

2012 CITY OF JOONDALUP BUSINESS STUDY REPORT



Small and
Medium
Enterprise
Research
Centre



**PROFESSOR BETH WALKER
AND
DR JANICE REDMOND**

Small & Medium Enterprise Research Centre (SMERC)

Telephone: (08) 6304 5282 | Fax: (08) 6304 5988

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KEY OBSERVATIONS

Why did people choose Joondalup as their business location? The data tells us that Joondalup was chosen as the preferred business location because it was close to the home of the owner and accessible for staff. Not only did they like the look of the area, they also perceived it to be a growing area. People started their businesses from scratch rather than buying an existing business and space availability was a prime motivator. Location in terms of road systems was significant because of access to banks and other commercial services and the City is therefore considered to offer a complete business hub. Closeness to customers as opposed to closeness to suppliers was also important.

Of less importance was the price of land or rental at the time of locating. However council rates are of some concern as is the lack of room for expansion.

There was no real consensus on whether the City was promoted well as a place to do business and there were some strong views, both negative and positive, about traffic, parking and signage.

Overall most of the survey respondents appear to be reasonably happy operating their businesses within the City of Joondalup. Some individual comments were made in the open section of the survey that pointed to areas in need of improvement, but many of these comments were from an individual perspective, rather than being a collective trend.

Nearly half (41%) of the business owners were over 50 years of age, and whereas succession planning was not canvassed, it would be reasonable to assume that there is likely to be a significant change of ownership in many businesses over the coming years. This is an area where the City could potentially help facilitate a successful transition for business owners.

The vast majority of respondents (82%) lease their business premises while only 18% are owned. This is a very high percentage of leasing, and is likely due to the high number of retail outlets that participated in the study. Retail is currently a very volatile sector and the growth in online shopping is forcing retailers to reposition themselves in order to withstand this change in consumer buying practices.

Leasing also means that these businesses owners have less control over their premises and cannot do the same things as those who own their premises, such as energy efficient alterations involving a change of air conditioners or other high energy use equipment. If community-based change is required, the engagement of both business owners and property owners will be needed.

The combination of a high number of leased premises, volatility in rent prices and an uncertain global economic situation creates the potential for businesses to rethink their strategies, such as moving out of Joondalup in search of cheaper accommodation.

With regard to environmental practices, 67% of respondents are already using energy-saving practices meaning that 33%, or one third, of all businesses within the City are not engaging in any cost-saving strategies via energy reduction. Education programs in this area may help these businesses to reduce their costs and simultaneously help the environment.

The difference in annual turnovers indicates that there is a broad range of business activity in the area, with some businesses having high turnover and some average turnover. Home-based businesses, widely accepted as generating small turnovers, were not represented in this study however the City may wish to investigate this cohort further, given that they account for over half of all registered businesses nationally.

Most of the respondents conduct some business online albeit traditional activities such ordering, banking and advertising. It is interesting to note the rising use of social media, with 35% using Facebook and 8% using Twitter. This is another activity that the City may wish to consider as a way to connect to its business community.

Only 10% of the businesses surveyed employ apprentices and 16% employ trainees. This relatively low rate of employing apprentices and trainees is likely due to the small number of light manufacturing and trade-related businesses within the City, which is where many apprentices and trainees are traditionally absorbed.

Respondents advised that half their staff working within the City of Joondalup live within a 10-minute drive of their workplace. Regardless of this, the vast majority (93%) drive to work and also drive as the sole occupant of their car (87%). This presents an opportunity for the City to promote different modes of transport, such as public transport or alternatives such as cycling and walking, given that so many live locally.

Nearly a third of respondents were not aware of the security patrols, yet in another question, over half thought they were effective. A high number of businesses reported having been victims of crime in the previous 12 months making it an issue for local businesses. Some interesting suggestions were forthcoming on how to combat the problem, but the main ones included more patrols/security/police, better lighting and tougher penalties.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The importance of small business to all economies is well documented¹. In Australia, small businesses (defined as businesses with less than 20 employees) account for 96% of all businesses, employ 3.7 million people or 46% of the private, non-agricultural sector workforce² and generate an estimated 39% of Australia's economic production³. Their continued success in generating economic wealth at both a local and national level, and as the key provider of local employment is therefore vital. However, they may not be able to achieve this alone. As Lewis et al⁴ state, "the successful provision of business assistance has come to be viewed as imperative in terms of advancing the fortunes of the small business sector and in contributing to economic growth". Given the significance of the small business sector, access to demographic information and understanding the business community's needs are important, as this can help to identify areas where assistance is required.

In this study, the majority of businesses surveyed were small businesses. However there were some that employed more than 20 employees in a full time or a combination of full time, part-time and casual capacities.

OBJECTIVES

The City of Joondalup is in the fast growing northwest corridor of Perth and is changing and evolving rapidly. There are over 13,400 registered businesses in the area. The outcomes of this research will provide the City of Joondalup with valuable insights into local businesses in order to better understand their needs and in particular, their responses to the services the City provides. It identifies key economic and social issues that are currently affecting small businesses and can inform future policy and effective support programs to assist with continued economic development in the precinct.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The City of Joondalup is home to 13,400 registered businesses which was the targeted sample. A research design involving both quantitative and qualitative methods was used⁵, with the first phase involving a survey and the second phase involving two focus group discussions to further probe key issues.

DATA COLLECTION

Phase One

The quantitative data collection phase of this research project was conducted concurrently via two methods; one being an online survey and the other, a hand-delivered paper-based survey. The use of two concurrent methods sought to overcome the low response rate to

survey participation usually experienced from small and medium enterprises, whilst also exposing the survey to as many businesses as possible within the targeted area.

