



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee **Date:** October 17, 2017
From: Cecilia Achiam, MCIP, BCSLA **File:** 12-8275-01/2017-Vol 01
General Manager, Community Safety
Re: **Business Licences Quarterly Report – Third Quarter 2017**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Business Licences Quarterly Report – Third Quarter 2017”, dated October 17, 2017, from the General Manager Community Safety be received for information.

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

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS: CA
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 continues to track ahead of 2016 and should result in revenues increasing five to seven per cent in 2017. This increase is utilized to offset an increase to temporary staff that are helping to pursue unpaid, expired business licences.

The number of new businesses, those businesses not previously licenced, is also up since last year. These statistics are illustrated in the chart below:

Table 1: Business Licencing Revenue for 2016-2017

	2017 YTD	2016	2015
New Business Licences	1478	1704	1651
Revenue (from Licences)	\$ 2,988,961	\$ 3,716,597	\$ 3,647,645

Application Processing

Staffing changes were made in early 2017 to address the increasing number of expired licences as well as those waiting to be processed. This has sustained a steady decline of the number of businesses with expired licences and a decrease in the number of businesses with suspended or pending applications. In particular, the decrease in expired licences is quite significant as it is 37 per cent lower than last quarter and 57 per cent lower than when it peaked in the first quarter of 2017 (when the staffing changes were initiated). The full summary is in Table 2.

Table 2: Total Business Licence Renewals and Applications

	2016 Q2	2016 Q3	2016 Q4	2017 Q1	2017 Q2	2017 Q3
Valid Licences	13,407	13,402	13,253	13,242	13,912	14,062
Expired Licences	1,882	1,870	1,975	2,192	1,496	941
Suspended and Pending Applications	487	576	443	450	420	371
Total (excludes expired licences)	13,894	13,978	13,696	13,692	14,332	14,433

Business Licence Enforcement

The focus of business licence enforcement in the third quarter of 2017 continued to be bed and breakfast businesses. In the fourth quarter, enforcement of Bed and Breakfast businesses will return to standard levels as the tourist season winds down and occupancy rates are lower. Staff will instead focus on businesses with expired licences and those businesses not operating within the regulations of City bylaws. While revenue is up from previous years, it is likely to continue to rise now that the value of tickets for “operating without a business licence” has increased to \$1000.

Table 3: Business Licencing Enforcement

	2017 Year To Date	2016	2015
Revenue from Tickets	\$ 14,150	\$1,700	\$ 8,950

Update on Bed And Breakfast Licences

The number of licenced bed and breakfast (“B&B’s”) businesses has increased to 46 in the City of Richmond.

At a Business Licence Hearing on October 10, 2017, Council extended the deadline for compliance for two bed and breakfast businesses. Council was also informed that a third business, previously non-compliant, has completed all the required work and is now in compliance with City bylaws. Staff will report back to Council in January on the progress of the two non-compliant businesses.

Sign Bylaw

A full-time Sign Inspector has now been hired into the Business Licences group. The Sign Inspector is providing enforcement for signs that are prohibited or installed without a permit and is also providing education that is consistent with the City’s new Language on Regulated Signs Policy.

Taxis

Council has recently approved changes to the taxi approval process. There have not been any new applications since this change but staff are preparing a letter to the Passenger Transportation Board to express Council’s request that 50 per cent of all new licences be for accessible taxis.

Liquor Licencing

Council received a one year update on the changes to the City’s Liquor Policy that were approved in 2016. Liquor applications continue at a steady rate with a range of applications including new liquor primary licences, location changes and changes to seating numbers.

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 business, signs, taxis and liquor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carli Edwards', with a stylized, cursive script.

Carli Edwards, P.Eng
Acting Senior Manager, Community Bylaws, Policy & Programs and Licencing
(604-276-4136)