



SURREY BOARD OF TRADE
COVID-19 Report
The Impact on Business
INITIAL SURVEY RESPONSES – DAY 3

March 16, 2020



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Surrey Board of Trade (SBOT) is a not-for-profit organization with a membership of over 6,000 business contacts and 3,000 businesses. The Surrey Board of Trade supports business and attracts business. Our role is to enhance economic opportunities and contribute to city-building initiatives that enhance livability in Surrey.

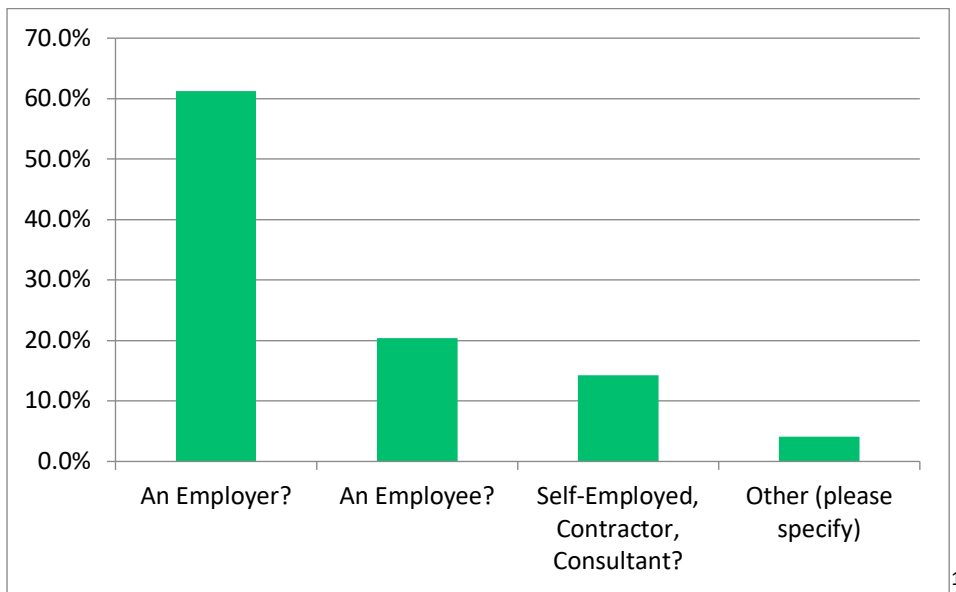
The COVID-19 pandemic is being closely monitored by the Surrey Board of Trade. As an industry leader, The Surrey Board of Trade is helping to lead the business response to COVID-19. Along with our partners, we will continue working with governments on options and tools to help businesses and their employees throughout the crisis.”

The Surrey Board of Trade asked its membership through a survey for their input on how COVID-19 has impacted their businesses. In order to provide the various orders of government with timely and succinct information, a short survey was sent to Surrey Board of Trade members.

2. RESULTS SUMMARY

A survey was distributed to our membership and network via various marketing strategies. The survey contained the six questions:

