

# Tri-City business licence another step closer

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Coquitlam city council gave unanimous support on Monday to a proposed intermunicipal business licence program.  
Photograph By TRI-CITY NEWS FILE PHOTO

Tri-City businesses operating in more than one of the municipalities will almost surely be able to pay a simple flat fee for an inter-municipal business licence, allowing them to operate legally throughout the region.

Monday, Coquitlam council added its unanimous approval for first three readings of the business licence bylaw; Port Coquitlam and Port Moody did the same last week.

Coun. Selina Robinson said the move shows what's possible when the three cities work together on a project that will make life easier for local residents.

"We're moving from collaboration to 'collaboraction' and we ought to be doing more of this," she said.

"I hope it signals further 'co-operation' as well," quipped Coun. Terry O'Neill.

The inter-municipal business licence (IBL) will allow business owners - including plumbers, landscapers and caterers - who work across municipal boundaries to pay \$165 on top of their annual business licence for a mobile business permit. Business owners are still required to purchase a standard licence in the city where their office or shop is located.

The IBL is expected to generate increased revenue for each of the cities because it will be easier for businesses to comply with business licensing requirements.

The Tri-Cities task force that has been working on the project since April sought help from the provincial government on a revenue-splitting formula for the new IBL fee. Under that formula, Coquitlam will receive 29% of the revenues while Port Coquitlam will get 18% and Port Moody 53% to avoid any revenue loss from current levels.

A Coquitlam staff report anticipates a 10% rise in business licence compliance if the IBL is approved, resulting in new revenue of \$75,000. A similar IBL in the Okanagan-Similkameen region saw a 30% rise in compliance.

Coun. Craig Hodge, the Coquitlam representative on the task force, thanked the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce and staff for helping to bring the IBL to fruition.

"What we have proved is that the three cities have a lot in common, and there really is a willingness to come together," he said.

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