

INNER WEST

# Economic Development Strategic Plan - Engagement outcomes report



## Engagement outcomes report EDSP

### 1. Summary

The draft Economic Strategic Plan (EDSP) has been developed in collaboration with the community and key stakeholders in September and October 2019. The role of the strategic plan is to help the growth of the local economy and making it more competitive and resilient.

### 2. Background

Council engaged the Inner West community, specifically the business community, on the draft Economic Development Strategic Plan via the engagement platform, Your Say Inner West (YSIW).

The draft plan was placed on public exhibition from 23 September 2019 until 27 October 2019. During public exhibition, there were 12 consultation events comprising of information pop-ups and direct consultation events with industry groups.

There were 637 visits on the YSIW project page, with 262 downloads of the plan. Council received 47 submissions. Respondents were predominantly local businesses.

The submission form on the website required participants to state their level of support for the strategic plan and its three core principles.

Majority of respondents agreed with the plan, with one respondent choosing not to answer.

The business community sessions were designed to discuss the local economy and encourage formal feedback on the plan. Consultations with industry groups highlighted the overwhelming support for the strategic plan and a potential business levy (95%). There were a total of 85 people engaged via the consultation sessions.

In the lead up to the drafting of the strategic plan, consultation (formal and informal) was held by the economic development unit with internal and external stakeholders, partners, key individuals and government agencies. This helped frame the key principles and objectives for the plan for the next three years.

### 3. Engagement Methods

- What was the method of engagement?
  - Online on [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au)
  - Ten onsite engagement sessions held across the local government area
  - One Council Committee presentation
  - Presentation at a Chamber forum
  - Your Say stall at Leichhardt and Marrickville
  - Email responses
  - Informal dialogue via face to face engagement when visiting premises to promote the consultations and the online feedback tools (approximately 800)

### 4. Promotion



Promotion was undertaken via the following:

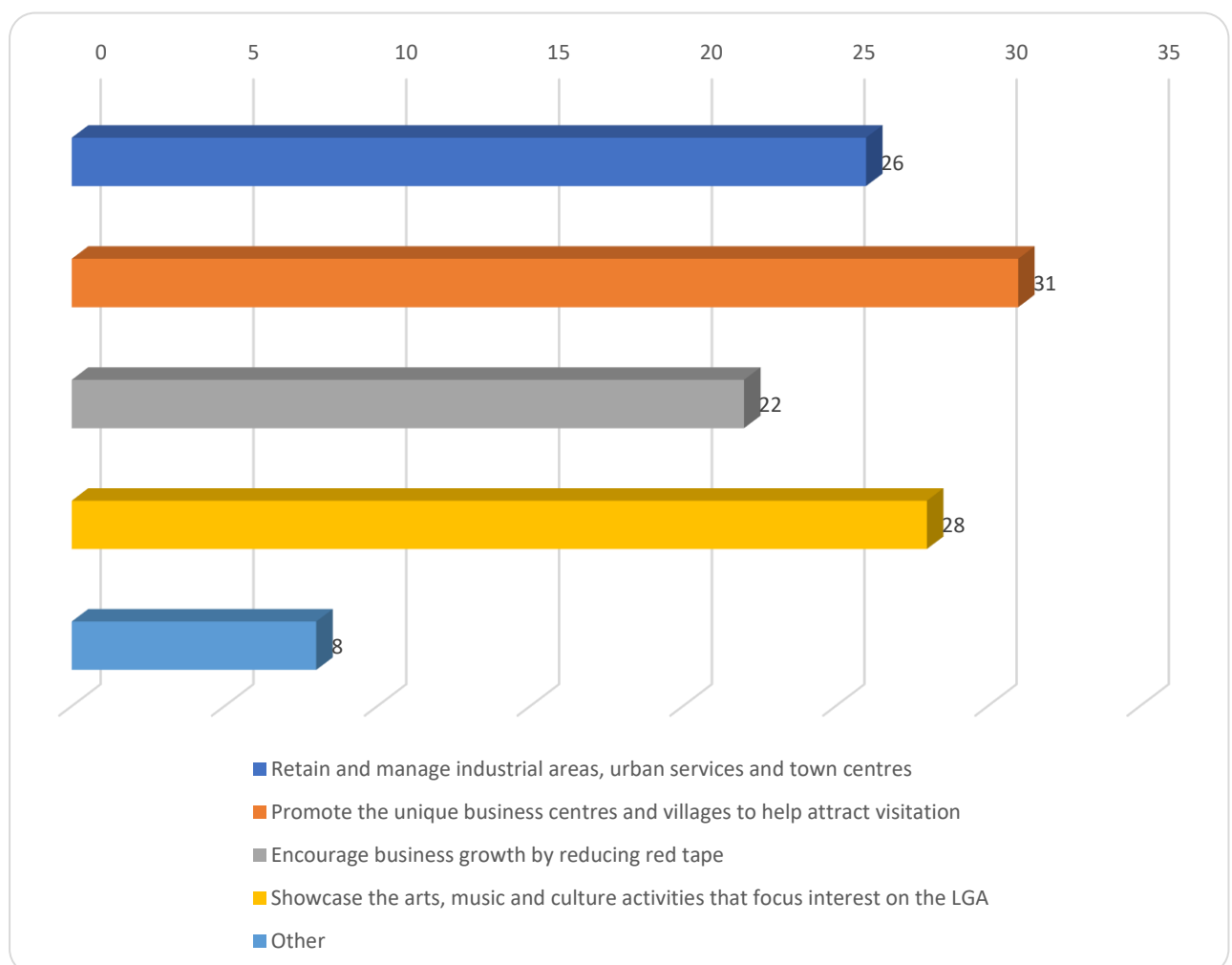
- Social media
- Council website
- Direct email to an estimated 27,000 business email addresses
- Direct contact via telephone (100 calls to key sectors)
- Directly engaging with business owners and staff by visiting all precincts and providing them with information
- Email Inviting the business chambers and associations to provide feedback
- Promoted at economic development programs such as Women in Business