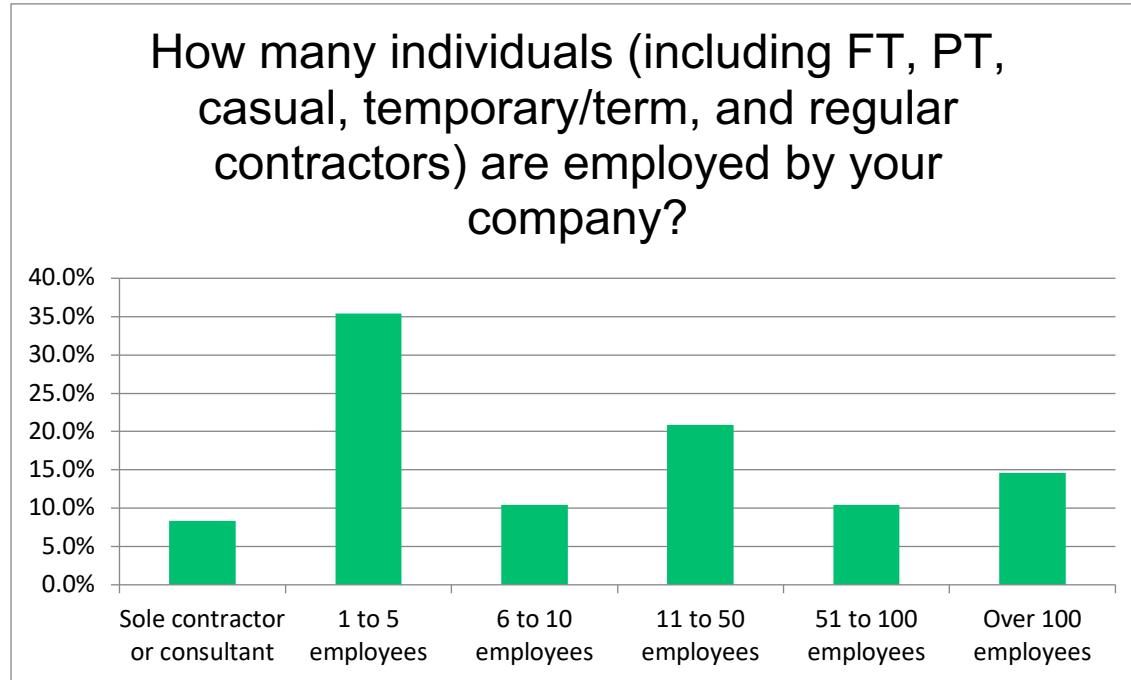
Respondent Category



As seen in the graph above, the majority of respondents were employers. As a city-building organization, the Surrey Board of Trade represents Surrey's business community.

¹ Two respondents that indicated other stated they are the Director of Marketing, and a non-profit arts organization. The former would be classified as an employee and the latter could be an employer depending on this position in the organization.

