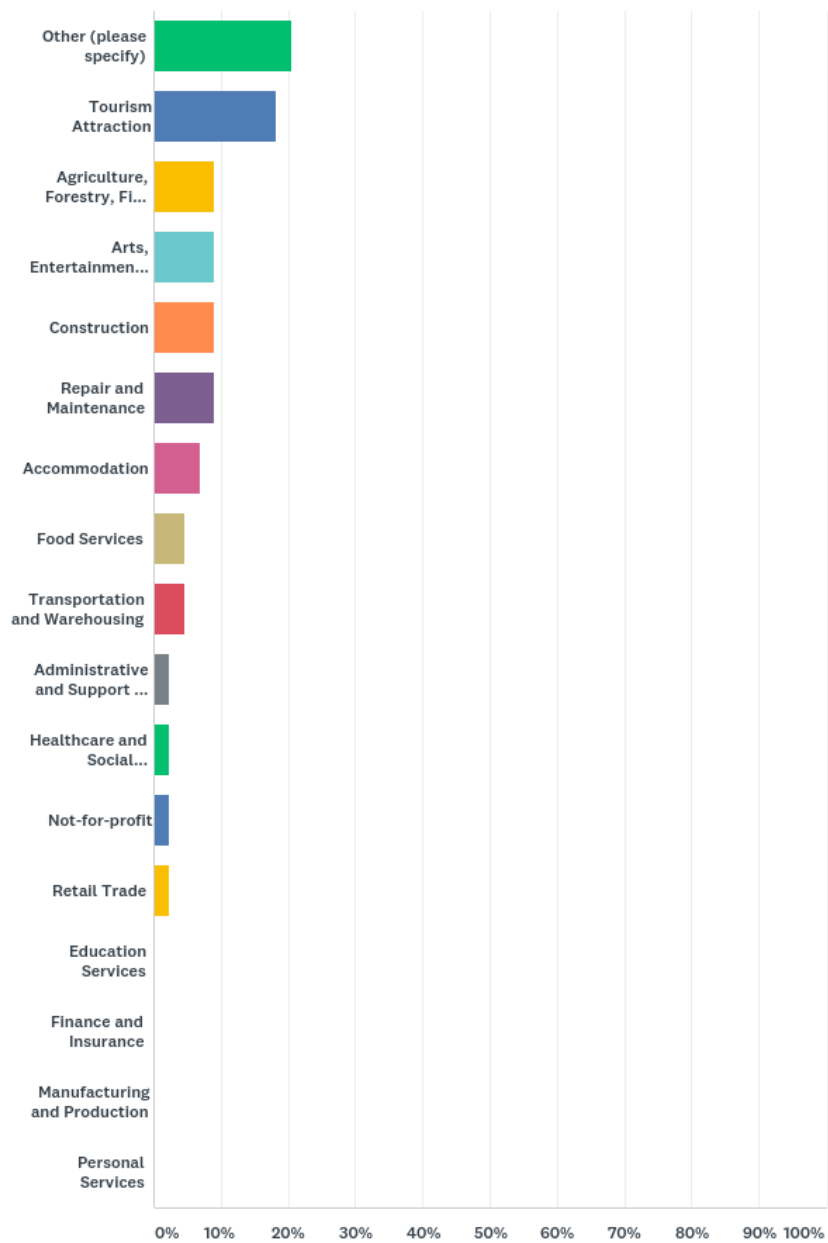
**United Counties of Leeds and Grenville  
Economic Development Office  
32 Wall Street, Suite 300, Brockville, ON**

**[www.investleedsgrenville.com/covid19](http://www.investleedsgrenville.com/covid19)**

## #2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 44

Skipped: 0



## #2 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Other (please specify)	20.45%	9
Tourism Attraction	18.18%	8
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	9.09%	4
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	9.09%	4
Construction	9.09%	4
Repair and Maintenance	9.09%	4
Accommodation	6.82%	3
Food Services	4.55%	2
Transportation and Warehousing	4.55%	2
Administrative and Support - Business Services	2.27%	1
Healthcare and Social Assistance	2.27%	1
Not-for-profit	2.27%	1
Retail Trade	2.27%	1
Education Services	0.00%	0
Finance and Insurance	0.00%	0
Manufacturing and Production	0.00%	0
Personal Services	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>44</b>

