

# UNSER & MCMAHON BUSINESS NODE STUDY



10/20/20

Project Summary Report

The Unser & McMahon Business Node consists of small, medium, and large businesses.

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# Unser & McMahon Business Node Study

## PROJECT SUMMARY REPORT

### PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this initiative was to identify and recommend business climate improvements to District 5's Unser & McMahon business node to create a successful and prosperous business community.

### Scope of Services

The following services were performed:

- I. (2) small business workshops
- II. (2) public safety meetings
- III. One-on-one meetings with individual businesses
- IV. (1) survey
- V. Brochure design & creation
- VI. Small business resource fair & networking event

**Note: Scope of services were adjusted accordingly due to the Public Health Order. During the time of this project some businesses were ordered to close.**

#### I. Small Business Workshops

Workshops were conducted using material from the Grow with Google Small Business program.

- *Spring into Action with Google's Business Tools, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020*
  - In-person event at the Small Business Office
  - Number of attendees: 3
  - Participants learned how to use Google Analytics to gain insights about how consumers engage with businesses online.
- *Google Virtual Webinar Series, April 2020*
  - Webinars facilitated by a Google Certified trainer
  - Topics covered: Get your Business Listed on Google Maps, Reach Customers Online with Google, Using Data to Drive Business Growth

**Summary:** Attendance was low. Businesses did not express interest in the Google workshops.

## II. Public Safety Meetings

Public Safety Meetings were conducted in collaboration with the Albuquerque NW Area Command Officers.

- *Public Safety Webinar, May 2020*
  - In-person event was converted to virtual webinar
  - District 5 City Councilor Cynthia Borrego gave welcome introduction to attendees
  - Officers spoke on trends due to COVID-19
  - Webinar was recorded and sent to all businesses
- *Coffee with a Cop, September 2020*
  - Hosted by Starbucks
  - Due to Public Health Order restrictions, limited attendance

**Summary:** Businesses had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with officers and express concerns on what they are seeing in the area. Officers are visiting the area frequently and are developing a relationship with the businesses. An active shooter training has been scheduled for the area.

## III. One-on-One Meetings with Individual Businesses

Due to the Public Health Order all meetings were conducted via phone.

- *Meeting Agenda*
  - Introduction of initiative
  - Traffic calming measures
  - Interest of organizing regular meetings
  - Public Safety

**Summary:** Not all businesses were available or willing to meet. Please see Appendix B for meeting notes.

## IV. Business Survey

COVID-19 Economic Impact

- *Survey Questions*
  - Is your business currently open?
  - To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted your business activity (sales, foot traffic, productivity, etc.)?
  - What has been the main impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your business?
  - Does your business have a formal or informal emergency preparedness plan in place (plans, procedures, contact lists and exercises, remote work, etc.)?
  - If the pandemic were to end tomorrow, how long do you estimate it would take to restore your normal business operations?
  - Did you have to or will you layoff employees?

- Do you have an online ordering system in place?
- What is the size of your business?
- What is Your Industry?
- What is the Most Important Message You Would Like to Relay?

**Summary:** Survey was conducted using Survey Monkey. Please note link to survey was sharable. Data collected reflects responses from businesses outside of the Unser & McMahon node. Please see Appendix C

## V. Brochure

- *Design & Creation*
  - All businesses in the node were listed
  - Highlights of District 5
  - Photos from participating businesses

**Summary:** The purpose of the brochure was to showcase the newer developing commercial area of District 5. All businesses located at the three intersection corners (SE corner is a vacant lot) were listed in the brochure whether they participated in the study or not. All participating businesses received several copies of the brochure to display in their storefront.

During the brochure creation process new construction began on the SW Corner. The brochure will be helpful in attracting future tenants. One business relocated during the project. Brochure will need to be updated often.

## VI. Small Business Resource Fair/Networking Event

Closing Event

- *Panelists*
  - District 5 City Councilor Cynthia Borrego
  - Economic Development Department, Director Synthia Jaramillo and
  - Economic Development Department, Small Business Office Manager David Sayers
  - Office of Neighborhood Coordination, Vanessa Baca
  - APD NW Area Acting Commander Lt. Jose Sanchez and Officers

**Summary:** The Small Business Resource Fair gave the Unser & McMahon businesses an opportunity to connect with City Departments and suggest forming a Business Association. The event was held at Tractor Beverage Company. A press conference followed to introduce the brochure and conclude the series of events. The event was recorded and will be available on Councilor Borrego's website. <http://www.cabq.gov/council/find-your-councilor/district-5>

## Overall Summary and Recommendations

The project was initiated weeks before the global pandemic. Adjustments were made and a shift was put on COVID-19 resources and support. Despite the current challenges all businesses were in high spirits.