Prior to commencing the data collection, the City of Joondalup placed a series of press releases in the local newspapers inviting local businesses to participate in the research. The releases briefly outlined the aims and significance of the research, informed business owners of the impending survey drop and provided a link to the online survey.

The link to the online survey was also sent electronically to the City's database of businesses and was live for a period of two months. Despite the potential to reach a significant number of businesses, the link was accessed only 125 times during those two months. Of these 125 potential respondents, the online survey was commenced on 27 occasions but only completed eight times, accounting for 3.7% of the total data collection.

The second means of data collection involved hand delivery of paper-based surveys in an attempt to boost response rates. This commenced after the online survey had been live for four weeks. Over a period of three weeks the research team visited businesses in selected areas within the City of Joondalup and handed the survey to business owners. The areas were selected in conjunction with the City of Joondalup to provide a cross section of businesses operating within the City's boundaries and included two major shopping centres, the Winton Road Business Centre and several smaller shopping and professional business centres. A total of 1,160 surveys were hand delivered and resulted in 221 responses being received. After removing 13 responses which were not completed, a total of 208 usable surveys remained, representing an 18% response rate.

Together with the eight responses from the online survey, a total of 216 responses were received from both data collection methods. Whereas this is not a large number of responses, it does demonstrate that business owners are reluctant to participate in this type of community activity, despite the fact that anecdotally, some are quite vocal regarding the perceived lack of business services in the area.

Even though business owners were advised that filling in the survey gave them the opportunity to have a say in local business matters, many simply declined to return the survey. As participation in the survey was voluntary and no individual or business was identifiable, business owners who had no particular opinion on the issues canvassed may not have felt the need to complete the survey. Conversely, business owners or managers who did have an opinion about a specific issue/s were more inclined to participate. This means that there may be some inherent bias in the sample, similar to participation in any voluntary activity.

Phase Two of the study involved conducting two focus groups to further probe the key issues identified in the analyses of results from Phase One. An interview protocol was

developed, again in consultation with key personnel from the City of Joondalup. The information from the focus groups has been absorbed into the key observations and a summary of the discussions is presented at the end of the main report.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was completed using quantitative and qualitative techniques. Survey data from Phase One was analysed using PASW software⁶ and a combination of quantitative techniques involving descriptive statistical analyses are presented in this report.

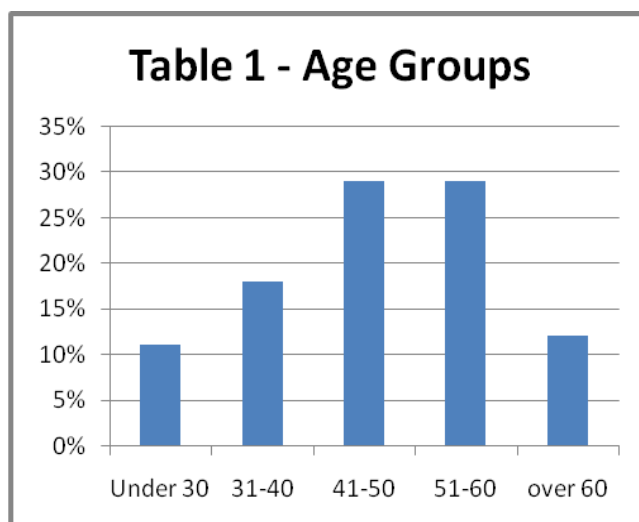
Data from the Phase Two focus group interview transcripts was analysed using deductive and inductive procedures to categorise and identify key themes and significant issues⁷. This dual process provides a rich source of information. Using this procedure has provided a comprehensive overview of both the nature and dynamics of businesses within the City.

RESULTS

Key outcomes for the City of Joondalup from this research will be increased knowledge and understanding of businesses with regard to their:

- a) Demographic information
- b) Requirements for assistance
- c) Degree of satisfaction with the City of Joondalup services

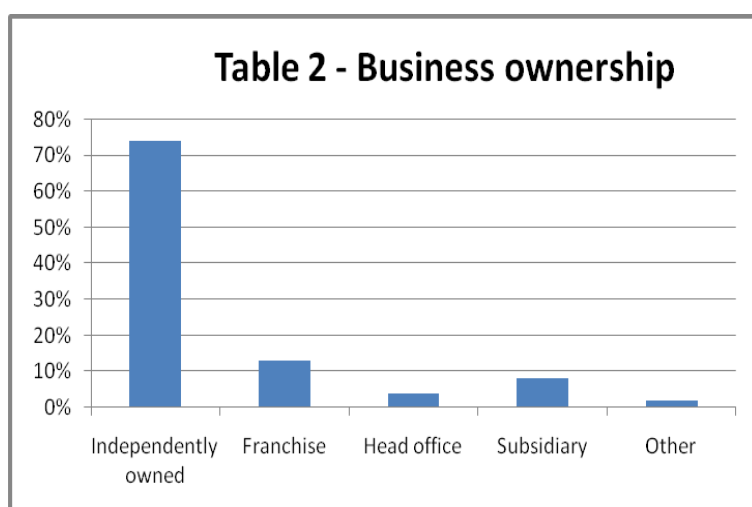
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION



Three demographic questions were asked in the questionnaire: the gender, age and postcode of the respondents. The respondents who completed the survey were almost equally divided between males (49%) and females (51%). Age-related data (see Table 1) show that few respondents were aged under 30 years (11%). The biggest age group was between 31-50 years at 48%. 29% of respondents were aged over 50 years, with 12% of the remaining respondents

aged over 60 years. These business owners, like the rest of the 'baby boomer' generation, are approaching retirement age. Whereas succession planning was not canvassed, it would be reasonable to assume that there is likely to be a significant change of ownership in many businesses over the next ten years and the City could potentially assist business owners in this area to make a successful transition.

