

Seymour Business Retention & Expansion Program

Report



A Project of the Neighbourhood Renewal Program



Acknowledgments

The Seymour Business Retention and Expansion Program is a project of the Seymour Neighbourhood Renewal Program. It was funded through the Department of Human Services and administered through Cutting Edge Youth Services and Mitchell Shire Council.

The Seymour Business Retention and Expansion Program is indebted to the Central Ranges LLEN for the assistance they provided, both in-kind and financial.

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Volunteers

The BREP is also indebted to the volunteers who conducted the business surveys for the project.



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Introduction

Background

It is essential to have a community which supports initiatives that focus on listening to and helping existing businesses to grow and prosper. The Business Retention & Expansion Program (BREP) is a community sponsored initiative which uses a structured interview process to learn about local business requirements, concerns, ideas and opinions.

The BREP supports and encourages economic and business development by discovering the barriers to survival and growth that face local businesses. The Program is derived from the economic development principle that sustainable business growth is created by retaining and expanding existing businesses, rather than by attracting new business into a community.

This report focusses on the BREP conducted in Seymour during 2004-2005. The Program was funded by the Department of Human Services through the Seymour Neighbourhood Renewal Program and facilitated by Mitchell Shire Council and The Seymour We Want.

Steering Committee and Task Force

The Steering Committee comprised the three key stakeholders organising the Program who co-opted individuals from the local community, business, educational institutions and government to form a local Task Force which advised the Steering Committee. A small number of volunteers were trained to conduct face-to-face interviews with local businesses in Seymour. Eighty two businesses were surveyed over a six month period.

Survey – Research Methodology

The survey was the tool that encouraged business owner/managers to talk about their perceptions, concerns and issues. The survey focused on the following key areas:

- Business structure and history
- Business environment
- Business constraints
- Business plans
- Business support for the community
- Business information and skills requirements
- Business use of email and internet
- The opportunity to elaborate on perceptions and ideas about what was needed to encourage business development in Seymour and to help local businesses do better.

Program Objectives

Interview businesses in Seymour to:

- Demonstrate community support for local businesses
- Discover the concerns and issues perceived by local businesses
- Encourage new ideas in terms of economic business development
- Collect a range of quantitative data to give a snapshot of small businesses in Seymour
- Respond to immediate business concerns.

Analysis of Survey Data

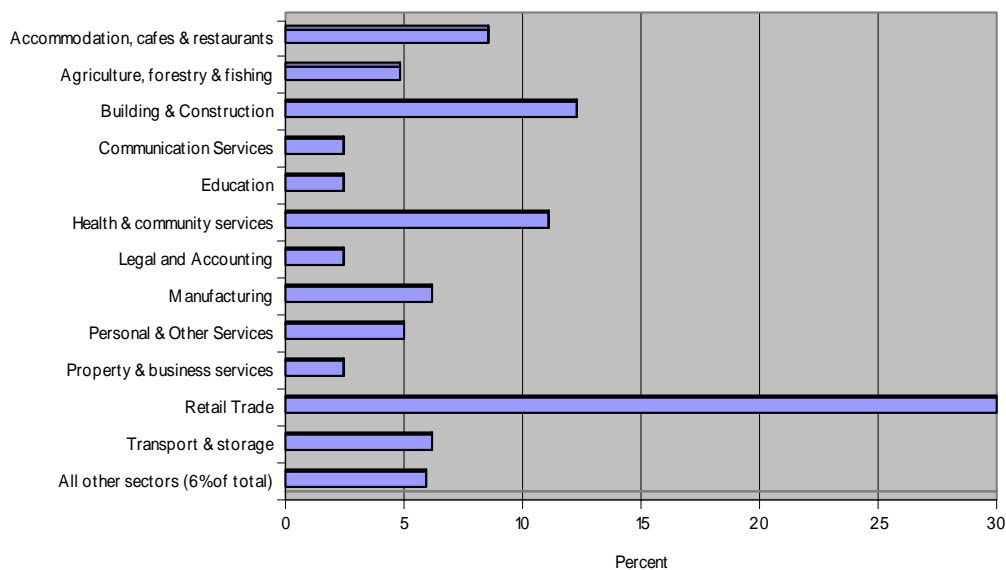
City of Seymour

The City of Seymour is the largest of the five main townships in the Mitchell Shire with a population of approximately 6,500 people. It is strategically positioned on the Hume Highway with direct links to Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga and Melbourne. As an important regional centre, Seymour is home to a wide range of businesses and services, which number approximately 800 according to the ABS 2001 Business Register Count. The BREP interviewed 82 businesses, representing 10.3% of the total number of businesses in Seymour.

Business Sector

The retail sector provided the largest numbers of businesses interviewed, representing 17% of the total number of retail businesses in Seymour. The biggest industry sector in Seymour is actually the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector which represents 19% of all businesses in Seymour, but only 4 businesses from this sector were interviewed for the BREP.

Chart 1. Major industry sectors represented in Seymour BREP



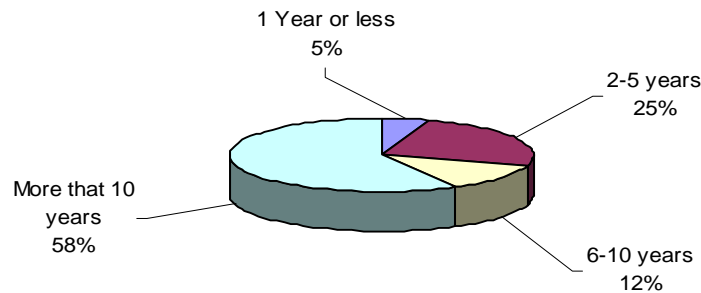
The largest industry sectors surveyed were in the following sectors:

1. Retail sector, 24 businesses, representing 30% of total interviewed.
2. Building and construction, 10 businesses, representing 12% of total interviewed.
3. Health and community services, 9 businesses, representing 11% of total interviewed.
4. Accommodation, cafes and restaurants, 7 businesses, representing 9% of total interviewed.

Age of Business

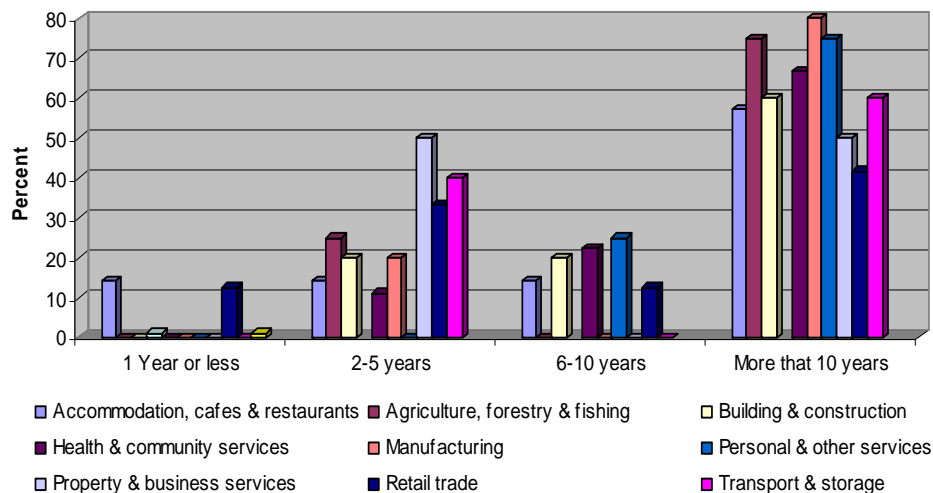
Businesses were asked how many years they had been in operation.

Chart 2. Breakdown by age of business



- More than half of the businesses surveyed (58%) had been in operation for more than ten years.
- Only 5% of businesses had been in operation for one year or less.

Chart 3. Age of business by industry sector

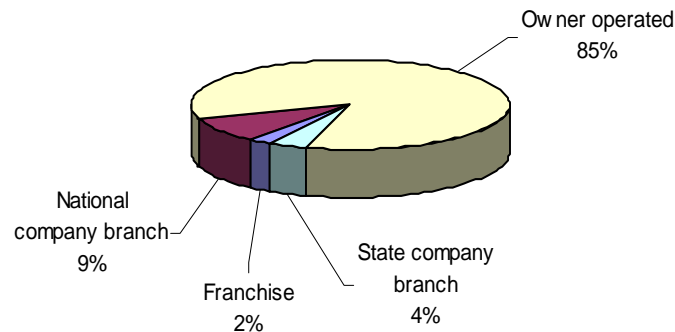


- There were businesses across all the industry sectors that had been operating more than 10 years.
- Retail businesses had the greatest spread across the age range.
- There were no businesses interviewed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing, building and construction, manufacturing or property and business services sectors that had been operating for one year or less.

Business Ownership

Businesses were asked a number of questions about their structure and focus of operations.

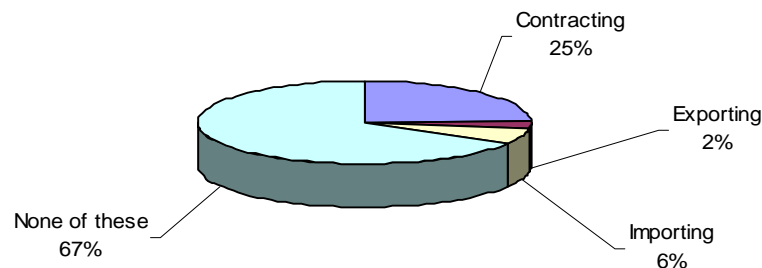
Chart 4. Breakdown by business structure



- The majority of businesses (85%) were locally owned and owner operated.

Business Focus (Import/Export/Local)

Chart 5. Focus of business

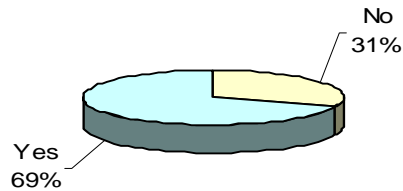


- The vast majority of businesses (92%) produced goods and/or services for the local market.
- Only 6% of businesses had an import focus and 2% had an export focus.
- Businesses from manufacturing (20%) and retail (17%) were the only sectors to report an import focus.
- Businesses from agriculture, forestry and fishing (50%) were the only sector to report an export focus.

Business Origin

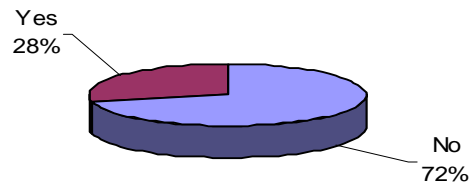
Businesses were asked if they were local, if they had relocated and the years they had been in Seymour.

Chart 6. Local to Seymour



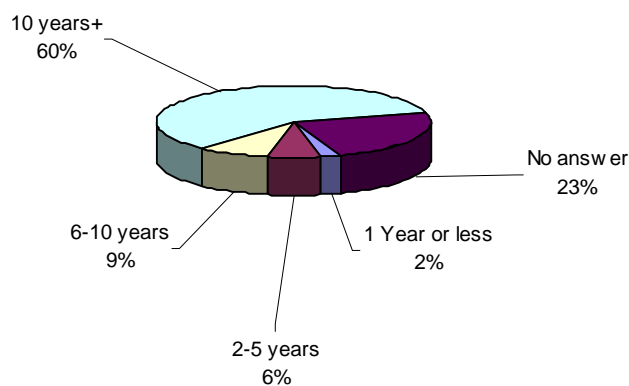
- The majority (69%) of business people were local to Seymour.
- Four out of nine, or 44% of the businesses interviewed from the health and community services sector were not local to Seymour.
- Nine out of twenty four, or 35% of the businesses interviewed from the retail sector were not local to Seymour.

Chart 7. Relocation to Seymour



- Just over a quarter (28%) of business people had relocated to Seymour.

