

April 15, 2020

Mayor and Council

City of Vernon

3400 30<sup>th</sup> Street

Vernon, BC

Your Worship and Council

We understand that Council is holding a special meeting today, April 15, and we wish to provide some information to be considered during your deliberations.

As you are aware, business owners in Vernon are struggling through the Covid-19 pandemic, with many closing their doors or, if open, experiencing a significant reduction in revenue. Local business is the backbone of the community and the eventual move towards recovery requires support for business now.

The Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce requests that the City consider the following:

- That 2020 property tax bills have a due date of Sept. 2 instead of July 2, similar to the recent action taken in the District of Lake Country.
- That 2020 utility bills for City customers be due four months after the billing cycle, and that interest be waived on outstanding balances until Dec. 31, similar to the action taken in the District of Lake Country.
- That the City review the 2020 financial plan to determine if adjustments can be made to expenditures. Many business owners have had to make difficult decisions.
- Where funds exist, that the City proceed with 2020 capital projects as a way of supporting the economy. Conditions are also ideal at this time as many businesses are closed, so the negative impact of construction would be reduced.
- That Council establish an economic recovery task force similar to that created in Penticton. Such a task force would be comprised of council members, city administration and business representatives, including the Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce. It would make recommendations to Council that support businesses in the short, medium and long-term.

The Greater Vernon Chamber has been focused on supporting its members and the business community through Covid-19, including promoting shop local and providing an online directory of businesses that are open. Another significant role has been advocating on behalf of business to all levels of government.

We appreciate the efforts of Council and Administration during an extremely challenging time for our community, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Krystin Kempton, President  
Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce