



To: Finance Committee

Date: July 4, 2007

From: Amarjeet S. Rattan
Manager, Business Liaison

File:

Re: B.C. Single Business Licence (SBL) Initiative

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
General Manager, Business & Financial Services
(4095)

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
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 easier 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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The Best Place on Earth

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.

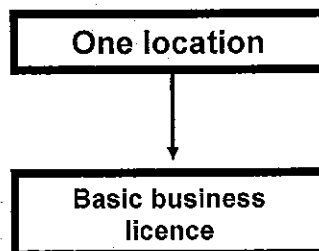


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A Workable Solution

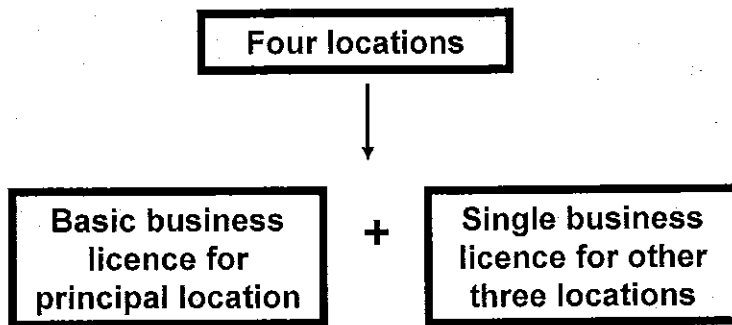
- **Model for a Single Business Licence in British Columbia**

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

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

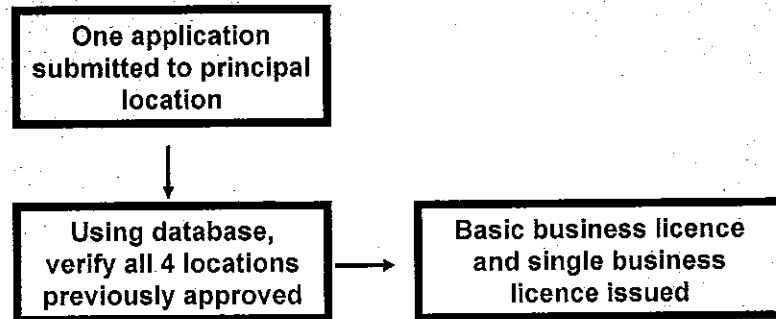
Data Base

New Business - Four Locations

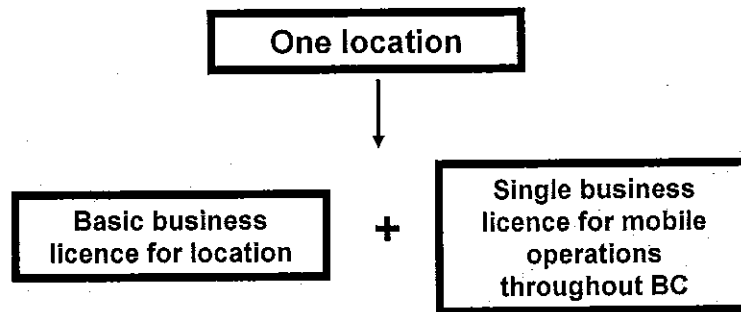
Name: Roberto's Pizza	Business Number: 123456789
Owner: Roberto Fino	Type of business: Restaurant
<u>Locations:</u>	<u>Pending/Approved?</u>
123 1 st Ave, Prince George (Principal)	Approved
123 97 th St, Oliver	Pending
123 Columbia Ave, Castlegar	Pending
123 KLO Rd, Kelowna	Approved
Application date: 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



TO: MAYOR & EACH
 COUNCILLOR
 FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

*PC: Amarjeet Kattan
 Andrew Nazareth
 for information*

		INT
✓	DW	
	GJ	<i>ES</i>
	KY	
	DB	
	WB	

May 23, 2007

PHOTOCOPIED 167983/121166

His Worship Mayor Malcolm Brodie
 and Councillors
 City of Richmond
 6911 No. 3 Road
 Richmond, British Columbia
 V6Y 2C1

MAY 29 2007
[Signature]
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*0150-01
 Nr 8275-06*

Dear Mayor Brodie and Councillors:

During the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) convention in October 2006, the Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier, challenged British Columbia to become the first province in Canada to establish a single business licence framework for local government, which will reduce costly duplication and encourage business growth and employment in all regions of British Columbia.

The Ministry of Small Business and Revenue has been charged to lead this government initiative and is working in partnership with the Ministry of Community Services, UBCM and the OneStop Business Registry to implement a strategy which will result in a single business licence for British Columbia by 2008.

We are seeking your assistance to implement this initiative, which will result in increased economic development and reduced regulatory burden for citizens, taxpayers and businesses.

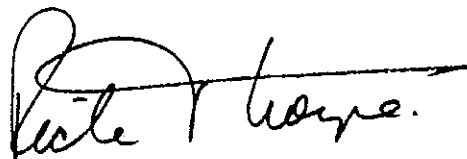
The need for greater harmonization was also raised at the UBCM convention in the Task Force on Community Opportunities Report. This well-received report noted several municipalities in the province have already established inter-municipal business licensing schemes, and others have similar plans. These arrangements allow businesses to acquire a business licence in the municipality where they are physically located and conduct business in partnering municipalities.

We will be studying these examples as we develop a model to be implemented across the province. We appreciated your input at Local Government Management Association meetings and UBCM area association meetings held in April and May where more information was made available.

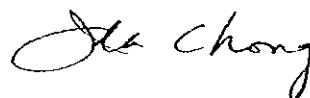
As we continue to streamline and simplify the impact of regulations on small business, business owners will have more time to devote to what is most important: running and building successful small businesses. A strong and dynamic business sector provides jobs and contributes to the health and prosperity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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Thorpe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rick Thorpe
Minister of Small Business and Revenue

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ida Chong". The signature is cursive and elegant, with a prominent loop at the beginning.

Ida Chong, FCGA
Minister of Community Services

cc: Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier

Brenda Binnie, President
Union of British Columbia Municipalities

TO MAYOR & EACH
COUNCILLOR
FROM CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

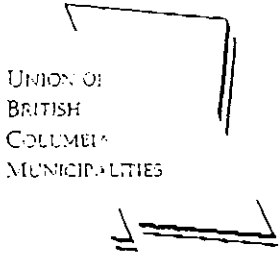
		INT
	DW	
	GJ	<i>JK</i>
	KY	
	DB	
	WB	

TO: Mayors and Councils

FROM: Brenda Binnie, UBCM President *PC: Amarjeet Rattan for information*

DATE: June 11, 2007

RE: **SINGLE BUSINESS LICENCE INITIATIVE**
My Response to May 23/07 letter from Ministers Thorpe and Chong



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ubcm@richmet.bc.ca

8275-06

I wish to provide clarification in response to the above referenced letter that was recently circulated to you.

Ministers Thorpe and Chong have written to you about a proposal for a single business licence and have indicated that this initiative is in partnership with UBCM. While UBCM has agreed to participate in discussions, the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue is leading the single business licence initiative.

I wish to advise that as UBCM President I signaled my reservations about the scope and timelines associated with this initiative to Minister Thorpe back on March 28, 2007.

By way of background, in February, UBCM was invited by Minister Thorpe to shape this initiative and I accepted an appointment to the Ministers Advisory Council. The Council was scheduled to meet once but that meeting was cancelled. I am relieved to learn the first meeting has now been scheduled for this month.

Even though the Advisory Committee is only now meeting to consider the proposal for a single business licence, the Ministry has proceeded to undertake consultations with local government. Some of you may have attended one of these consultation sessions already. UBCM staff has been involved at the working group level in order to monitor development and have continued to convey concerns about the scope and timelines.

The genesis of this idea came out of a recommendation from the Community Opportunities Task Force (COTF). I served as a member of that Committee. However, the scope of the COTF recommendation was limited to mobile businesses.

I want to assure you that UBCM has no agenda on this issue. We have no member-approved mandate to pursue a single business licence. As a member of the COTF, I thought that there was merit in exploring a single business licence for trades in given regions. Neither I, nor the UBCM Executive, have indicated our support for a single business licence for municipalities throughout BC.

UBCM is continuing to participate at both the working group level and at the Advisory Committee level. We have heard the concerns of the members and will continue to represent your interests to the Province on this matter.

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JUN 12 2007

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