

NO: **R182**

COUNCIL DATE: **OCTOBER 20, 2014**

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **October 15, 2014**

FROM: **City Solicitor**

FILE: **3900-20-13680**

SUBJECT: **Online Business License Applications**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Legal Services Division recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Approve an amendment to the Business License By-law, 1999, No. 13680 (the "By-law") as documented in Appendix "I" of this report; and
3. Authorize the City Clerk to bring forward the related by-law amendment as described in this report for the required readings and adoption.

## INTENT

The intent of this report is to introduce amendments to the Business License By-law, that if approved, will facilitate a leading-edge solution to move the entire business licensing process online. This new tool will offer business owners the option to submit or change an existing business license application on-line, thereby improving efficiency for Surrey businesses.

## BACKGROUND

The By-law Enforcement & Licensing Services Section will be introducing an online business license application in October 2014. To allow for the initial processing of the application by staff, a refundable deposit of \$50 will be applied to applications received online at the time the applicant submits the application to the City of Surrey. If the business license application is issued, that deposit will be applied to the first year's license fee imposed under the By-law essentially eliminating the cost of going online.

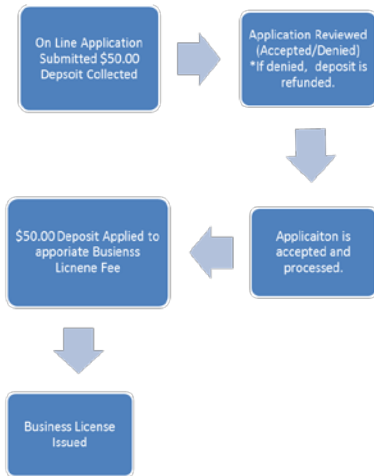
## DISCUSSION

Allowing businesses to apply online will alter when the personal interaction with staff occurs in relation to their business license application. Currently, the determination of the applicable business license fee and whether the zoning of the property would permit the intended business takes place before or during the submission of the application. When an application is submitted online, these determinations are not made until after the application is made. As such, a mechanism to collect a deposit of the applicable business license fee, until

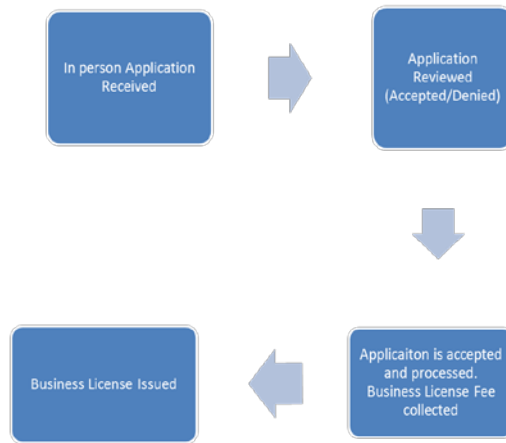
the full amount is determined, is necessary for the City to complete its initial review of a business license application submitted online.

The \$50 deposit will be non-refundable except in cases, once reviewed, it is determined that the type of business being applied for is not permitted due to the zoning restrictions. An application received in person would be immediately reviewed, and the applicant would be advised at that time if the property is not suitable for the applicant's intended purpose prior to any collection of the application fee.

#### Application Received Online



#### Application Received In Person



### SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation of this report, if adopted, will assist in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter by using the City's resources more efficiently; more particularly, the following Charter scope actions:

- SC18: Community Economic Development; and
- EC6: Sustainable Practices through Business Licensing Operational Requirements.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, the Legal Services Division recommends that Council:

- Approve amendments to the Business License By-law, 1999, No. 1368o (the "By-law") as documented in Appendix "I" of this report; and

- Authorize the City Clerk to bring forward the related by-law amendment as described in this report for the required readings and adoption.

CRAIG MacFARLANE  
City Solicitor

JR/nj/ld

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c.c. Manager, By-law Enforcement & Licensing Services

Appendix "I": Proposed Amendments to Business License By-law No. 13680

**APPENDIX "I"**

CITY OF SURREY

BY-LAW NO. \_\_\_\_\_

A by-law to amend the provisions of "Business License By-law, 1999 No. 13680" as amended.  
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The Council of the City of Surrey, in open meeting assembled, ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1. "Business License By-law, 1999, No. 13680" as amended is hereby further amended as follows:

a) By adding Section 14.1 after Section 14 as follows:

"14.1 An application made online must be accompanied by payment of an application fee of \$50.00. If the business license is issued, the application fee will be applied to the first year's license fee imposed under Section 21 of this By-law. If the business license is refused because the use for which the license is sought is in violation of Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, then the application fee will be refunded to the applicant. If the business license is refused for any other reason, the application fee is not refundable."

2. This By-law shall be cited for all purposes as "Business License By-law, 1999, No. 13680, Amendment By-law, 2014, No. \_\_\_\_\_".

PASSED FIRST READING on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

PASSED SECOND READING on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

PASSED THIRD READING on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

RECONSIDERED AND FINALLY ADOPTED, signed by the Mayor and Clerk, and sealed with the Corporate Seal on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_MAYOR

\_\_\_\_\_CLERK