THE BUSINESS ENTITY



The vast majority of businesses surveyed were independently owned (74%), with the next most common type of entity being a franchise (13%). See Table 2. The remaining 13% was made up of head office companies and subsidiaries or branches. Most respondents (82%) lease their business premises while only 18% are owned. This high percentage of

leasing is likely due to the high number of retail outlets that participated. It also means that the owners of these businesses have less control over their premises and are unable to do the things that business owners who own their premises can, such as making energy-efficient alterations by for example, changing air conditioners or other high energy use equipment.

With regard to the types of businesses, there was a broad spread across all ANZSIC categories with the biggest group being retail (31%). See Table 3 below.

Industry (according to ANZSIC codes)	Percentage
Accommodation + food	4
Admin	2
Arts & Recreation	2
Construction	5
Financial	3
Health	12
ICT	1
Manufacturing	6
Other	13
Public admin	1
Professional services	13
Real estate	5
Retail	31
Wholesale	2

Table 3: Range of businesses according to ANZSIC codes

In terms of the number of years in operation, 28% have been in business for 6-10 years; 26% for 11-20 years and 21% for 21 years or more. Only 13% of respondents have been operating for 3-5 years and 12% for 0-2 years, indicating that a large majority of businesses

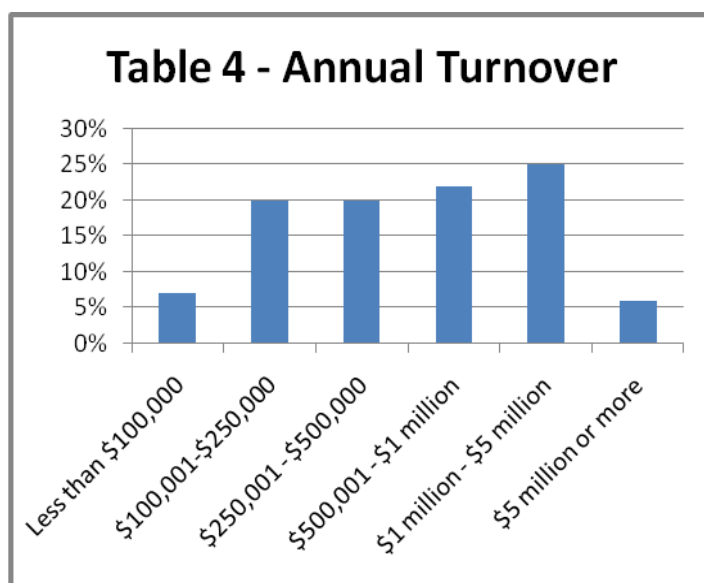
(75%) have been in operation for over 6 years. 79% of businesses surveyed have only ever been located in the City of Joondalup, while for 21% of respondents, this was not the case.

56% of the respondents indicated that they employ between 0 and 2 full-time staff members, 24% employ between 3 and 5 full-time staff, 11% between 6 and 10 full-time staff with the remaining 9% of businesses employing 11 or more full time staff members. This trend was mirrored for part-time employees with 78% of respondents employing between 0 and 2 part-time staff members, 14% between 3 and 5, 4% between 6 and 10 and 3% employing 11 or more part time staff members. Only 1% of businesses employed no part-time staff at all.

Casual employees reflect similar ratios with 73% of businesses surveyed employing between 0 and 2 casual staff members, 13% between 3 and 5 and 6% employing 6-10 casual employees. 1% of respondents employ no casual staff. At the other end of the scale, 7% employ 11 or more casuals.

Overall most of the respondent businesses within the City of Joondalup boundaries are micro businesses, that is they employ less than 5 people. There was a mix of permanent, full-time, part-time and casual employment, meaning that there are various employment options available in the area.

Annual turnover of businesses surveyed (see Table 4) indicated fairly consistent groupings across the majority of categories. 20% reported an annual turnover of \$100,001 - \$250,000 with the same proportion (20%) generating between \$250,001 - \$500,000 turnover annually. 22% was comprised of businesses with a turnover of between \$500,001 and \$1 million and 25%, between \$1 million and \$5 million per annum.



Of the remaining 13%, 6% achieve a turnover of over \$5 million while 7% generate a turnover of less than \$100,000 per annum. The spread of annual turnovers indicates that there is a broad range of business activity in the area, with some businesses having high turnovers and others, average turnovers. Home-based businesses, widely acknowledged to generate small turnovers, were not well represented in this sample and the City may wish to investigate this cohort further, given that they account for over half of all registered businesses nationally.

Almost half the respondents reported that their suppliers (46%) are predominantly located in the Perth metro area while for 22% the majority of suppliers are in the eastern states. Of

the remaining 32%, 12% of businesses use suppliers located mainly in wider WA, for 7% their suppliers are predominantly in the City of Joondalup and for 5% of businesses they are mainly located overseas. 7% of respondents were unsure.

Of the businesses surveyed, nearly half (44%) indicated that the majority of their customers are located within the City of Joondalup. This makes the City very much a localised business hub. For 34%, their customers are predominantly from the Perth metro area while 16% of businesses supply customers mostly located in wider WA. 4% supply customers predominantly located in the eastern states and 1% predominantly exports their products and/or services. The vast majority of businesses (92%) do not export any products or services.

Of the 8% that do export some of their products, the main market/s for the responding businesses include Australia, India, South America, Japan, Asia Pacific, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, UK and the USA. The percentage of product exported varied in increments of 5% - 100%.