#### 5. Engagement outcomes

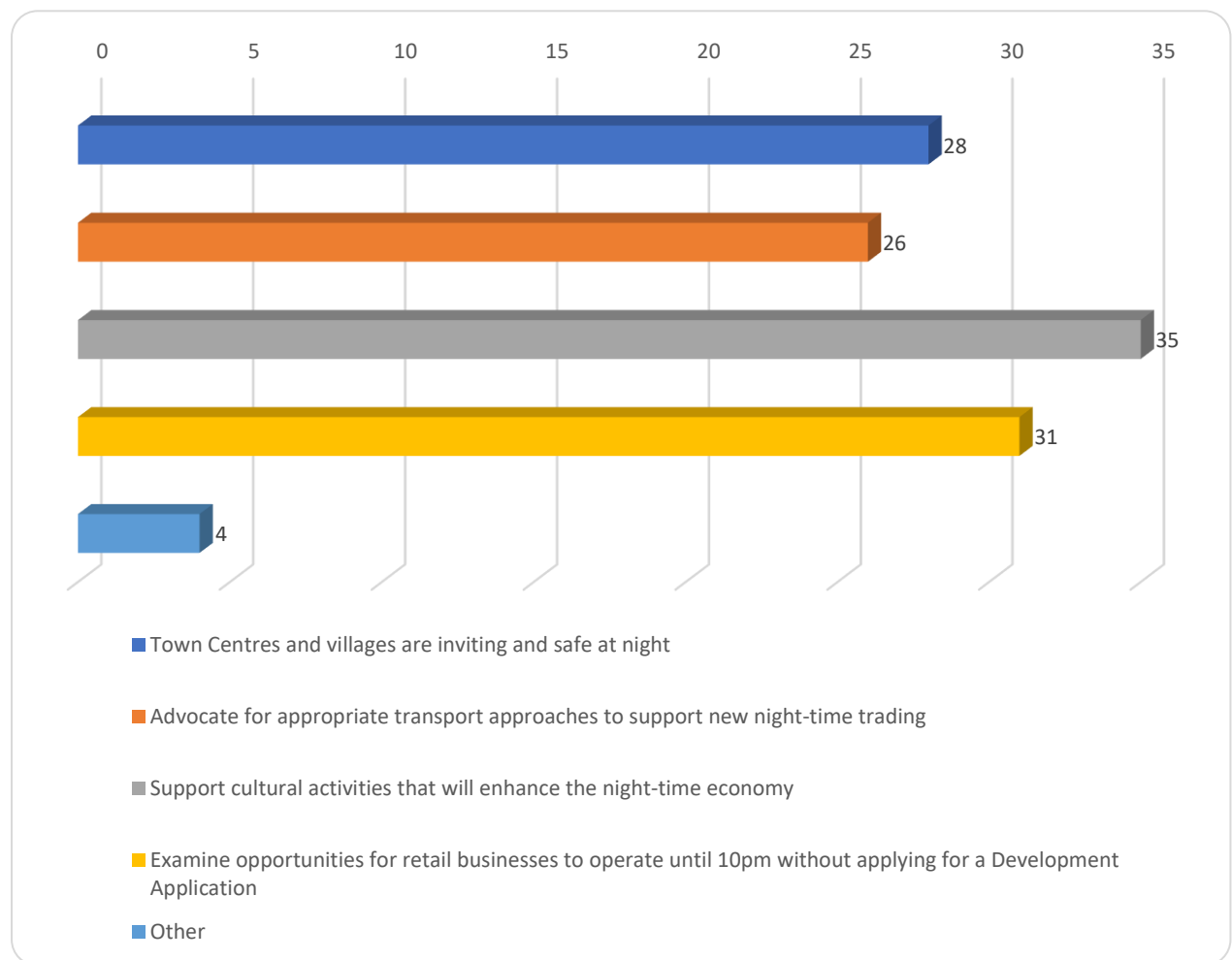
**Who did we hear from?** An estimated 90 - 95% of people were attached to a local business or resident.