Chart 8. Years in Seymour

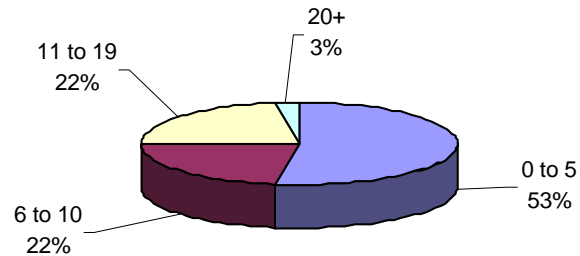


- Over half the respondents (60%) had lived in Seymour for ten years or more.
- Just under a quarter (23%) gave no answer, so it is assumed they did not live in Seymour.

Size of Business

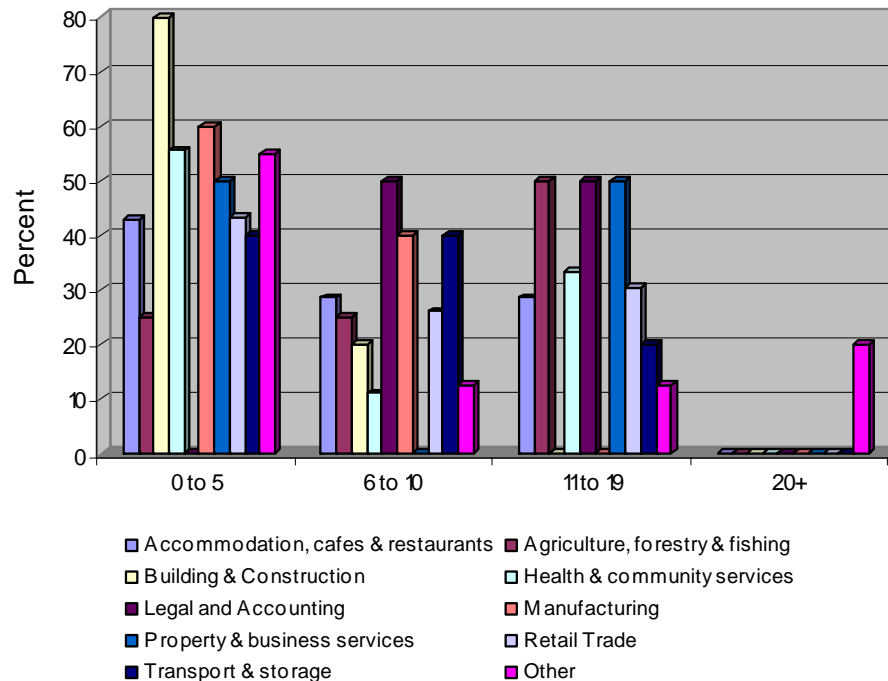
Businesses size was correlated against a number of variables.

Chart 9. Breakdown by size of business (number of people employed)



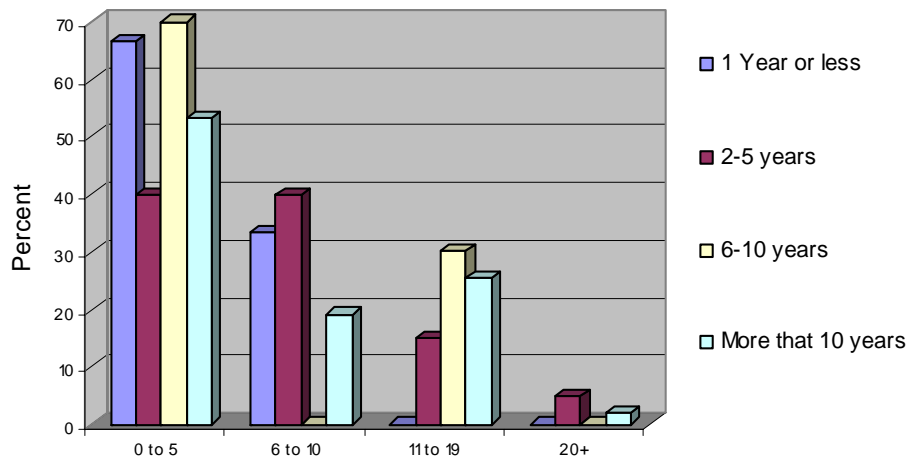
- Just over half the businesses (53%) surveyed employed between zero and five staff compared to the overall Mitchell Shire figure of 49%.

Chart 10. Size of business by industry sector



- Of the businesses surveyed, there were no retail businesses employing more than twenty people.
- Businesses employing more than twenty people were in the education and sport and recreation sectors.
- Health and community services, building and construction and manufacturing were predominantly the business that employed zero to five staff.

Chart 11. Size of business by age of business



- No businesses that had been operating for one year or less employed more than twenty people.
- 5% of businesses operating two to five years employed more than twenty people.
- Only 2% of businesses operating more than ten years employed more than twenty people.

Summary

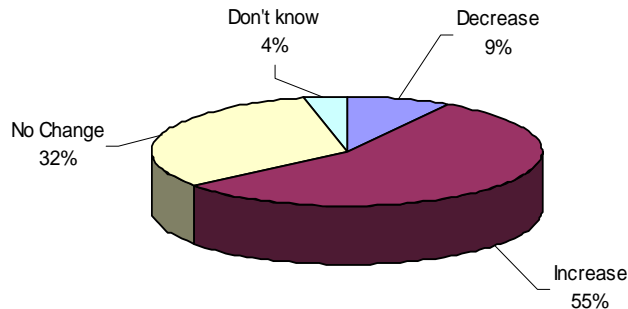
- The largest industry group surveyed was the retail sector.
- Just over half of the businesses surveyed were well established, having been in business for over ten years, and only a small number were new start up businesses. There were no businesses in the agriculture, forestry and fishing, building and construction, manufacturing or property and business services industry sectors that had been operating for one year or less.
- The majority of businesses were locally owned and owner operated and the majority produced goods and services for the local market. A very small number imported or exported goods. Retail and manufacturing businesses were the only ones that indicated they imported. Businesses from agriculture, forestry and fishing were the only industry sector to indicate an export focus.
- Business people were mostly local to Seymour with just over half having lived in Seymour for over ten years.
- Just over half the businesses were micro-businesses, employing fewer than five staff. Health and community services, building and construction and manufacturing were predominantly the business that employed fewer than five staff. There were no retail businesses interviewed that employed more than twenty people. Businesses interviewed that employed more than twenty people were in the education and sport and recreation sectors.
- Very few businesses interviewed employed more than twenty people.

Business Confidence

Businesses were asked a number of questions about their business activity levels over the past twelve months. They were also asked what levels of activity they anticipated over the next twelve month period.

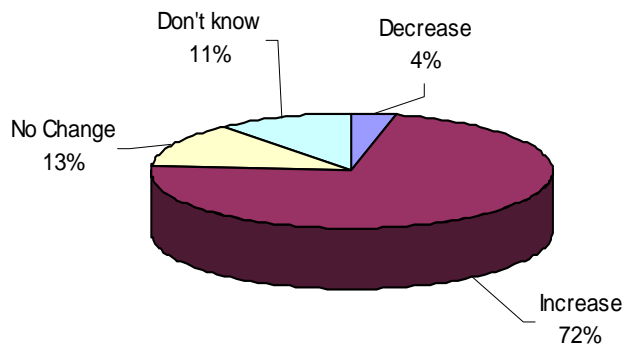
Business Activity Levels

Chart 12. Business activity levels in the past twelve months



- Just over half (55%) of businesses had experienced an increase in business activity levels in the previous year.
- Approximately a third (32%) had no change in business activity levels.

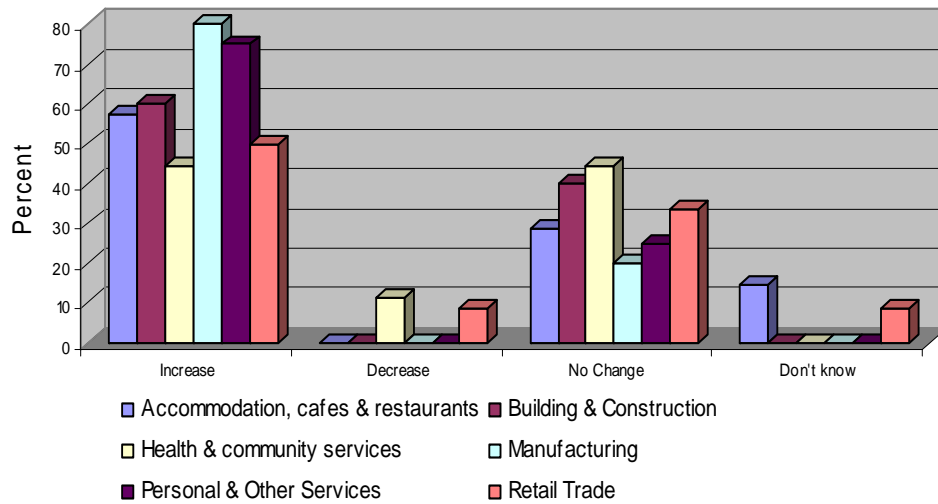
Chart 13. Expected business activity levels in the next twelve months



- Just under three-quarters (72%) of businesses expected an increase in business activity levels in the next twelve months.
- Only 4% of businesses expected a decrease in business activity levels.
- The majority of businesses that experienced an increase in the previous year expected an increase in the subsequent year. None of this group expected a decrease.

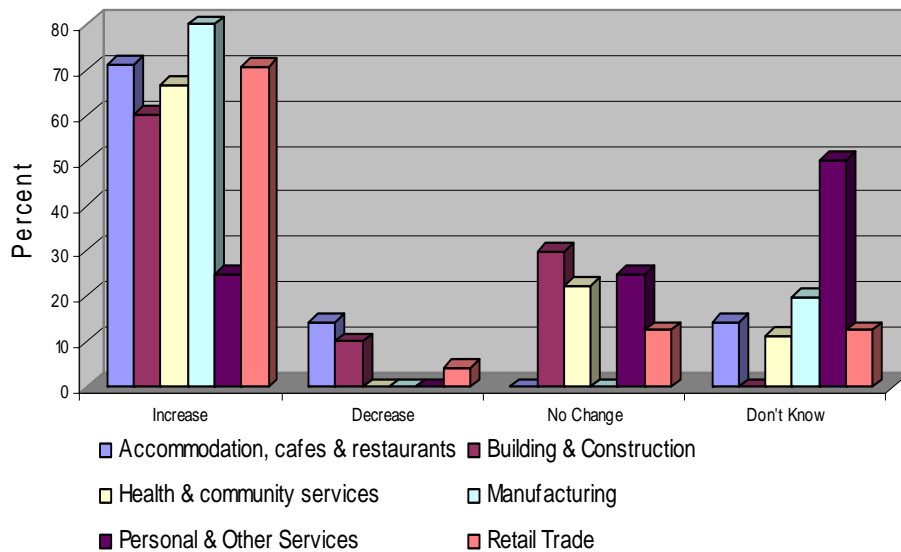
Business Confidence and Industry Sector

Chart 14. Business activity levels in the past twelve months by industry sector



- The majority of businesses in all industry sectors experienced an increase in business activity levels.

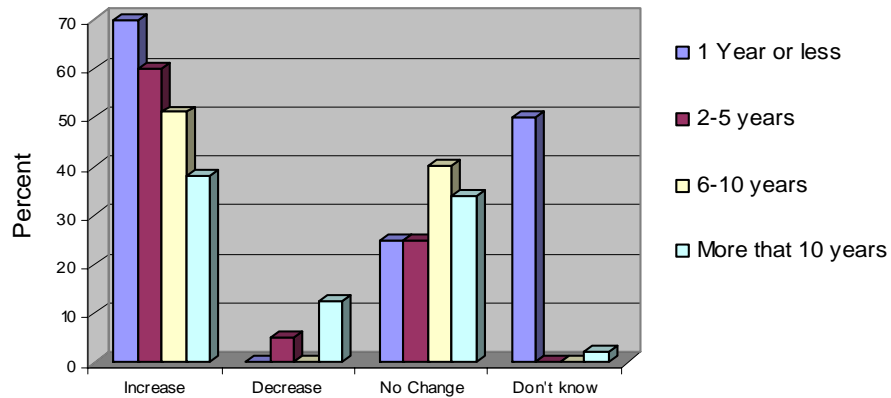
Chart 15. Expected business activity levels in the next twelve months by industry sector



- Businesses in the manufacturing sector were the most optimistic about an increase in activity levels.
- Businesses in the building and construction sector were most uncertain about an increase in activity levels.

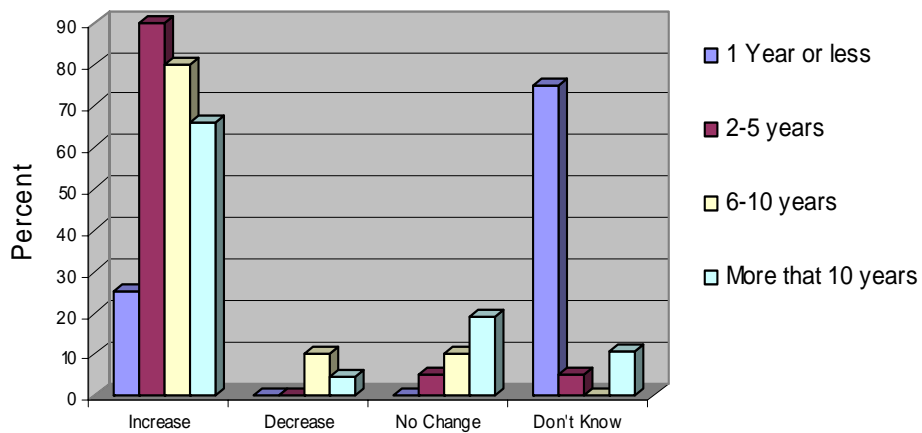
Business Confidence and Age of Business

Chart 16. Age of business by business activity levels past twelve months



- Businesses that had been in operation for one year or less (70%) had experienced the greatest increase in their business activity levels over the past twelve months.

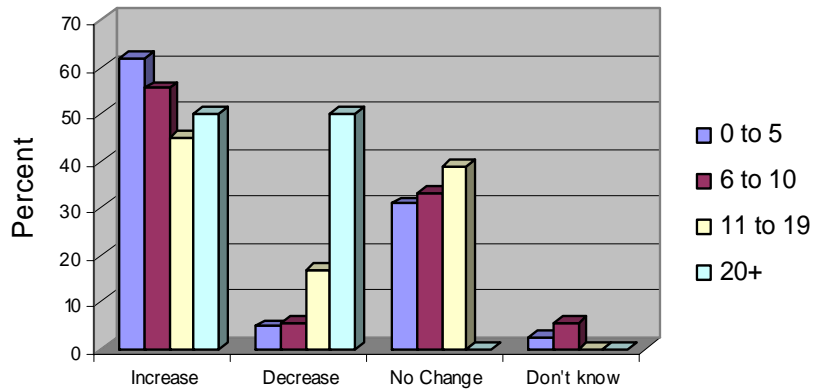
Chart 17. Age of business by business activity levels next 12 months



- Businesses that had been operating one year or less (75%) were most uncertain about increases in business levels over the next twelve months.
- Businesses that had been operating two to five years (90%) were the most optimistic about increases in activity levels.

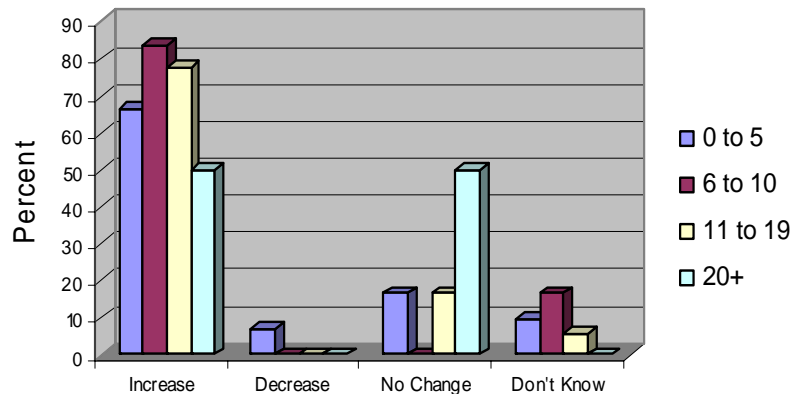
Business Confidence and Size of Business

Chart 18. Business activity levels in the past twelve months by size of business



- Equal numbers of businesses employing more than twenty people (50%) had experienced both an increase and a decrease in business activity levels over the past twelve months.
- Businesses that employed zero to five people had the greatest overall increases in activity levels (62%) over the past twelve months.

Chart 19. Expected business activity levels in the next twelve months by size of business

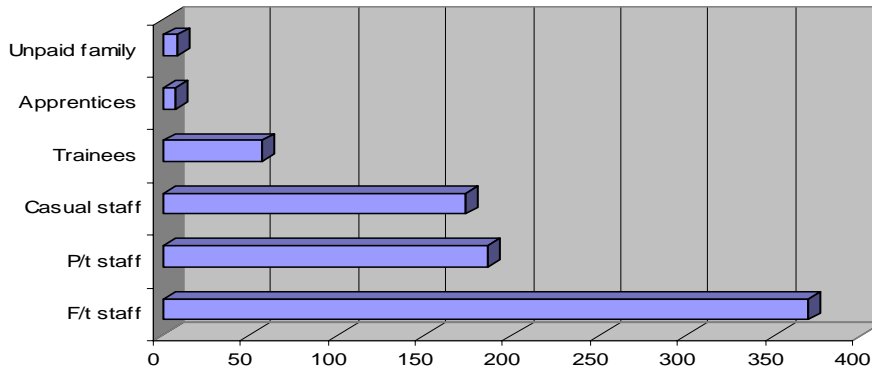


- A small number of businesses employing between zero to five people (7%) expected a decrease in business activity levels.
- Businesses employing between six to ten people had the greatest overall expectation of increases in activity levels (83%) over the next twelve months.

Employment & Journey to Work

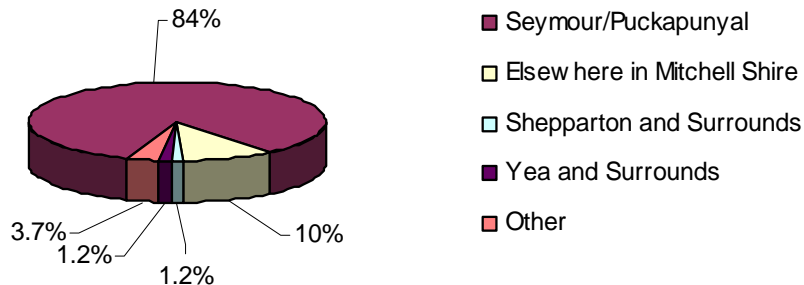
Businesses were asked a number of questions about the type of staff they employed and how their staff journeyed to work.

Chart 20. Category of staff employed



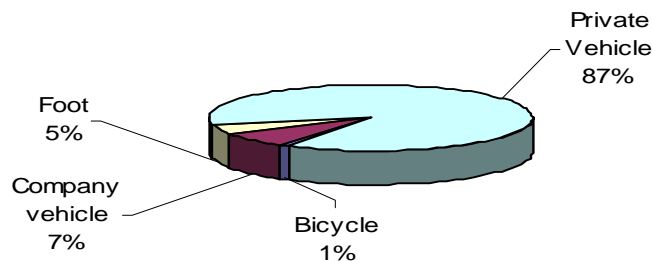
- The majority of businesses employed full time staff.
- Considerably more trainees were employed (57) than the smaller number of apprentices (7).

Chart 21. Employee travel location



- The majority of employees (84%) travelled from Seymour and Puckapunyal to work in Seymour.

Chart 22. Employee mode of travel to work



- The majority of employees (87%) travelled to work by private vehicle, whilst only 5% walked to work.

Summary

- Overall, businesses participating in the survey had high levels of confidence about doing business in Seymour. They reported increased business activity levels for the previous twelve months and expected this situation to continue in the subsequent year.
- More specifically, just under three-quarters expected an increase in business activity levels in the next twelve months. The majority of businesses who had experienced increased levels of business activity in the past year expected this to continue in the following year. Only a small number of businesses expected a decrease in business activity levels and these were the micro-businesses (zero to five staff).
- The majority of businesses in all industry sectors had experienced an increase in business activity levels over the past year. More businesses in the retail, accommodation, cafes and restaurants and building and construction industries experienced increases than other sectors.
- Businesses in the manufacturing sector were the most optimistic about an increase in activity levels over the next twelve months and businesses in the building and construction sector were most uncertain about an increase in activity levels over the subsequent twelve months.
- New start up businesses had experienced the greatest increases in their business levels over the past twelve months but they were also the most uncertain about increases in their business levels over the following year. Businesses that had been operating two to five years were the most optimistic about increases in activity levels.
- Equal numbers of businesses employing more than twenty people had experienced both increases and decreases in business activity levels over the past twelve months. Businesses that employed less than five people had the greatest increases in activity levels over the past twelve months. Businesses employing between six to ten people had the greatest overall expectation of increases in activity levels over the next twelve months.
- The majority of businesses employed full time staff. Trainees were largely employed in the accommodation, cafes and restaurants, property and business services and transport and storage sectors. Apprentices were employed in the building and construction sector. No apprentices were employed by any of the manufacturers interviewed.
- The majority of employees travelled from within Seymour and Puckapunyal to their work place by private vehicle.

Advantages and Disadvantages to Business

Businesses were asked to nominate four advantages and disadvantages of doing business in Seymour from a list of options. The proportions of businesses that responded to the options presented are set out in the chart below.

Chart 23. Advantages and disadvantages of doing business in Seymour

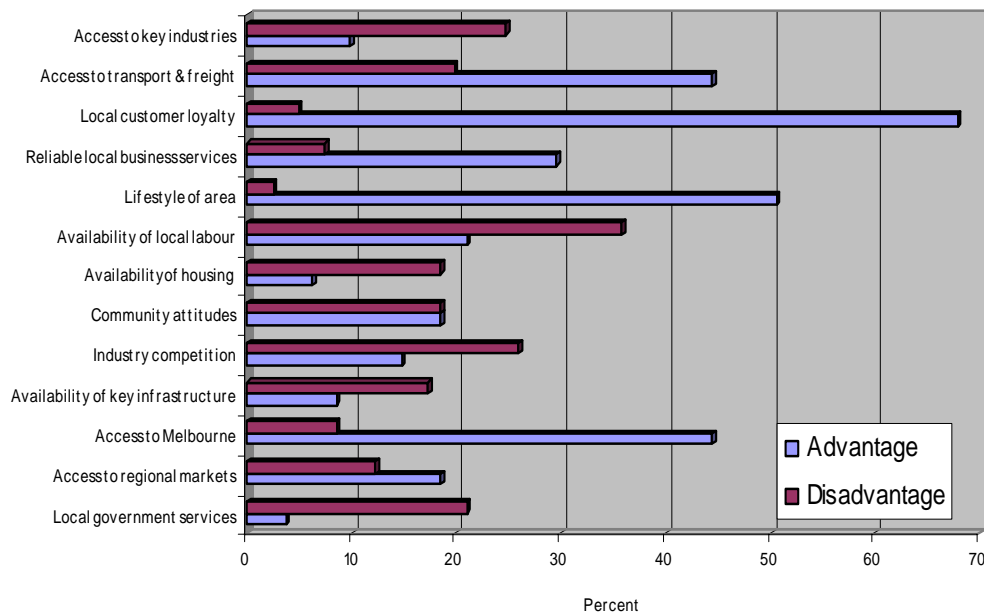


Table 2. The four major advantages and four major disadvantages of doing business in Seymour

Advantage		%	Disadvantage		%
1.	Local customer loyalty	68	1.	Availability of local labour	36
2.	Lifestyle of local area	51	2.	Industry competition	26
3.	Access to transport & freight	44	3.	Access to key industries	25
4.	Access to Melbourne	44	4.	Local government services	21

These advantages and disadvantages were cross tabulated with industry sector and size of business.

1. Advantages

Local customer loyalty: 68%

- Local customer loyalty was perceived as an advantage by 71% of businesses in the retail and 68% of businesses in the health and community services sectors. 29% of businesses that employed less than five people saw local customer loyalty as advantageous to doing business in Seymour.

Lifestyle of local area: 51%

- The lifestyle of the local area was seen as positive by 60% of businesses in building and construction, 57% of businesses in accommodation, cafes and restaurants and 50% of businesses in retail. Again, more micro businesses (62%) saw it as an advantage.

Access to transport & freight: 44%

- All of the businesses interviewed in the manufacturing sector (5 businesses) saw access to transport and freight as a positive, as did 50% each of businesses in the building and construction and retail sectors. Businesses that employed up to ten people saw access to transport and freight as most advantageous.

Access to Melbourne: 44%

- Access to Melbourne was seen as an advantage by 78% of businesses in the health and community services, 71% of businesses in the accommodation, cafes and restaurants and 36% of businesses in the retail sectors. Nearly half (44%) of businesses of all sizes perceived access to Melbourne as an advantage of being located in Seymour.

2. Disadvantages

Availability of local labour: 36%

- Availability of local labour was seen as a disadvantage by 60% of businesses in the manufacturing sector and 29% of businesses in retail. 41% of businesses that employed between zero to five people saw it as a disadvantage.

Industry competition: 26%

- Industry competition was seen as a disadvantage by 60% of manufacturing businesses, 30% of businesses in the building and construction sector and 17% of retail businesses. 27% of businesses that employed between zero to five people saw it as a disadvantage.

Access to key industries: 25%

- 75% of business in the personal and other services sector indicated that access to key industries was a disadvantage, as did 25% of businesses in the retail sector.

Local government services: 21%

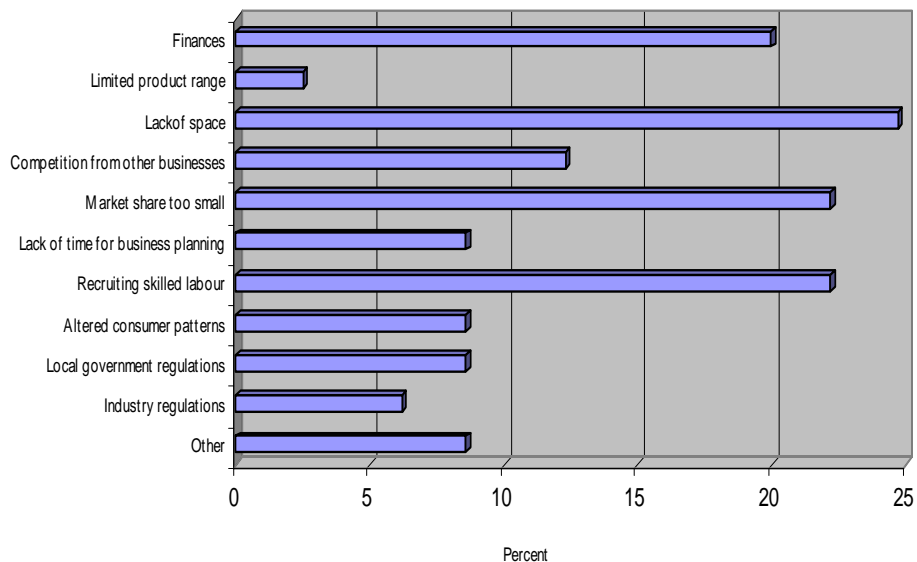
- 29% of businesses in the retail sector indicated that local government services were a disadvantage. Medium sized small businesses, (six to twenty employees), perceived that local government services were a disadvantage to doing business in Seymour.

Major Constraints to Business Expansion

Businesses were asked to nominate the major constraints inhibiting their business growth. Over half the businesses (54%) indicated there were barriers to expansion. Nominated were:

1. Lack of space: 25%
2. Market share too small: 22%
3. Lack of skilled labour: 22%
4. Availability of finances: 20%

Chart 24. Major constraints to business expansion



Lack of space: 25%

- 30% of businesses in the building and construction and 29% in the retail and accommodation, cafes and restaurant sectors nominated lack of space as a constraint. 33% employed between six to ten people and 31% employed zero to five people. 45% had been operating between two to five years, and 15% had been operating more than ten years.

Market share too small: 22%

- 40% of businesses in the health and community services and 25% of retail businesses indicated that their market share was too small. 29% employed eleven to twenty people and 21% employed zero to five people. 21% of businesses operating for ten years or more perceived that their limited market share was a barrier to expansion.

Lack of Skilled labour: 22%

- 40% of businesses in the manufacturing sector saw lack of skilled labour as a constraint, as did 30% in building and construction and 21% in the retail sector. Again, business that had been operating between two to five years and more than ten years were most likely to nominate access to skilled labour as an inhibitor to business growth.

Availability of finances: 20%

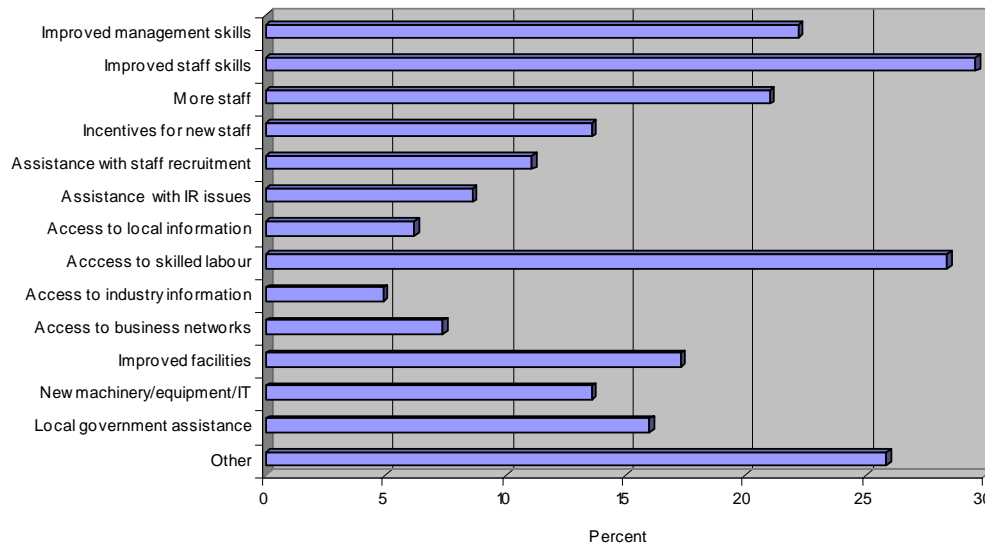
- 30% of businesses in the building and construction and 17% in the retail sectors indicated that finances were a constraint. 28% employed between six to ten people and 19% employed zero to five people. Once more, business that had been operating between two to five years and more than ten years saw lack of finances as a constraint.

Business Enablers

Businesses were asked to respond to options they judged as potentially enabling them to improve their business performance. The major enablers nominated by businesses were:

1. Improved staff skills: 30%
2. Access to skilled labour: 28%
3. Improved management skills: 22%
4. More staff: 21%

Chart 25. Business enablers



Improved staff skills: 30%

- 29% of businesses in the retail and 21% in the building and construction sectors indicated that improving staff skills would enhance their performance. Businesses operating the least amount of time were less concerned about staff skills than businesses that had been operating two to five years and over ten years (36% each) who were more concerned. 38% of responses were from businesses that employed zero to five people.

Access to skilled labour: 28%

- 26% of businesses in the retail and 22% in the building and construction sectors indicated that access to skilled labour would assist their business growth. Businesses operating two to five years (35%) and over ten years (57%) were most concerned about access to skilled labour. 44% of responses were from businesses that employed zero to five people.

Improved management skills: 22%

- 33% of businesses in the retail and 17% in the building and construction sectors indicated that they would benefit from improved management skills. Businesses that had been operating two to five years (44%) were most concerned about improving their management skills. 50% of responses were from businesses that employed zero to five people.

More staff: 21%

- 24% of businesses in the retail and 18% in the building and construction and accommodation, cafes and restaurants sectors indicated that more staff would assist them to do better. 65% of responses were from businesses that had been operating over ten years. 41% of responses were from businesses that employed between zero to five people.

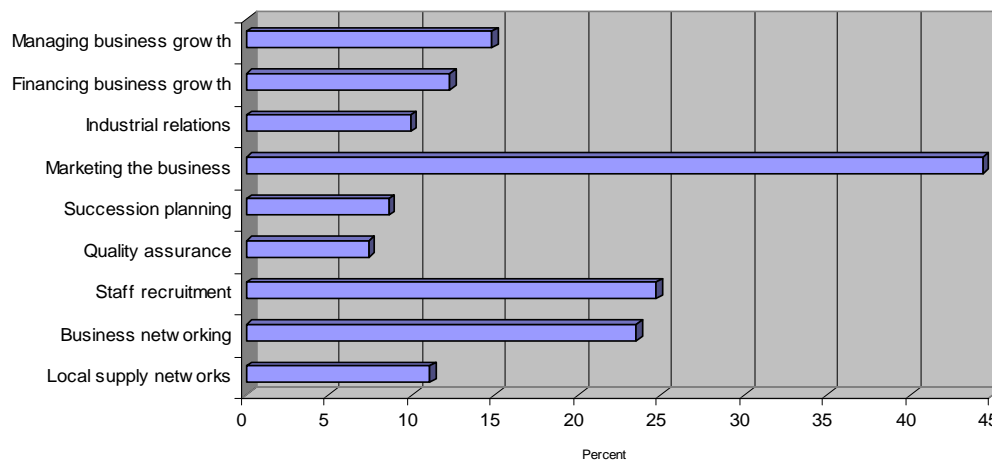
Information Needed to Improve Business Performance

Respondents were asked to nominate, from a list of options, information that might assist them in improving their business performance and skills base.

The options nominated by businesses that would most assist them with their business information and skill development requirements were:

1. Business marketing: 44%
2. Effective staff recruitment: 25%
3. Business networking: 24%

Chart 25. Information needed to improve business performance and skills



Marketing your business: 44%

- Business sectors that indicated they required information about marketing were from the retail (31%), building and construction (14%) and health and community services sectors (14%).
- 75% of businesses that had been operating one year or less and 56% of businesses that employed between six to 10 people were interested in marketing information.

Effective staff recruitment: 25%

- Retail (30%) and accommodation, cafes and restaurants (20%) indicated that access to information about effective staff recruitment would assist their business performance.
- 29% of businesses employing zero to five people were interested in staff recruitment.

Business networking: 24%

- Retail (32%) and manufacturing businesses (16%) were most interested in information about business networking.
- 26% of businesses employing zero to five people were interested in business networking.

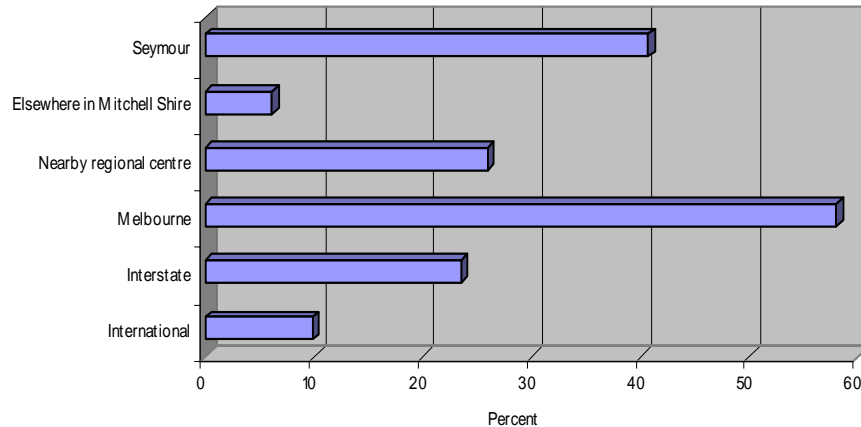
Summary

- The majority of businesses interviewed perceived that doing business in Seymour was enhanced by local customer loyalty and the lifestyle of the area. Smaller businesses in the retail, accommodation, cafes and restaurants and building and construction sectors were more likely to see this as an advantage. Access to transport and freight was seen as an important advantage by businesses in the manufacturing and building and construction sectors. Seymour's relatively easy access to Melbourne was seen as an advantage by businesses in the retail, health and community services and accommodation, cafes and restaurants sectors.
- Availability of local labour was perceived as the greatest disadvantage of doing business in Seymour. It was largely seen as a disadvantage by smaller businesses in the manufacturing and retail sectors. The lack of access to key industries was seen as a disadvantage by businesses in the personal and other services sector. Industry competition in Seymour was seen as a disadvantage primarily by businesses in the manufacturing sector. Medium sized businesses in the retail sector cited local government services as a disadvantage of doing business in Seymour.
- Lack of space was the major constraint to growth nominated by businesses. Medium sized businesses (six to ten employees) that had been operating between two to five years were most likely to nominate lack of space as a growth inhibitor. Just under half the businesses in the health and community services sector and a quarter of retail businesses felt that the size of their market share was a barrier to business growth. Larger businesses (eleven to twenty employees) that had been operating more than ten years were also more likely to say that this was the case. The lack of availability of skilled labour was cited as an inhibitor to growth by businesses in the traditional trades – manufacturing and building and construction. The building and construction sector also most often cited lack of finances as a constraint to business expansion.
- Staff were most frequently cited as the factor that would enable businesses to improve their business performance, particularly by those that employed between zero to five staff. Improving staff skills, access to skilled labour and employing more staff were the elements that businesses believed would most enhance their business growth. Building and construction was the industry sector most concerned about staff in general and the sector that saw availability of staff as their primary business enabler.
- Overall, business marketing information was perceived as potentially the most useful in improving business performance. The groups that predominantly thought this were businesses in operation for one year or less and those in the retail sector. Smaller businesses, those that employed between zero to five people, were most interested in information about effective staff recruitment and business networking as ways of improving their businesses performance.

Business Products and Services

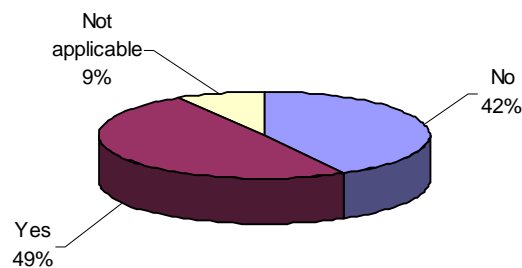
Businesses were asked from where they sourced their products and services, if these products/services were difficult to source and if they could be sourced locally.

Chart 26. Source of products and services



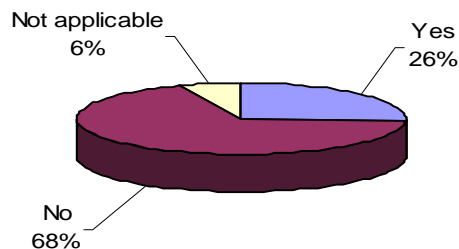
- Over half the responses (58%) indicated that business sourced their products from Melbourne and 41% sourced their products from within Seymour.

Chart 27. Are products and services difficult to source locally?



- Just under half (49%) of respondents indicated that products and services were difficult to source locally with almost equal numbers (42%) indicating they were not difficult to source.
- Of those that found it difficult to source products, 90% were from building and construction, 80% from transport and services and 60% from the manufacturing sectors.

Chart 28. Could they be sourced locally?

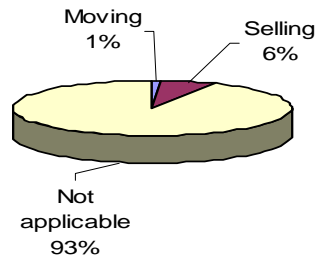


- 68% of respondents indicated that products could not be sourced locally.

Remaining in Locality, Moving, Selling or Closing

Businesses were asked their intentions relating to remaining in the locality, moving somewhere else or selling their business.

Chart 29. Intention to remain in locality, move or sell business

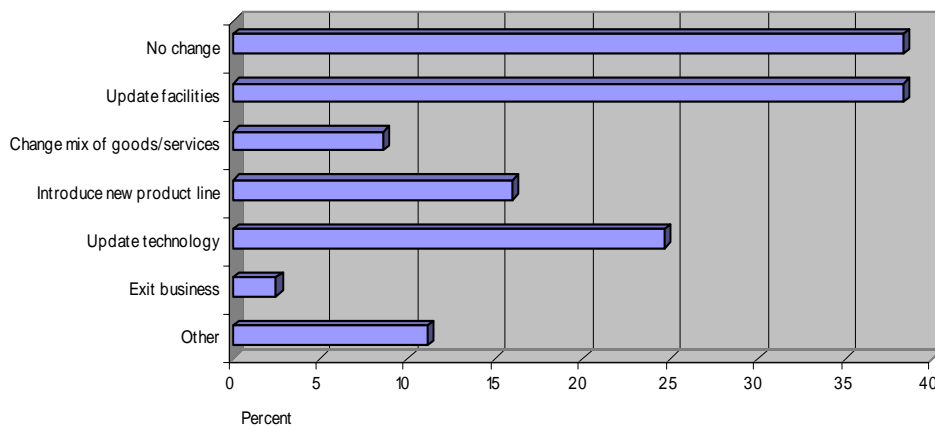


- The vast majority of businesses intended remaining in their present locality.
- 7% suggested they would either sell or move their business.
- One business indicated they were closing.

Plans to Change, Update or Expand Business Operation

- 38% of businesses indicated they had plans to update or change their facilities, whilst 38% indicated this was not the case. Of those that indicated that changes were anticipated, 38% planned to update facilities and 25% planned to update technology.

Chart 30. Planned changes to business operation



Update facilities: 38%

- 86% of businesses from the accommodation, cafes and restaurants and 75% of businesses from the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors indicated they wanted to update their facilities. 56% of businesses employing between eleven to twenty people were interested in updating their facilities.

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Update technology: 25%

- Businesses from the education, property and business services, and legal and accounting sectors were most likely to report wanting to update technology.

Summary

- Just over half of the businesses interviewed indicated that they sourced their products/services from Melbourne and just under half sourced them from Seymour. Almost half the businesses said that their products and services were difficult to source locally and these were all from the traditional trade areas – manufacturing, building and construction and transport services. These businesses also indicated that it was not possible to source the products and services they used locally.
- The majority of businesses had no plans to move, sell or close with the exception of one business which indicated it was closing. Equal numbers of businesses had both plans for change, expansion and update of facilities as had no plans for change, expansion and update of facilities. A large proportion of businesses from the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector indicated they had plans for change, expansion and update. Medium sized small businesses (employing between eleven to twenty people) were most likely to report plans for change, expansion and update of facilities.

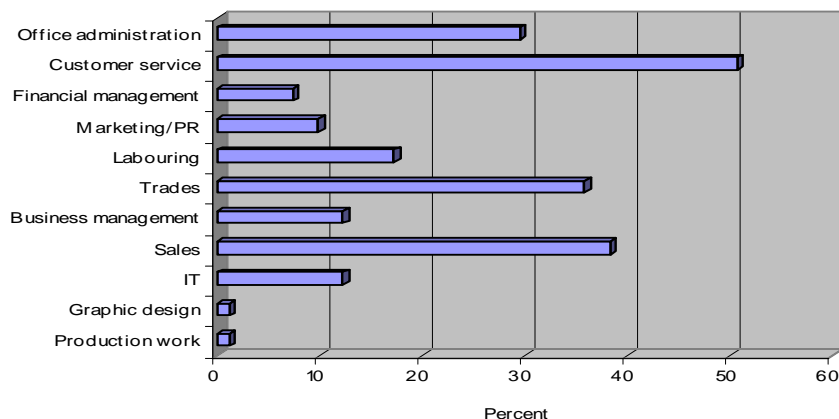
Skills Sought Over the Next Twelve Months

Businesses were asked to nominate which skills and occupations they might be seeking in the following year.

The major skills and occupations being sought over the next twelve months were:

1. Customer service: 51%
2. Sales: 38%
3. Trades: 36%
4. Office administration: 30%

Chart 31. Skills sought in next twelve months



Customer service: 51%

- 86% of businesses in accommodation, cafes and restaurants, 78% in the health and community services and 67% in the retail sectors indicated that they sought staff with customer service skills. 55% of businesses employing zero to five people were seeking staff with customer service skills. Businesses in operation between two and ten years were most likely to report a need to source staff with customer service skills.

Sales: 38%

- 60% of businesses from the manufacturing and 54% from the retail sectors indicated they required sales skills. 41% of businesses employing zero to five staff were seeking sales skills and 50% of businesses that had been in operation six to ten years were also seeking sales skills in their staff.

Trades: 36%

- 80% of businesses in the building and construction and transport and storage industry sectors were seeking trades skills. 43% of businesses employed between zero to five people and 40% of businesses had been in operation two to five years.

Office administration: 30%

- 56% of businesses from health and community services and 43% from accommodation, cafes and restaurants sectors indicated they needed office administration skills. 33% of businesses that employed between zero to five people and 40% of businesses operating two to five years required staff with administration skills.

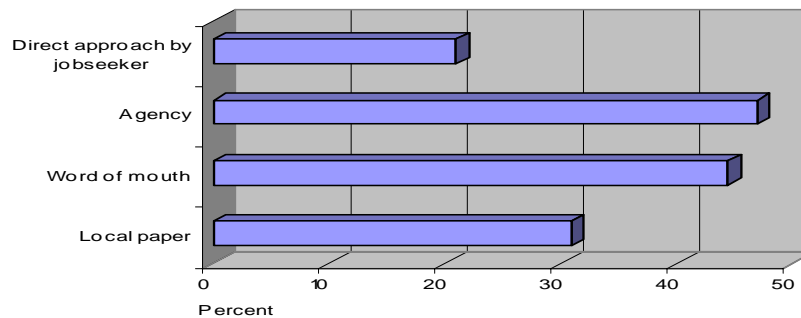
Method of Recruiting Staff

Businesses were asked to respond to a number of options indicating their preferred method for recruiting staff.

The three main options chosen by businesses as their preferred methods for recruiting staff were:

1. Agency: 47%
2. Word of mouth: 44%
3. Local newspapers : 31%.

Chart 32. Method of recruiting staff



Summary

- Overall, staff with skills in sales, customer service and tradespeople were the most highly sought after of all the categories suggested in the questionnaire.
- Businesses in the health and community services sector were the most likely to indicate that they would employ staff with sales skills.
- Businesses in the building and construction and transport and storage sectors indicated that they were most interested in employing tradespeople.
- Micro businesses (those employing between zero to five staff) were most likely to report a need for staff skills overall.
- Just under half of the respondents indicated that when they sought to employ staff they used employment agencies as their preferred method of recruiting staff.

Business Use of Computer & Internet

Businesses were asked a number of questions about their computer and internet usage.