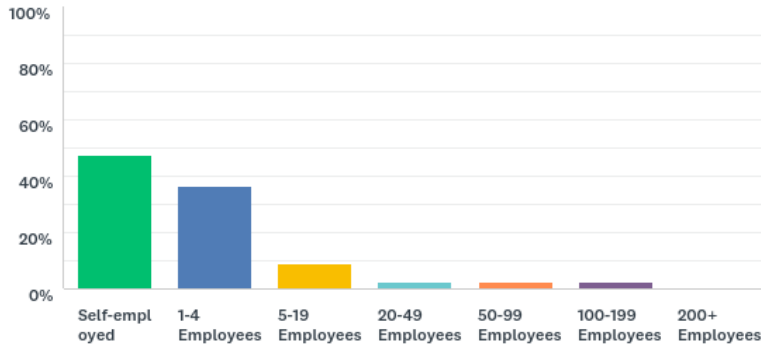
### Other (please specify)

- Kennel
- Arborist, Landscaping
- Antique shop
- Recreation and tourism
- Software for Zero Waste
- Maple syrup production and sales
- Event Venue
- Fishing, Hunting Retail & Tourism
- Hearing

### #3 Typically, how many employees does your company have?

Answered: 44

Skipped: 0

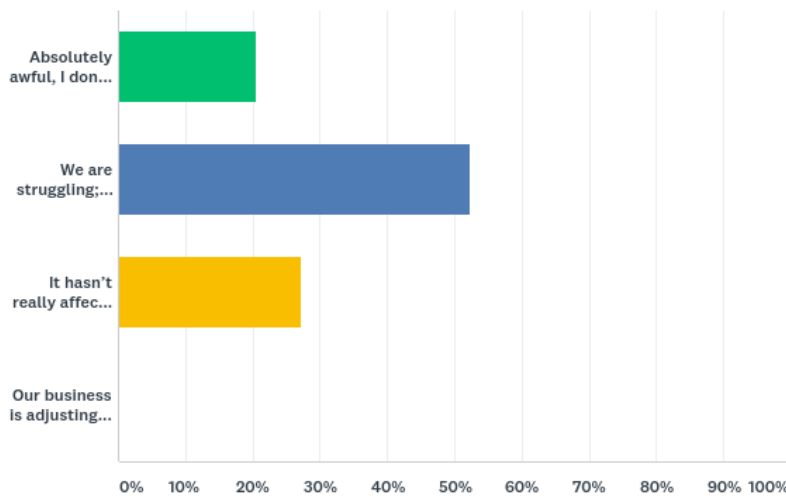


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Self-employed	47.73%	21
1-4 Employees	36.36%	16
5-19 Employees	9.09%	4
20-49 Employees	2.27%	1
50-99 Employees	2.27%	1
100-199 Employees	2.27%	1
200+ Employees	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>44</b>

### #4 How would you describe the impacts of COVID-19 on your business?

Answered: 44

Skipped: 0



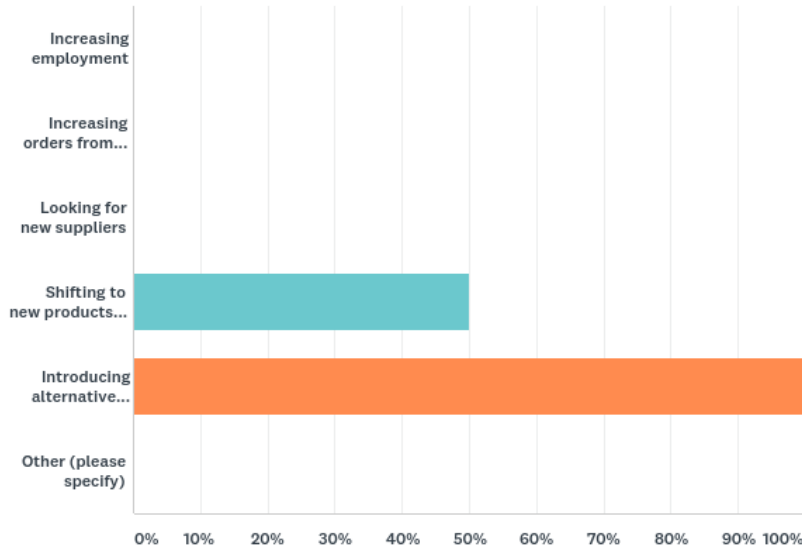
## #4 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Absolutely awful, I don't think our business will make it through (PROCEED TO QUESTION 6)	20.45%	9
We are struggling; recovering for this could take some time (PROCEED TO QUESTION 6)	52.27%	23
It hasn't really affected us yet (PROCEED TO QUESTION 7)	27.27%	12
Our business is adjusting and growing (PROCEED TO QUESTION 5)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>44</b>

