

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MAPLE RIDGE PITT MEADOWS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ASKS FOR EXPANSION OF
INTER-MUNICIPAL BUSINESS LICENCE PROGRAM**

Pitt Meadows B.C. April 18, 2016. The Chamber of Commerce serving Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows is requesting that the current Inter-Municipal Business Licence (IMBL) program boundaries be extended to encompass the entire Lower Mainland. The request was made to City of Pitt Meadows Council on April 5 and City of Maple Ridge on April 18 as members surveyed indicated a strong support to merge the existing programs into one.

The Inter-Municipal Business Licence (IMBL) reduces red tape by allowing construction and trades-related businesses to operate in more than one municipality, rather than by obtaining non-resident licences in each municipality in which they operate. Currently there are 11 mobile business license agreements in BC with 73 participating municipalities. In the Lower Mainland there are four programs: Fraser Valley, Metro West, North/West Vancouver, and Tri-cities. Several municipalities participate in more than one if they are conveniently located.

“I have heard from my members who have an IMBL that it greatly helps them as they only have one or two licences to worry about. This saves business time and money,” said Morden

The Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Chamber recently participated in a survey distributed through 12 chambers and boards of trade, in partnership with BC Chamber, and representing a membership of over 13,000. Of those responding, more than 80% strongly indicated support for expansion into one convenient program extending from the North Shore through to Hope.

Construction and trades related businesses are able to purchase a license in one of the four programs; however, there are those who have clients in a second or third area necessitating additional coverage.

Further, the survey results indicated that over 40% of respondents throughout the region either were not aware of the IMBL program or had little knowledge of whether a license in another municipality is required if they are just “visiting” a client.

As a result of member feed-back through the survey’s questions and comments, Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Chamber asked both Mayors and Councils of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows respectively to work together to

1. Develop and implement a Regional Inter-Municipal Business Licence program for the Lower Mainland
2. Develop education and awareness strategies to ensure members are able to take advantage of the opportunities the program provides, and to ensure members are compliant with the various municipalities licensing requirements.

“I believe it is of great importance to have business at the table when business by-laws are developed and improved upon,” said Morden. “Together we can ensure that the needs of Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows and businesses are met while minimizing red tape and keeping the fees reasonable.”

The Ridge Meadows Chamber of Commerce is a proactive network of business-minded individuals that are committed to acting as an accessible, visible and supportive resource to our members and the Ridge Meadows Community at large, communicating their collective voice to help shape a prosperous business community as the “The Voice of Business.”

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