- 98% of businesses reported that they used a computer as part of their business.
- Only two businesses reported otherwise and stated that they did not know how to use a computer.

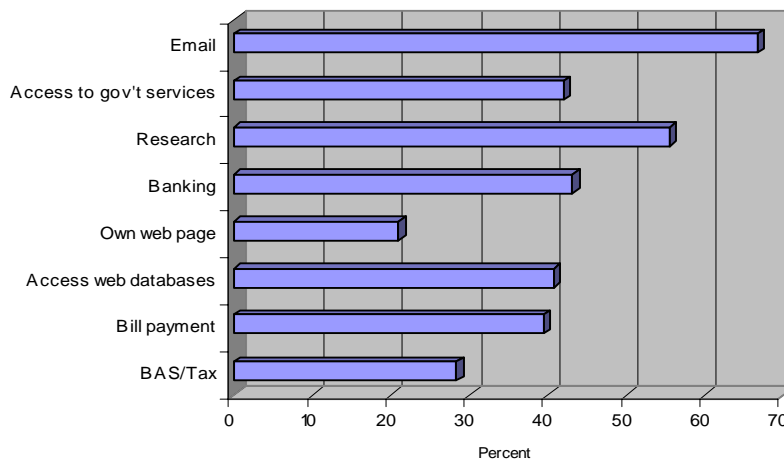
Internet

Eighty one percent of businesses indicated that they used the internet as part of their day-to-day business. The four main options chosen for business utilisation of the internet were:

1. Email: 67%
2. Research: 56%
3. Banking: 43%
4. Accessing web data bases: 41%

Interestingly, use of the internet to lodge BAS or tax returns represented only 28% of internet usage.

Chart 33. Ways in which the internet was used

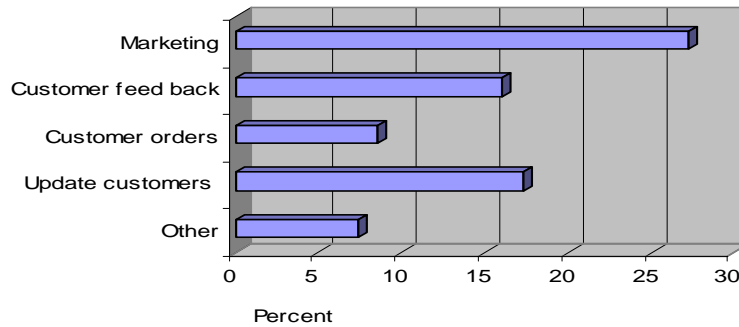


- The majority of business sectors indicated that they used email as part of their everyday business activities. Of those that did not, 41% of respondents were from the retail sector and 40% were from the building and construction sector.
- 68% of businesses from the health and community services sector indicated they used the internet for research.
- Apart from the computer services sector, businesses from the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector were the most likely to use the internet for bill payment (43%) and banking (57%), and all of the businesses from legal and accounting and computer services sectors used the internet to lodge their BAS/tax returns.

Web Site

Businesses were asked if they had a dedicated web site and were provided with a number of options regarding the purpose of the web site.

Chart 34. Ways in which web site is used



- Just over a third of businesses, 37%, indicated that they had a web site. The main usage of the web site was for marketing (27%) and to update customers about business activities (17%).
- 43% of businesses from the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector indicated that had a web page and only 21% of businesses from the retail trade had their own web page.

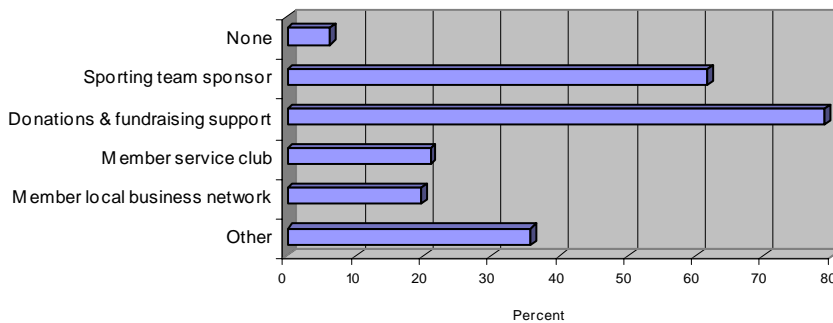
Summary

- The majority of businesses interviewed used computers in their businesses. They accessed the internet for email, research, banking and web data bases. Businesses that most often reported not using the internet were from the retail and building and construction sectors. Only a small percentage of the businesses interviewed used the internet to lodge BAS and tax returns and these were from the financial and computer services sectors.
- A third of businesses had their own web sites and the majority of these were from the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector. Business web sites were mainly used for marketing and keeping customers up to date.

Business Community Involvement

Businesses were asked to select a number of options indicating their level of community involvement. Only 6% of respondents indicated no involvement in community support or other community related activities.

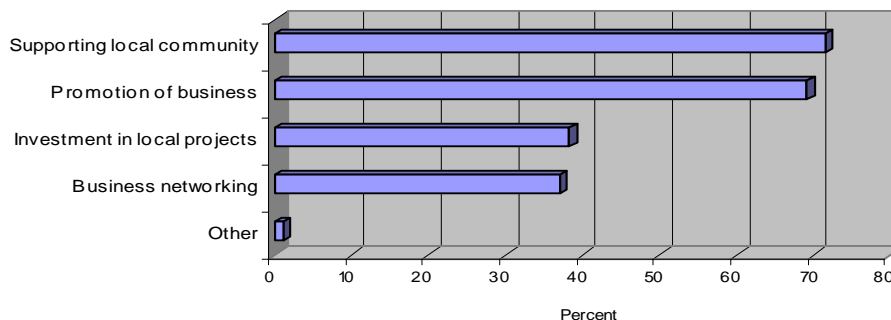
Chart 35. Types of community involvement



- Providing donations and fundraising support represented 79% of responses across all industry sectors. The building and construction (80%) and accommodation, cafes and restaurants (71%) sectors were most likely to provide this form of community support.
- Sponsoring sporting clubs represented 62% of responses and virtually all industry sectors participated. Of the businesses interviewed, those from the education and computer services sectors were most unlikely to sponsor sporting teams.
- Membership of service clubs or business networks represented 41% of responses with 43% of businesses from the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector reported membership of service clubs and business networks.

Respondents were asked to choose a number of options indicating what they believed the benefits of such involvement were for their business.

Chart 36. Benefits of community involvement

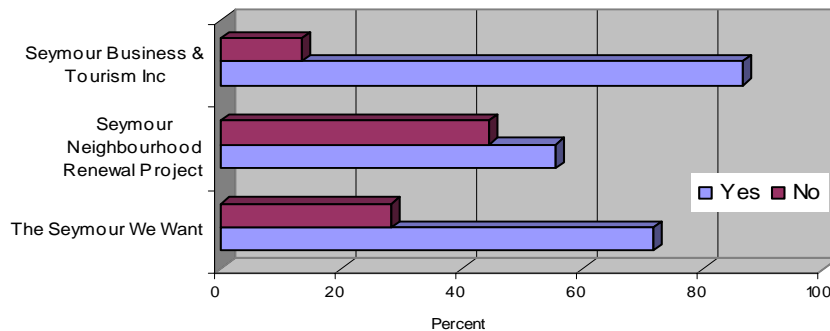


- Businesses across all industry sectors believed that supporting the local community was the greatest benefit derived from their community involvement. This option represented 72% of responses, whilst 69% of responses indicated that community involvement also assisted to market their business.

Knowledge of Local Programs/Projects

Respondents were asked to choose a number of options relating to whether they had heard of three programs and groups operating within the Seymour community.

Chart 37. Knowledge of local programs and projects



- Seymour Business and Tourism was the most well known group, with 86% of respondents indicating they had heard of it. Businesses across all industry sectors had knowledge of the group, with 100% from manufacturing, 86% from accommodation, cafes and restaurants and 83% from retail.
- Seymour's Neighbourhood Renewal Project was the least well known, with 44% of respondents indicating that had not heard of it. 70% of businesses in the building and construction sector and 57% in the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sectors had no knowledge of the Project.

Summary

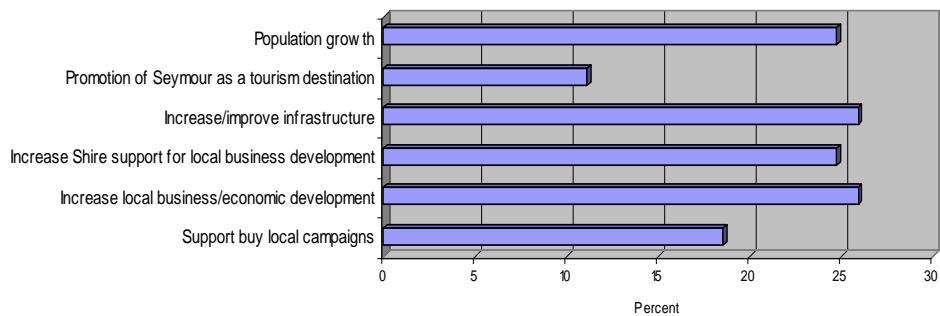
- Businesses in Seymour have a high level of community involvement. This ranges from providing financial support to the community in the form of donations and sponsorship, to membership of service clubs and business networks. The accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector was the most active in terms of providing donations and in their membership of service clubs and business networks.
- The community group that was most well known by respondents was Seymour Business and Tourism, the least well known was the Seymour Neighbourhood Renewal Project. Businesses in the education and health and community services sectors were most likely to have heard of the Neighbourhood Renewal Project, businesses in the building and construction and hospitality sectors least likely to have heard of the Project.

Major Issues and Themes

Businesses were asked a number of open questions to elicit their ideas and opinions about how business and investment could be improved in the township of Seymour. Their responses were categorised according to the themes that emerged to facilitate summarisation of responses. Unedited responses to all the questions are included at Appendix 1.

1. Responses to the question: “What do you think could be done locally to allow your business to grow?”

Chart 38. Local initiatives for business growth



Businesses suggested four main local initiatives that would allow their businesses to grow:

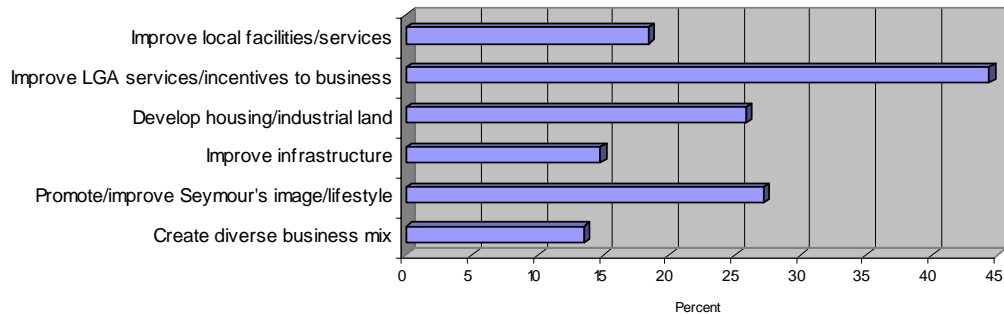
1. Increase/improve infrastructure: 26%
 2. Increase local business /economic development: 26%
 3. Increase Shire support for local business development: 25%
 4. Increase population: 25%
- Businesses from the education and accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector most often indicated that improving infrastructure would allow their business to grow.
 - Businesses from the retail and building and construction sectors most often indicated that increasing local and business development would allow their business to grow.

Quotes

- “Need to encourage housing and business development to increase employment and population”.
- “Industry locally to be encouraged which will support population and create more demand for products and services”.
- “More tourism into Seymour such as using the river”.