*What did they say?*

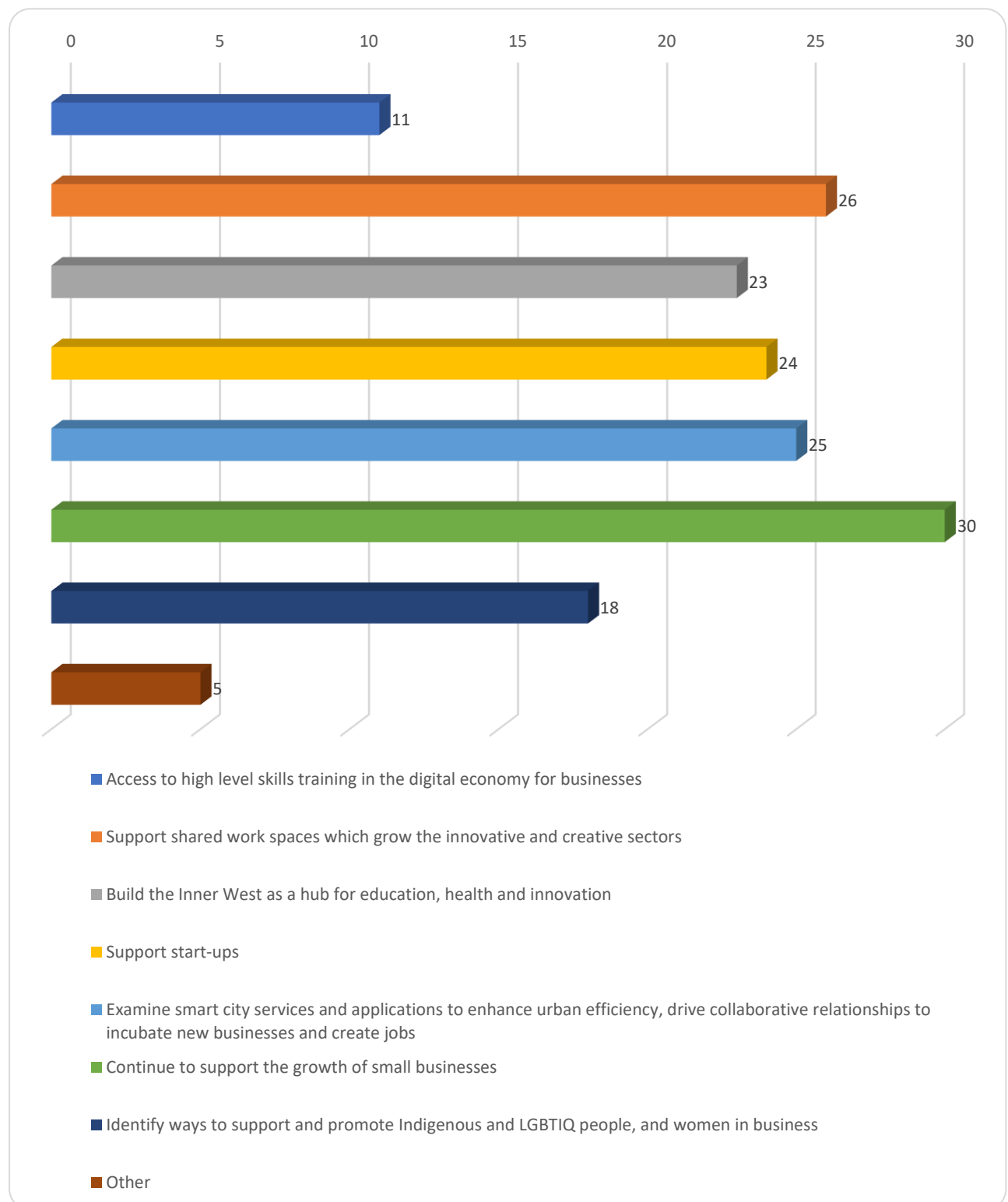
What can be undertaken to support Main Street and precinct vitality? (select up to three options)