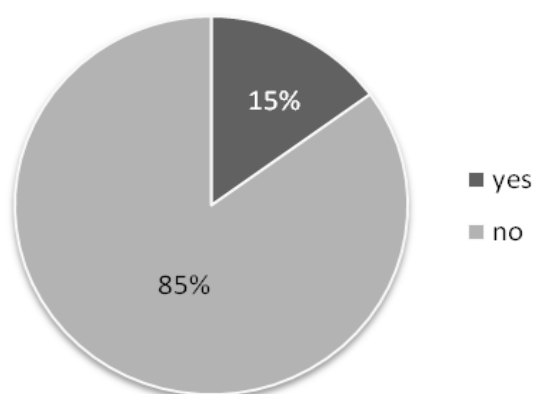
Respondents were asked whether they intend to utilise the National Broadband Network (NBN). Responses indicated that 54% were undecided, 31% answered in the affirmative and 15% said no. Respondents were also asked if they conducted specific business activities online. Online ordering is used by 59% of respondents, online banking by 72% and online booking facilities by 31% of respondents. 84% use email, 35% use Facebook and 8% use Twitter. Other online activities comprised client tutoring services, data entry, intranet, LinkedIn, lodging application with lenders, marketing, research forums, blogging, online database, promotions, research suppliers, Skype, specialist software, tax and accounting software, taxation lodgement, webinars, and demonstrations and websites

Having a balance of businesses with regard to size (by turnover and staff numbers) and activity keeps an area vibrant and this appears to be the case in Joondalup. An added advantage to this situation is that having bigger, successful businesses in an area can encourage smaller businesses to grow, and this in turn can lead to more localised business-to-business activity.

STAFF, RECRUITMENT, VACANCIES AND TRAINING

Respondents advised that half their staff working within the City of Joondalup live within a 10-minute drive of their place of work. Regardless of where they live, the vast majority (93%) drive to work and drive as the sole occupant of their car (87%). There may be some opportunity here

Table 5 - Staff Vacancies



for the City to promote different modes of transport, such as public transport or healthy alternatives such as cycling and walking, given that so many live locally. Another reason that the owners chose to locate their businesses in Joondalup was the adequacy of footpaths and cycle paths.

Respondents were asked if they currently have any staff vacancies. See Table 5. The majority (85%) reported no vacancies. Of the 15%

that did have staff vacancies, 9% had a single vacancy, 3% had two, 2% had three, and the remaining 1% had between five and ten staff vacancies.

When asked whether they were experiencing difficulty filling vacancies in particular areas, most replied no. Those who are experiencing difficulty listed occupations including part-time accountants, duct installers, food prep/customer service, junior hairdressers, labourers, marketing, nutrition, occupational therapists, qualified chefs, sales consultants, sales staff, systems analysts, good managers, electricians and labourers.

Respondents were asked how difficult it is to recruit staff to work in the City of Joondalup. Responses varied from “easy” and “fairly easy” to “impossible” and “hard to find good staff” in more-or-less consistent proportions. The predominant response to “are there any specific local training programs to help fill vacancies?” was “no” at 89%. The majority of respondents (90%) also indicated that “specific training needs could not be developed locally”. The 10% of respondents who felt that “specific training needs could be developed locally” listed among others, business development and customer service courses, as well as dog grooming, waitressing and interior design.

Only 10% of businesses surveyed employ apprentices and 16% employ trainees. 7% of these businesses employ one trainee or apprentice, 8% employ two, 5% employ three, 0.5% employ four and 0.5% employ six. When asked in which areas apprentices and trainees are employed, responses varied consistently across a broad range of occupations including accounting, beauty therapy, electrical, hairdressing and jewellery manufacture to mechanical, retail staff, vet nursing and floristry. This relatively low rate of apprentices or trainees is likely due to the low number of light manufacturing or trade-related industries within the City, which is where many apprentices and trainees are absorbed.

It should be noted that recruitment and training are relatively individual business activities and may vary significantly from specialist to more generic requirements depending on the

individual business. The survey did not examine how much businesses spend on training or how much they allocated to recruitment. Previous studies indicate that many small businesses do not have a fixed training budget, so businesses who wish to recruit trained staff are frequently not prepared to invest in any training of their own staff.

BUSINESS PLANS AND SPEND ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Respondents were asked about their plans for expansion or down-sizing within the next year. 61% responded that they were staying the same while 35% had plans for expansion and 4% for down-sizing.

The vast majority of businesses surveyed (84%) do not conduct any research and development (R&D). Of the remaining 16% who do, 5% of these companies (representing the majority) use between 0 and 5% of their turnover on R&D. Other respondents spent anywhere between 6 and 60% of their turnover on R&D.

BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

With regard to environmental programs and practices, 62% of respondents said that they would participate in such a program specific to their industry and 67% of respondents are already using energy-saving practices. The converse applies to the remaining 38% and 33% respectively (i.e. they would not participate in an environmental program and do not currently practice energy-saving strategies). This means that more than a third of all responding businesses within the City are not engaging in any cost saving strategies via energy reduction. Education programs may help these businesses reduce their costs and simultaneously help the environment.

BUSINESS SERVICES WITHIN CITY OF JOONDALUP

When asked if there were sufficient avenues to support business in advocacy and representation to local and state government, responses were fairly evenly divided between “yes” (39%), “no” (33%) and “don’t know” (28%).

The majority of businesses (80%) are not members of the Joondalup Business Association, the Wanneroo Business Association (98%) or the Stirling Business Association (99%), and none of the respondents are members of the Swan Chamber of Commerce. Only 14% of businesses surveyed are members of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI). Membership of other business associations included ARA, WANA, VANA, ANF, CPA, IPA, Tourism Council WA, MTAA, NECA and the Maylands Business Association in negligible percentages. These membership percentages are common as the majority of business owners do not join voluntary associations.

Respondents were asked if they would use specific services if available in the area. 83% said “no” to online recruitment; 95% said “no” to international trade; 92% said “no” to migration services and 71% said “no” to business training. Of those who replied “yes” to using any of the above services, 24% would access that service/s annually; 20% monthly and 4% would do so weekly. These numbers would suggest that there is no appetite within the business community for any additional business advisory services to be located within the City.

SERVICES WITHIN THE CITY OF JOONDALUP

Respondents were asked to rate a number of services and facilities currently provided by the City of Joondalup. Their responses were plotted according to a 6-point Likert scale ranging from “very poor” to “excellent”.

STREET LIGHTS

When asked to rate the standard of street lights near their business, 37% gave a “good” rating, 34% said “average”, 11% said “very good”, while 10% gave a “poor” rating. At the opposite extremes 4% of respondents gave street lighting near their business a “very poor” rating and 6% said it was “excellent”.

FOOTPATHS

The standard of footpaths was rated by 38% of respondents as “good”, 34% as average, 16% as “very good”, 7% as “excellent”, 4% as “poor” and 1% as “very poor”.

SIGNAGE

Almost half the respondents (42%) rated the signage near their business as “good”. 28% regarded the signage as average and 13% described it as “very good”. The remaining 17% of respondents were divided into “very poor” (4%), “poor” (9%) and excellent (3%).

STREETSCAPING

Streetscaping was regarded as “average” by 32% of businesses in the City of Joondalup and by 28% as “good”. The remaining responses were spread across the other rating scales in similar proportions as for the above.

Overall the four services canvassed were thought to be reasonably effective. However the written comments included numerous complaints from individual businesses about not being able to put out advertising signage. Despite the City’s consistent approach to this, many of the businesses were nevertheless unhappy about it, particularly retailers, who as previously mentioned, are struggling in the current economic climate.

SECURITY AND CRIME

Respondents were asked if they were aware of the Joondalup security patrols. 71% said “yes” and 29% said “no”. When asked if they thought the security patrols were effective, 54% replied “yes”, while 32% said “no” and 14% “didn’t know”. A large proportion of

businesses (42%) indicated that they had been the target of criminal activity within the past 12 months.

It is interesting to note that nearly a third of respondents were not aware of the security patrols, yet over half thought they were effective. In addition there was a high number of businesses that had been the victim of criminal activity and this would appear to be an issue for local businesses.

WHY ARE BUSINESSES LOCATED IN JOONDALUP?

The businesses surveyed were asked why they chose the City of Joondalup as their business location in a multiple-choice style question with 6-point Likert-scale responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Responses are outlined below for each question.

PROXIMITY TO SUPPLIERS

34% of respondents strongly agreed while 22% disagreed and 21% slightly disagreed. The remaining 23% responded with “slightly agree” (15%), “agree” (6%) and “strongly agree” (2%).

CLOSE TO CUSTOMERS

The majority of respondents (74%) fell into the “slightly agree” (23%), “agree” (24%) and “strongly agree” (27%) categories. 26% of businesses did not choose Joondalup for its close location to customers.

CLOSE TO MAJOR ROADS

A similar trend was evident in responses to this question with 29% slightly agreeing, 33% agreeing and 22% strongly agreeing.

SPACE/LAND READILY AVAILABLE

Once again most respondents were at the “agree” end of the scale (63%). Of those who disagreed, 19% fell into the “slightly disagree” category.

CLOSE TO INDUSTRIAL AREAS

This question elicited a majority of responses (68%) at the “disagree” end of the scale spread across “strongly disagree” (22%), “disagree” (22%) and “slightly disagree” (24%). 21% of respondents slightly agreed.

PURCHASE/LEASE/RENTAL PRICES

Respondents were more or less evenly divided over purchase/lease/rental prices being the reason that they chose Joondalup for their business location. 16% strongly agreed, 14% disagreed and 22% strongly disagreed, while 21% slightly agreed and 8% strongly agreed.

GOOD INVESTMENT AREA

Once again data indicates a similar number of respondents agreed and disagreed with this statement. 47% fell into “disagree” categories and 53% into “agree” categories.

BOUGHT AN EXISTING BUSINESS

This was true for approximately half the respondents (51%).

POWER SUPPLIES ARE RELIABLE AND WELL MAINTAINED

57% of businesses surveyed agreed with this statement to one extent or another.

WELL PROMOTED AS A PLACE TO DO BUSINESS

Opinion was evenly divided over this question with 51% of respondents disagreeing and 49% agreeing that Joondalup is well promoted as a place to do business.

FEW TRAFFIC AND PARKING ISSUES

A similar trend was evident from these responses indicating that approximately half (48%) disagreed and 52% agreed.

ADEQUATE BROADBAND ACCESS

61% of businesses surveyed agreed that adequate broadband access was a factor in choosing Joondalup as their business location. 39% disagreed.

SUFFICIENT ACCESS TO BANKS AND OTHER COMMERCIAL SERVICES

The majority of respondents (71%) agreed with this statement indicating that this requirement is well met for businesses within the City of Joondalup.

COUNCIL RATES ARE REASONABLE

66% of respondents disagreed that council rates are reasonable for the services provided. 26% slightly agreed while 4% agreed and 4% strongly agreed.

ADEQUATE ROOM FOR EXPANSION

Most respondents (65%) did not agree that there is adequate room for expansion - 20% strongly disagreed, 20% disagreed and a further 25% slightly disagreed. 20% slightly agreed while the remainder either agreed (9%) or strongly agreed (6%).

CLOSE TO HOME

This question scored a 74% predominantly “agree” rating with 11% of the remainder only slightly disagreeing, illustrating that proximity to home is an important consideration for these business owners.

LIKE THE LOOK OF THE AREA

The aesthetics of the Joondalup precinct was a major drawcard for businesses in the area, 73% of whom located there for that reason. 18% of businesses slightly disagreed that they “liked the look of the area” while 8% disagreed or strongly agreed.

IT'S A GROWING AREA

Once again predominantly “agree” responses (71%) were given to growth of the area being a factor in business owners locating their businesses in the City of Joondalup.

ACCESSIBLE FOR STAFF

The overwhelming majority of businesses surveyed (82%) viewed this as an important reason for locating their business in Joondalup. Conversely, only 18% did not regard accessibility for staff as a consideration for locating their business in Joondalup.

CLOSE TO RETAIL OUTLETS

For 80% of businesses this was an incentive when it came to location.

ADEQUATE FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE PATHS

64% of respondents fell into “agree” categories while 36% fell into “disagree” categories in a less disparate trend than for the questions above.

SUMMARY

In summary, Joondalup was chosen as the preferred business location because it is close to home for the owner and accessible for staff. Not only did most like the look of the area, they perceived it to be a growing area. People started their businesses from scratch rather than buying an existing business because there is space available. The location in terms of road systems was significant and access to banks and other commercial services was an important consideration for business owners who view the City as a complete business hub. Closeness to customers as opposed to closeness to suppliers was also an important factor.

Of less importance was the price of land or rental at the time of locating. However council rates are of some concern as is the lack of room for expansion. There was no real consensus on whether the City was well promoted as a place to do business and strong views were expressed - both negative and positive - about traffic and parking.

Overall most of the respondents appear to be reasonably happy operating their businesses within the City of Joondalup. There were some individual comments made in the open section of the survey regarding areas of improvement, but many of these were from an individual perspective rather than a collective trend.

OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the quantitative comments from the surveys and the focus groups, the following are options that the City may like to consider:

- Communication appears to be an issue, with many business owners stating that they do not receive any business-specific correspondence from the City. This could be due to the current communication strategy which uses electronic media rather than the more traditional paper-based media and the City may wish to review this. Electronic media is only cost effective if it gets the message across. Many businesses stated that they were not only inundated with emails but only opened emails from sources they perceived as being reliable. One way to start building trust is to give businesses small but specific chunks of information on a regular basis, e.g. bi-monthly information on ways to reduce energy and water, information on the carbon tax and how it might affect small businesses and how to comply with planning requirements and regulations. It may also be possible to provide industry-specific information which could be flagged in some of the communications and placed on the Business Section of the City's webpage.
- It was mentioned that the City is not very "business-friendly" and is too bureaucratic, so the above improvement in communication may help to arrest this perception.
- There are some misconceptions about the respective responsibilities of the City, the state and private enterprise. For example, the high cost of rentals was frequently mentioned as a barrier to growth. In one of the focus groups the confusion over trading hours, special precinct status and double time pay on public holidays were also perceived as barriers to business growth. Clearly these issues are not within the City's control, yet they were raised in relation to what the City could do to assist local businesses. Communication about what the City can do for businesses and what is not within the realm of LGAs, might be a good way of breaking down these misconceptions.
- The predominance of retail presents both challenges and opportunities for the City. In today's climate, retail as currently conducted by most traders, is potentially a danger zone. There is unlikely to be significant growth if retailers do not adapt to current conditions and adopt new and innovative ways of doing business. One strategy is to assist businesses in the use of digital technology, particularly the development of a web presence, supplementing traditional retail outlets with online sales facilities. Assistance with innovation could also be developed, as well as ways to target and reach new markets and develop more capacity. The City may wish to consider partnering with other organisations to promote this to the wider business community.

- There is also an opportunity to develop different shopping experiences or clusters within the City. Given the high socio-economic demographic of the area, the possibility may exist to develop high-end shopping, such as a 'King Street North'. Taking into consideration the ageing demographic, there is also an opportunity to develop retail hubs that appeal to cashed up baby boomers with products such as motor homes and boats.
- The ageing population provides an opportunity for the growth and development of other business opportunities to cater for their changing needs and at the same time, there is a growing family demographic in the area. This initially identifies two potential industry clusters: health and education, both of which are already under consideration by the City. In terms of health, having allied health services readily available in the area will become important, such as those available from private consultants in West Perth and Cambridge Street. Synergies with health-related education and research currently conducted at Edith Cowan University could be explored.
- The Joondalup Learning Precinct could also be expanded in a more holistic way with the main anchor tenants (ECU, WCIT and the Police Academy) presenting as attractors for other education and training facilities or support services. Notwithstanding the new Motor Trade Complex, there are other multiple training and development needs that that could be met by small, flexible RTOs and other service providers to benefit both the business community and the general population.

SUMMARY OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

Two focus groups were held on the 6th June 2012 at the Joondalup campus of Edith Cowan University. They consisted of people who had completed the survey and indicated that they were willing to participate. In the first group, 7 out of the 9 business owners who agreed to attend participated and in the second group, 5 out of 9 business owners participated. Overall there was a good spread of business locations with participants from Whitfords, the CBD, the Winton Business Park, Joondalup Gate and Canham Way.