2. Responses to the question: “Do you have any suggestions for attracting business investment to Seymour?”

Chart 39. Suggestions for attracting business investment



Businesses suggested four main initiatives that would attract business investment:

1. Improve local government services and incentives: 44%
2. Improve Seymour's image: 27%
3. Develop housing industrial land: 26%
4. Improve local facilities/services: 19%

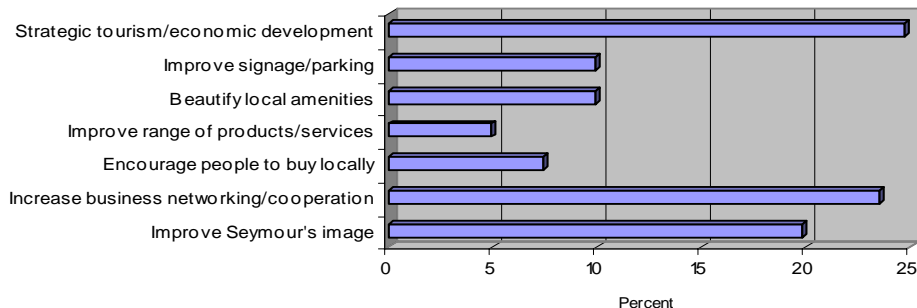
- Businesses from the education, building and construction and retail sectors most often indicated that improving local government services and incentives would attract business investment.
- Businesses from the retail and accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector most often indicated that improving Seymour's image would attract business investment.

Quotes

- “Shire to attract companies here with subsidised land/rates. Look at Melton an example of an area which has attracted business development”.
- “Shire should be proactive with businesses in Shire to established services (sic) i.e. booklet for new landowners listing all businesses/services specific to small land owners”.
- “Upgrade Emily Street to make all Seymour's entrances more attractive”.
- “Beautify entrance to town”.

3. Responses to the question: “Do you have any ideas for improving business activity in Seymour?”

Chart 40. Suggestions for improving business activity



Businesses suggested three main initiatives that would improve business activity in Seymour:

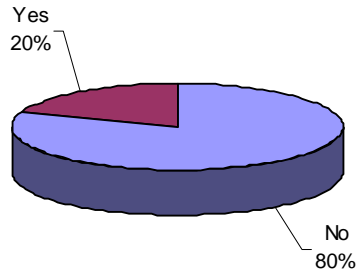
1. Strategic tourism/economic development: 25%
 2. Increase business networking/cooperation: 24%
 3. Improve Seymour's image: 20%
- Businesses from the property and business services, communication and agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors most often indicated that strategic tourism and economic development would improve business activity in Seymour.
 - Businesses from personal and other services, property and business services and sport and recreation most often indicated that increasing business networking and co-operation would improve business activity in Seymour.

Quotes

- “Business marketing strategy for local business & networking”.
- “Improved business networking (formal & informal)”.
- “Promote Seymour’s prime location for tourism & access to Melbourne, Shepparton & Bendigo”.
- “Chamber of Commerce would be useful for business network, like the business breakfast Richard Malouf used to arrange (not the tourism focus)”.
- “More community involvement in business and tourism”.
- “Links between Seymour We Want, Neighbourhood Renewal & Business and Tourism groups”.

Red Flag Issues

Respondents were asked if there were any issues of immediate and pressing concern that they wished to bring to the attention of the interviewer. Only 20% of respondents indicated that there were such issues. No businesses indicated that their issues required urgent attention.



Businesses nominated the following issues as “red flags” which have been recorded in their own words and categorised under broad headings as follows:

Signage:

- Business Signage at entrance to Industrial Estate
-industrial estate is not included in Town Maps or Location guide.
- Signage-advertising businesses within the estate, at entrance of estate.
It is recognised that other industrial estates are clearly identified by local signage.
This estate is not included on town maps.
- Business signage at entrance to industrial site.
Industrial site not included in maps or location guide.

Roads & Parking:

- Access road too narrow. An accident waiting to happen.
- Concern about traffic from KFC exit into Tallarook Street - safety concern, not wide enough. Queue for Drive Thru can block the roadway.
- Access road too narrow. An accident waiting to happen.
- Road up keep essential for business access.
- Car park at rear needs to be re-configured to maximise parking availability.

Seymour’s Image & Development:

- Poor entrance to town - need to beautify Emily St urgently, police stopping vehicles outside businesses in Emily St.
- Improved attitude of all persons within the community especially shire towards Seymour development.
- Concerns about the future of the retail area. How will Seymour continue to expand in the central business district?
- Local support for buying goods that are difficult to achieve.

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Business Concerns:

- Need to be sent paperwork to inform on Seymour Business and Tourism.
- EBA changes in rates of pay and industry award changes.
- If going to expand, needs to be since is a market there for it (eg will Council support them).
- Local Government attitudes.
- Employment (recruiting & retaining).
- Their lack of business and financial knowledge going in, the number of competing food & beverage shops opening recently (and more coming).
- Uncertainty of Job Access agency benefits, spiralling costs involved, tax debts, financial advisory costs, local government fees, business draining personal savings account. Landlord is unwilling to assist with improvements to building which still needs doing in some areas.
- Shire involvement (in survey) concern that info given might get into the wrong hands-not prepared to give estimate on financial matters (increase/decrease).

Appendix 1

Full text of responses to questions:

1. What do you think could be done locally to allow your business to grow?
2. Do you have any suggestions for attracting business investment to Seymour?
3. Do you have any ideas for improving business activity in Seymour?

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Responses to the question: "What do you think could be done locally to allow your business to grow?"

Natural township growth.

Population Increase within Seymour.

Bus Service to Golf Club

Improved advertising targeting key areas that could need our service.

Promote Seymour through Shire activities eg Expo etc.

Nothing at the moment.

Promote leisure centre as a health provider to a more co-ordinated community interface.

Currently Seymour Neighbourhood Renewal, Seymour We Want, Shire Council, Mitchell Health all operate separately.

Rail Trail between Seymour & Alexandra (cyclists shop here on way to rail trails in North East

-a local rail trail will bring in more tourists/bike users).

Our business relating to gardens needs a strong support network led by the Shire to encourage gardening in a general sense throughout the town.

Need to encourage housing and business development to increase employment and population.

More marketing across the region.

More big events such as expo, Go Cart Championships which bring in more people.

More tourism into Seymour such as using the river.

Assistance to finance expansion of existing business.

Increased residential & commercial developments.

Increased population would bring more demand for computers.

local Government assistance to help low income families purchase a computer to support students at school.

Increase building development, population growth.

Shire attitude to encourage other business to Seymour could be improved-resulting growth in population and employment would increase demand for these products.

More small land holdings should be encouraged.

More advertising opportunities. Better signage to industrial estate.

Population growth.

Improved premises (bigger) has to be in right location for heavy vehicle access & ease.

Tourism. Melbourne & general travel within district.

More population. More industry.

Migration of people to Seymour area.

Growth relies on dress code of local business & social activities.

Laundry use increases droughts, dryer use increase during wet weather.

Increased business in Seymour would have 'flow on' effect.

Industry locally to be encouraged which will support population and create more demand for products & services.

Already planned expansion building out (replacing parking spots by entrance).

Increase business activity in Anzac Ave precinct.

Demand that Councillors adopt a policy of employing local contractors, tradesman & service providers instead of using "mates" of senior Mitchell Shire management who contribute nothing to the rates pool.

Continue to make Seymour an attractive & viable place to live.

Promotion of Seymour encouraging more people to shop here. Increase in population.

Improved industrial facilities. Improved public transport & services for public to access all services.

Fairer fuel price regulations. Safeway fuel is regularly 10c/L cheaper than other fuel stations in town.

More support and accessibility to local government planning and building departments.

Improved access to include reasonable timeline for application and more help in understanding flood or LSIO rulings and other overlays.

By perhaps helping with advertising throughout the area and also promoting the Seymour area as a possible area to visit.

Increase housing approvals-encouraging local builders to purchase locally.

Happy with size & output. Have expanded in past & have returned happy levels now.

All expanding will involve facility & equipment.

Increase locality to local businesses. General growth for more opportunities.

Natural township growth.

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More population.
Some improved business communications with similar business.
Population growth will cause increased need for fridge mechanics.
Population.
More home improvement.
Higher profile for Anzac Ave shops area. Something open Saturday afternoon or Sunday afternoon.
Expand residential areas in and around Seymour-to have more school age population.
Overall retail expansion-encourage retailers to understand their local market and how to benefit from doing business locally.
Listing of what skills and equipment are available locally for traders to access.
Promotion of Seymour to increase awareness of what it has to offer.
Depends on agriculture industry to grow and more industry in Seymour generally.
Government (local/ State/ etc) understanding and support, plenty of speaking the sympathetic rhetoric, but only ever take, take & take again.
Upgrade Emily Street entrance – VERY DRAB
Put herbs in Roundabouts (also colourful flowers).
Need to make towns entrance attractive to get people to stay here.
Attract more light industry.
Incentives from Shire-eg free promo of business-put on maps free or cheaply.
Need other business to locate here. Have more people –as this business relies on people.
Was on committee years ago to upgrade Emily Street but nothing got done.
Thinking of winding down, but would like to see Seymour expand.
We should have more contact with GMGT in Wallis Street and more careers work in local schools.
We would be willing to have students on workplacement here.
More local employment for a second income in family so there is more money to spend locally.
Expansion of housing and more families with children will increase need for school bus work.
More land for retail/ workshop space with good public access (prime area).
Shire could be less 'arbitrary' about planning- carpark spaces, garbage bin issues.
More promotion of business in Seymour i.e. Market Day for Seymour – wide publicity across region (refer to Business & Tourism Group).
Promote food & fashion in the expo situation with make up, jewellery etc.
More support to employer for apprentices.
Change bus route to come past Child Care Centre for after school programs. To expand would need more child care qualifications.
Increase in population.
Develop another retail area in Seymour i.e. Tallarook St (southside).
Turn residences in 'business area' into professional office space.
Shire could buy the few houses in Tallarook South for developments.
The mobile site should be cleaned up and re-developed .
Resolution of hospital dispute.
Let more development happen in Seymour to support major events which would use this equipment.
Shire supports for local companies in turfing.

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Responses to the question: "Do you have suggestions for attracting business investment to Seymour?"

Electric Rail System to link Seymour to Melbourne.

Promoting Lifestyle/ River access to Melbourne etc.

Need more housing land.

Assistance with planning approvals etc. so that it doesn't take so much time.

Open up more land for development. Water facilities to be improved to attract business.

Need more flexibility in Local Government. Local Government to assist business.

Upgrade Emily Street (to make sure all Seymour entrances more attractive).

More recreational activities (other than sport) eg Picture Theatre, upgrade parks (they need to be more Appealing). Need a rose garden.

Land sales.

Women's & teenage clothing/shoes shop. Men's shoes-especially large sizes eg School shoes.

Improvement to schools.

Improvement to parks-gardens especially with good management & leadership.

Finish Emily Street. Beautify entrance to town

Encourage/make local businesses to keep own front yard tidy.

Availability of land. Take opportunity to get other business into Seymour (don't) let them go outside our town when they are looking to locate in our area –provide incentives.

More housing- more residential areas to be development.

More population would create need for more goods and services.

Bigger industry –access to water, rail & road here would be beneficial for someone to relocate.

Needs Shire to provide cheap rates and land-incentive for development of industry and housing.

Business investment relates directly to pay packets. Get the mix right i.e. Jobs with real wages not just pensions and your community thrives. We need a shire willing to promote our assets – water – power – trains, etc to bring

Industry and jobs/ pay packets to Seymour.

Shire incentives to relocate to Seymour cheaper rates, water, land, etc.

Shire to attract companies here with subsidised land/rates.

Look at Melton an example of area which has attracted business development.

Shire should encourage more businesses into Seymour, more light industry.

Shire should offer incentives to bring light industry to Seymour area.

Also, encourage more housing to be developed in small acreages.

