



The Voice of Business in Mission

Mayor & Council
District of Mission
8645 Stave Lake St.
Mission, BC
V2V 4L9

March 15th, 2018

RE: Business License Regulation and Fee Review

Dear Mayor & Council,

For 125 years, the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce has operated as the voice of business in Mission. We advocate on behalf of local business on the economic sustainability of our community. The Chamber is very concerned that the recently released proposed changes to the business license fees announced by the District of Mission on March 14th, 2018 will impact that stability.

Late in January 2018, the District of Mission informed the Chamber that a full review of costs to deliver business support in the community would be undertaken with an extensive consultation of the business community. The intent of the review, as communicated at the time of the meeting, was to align the costs of facilitating business licensing based on the types of business in Mission. The Chamber supported a review to ensure sustainability for the business licensing program. The Chamber shared with our members all communications which were received by the District during the process and encouraged members to attend the open house put on by the District on Feb 20th 2018. This open house was poorly attended, and we understand the District's desire to get feedback from the business community. The District has now distributed a proposal, that we feel is strongly lacking proper business consultation and we request that further consultation is completed (in addition to the new survey released on Mar 14th) to ensure the business communities voices are heard.

The proposed 60% increases, (in some instances up to 2000% increases) are drastic and with an unrealistic timeline of implementation. The Chamber is very concerned, in particular, about the lack of context for these increases, and the lack of a detailed report of costs (\$2.5 M) associated with the business licensing program in Mission.

Questions we have in particular are:

- Where is the justification for classifying businesses in the proposed levels?
- What additional costs or services do each businesses receive at each level?
- What portion of related business costs should be covered by commercial taxation, and what costs are specifically related to licensing?

These increases are not aligned with our current neighboring community license fees, and they do not support business, nor do they encourage economic growth in this community.

The Chamber understands the needs for sustainability, and understands that some businesses do cost more in inspection and enforcement, however, we need details and transparency to ensure our business community and our council is able to make an informed decision.

We will encourage our members to voice their concerns through completing the survey the District has developed, however this cannot be the only form of consultation.

The Chamber encourages the District to have a more realistic approach to any increase brought forward to the business license fees and would welcome any involvement in providing feedback and guidance in this process.

Representing over 500 businesses and organizations in Mission that employ more than 7,000 workers; the Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce is NOT in support of the Districts Business License Regulation and Fee Review findings and requests that further consultation and consideration of costs be reviewed before any final changes are brought forward to the Council for decision.

Sincerely,



Andrea Walker
President
Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce