



To:	Community Safety Committee	Date:	May 26, 2026
From:	Anthony Capuccinello Iraci General Manager, Law and Community Safety	File:	12-8375-03/2025-Vol 01
Re:	Business Licence Activity Report - First Quarter 2026		

Staff Recommendation

That the report titled “Business Licence Activity Report – First Quarter 2026” dated May 26, 2026, from the Director, Community Bylaws and Licencing, be received for information.

Executive Summary

In the first quarter of 2026, Richmond’s Business Licensing program continued to demonstrate strong performance, supporting Council’s priorities for sustainable community growth and responsible financial management. Revenue remained strong compared to the same period last year, while the number of valid licences increased and expired licences declined, reflecting ongoing business activity and effective staff follow-up. Although fewer new licences were issued, there was continued demand for licensing services through change applications and file updates, suggesting a dynamic business environment.

Staff also maintained a proactive, compliance-focused enforcement approach by working with businesses to resolve licensing issues before pursuing stronger enforcement measures. This strategy helped encourage voluntary compliance and supported accurate licence records across the city. Overall, the quarter reflects solid financial results, effective administration, and continued efforts to promote business compliance and support Richmond’s economic health.

Staff Report

Origin

This report provides a review of business licence activity in the first quarter of 2026.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth:

Strategic and sustainable growth that supports long-term community needs and a well-planned and prosperous city.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #4 Responsible Financial Management and Governance:

Responsible financial management and efficient use of public resources to meet the needs of the community.

Analysis

Business Licence Revenue

The total revenue collected in the first quarter of 2026 was \$2,221,303 representing a 20 percent increase compared to revenue in the same quarter of 2025.

Table 1: Business Licence Revenue comparing Q1 2025 to Q1 2026

	Q1 2025	Q1 2026
Revenue	\$ 1,848,366	\$ 2,221,303

Application Processing

The licencing application process is a crucial step since it confirms whether the businesses have the required approvals from agencies that regulate health, safety and other municipal, provincial or federal requirements. This process is overseen with thoroughness and efficiency and the following measures of performance are used:

- **“Valid Licences”** is the number of businesses with valid licences.
- **“Expired Licences”** is the number of businesses that have not paid to renew their licence within 60 days of being sent an invoice. Staff follow up with these businesses regarding the outstanding licencing fees and confirm whether they are permanently closed.
- **“Pending/Change Applications”** are businesses that have applied for a new licence or a change request of an existing licence, but are waiting for their applications to be processed. Staff work to keep this number low by prioritizing these applications.
- **“Total Licences”** is the total number of business licences that are valid, expired (and being checked) and under application review.

Table 2 represents the total number of business licences and their status for Q1 2025 and Q1 2026. These statistics are reported quarterly, rather than annually, as the numbers fluctuate throughout the year due to a variety of factors such as application intake, premise alterations, business information changes, and permanent business closures.

Table 2: Number and Status of Business Licences comparing Q1 2025 and Q1 2026

	2025 Q1	2026 Q1
Valid Licences	13,708	14,451
Expired Licences	3,110	2,071
Pending/Change Applications	752	845
Total Licences	17,570	17,367

Q1 2026 total licences decreased by 203 (1%) compared to the same quarter in 2025. Valid licences increased by 743 (5%), while pending/change applications increased by 93 (12%) compared to Q1 2025, which may indicate higher activity in business relocations, ownership changes, or modifications to existing licences. Notably, the number of expired licences decreased by 1,039 (33%) in Q1 2026 reflecting staff's continued efforts to follow up on outstanding applicants, confirm their status, and ensure the licences are recorded in the appropriate category.

Table 3 highlights the number of new business licences issued. A total of 437 new business licences were issued in Q1 2026, compared with 556 in Q1 2025, representing a 21.4% decrease. The decline may reflect changing business activity trends within a challenging economic environment, however, fluctuations in quarterly business licence activity are to be expected.

Table 3: New Business Licences Issued

	2025 Q1	2026 Q1
Total Issued	556	437

Business Licence Enforcement

In the first quarter of 2026, staff issued 199 bylaw violation notices for various offences, including operating a business without a licence or contrary to licence conditions. Of these, 162 violations were related to businesses operating without a valid licence and 29 violations were related to failure to comply with term or condition of a licence violation.

Businesses operating without a valid licence are typically issued a warning and provided with steps to achieve compliance. If a follow-up inspection confirms continued non-compliance, a bylaw violation notice is issued. Fine revenue reflects staff efforts in following up with non-compliant businesses which may include converting a violation notice to a warning where a business applies for, pays for, and obtain a business licence in a timely manner.

This strategy of targeting non-compliant businesses resulted in a considerable number of businesses opting to come into compliance rather than being subject to more bylaw enforcement.

In many cases, staff exercised their discretion to convert finable violations into warning violations for businesses with no significant history of bylaw enforcement, provided they applied for, paid for, and obtained a licence in a timely manner. Table 4 highlights total enforcement revenue in Q1 2026 compared to Q1 2025.

Table 4: Business Licence Enforcement Revenue Q1 2025 and Q1 2026

	2025 Q1	2026 Q1
Revenue from Tickets	\$ 26,250	\$ 27,500

Budgetary Implications

None

Conclusion

This report provides the Community Safety Committee with an overview of business licence activity and revenue for the first quarter of 2026. Overall, revenue remained strong, valid licences increased year over year and expired licences declined. These results reflect continued business activity in Richmond and staff's proactive efforts to support accurate licencing records and business compliance.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Corrado
Director, Community Bylaws and Licencing

Report Contributors

This report was prepared by Mark Corrado, Director, Community Bylaws and Licencing and reviewed by Finance and Economic Development.

Endorsed by Serena Lusk, CAO