The purpose of the focus groups was to drill down on some of the issues raised in the surveys and also ensure that other relevant business issues had not been missed in the quantitative part of the research. Each discussion lasted approximately an hour-and-a-quarter and similar questions were asked of both groups. Both groups were asked to name one issue and to come up with a possible solution, the second part being considerably more difficult than the first. Listed below are some of the key issues mentioned. There was robust and constructive discussion amongst both groups and while there were several issues of concern to the business owners, most were happy to be operating within the City of Joondalup. Many stressed that retail is under significant pressure at this point in time.

- One of the main issues that the first group raised was the issue of parking, both the introduction of paid parking and the overall lack of parking in the CBD and the Winton Business Park area. Parking was not perceived as an issue in the other business locations. The first group was unable to come up with any solution to the problem other than reverting back to free parking. The second group acknowledged that parking was an issue, particularly in the Winton Road area, and also agreed that the volume of traffic was an indication of strong customer activity.
- A second issue raised by both groups was the traffic flow in some areas. Again the Winton Business Park featured strongly with the growth in customers creating problems with regard to the volume of traffic and the inability of cars to access some of the businesses. Two individual cases were highlighted. A truck-training company that conducts their training within the road system in the Winton Business Park area and the location of the service station on the corner. Favourable petrol prices create situations where service station customers block the entrance to the Business Park as the service station is situated at one of the key entries to the Park.
- There was confusion over the changes to retail trading hours compounded by shops in the CBD being designated as a Special Trading Precinct while the Whitfords Shopping Centre only trades 6 days a week. It was pointed out to the group that trading hours are a state government issue, but the first group wanted the comment noted.

- There were concerns about individual signage as well as the lack of more generic signage, such as parking and the entrance to the Winton Business Park, including the names of the businesses. The fact that there are walkways under Joondalup Drive connecting the CBD to the Winton Business Park that many people did not know existed, was also mentioned.
- The entrance to Lakeside from the train station and the general appearance of the corner of Collier Pass and Grand Boulevard where perceived to be poor, did not show off the area in the best possible light and could be detracting from an otherwise pleasant environment.
- A concern for safety coupled with the fact that two large licensed premises dominate the CBD area and the anti-social behaviour associated with these premises, meant that there was a lack of good night life for families and people in general. Suggestions to improve this included duplicating Oxford Street in Leederville and Beaufort Street in Mount Lawley to create a vibrant dining strip. The option of encouraging small bars or wine bars was posited as a way to potentially change the image of the CBD area as being 'rough'.
- Other comments by the groups indicated their individual and collective desire to interact more with the City in regard to their businesses and their genuine interest in working as a collective to improve business activity and conditions in the area. The recent appointment of an economic development officer at the City should facilitate dialogue with the business community.
- A final closing comment was that the City of Joondalup is a great place to live, work and have a business in, but that this information was somehow 'secret' and that many were unaware of what is on offer in the area. The consensus was that there needs to be higher visibility of the business activities. The group felt that more could be done to market and promote the area as a great place to do business.

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Business Survey 2012

This is an anonymous questionnaire. Please read the Information Letter carefully as it provides details of the survey project. By completing the questionnaire, you are consenting to take part in this survey. You are not required to provide your name as part of the survey; therefore, any contact details you supply will be completely voluntary.

Your Business

1) What is your business? (e.g., panel beater, accountant, deli/café – please be as specific as possible)

.....

2) Is your business...? (Please tick one box only)

☐₁ Independently owned & operated

☐₂ A franchise

☐₃ A head office company

☐₄ A subsidiary or branch company

☐₅ Other (please specify)

3) Are the premises?

☐₁ Leased

☐₂ Owned

4) What is your position?

☐₁ Owner

☐₂ Manager

☐₃ Supervisor

☐₄ Other (please specify)

5) How many years has the business been in operation (please specify number of years)?

.....

6) Has this business only been located in the City of Joondalup?

☐₁ Yes Go to Q7

☐₂ No

If the business was previously located in another location:

a) Where was the previous location?

b) How many years has it been operating in the City of Joondalup?

.....

c) Reason for moving to Joondalup?

.....

7) How many employees are there in this business (including yourself)?

☐₁ Full time ☐₂ Part time

☐₃ Casual/Temp

8) What is your annual turnover?

☐₁ Less than \$100,000

☐₂ \$100,001 - \$250,000

☐₃ \$250,001 - \$500,000

☐₄ \$500,001 - \$1,000,000

☐₅ \$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000

☐₆ \$5,000,001 or more

9) Where are the majority of your suppliers located? (please tick one box only)

☐₁ Within the City of Joondalup

☐₂ Perth Metro

☐₃ All of WA

☐₄ Eastern States

☐₅ Overseas

☐₆ Unsure

10) Where are the majority of your customers located? (please tick one box only)

☐₁ Within the City of Joondalup

☐₂ Perth Metro

☐₃ All of WA

☐₄ Eastern States

☐₅ Overseas

☐₆ Unsure

11) Do you export any of your products/services?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No Go to Q12

If Yes:

a) Where is your main market located (e.g. Japan, Indonesia, United States, United Kingdom) etc?

.....

b) What percentage of your product is exported outside Australia?

.....

12) Do you intend to utilise the National Broadband Network (NBN)?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

☐₃ Don't Know

13) Which of the following business activities do you conduct online (please tick all that apply)?

☐₁ Online ordering

☐₂ Online banking

☐₃ Online bookings

☐₄ Email

☐₅ Twitter

☐₆ Facebook

☐₇ Other (please specify)

Your Staff and Training

1) Do you currently have staff vacancies?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No Go to Q2

If yes:

a) How many vacancies do you have?

b) Are you having difficulties filling vacancies in a particular area e.g. electrical, hospitality etc (please specify which area(s))

.....

c) How difficult is it to recruit staff to work in the Joondalup area?