## #5 If your business is growing due to COVID-19, what will you or are you doing to address this? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 2

Skipped: 42

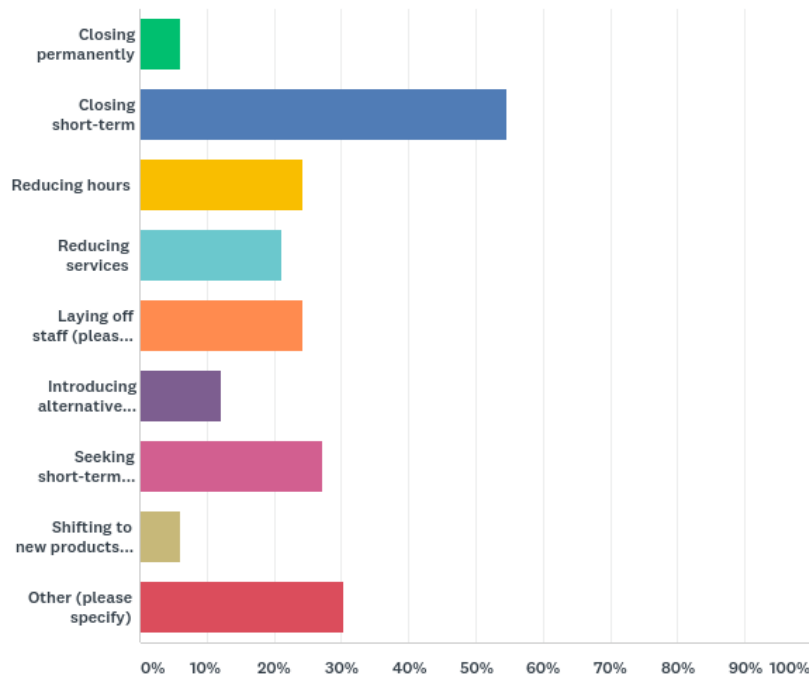


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increasing employment	0.00%	0
Increasing orders from suppliers	0.00%	0
Looking for new suppliers	0.00%	0
Shifting to new products or services	50.00%	1
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	100.00%	2
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
<b>Total Respondents: 2</b>		

## #6 If your business is affected negatively by COVID-19, what will you or are you doing to address this? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 33

Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Closing permanently	6.06%	2
Closing short-term	54.55%	18
Reducing hours	24.24%	8
Reducing services	21.21%	7
Laying off staff (please specify number) _____	24.24%	8
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	12.12%	4
Seeking short-term financing	27.27%	9
Shifting to new products or services	6.06%	2
Other (please specify)	30.30%	10
Total Respondents: 33		

## #6 continued...

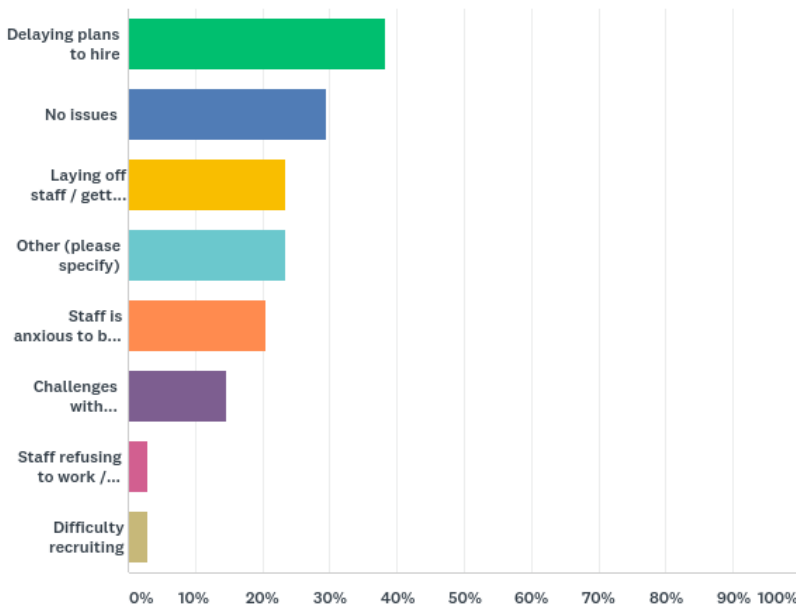
### Other (please specify)

- We usually open in April, will not bring back as many people, will try to do more ourselves. At least 60% of our regular customers are American and this will hit us big time. It already has as they are not renewing their summer docking agreements.
- Closed retail outlet, will be working on my online store
- We are a seasonal business only. We might lose the whole season. If we are able to open at all, we most likely will reduce hours and only be open on weekends
- We are seasonal April to November and will likely lose the entire season. We are not able to rehire any staff for the season.
- Seeking funding from TLTI and also drawing on the federal government's newly introduced 75% wage subsidies for our 2 employees since our adoption fees and donations have fallen by over 35%
- Minimizing expenses
- Mandated to remain closed even though due to open for seasonal operation - golf course must operate to maintain their product - with no revenue to offset costs results in devastating implications financially, particularly with an already limited number of days in the year to operate – COVID-19 reduces further that limited timeframe to operate and make revenue
- Offering direct sales and delivery
- Modified hours, staying open to sell what we can to pay bills. Less customers coming into shop.
- Trying to reduce hours to stay viable.

## #7 What issues or challenges are you experiencing with your employees/workforce due to COVID-19? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 34

Skipped: 10



## #7 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Delaying plans to hire	38.24%	13
No issues	29.41%	10
Laying off staff / getting them onto EI	23.53%	8
Other (please specify)	23.53%	8
Staff is anxious to be working	20.59%	7
Challenges with alternative ways of working (ie. working from home, working remotely)	14.71%	5
Staff refusing to work / absenteeism	2.94%	1
Difficulty recruiting	2.94%	1
Total Respondents: 34		

### Other (please specify)

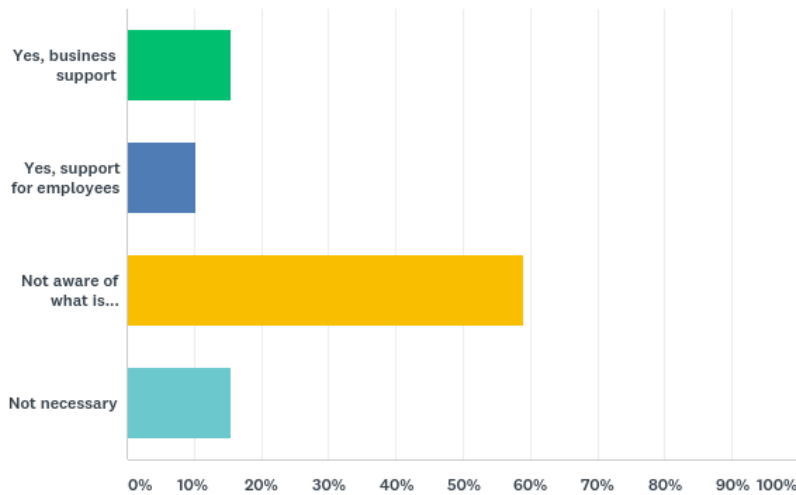
- Concern that apiary supplies, pre ordered and payed for, may not be available on pre-arranged pick-up date of May 21, 2020
- This is usually a busy time for us. We are having customers drop off their vehicles and not stay, some are paying ahead of time and picking up the vehicle after hours to limit contact. We have been wiping off keys, door handles, steering wheels and shifters with Lysol wipes. Most of our customers have been wonderful, some.....
- Not sure how best to safely get products to customers. Doing e-transfer and porch pickup, but not ideal
- Concern about having enough volunteers to maintain our operations given that we care for animals and must feed and provide them with medical care
- Non-essential business not able to open
- Staff anxious to work however with no revenue stream to support operating costs hours are limited
- Family business
- Retail sales, hard to work from home



## #8 Have you accessed any government support programs currently available?

Answered: 39

Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Closing permanently	6.06%	2
Closing short-term	54.55%	18
Reducing hours	24.24%	8
Reducing services	21.21%	7
Laying off staff (please specify number) _____	24.24%	8
Introducing alternative ways of working (working from home, working remotely)	12.12%	4
Seeking short-term financing	27.27%	9
Shifting to new products or services	6.06%	2
Other (please specify)	30.30%	10
Total Respondents: 33		

## #9 What support are you looking for from the federal and provincial governments right now?

Answered: 32

Skipped: 12

- Income replacement x2
- If they could lower the amount of contributions to CPP, EI and CPP....and fight insurance companies to decrease payments for liabilities and including WSIB
- Relief from loss of income since January 2020
- Money to cover so we don't have to close
- Clear information
- CERB
- To be there when we do need them
- Fair, accessible support for all affected businesses (not just \$50K+ annual payroll)
- Monthly support
- Short- term financial assistance. Business too small right now to qualify for loan. We may qualify for wage subsidy - will be investigating this shortly
- A small amount of financial help to assist with bills that need to be paid. I may not be able to recover from depending on the situation of tourism this summer. My needs are small.
- I need to know how the support applies to seasonal business as we would normally open mid-April. We serve marina gas, groceries, as well as non-essentials.
- Financial support to buffer that I have no income until this turns around and even then it will take time to start to make income again - CERB basically. Financial: loan/grant to help that we are seasonal and all of our inventory for the summer season has been purchased and now no ability to sell, and some will be 'stale' before we are able to reopen,
- An exit plan to this situation and further down the road a program specially designed for tourism businesses
- Wage subsidy
- Long-term wage subsidy programs to help staff who we cannot re-hire and who will not qualify for EI next winter due to lack of hours this season
- Subsidies to cover wages and any other operating expenses which may be available
- None
- Grants or loans at low rates. To be honest they deal with enough issues now, the only thing I would suggest they have a strict and strong financial plan to recover and not put Ontario and Canada in enormous debts
- At least for my business rent to be paid
- Funds to pay basic things like telephone, hydro, loan, mortgage, gas and food
- A loan
- Trying to find access to government wages subsidy and CERB application process
- I do want to go bankrupt
- Bridge financing. Lower credit card rates
- Temporary Financial Support
- Something that applies to us. Most programs are not suited for my business and do not want to borrow
- Grants, allowances, not interested in a loan to have more debt

## #9 continued...

- Being a seasonal business, our hope is that we will be able to open in May
- Loan and wage subsidy

## #10 What support are you looking for from your local municipal government right now?

Answered: 30

Skipped: 14

- Nothing x5
- Freeze property taxes for 5 yrs x2
- Defer or refund property taxes. Remove all fees.
- Delay in taxes
- Delay in taxes came after they were due. May need this for the 2nd installment. Now worried about potential flooding on St. Lawrence on top of pandemic
- Being able to pay taxes in several payments
- Cancellation of property tax payments
- Reduced property taxes, more communication
- Reducing % of Taxes
- Lower the payment for zoning amendments request...it might attract and keep more business in our area
- Extensive marketing for the tourism in the region in preparation of the ending of Covid-19 pandemic
- How to find the resources
- Response to local needs and clear information
- To be there when we do need them
- Income replacement; ways to support business in future should lockdown continue
- Resources help to access prov / federal funds, advocating for the prov / fed gov't to provide that funding / resources
- Exit plan for seasonal businesses. eg our property tax is our biggest single expense after payroll. If we are not able to open for the whole season, how should we be able to pay for the property tax in the tune of 16,000 CAD?
- Any grants or other means to make up for the substantial drop in donations since we do not receive any guaranteed funding
- Hazardous waste more than one day per year, twice a year would be great
- Publicity when all this is going to be over
- Have never received support from municipal government. reduced property tax due to reduce income and business depreciation suggested
- I still have to pay bill's, insurance for commercial business is so high and I can't afford to keep paying when I can't make no money
- Help advertise we are open. Help fund Plexiglas shield in from of cash register
- Hoping we can open our business in May

## #11 What support are you looking for from your local community organizations right now? (ie. Chambers, Employment Services, BIAs, Small Business Centres)

