

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

5. Practical Updates to Modernize Vancouver's Business License Policies

Submitted by: Councillor Bligh

WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver is known for, and prides itself on being, a vibrant, cosmopolitan 21st Century city, attracting businesses and individuals seeking opportunities in a modern urban setting;
2. A core responsibility of the City and its elected Council is to ensure that an efficient, modern regulatory framework is in place at all times to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and a conducive environment within which businesses can thrive;
3. Fostering economic activity, growth, and innovation, as well as creating the conditions to support jobs and employment and a diverse range of commercial activities, are fundamental to what a city is;
4. Members of Council are frequently alerted to obscure, outdated, and/or seemingly unnecessary rules and regulations imposed by the City that only hinder economic growth and frustrate commercial activity. Several current examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Food and liquor establishments that would like to offer Karaoke as an entertainment option for their customers but are not able to do so because their zoning and business license category only allow for live entertainment
 - Retail stores, specifically in Gastown, that sell lingerie but are prohibited from selling other adult-oriented items due to these items being restricted to the "Adult Retail Store" license category under the City's Zoning and Development Bylaw
 - Bars and liquor-serving establishments that would like to include arcade entertainment for their customers' enjoyment but are unable to do so based on current zoning and business license category restrictions
5. It is incumbent upon Council to address policies, rules, and/or regulations and policy frameworks brought to their attention that needlessly hinder and/or impede innovation, entrepreneurship, and/or only serve to frustrate legitimate commercial activity and the city's economic competitiveness; and
6. By rectifying known impediments to Vancouver's economic competitiveness and the city's ability to attract investment and create local job opportunities, Council is tangibly demonstrating a collective commitment to promoting a dynamic and thriving business economy.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to review the specific business license situations referenced in the preamble of this motion, all of which have been brought to the attention of the elected members of Council and report back with any recommended by-law and zoning amendments and/or any associated implications that would result from such actions;

FURTHER THAT staff be directed to conduct this work in collaboration with representatives from the relevant industries, the local businesses affected, and other stakeholders to ensure that the City's rules and regulations in this regard are relevant, meaningful, and demonstrate the City's adaptability to the ever-evolving economic and business landscape in our city.

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