.....

2) Are there any specific local training programs that help you to fill your staff vacancies?

☐₁ Yes (please specify)

.....

☐₂ No

3) Are there any other specific training needs that can be developed locally to help your business?

☐₁ Yes (please specify)

.....

☐₂ No

4) Do you employ ...

1) Apprentices?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No Go to Q5

2) Trainees?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No Go to Q5

If yes:

a) How many?

b) In which areas are they employed e.g. mechanical, electrical, retail, office etc?

.....

5) Do the majority of your staff live within 10 minutes drive of work?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

☐₃ Don't Know

6) How do the majority of your staff get to work? (please tick one only)

☐₁ Car/motorcycle

☐₂ Public transport

☐₃ Bike

☐₄ Walk

a) If by car, do the majority? (please tick one only)

☐₁ Drive solo

☐₂ Car pool

☐₃ Unsure

Your Business and the Environment

1) What do you consider to be the key environmental concerns in your industry?

.....

.....

.....

2) If there was an environmental program specific to your industry, would you participate?

☐₁ Yes ☐₂ No

3) Are you implementing energy saving practices?

☐₁ Yes ☐₂ No

Your Business Plans

1) Are you expecting to expand/downsize your business within the next 12 months? (Please tick one box only)

☐₁ No, staying the same

☐₂ Yes, expanding

a) If expanding, do your plans include? (Please tick all that apply)

☐₁ Employing more staff (state how many)

☐₂ Investing in new equipment

☐₃ Developing new products, services, features

☐₄ Developing new local markets

☐₅ Developing new international markets

☐₆ Expanding within City of Joondalup

☐₇ Expanding on an existing site

☐₈ Moving out of City of Joondalup (please state why)

.....

.....

☐₉ Other (please specify)

.....

☐₃ Yes, downsizing

a) Please explain why you are downsizing and if you will remain in the City of

Joondalup?

.....

2) Does your business conduct any research and development?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No Go to next section

a) If yes, what percentage of your turnover is used for research and development?

.....

Business Services within City of Joondalup

1) Are there sufficient avenues to support businesses in the City of Joondalup in regard to advocacy and representation to local and state government?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

2) Are you a member of the following business associations? (please tick all that apply)

☐₁ Joondalup Business Association

☐₂ Wanneroo Business Association

☐₃ Stirling Business Association

☐₄ Swan Chamber of Commerce

☐₅ Other (please specify)

3) Are you a member of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI)?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

4) Would you be interested in using any of the following services if they were available in the area? (please tick all that apply)

☐₁ Occupational Health and Safety

☐₂ Industrial Relations

☐₃ Online Recruitment Services

☐₄ International Trade

☐₅ Migration Services

☐₆ Business Training

5) How regularly do you think you would access the services you have selected?

☐₁ Daily

☐₂ Weekly

☐₃ Monthly

☐₄ Annually

Services within the City of Joondalup

1) Please circle a number from 1 (Very Poor) to 6 (Excellent) that best describes how you feel about the following statements. (Please respond to all statements)

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
The standard of street lights near your business is:	1	2	3	4	5	6
The standard of footpaths near your business is:	1	2	3	4	5	6
The standard of street signage near your business is:	1	2	3	4	5	6
The standard of street scaping near your business is:	1	2	3	4	5	6

2) Please circle a number from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree) that best describes why you chose the City of Joondalup as your business location. (Please respond to all statements)

I chose the City of Joondalup as my business location because ...	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
Proximity to suppliers	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is close to my customers	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is close to major roads	1	2	3	4	5	6
Space/land was readily available	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is close to other industrial areas	1	2	3	4	5	6
I liked the purchase/ lease/rental prices	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is a good investment area	1	2	3	4	5	6
I bought an existing business	1	2	3	4	5	6
Power supplies are reliable and well maintained	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is well promoted as a place to do business	1	2	3	4	5	6
There are few traffic and parking issues	1	2	3	4	5	6
There is adequate broadband access	1	2	3	4	5	6
There is sufficient access to banks and other commercial services	1	2	3	4	5	6
Council rates are reasonable for services	1	2	3	4	5	6
There is adequate room for expansion of my business	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is close to my home	1	2	3	4	5	6
I like the look of the area	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is a growing area	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is accessible for staff	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is close to retail outlets (i.e. groceries)	1	2	3	4	5	6
There are adequate footpaths and cycle paths	1	2	3	4	5	6

3) Are you aware of the Joondalup security patrols e.g. City Watch?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

4) Do you think Joondalup security patrols are effective?

☐₁ Yes Go to Q5

☐₂ No

If no, why not?

.....

5) Has your business been the target of criminal activities in the past 12 months?

☐₁ Yes

☐₂ No

6) Can you suggest ways to reduce crime in the City of Joondalup?

.....

7) The City of Joondalup is committed to continuous improvement. In order to do this it is important to know what issues are currently affecting businesses in the area. Please list and explain the top issues currently affecting your business, starting with the most important to you:

.....

.....

.....

8) What do you like the most about doing business in the City of Joondalup?

.....

.....

.....

9) What do you dislike the most about doing business in the City of Joondalup?

.....

.....

.....

About You

1) What is your gender?

☐₁ Male

☐₂ Female

2) What is your age group?

☐₁ Under 30

☐₂₃ 1-40

☐₃ 41-50

☐₄ 51-60

☐₅ Over 60

3) What is your business postcode?

4) Would you be interested in being part of a focus group? If yes, please provide your contact details below.

Name:

Business Name

Telephone Number Work

Mobile

Thank you for your time and participation in this survey.