Answered: 28

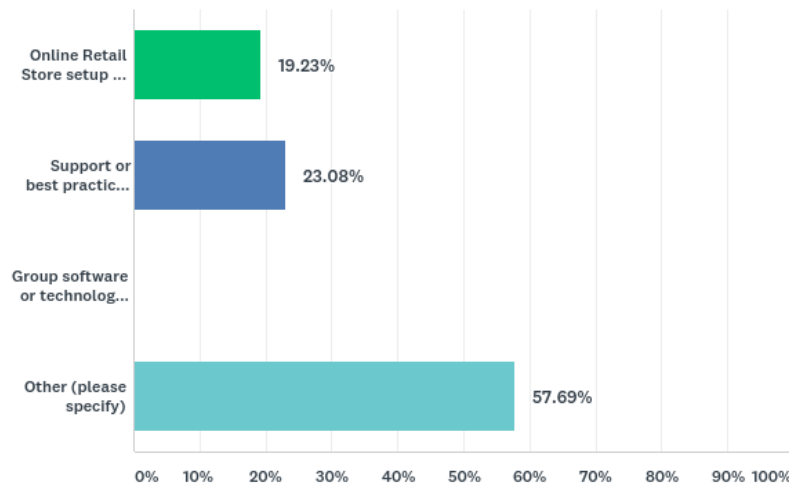
Skipped: 16

- Nothing x5
- Easy links to apply for whatever support is out there x2
- Help to understand what support applies to us and how to apply for it x2
- Shop locally!!
- Extensive marketing for the tourism in the region in preparation of the ending of Covid-19 pandemic
- Loans and help applying for gov't funding
- Lobby support and information
- Nothing at this time x2
- Advertising
- A lot of info out there that's hard to navigate. It would help if there was a local representative we can call directly to help us apply for government support
- Not aware of how these agencies could possibly help
- I would not expect these offices to have any experience that would help
- Planning for the future - how are we going to help our businesses come back to life? And I guess one more thing – help for businesses to navigate the ins and outs of closures etc. - ie) I see some businesses open that I think are stretching the definition of essential... helping businesses to navigate the 'optics' of how they handle this situation
- Advocate for the smallest businesses. From what I understand there is help for businesses with a payroll of \$50,000 CAD. That is a lot of payroll... Where is the help for smaller businesses?
- All tourism sectors are hard hit and will need support getting back on track for next season
- Advertising our region and Canada as a safe destination, etc.
- Any assistance they can provide to let people know that our donations are down substantially and to appeal to the community to continue donating if possible.
- Promote local business, maintain communication between businesses
- Funding not loans
- I have no idea, I am so scared, I'm gonna have to close permanently
- Up to date info. Where can I print out posters for from door from Health Canada
- In the future do marketing blitz for next year
- Open communication with what is going on to keep the economy moving

## #12 What would be helpful right now to assist your business with transition and recovery?

Answered: 26

Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Online Retail Store setup and training	19.23%	5
Support or best practices on deliveries	23.08%	6
Group software or technology purchases to allow workers to work remotely	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	57.69%	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>26</b>

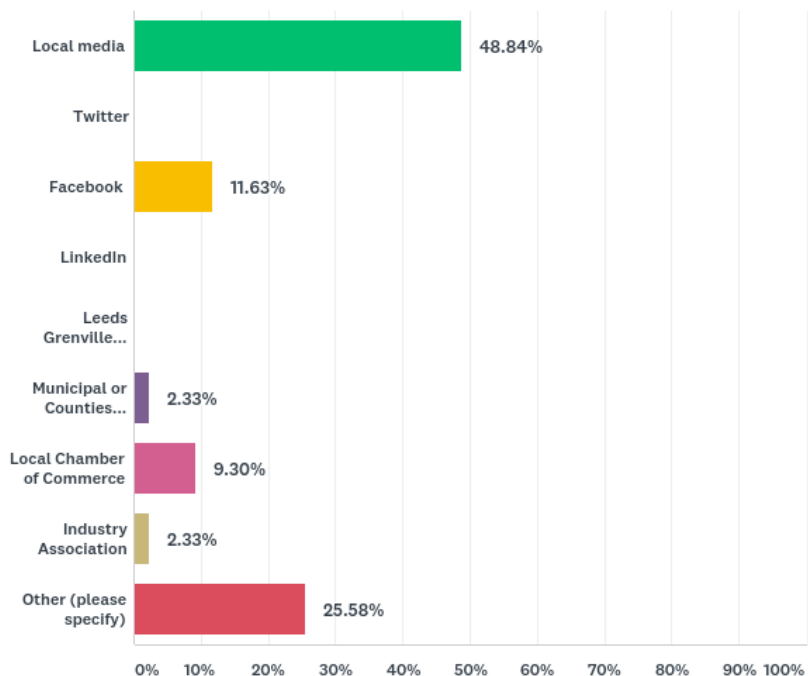
### Other (please specify)