Organization Size

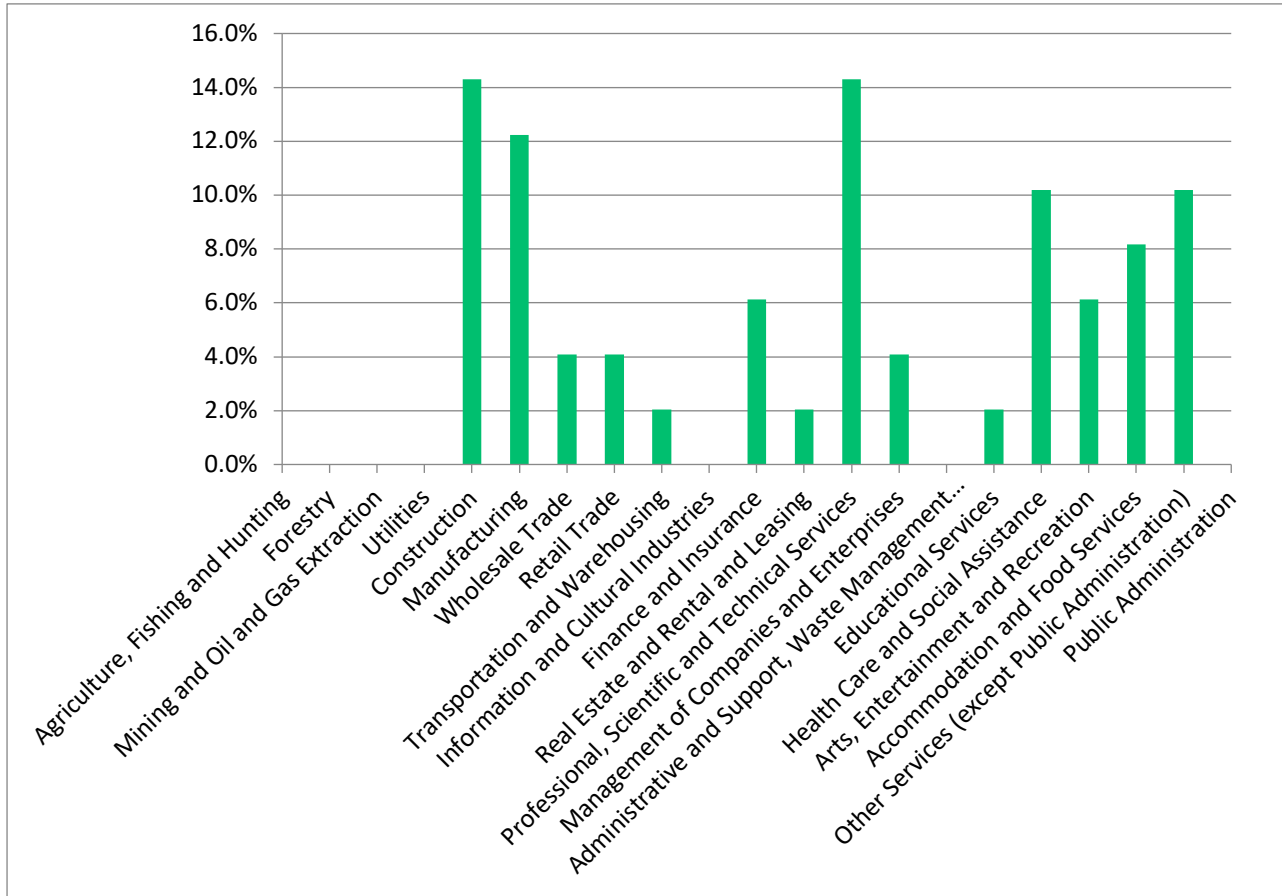


In this question, many respondents indicated they had between 1 and 5 employees in the organization. The majority of businesses in Surrey are small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).² Interestingly, there were close to 15% of respondents that indicated that their organization employed over 100 employees.

Upon further investigation of the analytics, it was gleaned that of the respondents that indicated they were an employer, there were 4 respondents that employed over 100 employees. Three respondents employed between 51 and 100 employees with a low of 153 employees, a high of 300 employees, and a mean of 226.5 employees under their employ. Seven respondents indicated that they employed between 11 and 50 employees

²<https://www.surrey.ca/business-economic-development/1498.aspx>

Which category would best describe your company? (NAICS based choices)



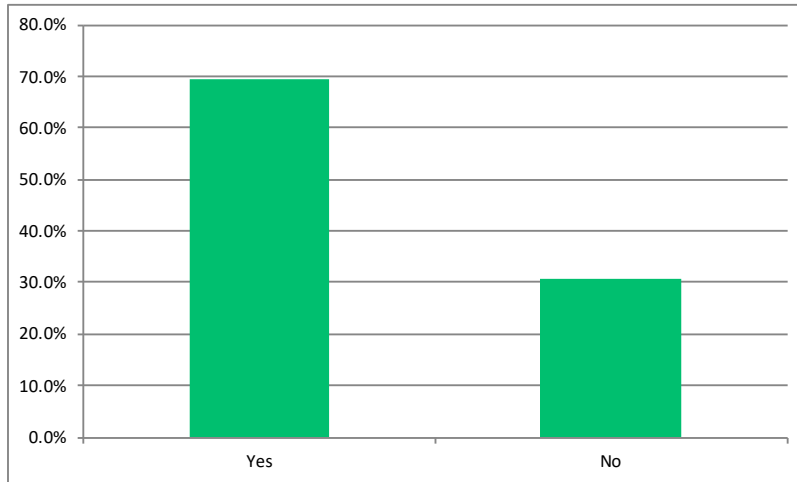
All Surrey Board of Trade surveys of membership thoughts and opinions on various issues includes a question about which NAICS category best described their business.³ This provides us with data that can be extrapolated to which industry is affected by COVID-19.