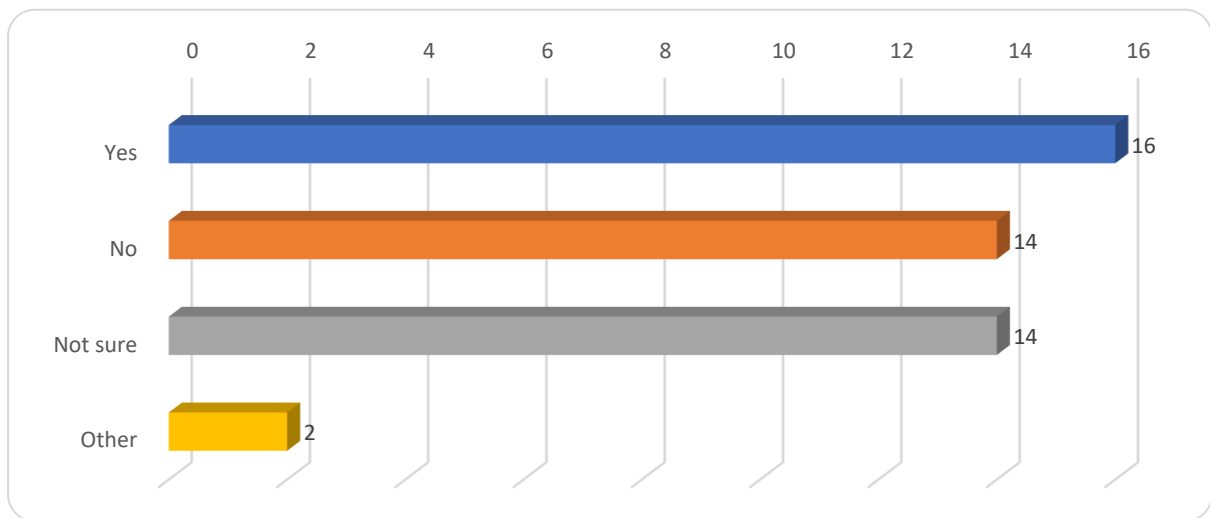
Successful global cities have a strong cultural life and diverse night-time economy. Please prioritise what could be undertaken to enhance the night-time economy. (select up to three options)



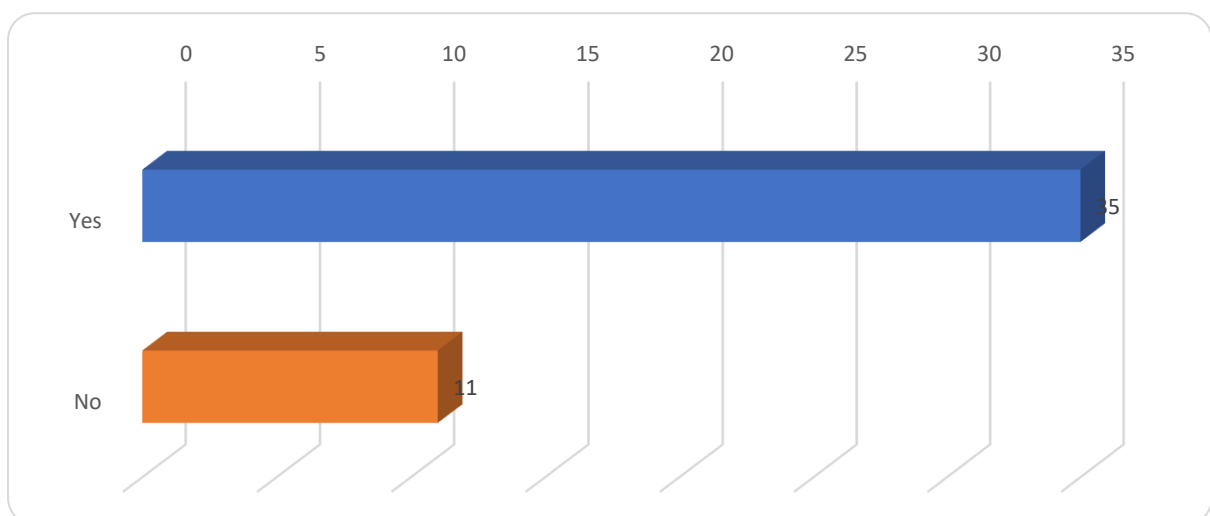
Prioritise what you think will enhance the Local Government Area's reputation as a collaborative, connected and innovative place that supports local workforce, emerging industries and commercialisation? (Select up to five options)



Do you support the possible introduction of an Economic Development Special Rate levy on businesses that could cost between \$5 to \$20 a week? These funds would be quarantined to be used in centres and villages to promote, brand and activate business zones to help drive visits and local spend to the area.



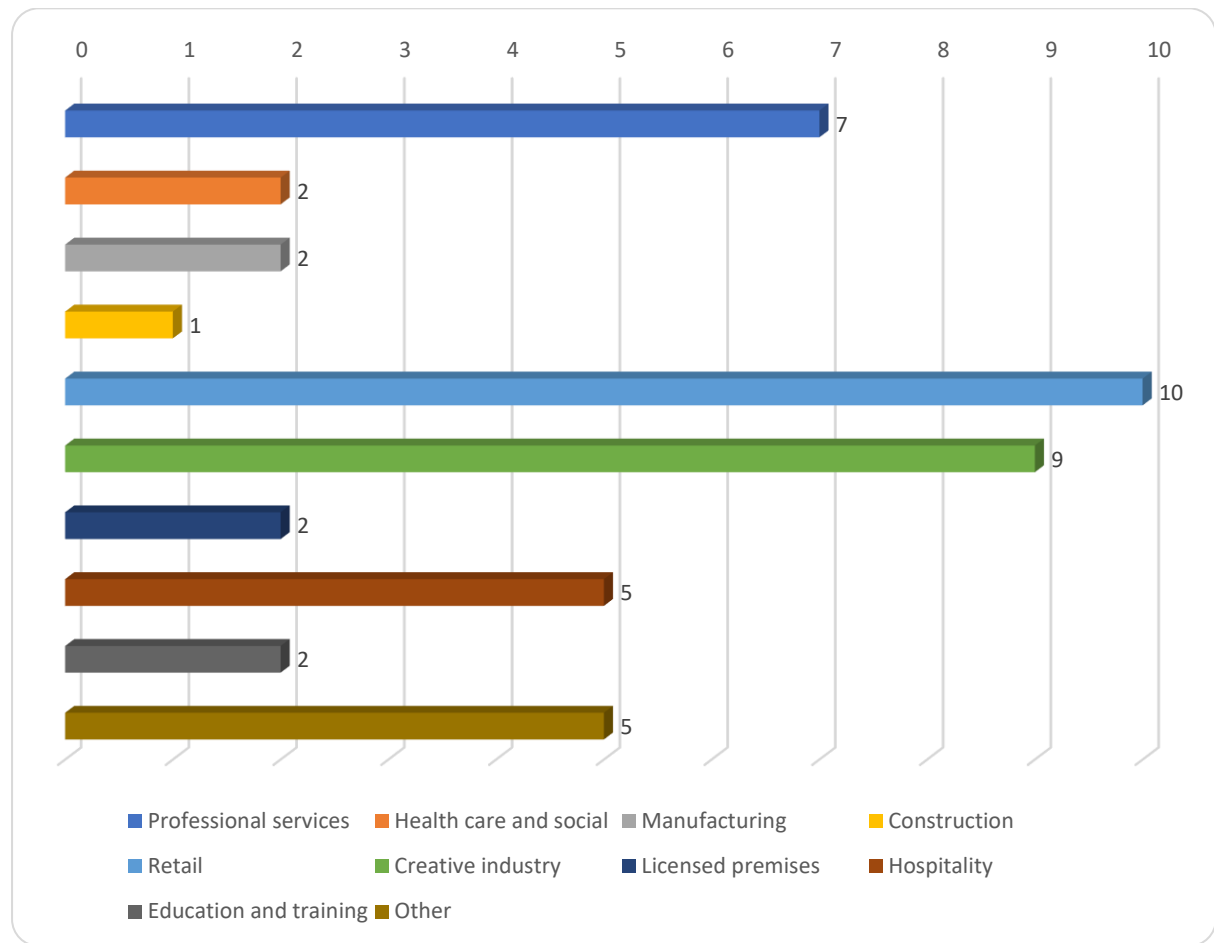
Would you consider attending a workshop or holding a best practise talk for the local business community?