- I don't know x2
- Money x2
- Compensation for loss of income
- Nothing
- Nothing can help because my clientele is not allowed to travel
- Customers would be nice, but I do not hold any high hopes for this season. I am not ready to transition into an online retail store yet, but it may that I will if things don't turn around.
- Assistance sorting out what federal assistance works for seasonal marina business
- We just have to wait for this to pass so we can open
- Determining means to generate revenue from donations since many donors have been negatively affected by the loss of jobs and reduced income.
- Guidance for government funding access, assistance with internet and website grants
- Financial bridge
- Promote / advertise my shop and other local shops that are open. Products / services I offer and other offer and their modified hours. Plexiglas installation for cash counters
- Money! Self-employed still have very large bills with hydro, taxes, banking fees, insurances, fuels, all of these do not stop even if we do not open, absolutely zero income but bills must be paid

## #13 What is your primary source of information on COVID-19 and business support programs?

Answered: 43

Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Local media	48.84%	21
Twitter	0.00%	0
Facebook	11.63%	5
LinkedIn	0.00%	0
Leeds Grenville Lanark District Health Unit	0.00%	0
Municipal or Counties website	2.33%	1
Local Chamber of Commerce	9.30%	4
Industry Association	2.33%	1
Other (please specify)	25.58%	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>43</b>

## #13 continued...

### Other (please specify)

- Television news CTV
- CBC new x2
- National Media
- Canada.ca and Ontario gov't website
- Reddit
- CFIB
- ontario.ca, canada.ca
- Ottawa Public Health
- Media as well for general and all daily updates
- 107.5 CBC radio or CTV News
- Federal and provincial government websites referenced through Google.

## #14 If you would like to speak to someone regarding support available to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, please provide your contact information:

Answered: 20

Skipped: 24

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Contact Name	100.00%	20
Business Name	95.00%	19
Contact Number	90.00%	18
Email	100.00%	20

## Additional Notes:

- Survey Timeframe: March 30 – April 3, 2020
- Survey Distribution: Businesses that were part the Counties Economic Development business directory, with active email addresses, received the Covid-19 survey directly. In addition, some members of Business Support Working Group distributed the survey through their membership lists.
- Government of Ontario modified Essential Workplace list on April 3, 2020 with additional business closures on April 4, 2020 at 11:59 p.m.

## Business Support Working Group:

### Municipalities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge | Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott | Rideau Lakes | Westport

### MP / MPP

MP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes  
MPP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

### Community Futures Development Corporations

1000 Islands CDC | Grenville CFDC | Valley Heartland CFDC

### Small Business Enterprise Centres

Leeds & Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre  
Small Business Advisory Centre – Smiths Falls | Lanark

### Chambers of Commerce

1000 Islands Gananoque | Brockville and District | Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay & District | Merrickville and District | North Grenville | South Grenville

### BIAs

Downtown Brockville | Downtown Gananoque | Downtown Prescott | Old Town Kemptville

### Employment Services

CSE Consulting | Employment and Education Centre | KEYS Job Centre

### Other Business & Education Agencies

Regional Tourism Organization 9 | St. Lawrence Corridor Economic Development Commission | Eastern Ontario Workforce Innovation Board | Rideau Lakes Business Network | St. Lawrence College | Kemptville Campus Education and Community Hub

## THANK-YOU!

On behalf of the Business Support Working Group, we would like to thank each business who took the time to complete the survey. Members of the Working Group will be reaching out to assist businesses who indicated they would like assistance. The Working Group contact is available on the webpage, along with any new programs and resources as they become available.

Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

W: [investleedsgrenville.com/covid19](https://investleedsgrenville.com/covid19) | E: [ann.weir@uclg.on.ca](mailto:ann.weir@uclg.on.ca)