



To: Finance Committee
 From: Amarjeet S. Rattan
 Manager, Business Liaison
 Re: B.C. Single Business Licence (SBL) Initiative

To Finance - July 18, 2007
 Date: July 4, 2007
 File: 12-8275-00

Staff Recommendation

That staff be directed to:

- (1) Consult on and discuss the SBL initiative with the appropriate BC Government ministry;
- (2) Refer SBL issues to meetings at the UBCM Convention later this year;
- (3) Report back to Council with SBL initiative implications.

Andrew Nazareth
 Andrew Nazareth
 General Manager, Business & Financial Services
 (4095)

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
<i>Andrew Nazareth</i>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

In an October 2006 B.C. Report of the Task Force on Community Opportunities, the Task Force urged that communities across the province commit to harmonizing business licensing regulations through the expansion of region-wide, inter-municipal business licensing schemes. The report stated that "in particular, this approach would simplify licensing requirements for mobile-type businesses operating across local boundaries, such as contractors and developers".

Further to this report, at the UBCM Annual Convention in October 2006, Premier Gordon Campbell challenged local governments to develop a single business licence framework by 2008 so that 'British Columbia would become the first jurisdiction in Canada where businesses could operate freely anywhere in the province'.

Analysis

Over the past two months, staff from the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue have made presentations (Attachment 1) to the members of the GVRD Regional Economic Development Subcommittee, as well as the Regional Permits and Licensing Committee to discuss the Single Licence Initiative.

According to these presentations, the goals of the Single Business Licence include:

- reducing the administrative burden on municipalities and business,
- increasing compliance with municipal business licence bylaws,
- improved information flow between municipalities and their ability to monitor compliance, and
- making it casier for businesses to operate where their services are needed.

Currently, a small number of 'inter-municipal licensing arrangements' are operational in some parts of B.C., including North and West Vancouver. However, these arrangements are specifically only for 'mobile businesses' operating in small geographic areas.

A Single Business Licence, as being proposed by the BC government, would allow any business to obtain one licence and operate in any number of municipalities in the province.

To date, no consensus has emerged from the discussions between provincial and local government representatives.

While the provincial government is strongly in favour of implementing a Single Business Licence framework, reactions from the lower mainland municipal representatives who have attended the ministry presentations indicate strong opposition to this idea. Municipal concerns include:

- potential loss of revenues,
- creation of an additional layer of bureaucracy to re-distribute licence fees,
- ability to monitor compliance and enforce bylaws, and
- impact on local permit and inspection processes.

While no specific detailed model has yet been presented for consideration, a Single Business Licence would necessitate a central organization to coordinate a province wide licence information database and collect and then redistribute all licence fees. Ministry staff have indicated that UBCM could be a potential organization for this role, however, the attached UBCM correspondence would indicate that they are, at best, neutral on the concept of a Single Business Licence at this point in time.

Financial Impact

None at this time.

Conclusion

The SBL initiative raises some initial municipal concerns that will require further consultations with UBCM and the BC Government.




Amarjeet S. Rattan
Manager, Business Liaison
(4686)

Attachment 1: Ministry presentation materials


Attachment 2: Ministry & UBCM correspondence

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Single Business Licence Initiative



GVRD Regional Permits and
Licensing Committee
June 20, 2007

The Premier's Challenge

- October 2006 UBCM Convention
- Premier's Challenge: Develop a Single Business License Framework by 2008

Single Business Licence Initiative

- Purpose: Develop province-wide single business licence by 2008
- Lead: Ministry of Small Business & Revenue
- Partners:
 - Union of British Columbia Municipalities
 - Ministry of Community Services
 - Ministry of Finance (OneStop Business Registry)
 - Ministry of Economic Development

SBL Advisory Group

Members

- UBCM
- Former city administrators
- BC Chamber of Commerce
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Economic Development Association
- Small Business Roundtable



Consultations to Date

- Rocky Mountain/West Kootenay Joint Local Government Management Association, Nelson
- Richard Taylor, Executive Director, UBCM
- GVRD, Regional Economic Development Subcommittee
- John Winter and Jon Garson, BC Chamber of Commerce
- North Central Municipal Association, Williams Lake
- Okanagan Mainline Municipal Association, Merritt
- Local Government Management Association Annual Conference, Vancouver
- BC Chamber of Commerce Annual Conference, Victoria
- Government Financial Officers Association Annual Conference, Penticton
- Laura Jones, Vice-President, Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Mark Startup, President and CEO, Retail BC



Results of Consultations

Local Government Concerns:

- Potential impact on municipal government revenue
- Retaining trigger for administrative processes e.g. inspections, permits
- Ability to monitor compliance and enforce bylaws
- Ability to regulate businesses in community

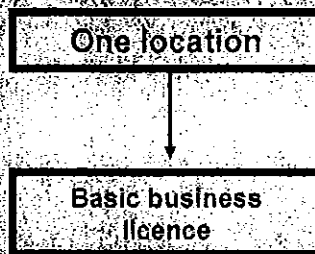
Proposed model attempts to address these concerns.