What best describes your main relationship to business in the Inner West? (select one option)

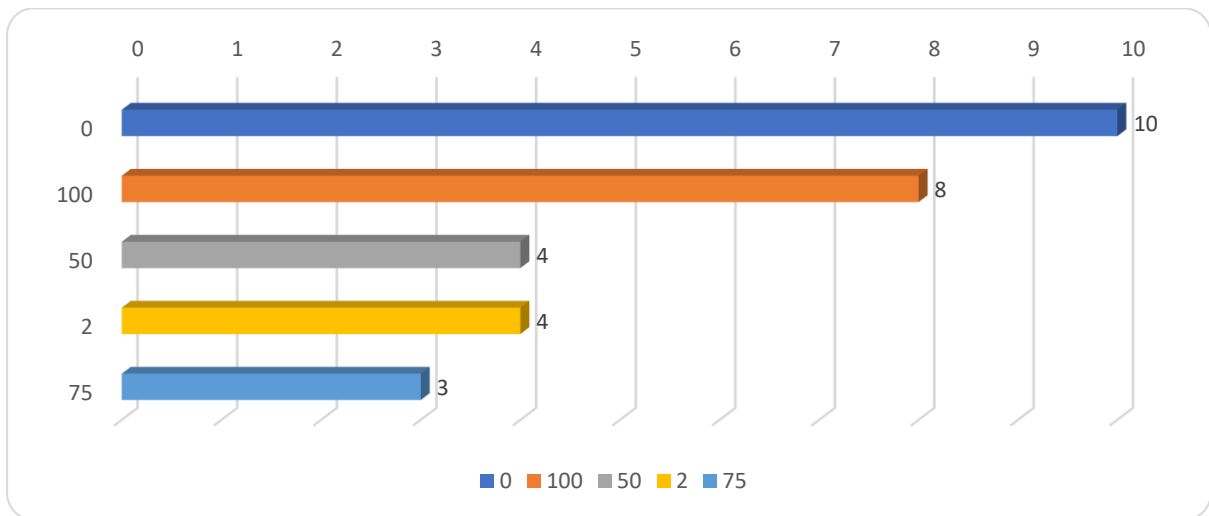


Thinking about the main business you are associated with in the Inner West. What type of business is it? (select one option)