Since the Unser & McMahon business node is a new area, businesses did not have any concerns regarding adequate street lighting, accessibility, or traffic calming concerns. However current and future development may change conditions. Legislation may be created to identify Unser & McMahon as a business district.

Future physical improvements:

- Street banners are **recommended** to highlight the business node. Example--banners were placed on West Central presented by local artists.
- Street furniture. Example--art pieces and furniture were placed on the intersection of 12<sup>th</sup> and Candelaria
- Traffic calming measures. As the area continues to develop improvements may include more visible cross walks and mid- block crossings. Example--Nob Hill Central, Lead, and Coal crossings.

Businesses were connected to City Departments and given information on the process of forming a business association. There are many advantages to forming an association. Regular association meetings give businesses an opportunity to address their concerns as a group and recommend improvements. Possible events to drive traffic can be coordinated, such as Holiday Shop & Strolls. A business association may choose to expand to other businesses close to the Unser & McMahon intersection. For more information on forming a business association see below departments & contacts:

**CABQ Economic Development Department:**

505-768-3270, <http://www.cabq.gov/economicdevelopment>

**CABQ Small Business Office:**

505-768-3730, <https://www.cabq.gov/economicdevelopment/small-business>

Creating a **digital presence** is recommended should these businesses decide to move forward with forming a business association. Website and/or social media accounts will bring a greater sense of social presence to the Unser & McMahon Business Node.

Each commercial area in Albuquerque's District 5 holds different opportunities and assets while facing different needs and challenges. Organizing each area gives City representatives, investors, business owners, and customers a better understanding of how to make improvements for a prosperous business climate.

## APPENDIX A SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

### **Business Support Organizations:**

- City of Albuquerque Economic Development Department, <http://www.cabq.gov/economicdevelopment>
- African American Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, <https://aagacc.org/>
- Albuquerque Economic Development, <https://www.abq.org/>
- Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, <https://www.ahcnm.org/>
- Albuquerque LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce, <https://abqgaychamber.org/>
- Albuquerque Westside Business Association, <http://abqwestside.org/>
- American Indian Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico, Inc., <http://www.aiccnm.com/>
- Bernalillo County Economic Development Department, <https://www.bernco.gov/default.aspx>
- Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, <https://greaterabq.com/>
- NAWBO - National Association of Women Business Owners, <https://www.nawbo.org/new-mexico>
- NM Association of Commerce & Industry, <http://www.nmaci.org/>
- NM Economic Development Department, <https://gonm.biz/>
- Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Commerce, <https://rrrcc.org/>
- Rotary International, <https://www.rotary.org/en>
- Sandoval Economic Alliance, <http://sandovaleconomicalliance.org/>
- SBIR/STTR, <https://www.sbir.gov/state-contacts?state=New+Mexico>
- SCORE Albuquerque, <https://www.abqscore.org/>
- WESST (6 Offices Statewide), <https://www.wesst.org/>
- Young Professionals of Albuquerque, <http://ypabq.org/>

### **Funding Sources / Accelerators:**

- ABQid, <https://www.abqid.com/>
- DreamSpring formerly ACCION New Mexico (microlender), <https://www.dreamspring.org/>
- CNM – IGNITE Accelerator, <http://stemuluscenter.org/products/ignite-community-accelerator>
- Coronado Ventures Forum, <http://www.cvf-nm.org/>
- *EmprendeLatino LLC, Latinx Tech Accelerator*, <https://www.emprendelatino.co/>
- Enchantment Land Certified Development Company, <http://www.elcdc.com/>
- *FUNDIT*, [https://gonm.biz/uploads/documents/programs/Fund it Application Checklist.pdf](https://gonm.biz/uploads/documents/programs/Fund_it_Application_Checklist.pdf)
- NM Angels, <https://nmangels.com/>
- NM Bankers Association, <http://www.nmbankers.com/>
- NM Catalyst Fund, <https://gonm.biz/>
- NM Community Capital, <https://nmccap.org/>
- *Prosperity Works (Individual Development Accounts)*, <https://www.prosperityworks.net/>
- Rocky Mountain Venture Capital Association, <https://www.rockymountainvca.com/>
- Startup Factory, <https://nmangels.com/nmsuf/>
- The Loan Fund (Microlender), <https://www.loanfund.org/>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, <https://www.rd.usda.gov/>
- U.S. Small Business Administration, <https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/nm/albuquerque>
- WESST (Microlender, 6 Offices Statewide), <https://www.wesst.org/>

## APPENDIX B MEETING MINUTES

12 out of 21 businesses participated in the one-on-one meetings, with expressed interest in public safety. One business relocated out of the area during the study.

**Slice and Dice Pizzeria** – (April 24<sup>th</sup>) Spoke with owner Victor Briseno. Under the current circumstances Victor has made some slight changes to his business strategy. Although he cannot have people dining in and enjoying board games while they eat, he has made games available for purchase. They offer curbside and delivery. He was able to keep all his staff, but hours have been reduced. Victor offered his location to host an event. He did participate in the public safety meeting. 7/22/2020 UPDATE: Dropped off letter from Councilor Borrego. Emailed link for Small Business Office intake form. Spoke to Victor about the City Grant for Outdoor Dining. Unfortunately, there is no room for an outdoor patio due to new construction on the property.

**McDonalds** – (May 1<sup>st</sup>) Spoke with GM Edgar. Edgar is interested in participating in a business association. His store has remained busy. Not impacted much by pandemic. No traffic calming measures needed. Edgar expressed interest in public safety meetings. Was not able to attend virtual meeting but forwarded the invite to one of his store managers. 7/23/2020 UPDATE: Emailed a letter from Councilor Borrego.

**Starbucks** – (Feb 24<sup>th</sup>) In person introduction was made. Spoke with assistant manager. They are interested in participating in a business association. Spoke briefly about initiative. There is no need for traffic calming measures. Will be in contact with GM Mary Schuster to talk about hosting Coffee with a Cop. Outdoor dining available.

**Tractor Brewing Co** – (May 1<sup>st</sup>) Spoke with manager Nicole. Business reopened on April 26<sup>th</sup>. She is interested in participating in a business association however it needs to be run by owner. Contacted owner and have not received a response. 7/22/2020 UPDATE attempted to drop off letter from Councilor Borrego. Business was not open. Hours of operation are 4 -10 pm. Sent copy of letter via email as well as the link for the Small Business Office intake form.

**Crackin Crab** – (April 24<sup>th</sup>) Spoke with store manager Thomas. Despite the pandemic they have been doing well. Employee hours have been reduced. They are offering curbside service. Business does not require any improvements. Thomas is interested in participating in a business association but will need to run it by the owners. UPDATE: Dropped off letter from Councilor Borrego. Talked with manager and made her aware of the grant for outdoor dining. Owners were not available to speak with. Was told to call later that evening. Called and owner was unavailable.

**ChocGlitz & Cream** – (April 1<sup>st</sup>) Spoke with owner Celeste over the phone. Under the current situation Celeste has been able to pivot her business strategy. She is offering curbside, delivery, and gift cards.

She did have to reduce business and employee hours. Celeste inquired about the COA Grant for Micro businesses. I encouraged her to apply. Revenue has gone down but she is able to stay afloat. She did have concerns about her current SBA loan. I gave her the contact information for the SBA local office. Also emailed link for the Small Business Office intake form. Celeste is interested in participating in a business association. 7/22/2020 UPDATE: Dropped of a letter from Councilor Borrego. Business has been steady. Operating on reduced hours.

**State Farm Insurance** – (April 17<sup>th</sup>) Spoke with office manager Jasmine. Business has not been impacted by the pandemic. The office has remained open and is practicing COVID-Safe precautions. Agency owner Ashley Duran has been recovering from a medical procedure. I left a message and sent email to schedule a meeting. Have not heard back. Followed up May 1<sup>st</sup> and Ashley was unavailable. 7/23/2020 UPDATE emailed letter from Councilor Borrego.

**Sherwin-Williams Paints** – (April 17<sup>th</sup>) Spoke with Store Manager Alexa Vasquez. She would like to receive updates but is limited in participation due to corporate policies. The pandemic has not had a significant impact on business. Prior to the pandemic the store has been performing well and no need for any improvements. 7/23/2020 UPDATE emailed letter from Councilor Borrego.

**Kidz Academy Preschool** – (April 17<sup>th</sup>) Spoke with owner Keith Griego. The school is doing well. The pandemic has not had a major impact on business. Some employee hours have been reduced but that is normal for them during this time of year. Keith was able to attend one of the online Google webinars and expressed interest in participating in the business association. 7/23/2020 UPDATE emailed letter from Councilor Borrego, as well as link for Small Business Office intake form.

**Advanced Auto Parts** – (April 17<sup>th</sup>) Spoke with GM John over the phone. Business has slowed down due to the pandemic but doing well. Employee hours were reduced. Limited in participating in events due to time and corporate policy. 7/22/2020 UPDATE Dropped of letter from Councilor Borrego

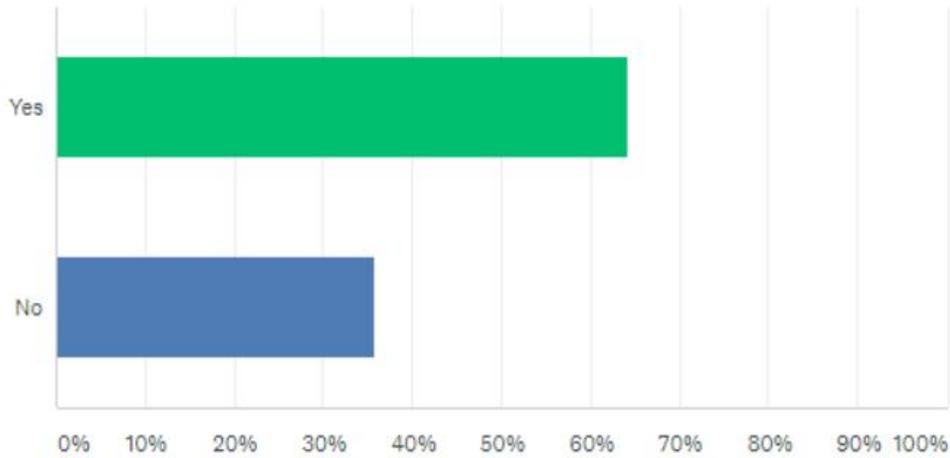
**Walgreens** – (May 1<sup>st</sup>) Spoke with Store Manager Kathy. Her store has been doing well and has seen an increase in revenue since pandemic started. She is limited in participation due to corporate policy. Kathy did attend public safety webinar and interested in future public safety events. 7/23/2020 UPDATE emailed letter from Councilor Borrego

**Circle K** – (May 1<sup>st</sup>) Spoke with store GM Gerlynn over the phone. Extremely limited in participating in events. She is interested in establishing a relationship with APD NW Area Command. Gerlynn was not able to attend the public safety meeting however she requested to have the webinar recording sent to her. Her store has not had any major issues with crime. Pandemic has had no effect on revenue. No need for any traffic improvements. UPDATE 7/22/2020 dropped off letter from Councilor Borrego. Store clerk will give to manager.

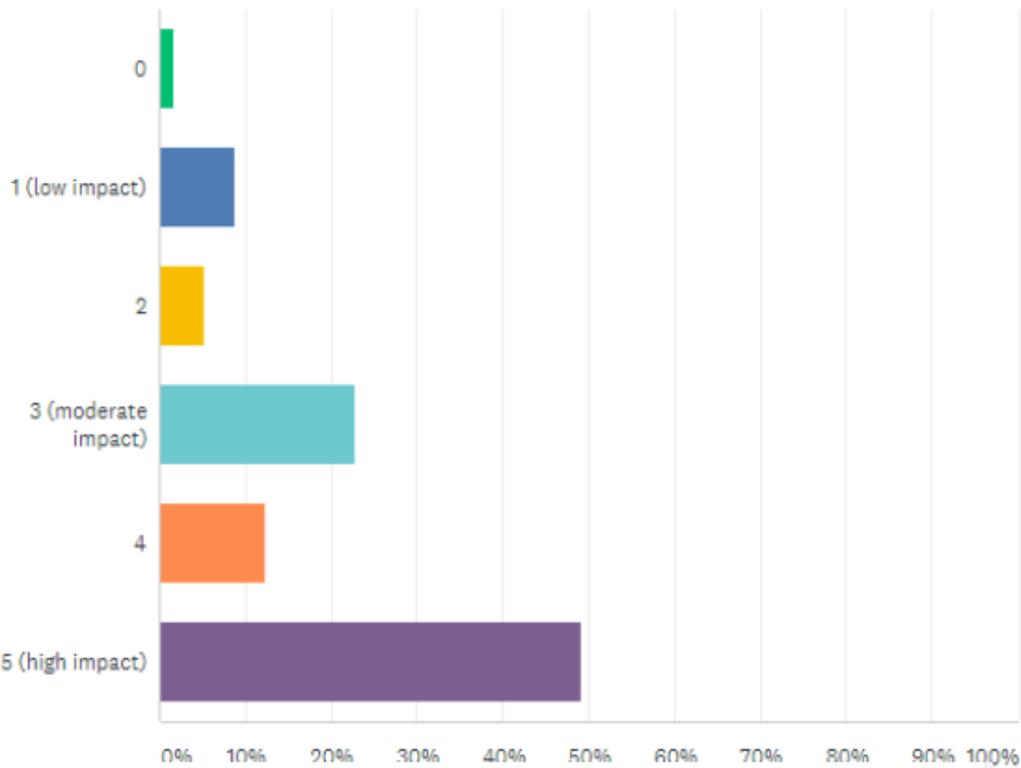
## APPENDIX C BUSINESS SURVEY

### COVID-19 Economic Impact Survey

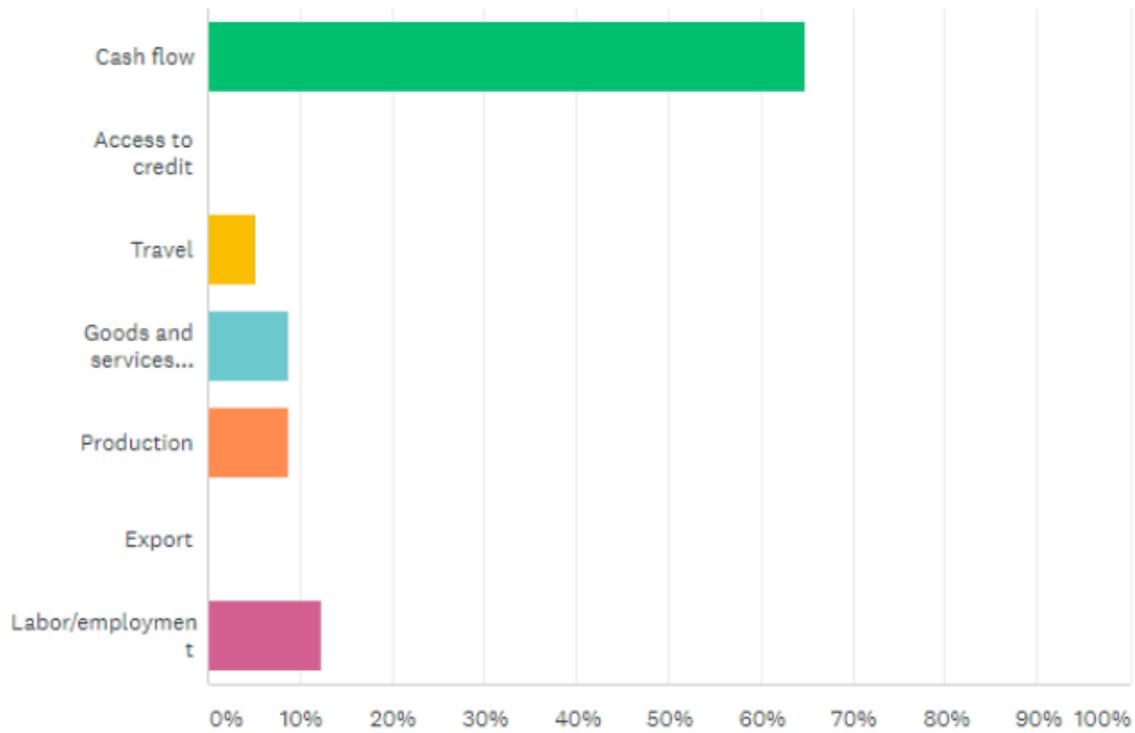
**Q1: Is your business currently open?**