More residential & commercial development has a 'flow on' effect for other goods & services.

More office space is needed in Seymour-maybe support for development from shire would help.

Government incentives to make relocation/ investment worthwhile.

General appearance of town-poor first impression of Seymour via Emily Street or Anzac Ave- should be Dramatically improved.

Shire should be pro-active with businesses in Shire to established services i.e. booklet for new landowners listing

All business/service specific to small land owners (as in Strathbogie shire).

Improved community attitude.

Promotion of living in country areas particularly retired, etc. Promote advantages & dispel myths.

Land availability & housing options.

Council restrictions. More diverse business needed.

Promotion in surrounding area at why Seymour is a great place to invest.

Promote lifestyle/ housing advantages.

Council to be more proactive more quickly when investors are interested, we need to move on it Infrastructure for new housing, etc.

Whatever the Shire can do to make it easy for business to be attracted to Seymour.

Beautify Seymour-improve entry to Seymour via Emily Street & Anzac Ave.

Encourage business to improve premises.

Needs light industry (like Nestle') in Seymour to provide more jobs.

Promotion by Shire to attract major industry-"free rates" for some years, industrial land at reasonable price.

Major highway, rail limit Mongaloro airport, water are major assets to promote Seymour.

Rent assistance for business to establish and settle in-say for first 6 months.

Improve entrances to Seymour from Yeas (GV Highway/ Anzac Ave) and Emily St(both directions).

Increase personal pride in local residents (are there health regulations about shoppers barefoot in stores?).

To increase investment potential in Seymour, we firstly need to increase population and create demand.

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Make it known that the Shire policy is to help business & thereby encourage business to come here, not like at present where any new comer is bombarded with inspectors, regulations, permits, recent By laws & red tape.
Local government assistance and flexibility.
Improve image of town.
Outside perspective is that Seymour is not a nice place to live-so why set up a business there.
Promotion of our location & attributes.
A more helpful local government planning development, able to help and give timely answers to planning Submission.
By keeping the business competitive with Melbourne stores which encourage people to shop locally.
More flexibility with permits.
Speedy approvals of permits.
More population will attract more business.
Lack of incentives to attract business to Seymour.
Electric rail system to link Seymour/ Melbourne. General rail improvements.
Strategic consideration to retail precinct of Seymour (redeveloping + expansion).
Shire attitude.
Promoting lifestyle (river, access to Melbourne).
More incentives to attract investment potential.
More industry in Seymour to provide jobs.
Good infrastructure, transport, training for workforce. Local, state & federal government support.
Better information on the nature of the community, gaps in the market and Council marketing, the advantages to Industry(accessible by rail, road, lifestyle opportunities)
Optimism in community & shire. Improved Shire support to new development
Government assistance to decentralise or develop industry into regional area. Local/ State/ Federal government.
More aggressive pursuit via shire & a community group to promote Seymour.
Promote the location of rail services/ transport, available work force, water, natural gas, mail centre, Centrelink/ Job access agencies etc.
Promote the river. Better promotion of area as we did not know anything about Seymour before buying here.

Incentive programs to set up new business - eg rates. Availability of land & buildings
Time taken to approve plans - too long (heard from others, not personal experience).

Cheap/ free land offered to suitable business
Bernie gave example of what Wodonga had done when here was there & it progressed much more than Albury at the time. Get industry/ business here- that brings people.
Shire needs to be more proactive in allowing big business to come and develop.
Council involvement- too much red tape.
Help to establish business.
Attract people to town- even if they work elsewhere.
Sub divisions should be easier to develop- less red tape.
Council should do more to alleviate costs of services.
Town entrances need to be UPGRADED to encourage people to come into town, fix Emily Street
Sell town as a town for people to live in. Need to get pride in the town.
Need things to keep people in Seymour eg movies, bowling. People go to Bendigo or Shepparton for Entertainment and then they shop. Suggest "shows" to Community complex
A book store - record store that caters for older people.
Provide good infrastructure to be attractive to new business, perhaps for small manufacturer to relocate from Northern suburbs to Seymour.
Shire could facilitate permits etc for interested businesses.
Apply employment targets (say 20 employees within 3 years penalty applies).
Rearrange look of the town- improve the amenity of the town.
Maybe limit number of certain businesses such as cafes.
Provide incentives for businesses to move to Seymour.
Shire make it easy for new industries to come to Seymour to provide employment.
Shire could provide lower rates, low rentals, free water access to entice more business to this region.
No more video shops!
Subsidy to establish light industry. Fast tracks permits for businesses
Key to growth is to do your business well.

Business Retention & Expansion Program Report: City of Seymour

Something like a MacDonald's would bring more traffic into Seymour.
Shire should advertise Seymour as a great place to be- only an hour from other big towns (for permanent Residents as well- attract tradesman-business etc).
Shire should employ local tradesmen/ women for their works.
Availability of houses.
Promote the accessibility to Melbourne (of this town).
Activities for young people.
More housing development would mean more work although currently enough contracts at Puckapunyal for 2 years.
Shire needs to promote Seymour- one of the best riversides parks here are not promoted.
Lions parks & walking track need promoting- extend walking track.
Build on the advantage we have with river.
Incentives to get business to town. Make it easier to get things done-permits etc take too long.
Provide subsidised land and rate concessions to entice business.
Clean up (mobile site) and put up new fencing, sell as factory allotments - advertise in Melbourne.
Real estate agents are asked for available rental space- liaise with local Real Estate agents.
Promote access to Melbourne.
Promote Goulburn River and lifestyle of area.
Promote Seymour as heart of Victoria- central to Shepparton, Bendigo, northeast.
Powder coating for poles, plastic welder not available outside of Melbourne- maybe an opening for that in this Area.
Increase stable population base. Encourage local loyalty.
Condense shops into smaller area- for ease of access.
Improving parking access for all area.

Business Retention & Expansion Program Report: City of Seymour

Responses to the question: "Do you have any ideas for improving business activity in Seymour?"

Tourism, Trawool etc, Rail, River Entrance/ Exit. Avenue [Beautification].
More co-operation between businesses in Seymour.

Business people need to be more active within their own business to encourage people to shop locally.
More extensive products-stores need to be more inviting to customers, special activities etc.
Encourage business to work together to encourage people to shop in Seymour.

Encourage business to participate in self improvement programs.

Shire to keep up to date list of businesses-address & ph numbers.

Cinema-Public Hall (with a floor that suits). Any indoor activity.

Town planning-should allow for future growth-re design the roadway entrances & exits in and around Safeway & Bi-Lo car parks (at present it is well organised chaos).

Urgently update William St & footpath with plans for underground power lines etc and drainage.

Rebuild toilet block in Safeway carpark BUT not as close to William Street.

Find some way to utilise the river.

Finish river walk (currently have to walk back the same way or crawl under fence to roadway).

Easier to get people here if we have things for them to do on a regular basis.

Shire Web page could include directory of products & services across the Shire.

Better communication between groups, support cross promotion, recognising volunteers (such as sporting groups).

Business activity will only increase with a vibrant shopping precinct.

Encourage people to the shopping areas, make it appealing to outsiders and let the shop keepers do their thing.

Seymour We Want and local tourist promotion to continue.

Shire to encourage more jobs for Seymour and more housing.

Upgrade motels in the area.

Promotion of Puckapunyal will benefit Seymour of former soldiers return for events (reunion).

Railway Heritage to be promoted to bring railway people here.

Put a limit on government owned housing in Seymour.

The duplication of Coles etc in south of shire will impact on shopping in Seymour.

Look at how to improve attractiveness of Seymour-look at main street in Albury for example of planting.

Business along Emily street and Anzac Ave should improve appearance.

Entries into Seymour are 'pathetic'.

Programs to keep students at school-less truancy.

Encourage small acreage development.

Entice industry to Seymour.

General population growth.

Advertise Seymour like Shepparton does.

Improved physical presentation of business. Taking of strategic risks

Business marketing strategy for local business & networking. Improved information of activities for business.

Local suppliers should work together rather than treat as competition (eg if doesn't have a part refer on, approach local competitor to purchase.

More community spirit at Christmas time among business.

Book mark for Seymour & Surround need to be a map and bright (more appealing).

More visitor signposts from Emily Street (eg walking trail/Lions park) and Anzac Ave.

Shop in Seymour campaign.

Improve business network.

Seek to replace the Councillors who are made to feel important by the CEO & who are ready to do the bidding of the CEO & to ensure that Councillors are in place to see that the wishes of the ratepayers are carried out or At least considered. The removal of the present CEO DICTATOR would be a start.

Enable those rural zones on town boundaries to be relaxed to cater for the outside demand for 2,5,10,40 acres.

Loyalty schemes for customers.

traders markets/ annual promotion of local traders with discounts & giveaways.

Improved business networking & attitude.

Keep improving community facilities and road/ rail access. Beautification of entrances & exits for first Impressions of visitors.

Business Retention & Expansion Program Report: City of Seymour

Reduce rent to encourage new businesses to fill empty shops.
Keep town tidy.
Improved business networking formal & informal.
Seymour needs more business minded people, particularly in business community.
A lot of local community people do not have customer commitment and/or value in importance of this.
Tourism, Trawool etc, river, rail entrance/ exit avenue.
Continued improvement in attitude within business and the community.
Get business working together.
More signs advising of business.
Shire could provide incentive for Business/ industry to come here.
Registry of skills & equipment-what capabilities are in the local area (look at Latrobe Valley directory from years ago)
Shop in Seymour campaign
Change of attitude. Promotion of self.
Promote locals to buy local.
Not enough people to organise events-eg music festival.
Young people main ones who spend money - not a lot for them. Business people need to be involved.
Free tip tickets (a couple each year). Free recycle of green waste.
Find out why we can't do things & change. Plenty of volunteers ready to help.
Signage to say "this is not Seymour Central" as people driving through town think that Emily Street is all we've got.
Council meetings to be rotated through towns in Shire.
Town identity to be established. Find something to promote like other place. Eg Beechworth Bakery.
More big community events- things going on all the time eg Castlemaine has lots of Art shows, events etc.
Expand small shows like Tastes of Goulburn.
Puckapunyal needs more people, as used to be, get more business from them.
Shire could prepare a brochure to promote bringing business to Seymour, can target specific areas for long term employment prospect.
Promote Seymour's prime location for tourism & access to Melbourne, Shepparton & Bendigo.
Railway Heritage centre needs more signage.
Brochure of local attractions to be available widely.
Improve appearance of entry to Seymour on Emily Street and Anzac Ave from Yea.
Support 'tidy towns' clean up in public areas.
Chamber of Commerce would be useful for business network, like the business breakfasts Richard Malouf Used to arrange (not the tourism focus).
A business idea for someone to take lunches around to business owners who work alone & can't leave the Premises for lunch time. Perhaps one of the cafes in Station Street area could offer the service.
Cap the number of certain kinds of shops i.e. video shops, cafes and hairdressers much like the pharmacists & newsagents restrict numbers.
Maybe a monthly 'market day' in Kings Park would bring more people into town to use local service.
Pedestrian access needs to be improved around video land area. Re- open old railway gates.
Relocate some of Shire workers into Seymour.
Develop access to Goulburn River.
Sign on Goulburn River bridge on entry from Melbourne- isn't it the biggest river in Victoria?
Rickshaws in Station Street to take visitors to river or other points of interest (like were used at Expo).
Beautify Emily Street entry to Seymour.
Welcome to Seymour message placed to train travellers on arrival. Tourist info available inside train station.
More community involvement in business and tourism
Links between Seymour We Want, Neighbourhood Renewal & Business and tourism groups
Emily St needs to be improved.
General population growth will bring activity.
Industries to attract quality trades people & other people with training in Specialised area.
A lot of our clients can't find experienced personnel to work for them.
Improve parking access.
Shire incentive to attract new business to Seymour- subsidy for rates or land.