A Workable Solution

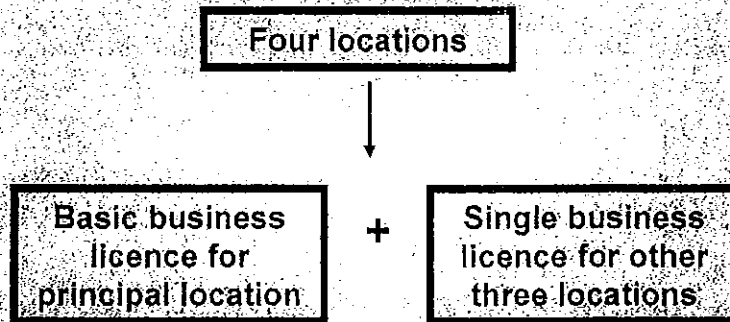
- **Model for a Single Business Licence in British Columbia**

New Business – One Location



No change from current process

New Business – Four Locations



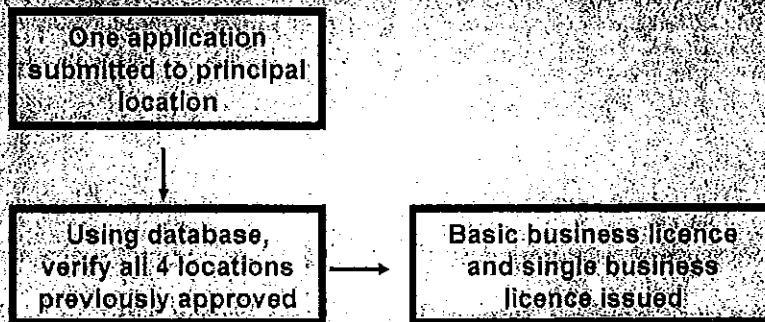
Application Form New Business - Four Locations

Name: Roberto's Pizza	SBL: YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Business Number: 123456789	
Owner: Roberto Fino	
Type of business: Restaurant	
Locations:	Fee
123 1 st Ave. Prince George (Principal)	\$210 (basic)
123 97 th St, Oliver	\$X (single)
123 Columbia Ave, Castlegar	\$X (single)
123 KLO Rd, Kelowna	<u>\$X (single)</u>
Total Fee:	\$X

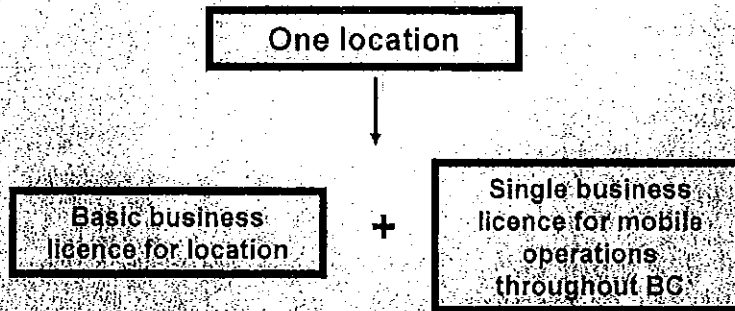
Data Base New Business - Four Locations

Name: Roberto's Pizza	Business Number: 123456789
Owner: Roberto Fino	Type of business: Restaurant
<u>Locations:</u>	<u>Pending/Approved?</u>
123 1 st Ave, Prince George (Principal)	Approved
123 97 th St, Oliver	Pending
123 Columbia Ave, Castlegar	Pending
123 KLO Rd, Kelowna	Approved
Application date: June 18, 2007	
Expiry date: June 17, 2008	
Alerts: Liquor licence applied and issued for Castlegar location only	

Licence Renewal Existing Business - Four Locations



Mobile Business



Application Form Mobile Business

Name: Ella's Garbage Disposal	SBL: YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Business Number: 123456789	
Owner: Ella Coppermine	
Locations: 123 Agate Dr, Logan Lake	
Type: Mobile waste collection and disposal	
Fee: Basic business licence fee for Logan Lake	\$ 60
Single business licence fee	\$ X
Total Fee	\$ X

Data Base Mobile Business

Name: Ella's Garbage Disposal Business Number: 123456789

Owner: Ella Coppermine

Type of business: Mobile waste collection

Locations:

Pending/Approved?

123 Agate Dr, Logan Lake (Principal)

Approved

Application date: June 18, 2007

Expiry date: June 17, 2008

Alerts:

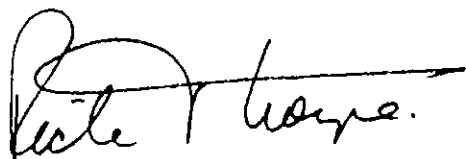
Other Issues

- Fees and Revenue: several options available
- Length of licence: option of introducing 1 or 3 year licences
- Monitoring: developing central database and leveraging existing systems
- Legislation: potential amendments to facilitate Single Business Licence

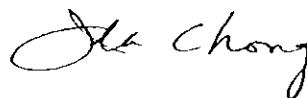
As we continue to streamline and simplify the impact of regulations on small business, business owners will have more time to devote to what is most important: running and building successful small businesses. A strong and dynamic business sector provides jobs and contributes to the health and prosperity of our communities and to the economic well-being of the province.

We look forward to working in partnership with you, your Council and your Chief Administrative Officers on this exciting opportunity. Should you have any questions, please contact Nicola Lemmer, Manager, Single Business Licence, Ministry of Small Business and Revenue at 250 387-1548.

Yours truly,



Rick Thorpe
Minister of Small Business and Revenue



Ida Chong, FCGA
Minister of Community Services

cc: Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier

Brenda Binnie, President
Union of British Columbia Municipalities