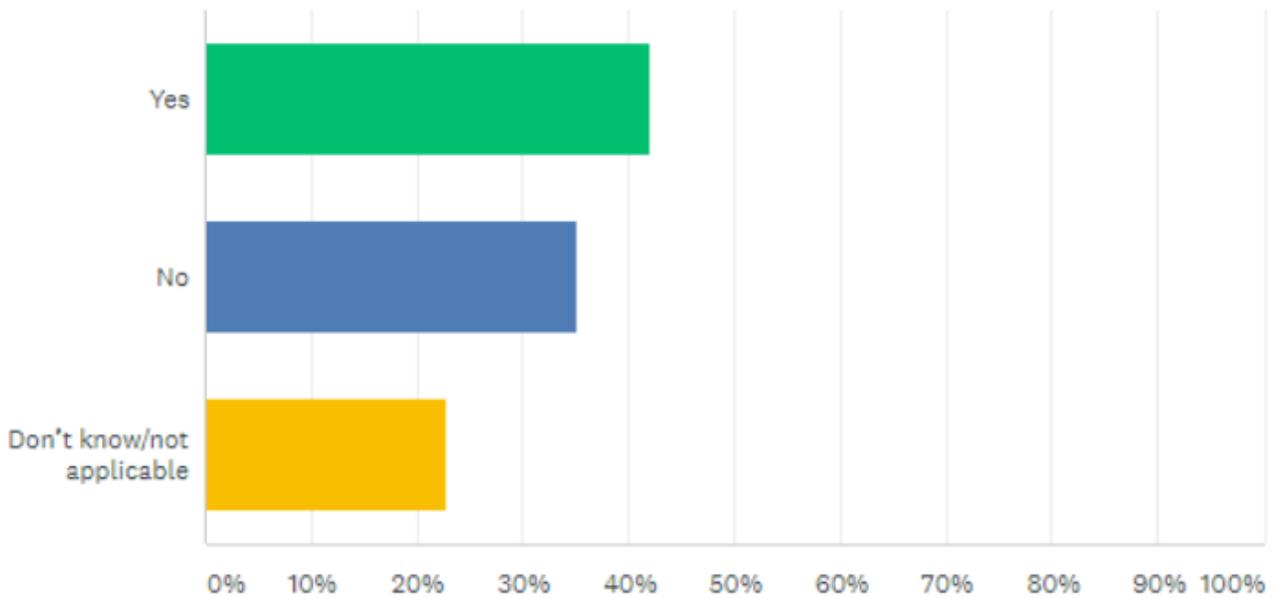
**Q2: To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted your business activity (sales, foot traffic, productivity, etc.)?**



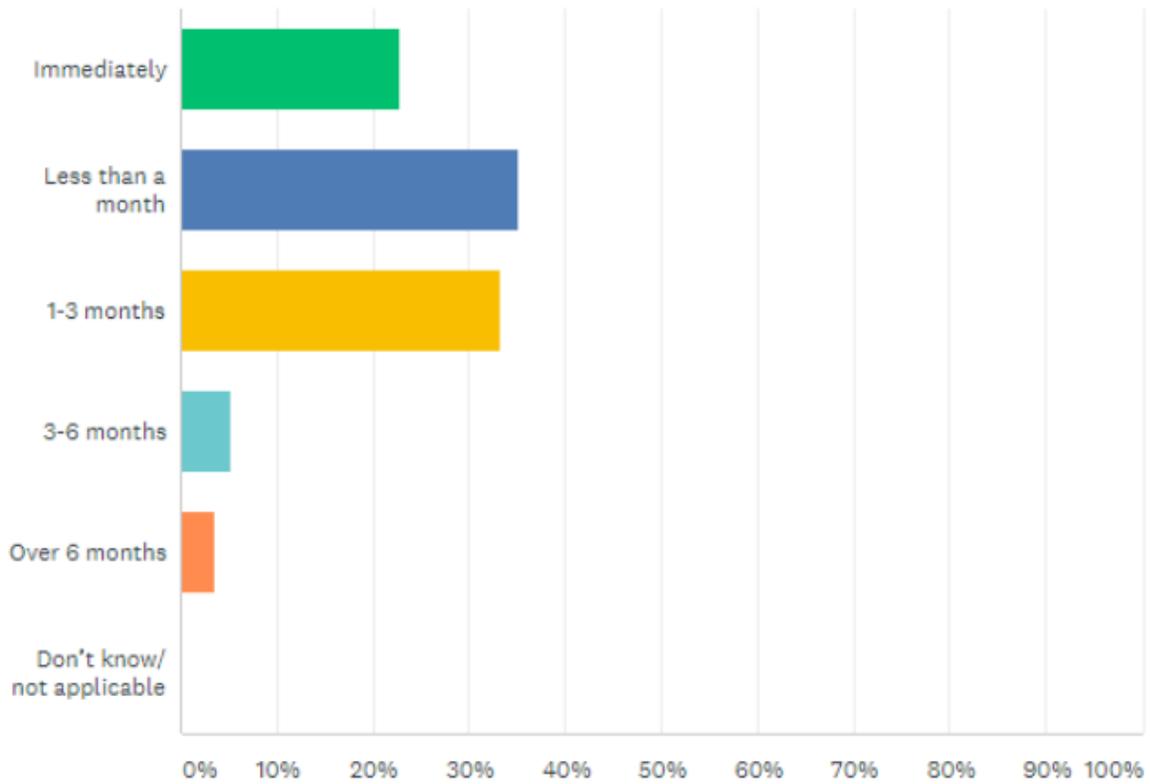
**Q3: What has been the main impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your business?**



