

## MEMORANDUM

April 3, 2013

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**CC:** Penny Ballem, City Manager  
Sadhu Johnston, Deputy City Manager  
Janice MacKenzie, City Clerk  
Mike Magee, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Mairi Welman, Director, Communications  
Kevin Quinlan, Director, Policy and Communication, Mayor's Office  
Lynda Graves, Administrative Manager, City Manager's Office

**FROM:** Brenda Proskan  
General Manager

**SUBJECT:** Business licence updates:  
RTS 9945 - End dates for business licences  
RTS 9940 - Mobile business licensing program

This memo responds to the following two requests from Council on January 15, 2013:

1. Mobile business licensing program - the motion on notice directed staff to report on the status of City/VEC work, including the feasibility of a pilot program to implement a mobile business licensing program
2. End dates for business licences - Councillor Reimer requested information about the possibility of staggering end dates of business licences so that licences expire on a day City Hall is open and not on December 31st as they do now.

### 1. Mobile Business Licensing Program

In the Fall of 2012, municipal staff and representatives of the economic commissions of Vancouver, Surrey and Richmond started discussions on a pilot program to implement an inter-municipal business licence (IMBL). The scope of the initiative would involve construction-related businesses (contractors and trades) being licensed in their home municipality and paying an optional inter-municipal business licence fee (\$150-\$200) to carry out work in all participating municipalities. The IMBL will benefit businesses doing work in

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multiple municipalities by simplifying the licensing process (time savings) and reducing licensing costs to businesses.

The BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training provided a financial analysis of the revenue implications for each participating municipality of the IML initiative using business licence data from each municipality. That analysis identified an appropriate licence fee and financial model for an IML licence that would result in revenue neutrality for the participating municipalities.

Burnaby, New Westminster and Delta are also joining the Vancouver/Surrey/Richmond IML initiative. Staff from all six municipalities are working out the details of the program including licensing, compliance and enforcement processes. Staff expect to report to Council on the required by-law changes in June 2013 and implement the program shortly thereafter. While City staff are hopeful that all six municipalities will be involved in the initiative, this will depend on their degree of readiness to implement this year.

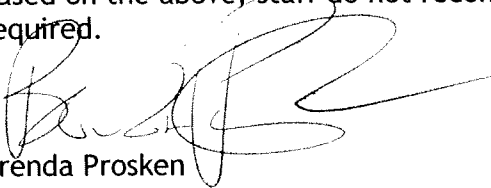
Ultimately, the objective is for all lower mainland municipalities to be part of one IML, subject to successful pilot initiatives as described above and those currently underway in the North Shore, Tri-cities areas and Fraser Valley.

## 2. End dates for business licences

Business licences expire on December 31st, but business owners have until January 15<sup>th</sup> (or the next business day after that if City Hall is closed on the 15<sup>th</sup>) to pay their fees without penalty. This provides an opportunity for those business owners who wish to renew their licences in person to do so without being penalized due to City Hall being closed. The penalty for a late payment is \$40 or 10% of the annual licence fee, whichever is greater.

For the 2013 business licence renewal, the City provided an enhanced online renewal capability that allows business owners to pay for their licences online and print them at any time. So far, approximately 44% of the 2013 renewals have taken place online and this percentage has grown steadily from an online renewal rate of 19% in 2008. Staff are targeting this figure to grow to 85% by 2015 as there are significant benefits to customers in reduced processing times and to the City in reduced processing and mailing costs.

Based on the above, staff do not recommend that amendments to licence renewal dates are required.



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