



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

---

**To:** Community Safety Committee **Date:** November 22, 2018  
**From:** Cecilia Achiam  
General Manager, Community Safety **File:** 12-8375-03/2018-Vol  
01  
**Re:** **Business Licences Quarterly Report – Third Quarter 2018**

---

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Business Licences Quarterly Report – Third Quarter 2018”, dated November 22, 2018, from the General Manager Community Safety be received for information.

Cecilia Achiam,  
General Manager, Community Safety  
(604-276-4122)

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: 
APPROVED BY CAO 	

## Staff Report

### Origin

This report provides a quarterly summary of activities in support of the regulation of business licences in the City of Richmond and supports Council's 2014-2018 Term Goal #8 Supportive Economic Development Environment:

*8.1. Richmond's policies, programs, and processes are business-friendly.*

### Analysis

#### Business Licence Revenue

Revenue from all business licences is increasing faster than has been observed in other quarterly reviews. Third quarter revenue is more than 20 per cent higher than the third quarter in 2017. This could be the result of an increased effort by staff to address businesses with unpaid licences but more analysis will be available at year-end.

The number of new businesses, those businesses not previously licenced, is also on track to exceed previous years. These statistics are illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Business Licence Revenue for 2015-2018

	<b>2018 YTD</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
New Businesses	1404	1801	1704	1651
Revenue (from Licences)	\$ 3,647,214	\$ 3,884,271	\$ 3,716,597	\$ 3,647,645

#### Application Processing

The licencing process ensures that businesses have received all required approvals from those organizations that regulate health and safety as well as any other municipal, provincial or federal requirements. This process should be both timely and thorough. Table 2 shows the measures that staff use to assess the current process and ensure that inspections and permits are issued without delay so that businesses can open as soon as possible.

Table 2: Status and Number of Business Licences

	<b>2017 Q1</b>	<b>2017 Q2</b>	<b>2017 Q3</b>	<b>2017 Q4</b>	<b>2018 Q1</b>	<b>2018 Q2</b>	<b>2018 Q3</b>
Valid Licences	13,242	13,912	14,062	13,870	13,940	14,368	14,285
Expired Licences	2,192	1,496	941	944	887	646	688
Suspended and Pending Applications	450	420	371	329	282	279	286
Total	15,884	15,828	15,374	15,143	15,109	15,293	15,259

Over the last two quarters, staff have been able to sustain the work started late last year to decrease the number of licences either expired or waiting to be processed. After a 70 per cent reduction in expired licences and a 38 per cent reduction in suspended or pending applications waiting to be processed, the numbers seen over the last two quarters remain stable.

### Business Licence Enforcement

The revenue collected from bylaw fines and tickets related to licencing has continued to increase after a low in 2016 (shown below in Table 3). This increase is due to:

- Increasing the fine for operating a business without a licence from \$100 to \$1,000;
- Increasing number of staff available for inspections and enforcement; and
- Enforcement of illegal taxis and other targeted campaigns.

This revenue is projected to continue to increase in 2018 as staff are planning targeted enforcement with other agencies such as the RCMP, BC Liquor Control and the Passenger Transportation Board.

Table 3: Revenue from Tickets

	<b>2018 YTD</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
Revenue from Tickets	\$ 21,150	\$ 16,350	\$ 1,700	\$ 8,951

### Illegal Ride Hailing

Earlier this year, Business Licencing staff, along with staff from the Passenger Transportation Board and RCMP, undertook enforcement of drivers operating illegal, unlicensed taxis on multiple occasions. In the course of four separate days over a period of five months, 25 drivers were stopped by the team of inspectors. Each driver received three tickets from the City of Richmond. These tickets were issued for:

- Operating a business without a licence (\$1,000);
- Failure to display a Chauffeur's Permit (\$50); and
- Failure to display a tariff card (\$100);

More than half of the drivers who were issued tickets have registered disputes to have their cases heard in Provincial Court and the first three cases were heard in Provincial Court on October 3, 2018. In all three cases, the drivers were found guilty of all charges and ordered to pay the fine amounts (the judge did not reduce the fine amount).

It is encouraging that the court did not reduce or reject the tickets and fines as they were issued by the City and that the enforcement procedure was upheld upon questioning during a trial. While it is hoped that the successful prosecution of drivers in court will discourage future drivers, the enforcement team is working with the RCMP and the PTB to schedule additional enforcement action.

### Sign Enforcement

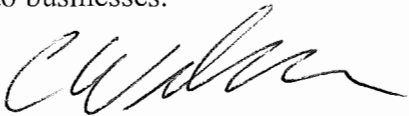
The main focus of enforcement of signs in the third quarter, and into the start of the fourth quarter, was the enforcement of municipal election signs. Staff received more complaints than in previous elections and will report back on the statistics at the end of the fourth quarter.

### **Financial Impact**

None.

### **Conclusion**

This report provides an update on third quarter statistics to the Community Safety Committee from the Business Licences department. The statistics and commentary provided in this report will inform discussions related to policy, staffing and resources for licences and permits related to businesses.



Carli Williams, P.Eng.  
Manager, Community Bylaws and Licencing  
(604-276-4136)