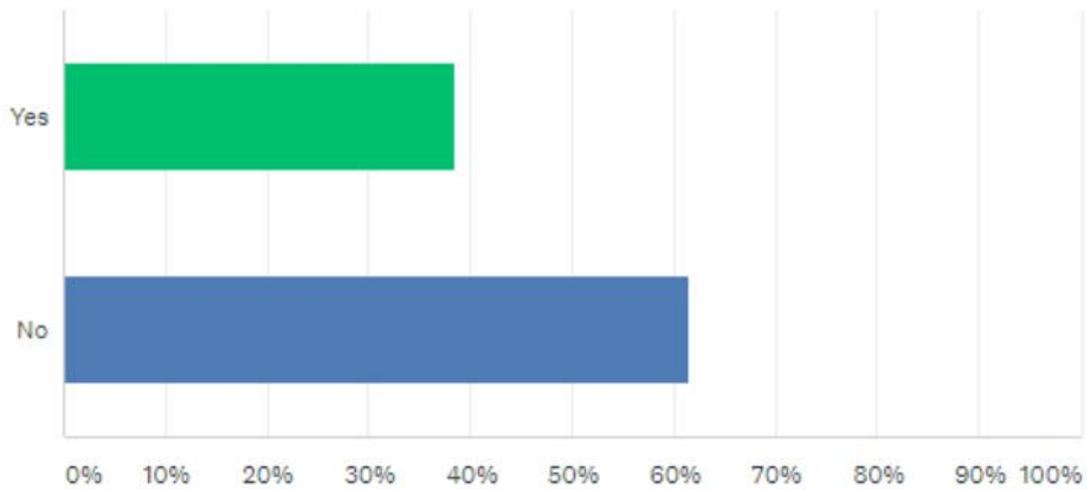
**Q4: Does your business have a formal or informal emergency preparedness plan in place (plans, procedures, contact lists and exercises, remote work, etc.)?**



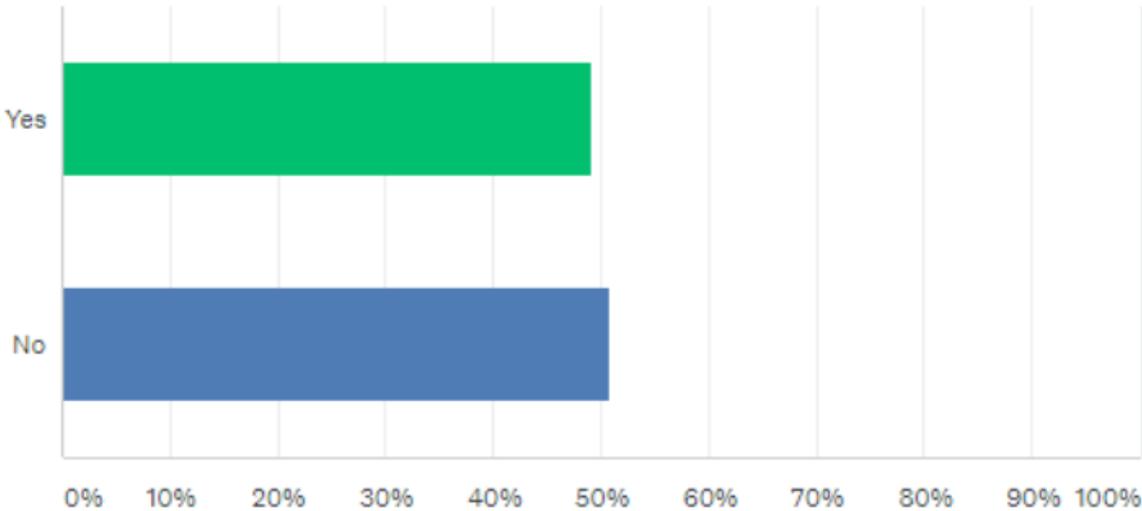
**Q5: If the pandemic were to end tomorrow, how long do you estimate it would take to restore your normal business operations?**