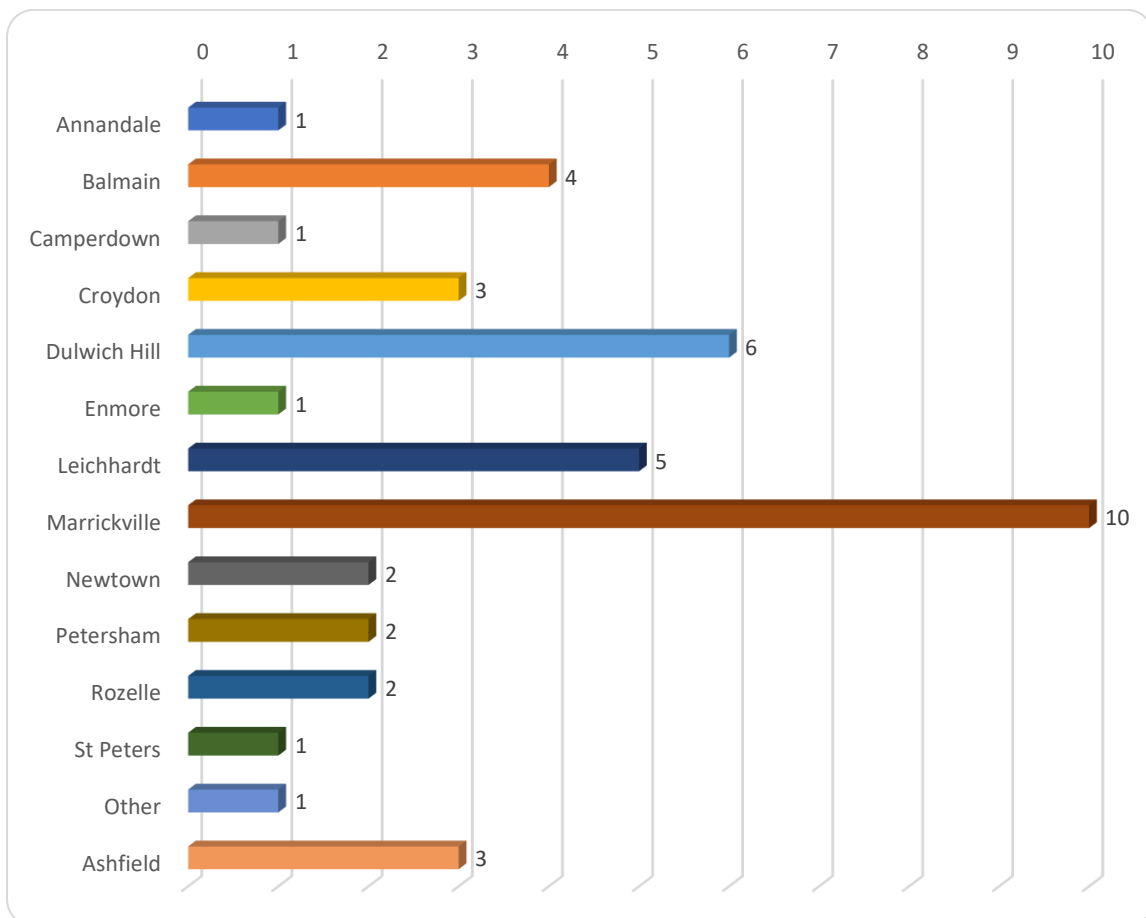




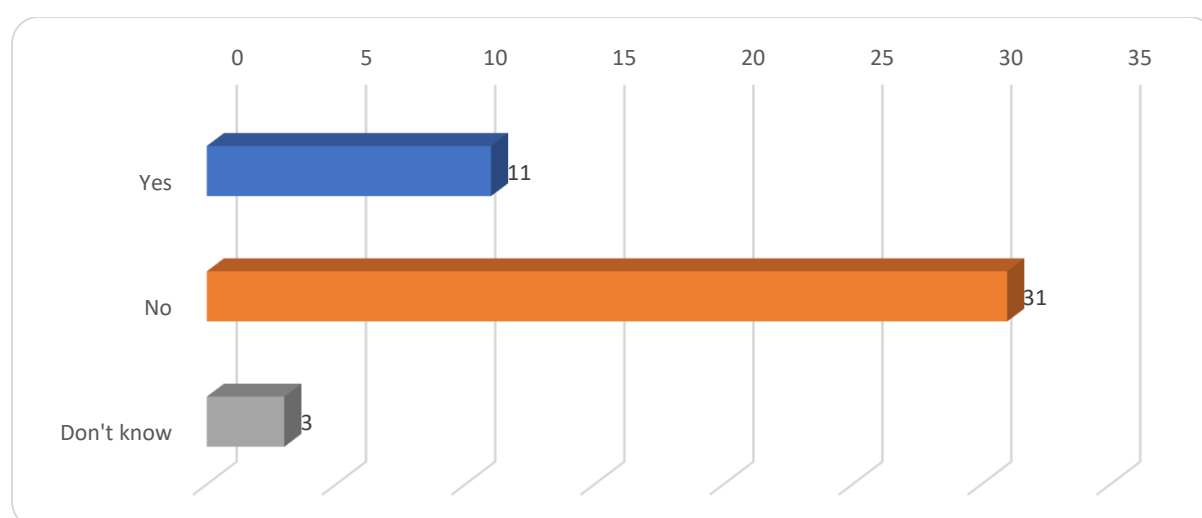
Thinking about the main business you are associated with in the Inner West. How many employees are there?



Suburb where the business is located



Are you a member of a local business chamber or a business organisation?



- **At face to face engagement sessions/workshop/Your Say stall at festival/intercept surveys/pop ups/forum/focus groups/ feedback**

The feedback sessions resulted in almost every participant in support of the EDSP. A number of participants wanted to discuss parking issues, which is not a feature of the plan or what the sessions were about.

The potential business levy was discussed at length at every session. Initial hesitation was remedied as participants gained an insight to the success of the current Urban Centres Program at Marrickville, Newtown, Dulwich Hill and Petersham. The levy would create a pool of funds across the LGA for business precincts to promote and market their areas and generate visitation and spend in the local area. Only two attendees were not in support of the levy or exploring future options for a levy.

Retaining and protecting employment lands, supporting small business, developing a night time economy plan, promoting the precincts and supporting creative industries were prevalent topics from those who attended the 70 minute sessions.

The representatives of the shopping malls were also keen to highlight the power of marketing to generate greater visitation to the Inner West. Representatives were keen to meet at least on annual basis to network and engage with Council.

Other comments of note include supporting traditional high streets such as Norton Street and identifying ways to better engage with homebased businesses.

- **Comments received from organisations/groups/stakeholders**

There were two additional significant submissions from local businesses, submitted after the deadline, combining submissions with the LSPS and the Employment and Retails Lands Study.

Both were supportive of the EDSP. Key points raised include:

- Protecting employment lands
- Increase the density of permissible density in employment lands
- Consider ways to prevent warehouses from shifting to other areas
- Consider removing demarcation between light and general industrial uses
- Support creative industries
- Recommendation to review how mobile food services such as Uber eats is evolving
- Attract new industries
- Support for industry clusters
- Create and deliver a night time economy strategy
- The need to address the processing times for DAs and other Council applications and programs supporting small businesses
- Identify tangible measures by which it can better facilitate land-use, planning and development outcomes for these businesses.

These are common themes and discussion points that were also heard at the information sessions.

- **Other responses from individuals and common themes**

The overwhelming response from individuals and business representatives was positive. People welcomed the first Inner West economic plan. Across the former Marrickville Council area, there was a real push to retain as much of the industrial lands as possible. Businesses see this is part of the Inner West fabric, history and the strength of the economy. However, a number of factories and manufacturers also spoke at length about the need for Council to balance regulatory and enforcement particularly for loading and unloading and movement of trucks.

A number of individuals from site visits and at forums made it clear that employment generation and job retention in the Inner West is a priority and an additional strategy should be considered.

Across many of the precincts, many individuals enquired about the night time economy and creative arts. There was a real acknowledgement that the Inner West has a growth in the evening and night time economy sector, with creative industries having a link. A number of individuals wanted to see the Inner West become a hub for culture and the arts.

Younger people enquired about start-ups and how Council can link better with young people.