At 14.3% of all respondents, the construction industry and the professional, scientific, and technical services industry provided their responses. The manufacturing industry represents 12.2% of respondents of this survey. These figures are not surprising as Surrey has a large manufacturing industry, and construction and development are also prominent. Surrey has many diverse businesses but the professional, scientific, and technical services can include legal services, accounting, architectural, engineering, computer systems design and related services, etc.⁴

³ Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services is cut off from the graph

⁴ <https://www.bls.gov/iag/tgs/iag54.htm>

Has COVID-19 Impacted Your Business?



The majority of respondents indicated that COVID-19 has impacted their business in some way. This Survey was sent at the early stages of COVID-19 response and awareness, and so perceptions on the impact may have changed as more information became available.

It is notable that even in the early stages, almost all industries that were indicated on the NAICS believed there was some impact on their business as a result of COVID-19. Only one industry, real estate, indicated that they did not observe any immediate impact to their business activities.

Manufacturing, construction, professional services, retail, wholesale trade, financing and insurance, education services, health care and social assistance, transportation and warehousing, management of companies and enterprises, arts entertainment and recreation, and accommodation and food services all felt an impact.

How COVID-19 has Impacted Your Business

In an open-ended response question, all of the respondents that indicated yes to the previous question provided details on how the virus has impacted their business operations. Again, the impact may be better understood now, and those that did not believe there was an impact may find that COVID-19 is impacting their industry and business now.

The responses can be summarized as follows:

- Less new business;
- Less walk-through traffic and customer walk-ins;
- Cancelled events and hosting opportunities;
- Reduced sales and tickets;
- Staff shortage due to travel (self-isolation upon return), stress, or other reasons;
- Decreased morale and productivity – employees are worried about their livelihoods and family;
- Market unpredictability;
- Shipment delays from certain parts of the world; and,
- Supply shortages.

Do you expect the COVID-19 virus to have a greater impact in the coming weeks/months? If yes, in what ways?

In another open-ended question, the respondents were given the opportunity to provide their opinion on how the COVID-19 virus may impact their industry and business in the coming weeks.

Interestingly, of those who indicated that there was no impact to their industry (question 3) at the time they answered the survey, only 8% of the 30% did not indicate that COVID-19 will have impacts on their business and industry. On the other hand, 22% of respondents that indicated their business and industry will be impacted in the near future.

Respondent answers include:

- More people working from home;
- Some staff off of work;
- Business will be closing as they cannot stay afloat;
- Reduced customers;
- Postponing and cancelling events;
- Supply chain impacts; and,
- Slowdown in sales.

3. CONCLUSION

The Surrey Board of Trade concludes that Surrey's business community, as well as local, provincial and federal governments have much to gain from implementing business continuity and additional measures announced today will help provide liquidity for Canadian businesses during the current crisis. Measures of particular note for Canadian businesses include:

- A cut by the Bank of Canada in its benchmark interest rate by 50 basis points to 0.75 per cent.
- \$10 billion in credit support to Canadian businesses through the Business Development Bank of Canada and the Export Development Bank of Canada.
- A decrease in the domestic stability buffer that will add nearly \$300 billion in liquidity to the banking system and reinforce the commercial banks' ability to supply credit.

The Prime Minister of Canada declared that the border will be closed to all except Canadian citizens, Primary Residents, US Citizens, air operators/crew and immediate family members. This ban does not extend to commerce or trade. This will decrease the spread of the disease but will still allow for the economy to operate at relatively normal levels, however, without additional and holistic assistance to businesses in an efficient manner, small businesses will face detrimental effects.

The Surrey Board of Trade's membership has indicated that this is a problem for our business community. We are facing a new global crisis that has not been experienced in recent years. All orders of Government must work collaboratively with the business community and the Chamber of Commerce/Boards of Trade to ensure that efficient and effective flow of information is provided.