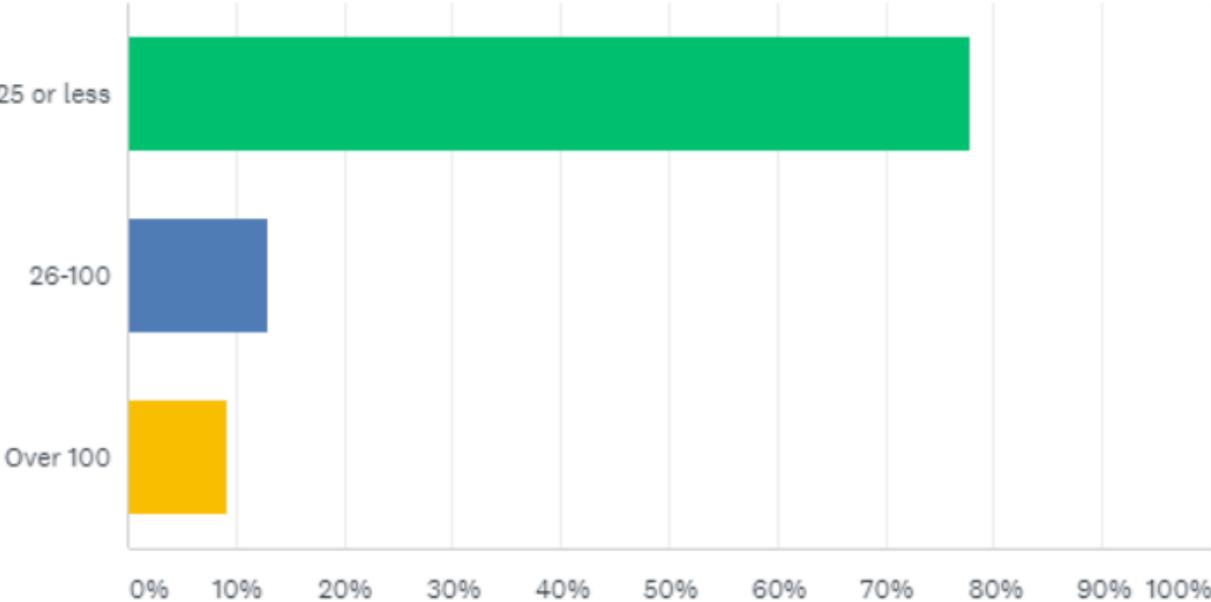
**Q6: Did you have to or will you lay off employees?**



**Q7: Do you have an online ordering system in place?**



**Q8: What is the size of your business?**



**Q9: What is your industry?**

- Childcare
- Restaurant
- Retail
- Insurance
- Health & Wellness

**Q10: What is the most important message you would like to relay?**

“Small businesses in the food industry operate on tight margins and with sudden closures causing our cash flow to disappear it will be nearly impossible to stay afloat. We need federal help to assist with fixed costs.”

“The small business can’t survive”

“Our biggest concern is paying our rent. Everything we have worked for over the past year to year and a half that was anticipated as revenue in the summer of 2020 is gone. We will receive nothing.”

“Having a store front type business, the biggest impact for us has been the daily selling of our goods to people. First, because people stopped coming in. And now because we’re limited to take out or delivery only. Also, with people out of work they stop spending money where they used to...so I’ve been hit from both sides.”

“Public information being accurate regarding the truth in the market place”