

Attachment 1: Themes we are hearing

The following is a chart of the current and future needs of Edmonton’s businesses communities. This qualitative data was gathered through the following sources:

- Conversations with business owners through the One-on-One Program
- Partners, including Business Improvement Areas, Chamber of Commerce, and other advocacy organizations
- Media monitoring
- Ongoing monitoring of general business sentiment through social media

Themes	What We’re Hearing
Financial Assistance and Material Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are gaps in accessing federal and provincial support; for instance, a new business may not be able to access the Canada Emergency Business Account as they are unable to meet the payroll criteria. • City of Edmonton property tax deferrals are not being passed along to businesses in the form of decreased rent. • Some businesses are not able to access personal protective equipment (PPE) due to lack of supply and cost. • Some businesses need financial support to purchase PPE or pay for commercial space renovations (such as the purchase and installation of plexiglass or barriers). • As there are no requirements for landlords to use the Canada Commercial Rent Assistance program, some landlords are not choosing to offer a break in rent to commercial tenants. • Many businesses are not in a position to take on additional debt to help with expenses so loan based programs are not effective for them. • 50% capacity will not allow those businesses in the hospitality industry to return to profit.
Direction, Guidance and Clarity via one-on-one support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses will continue to need one-on-one support through permit, licence and grant application processes. • Timely and tailored responses from Administration are required in order to support urgent business inquiries. • Edmonton businesses are diverse and would benefit from tailored supports that address specific needs of various marginalized communities that experience disadvantages (ex. newcomers, indigenous entrepreneurs, etc.). • Businesses need clear and specific direction on what government supports they are able to access.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Materials and resources should be accessible, including translations of documents into commonly-spoken languages. ● New business owners desire clarity on timelines, fees and process prior to applying for services. ● Businesses affected by COVID-19 need support to negotiate rent leniency with landlords, a ban on evictions and rent support. ● A business owner may not be aware of all the organizations offering support to small businesses and which ones are relevant to their business. ● Now that the relaunch has been approved, business owners need clear direction on which businesses are allowed to operate and detailed industry specific guidelines. ● There is lack of clarity around expectations related to PPE and associated processes through opening. ● There is so much information out there; business is struggling with where to go for information and how to make sense of it.
<p>Innovation and Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is a need for strategic recovery planning for individual businesses. ● Existing businesses need support to transition to other ways of doing business, such as building an online business and adopting digital technologies. ● Pivoting takes time and costs money, and many businesses do not have the resources or support to do this. ● Businesses have good ideas (i.e. pedestrian take-out window in a coffee shop) but do not have the resources to execute.
<p>Market Demand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creating vibrancy for our mainstreets will require the return of people and customers. ● Improving consumer confidence will increase spending at local establishments and the consumption of food prepared locally. ● The City is being asked to increase the procurement of local goods and services.
<p>Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● With reduced people on the street, some businesses are experiencing increased vandalism and other property crimes. They do not have the resources to resolve this.