

# **Sturgeon County Business Licensing White Paper**

**December 2016**

**Terry Stacey Ecd (Ret'd)**

# Sturgeon County Business Licensing White Paper

In 2016 Councillor Evans made the following motion that was approved by Council:

That Sturgeon County Council directs staff to include an initiative to evaluate (in 2017) and as appropriate recommend implementation (2018) of Business Licensing for Council's consideration when approving the 2017-2019 Corporate Business Plan.

In order to fulfill the motion it was determined that a white paper be developed assessing the pros and cons of Sturgeon County developing a business license system. This includes looking at how the County currently deals with permitting for businesses, best practices in the Capital Region, and financial impacts on the County to implement a business license system.

## **The Challenge:**

The main challenge is identifying and communicating what is behind the reason for looking at a business license system and determining if implementing such a system will mitigate the issues currently facing the County.

Six interviews were held with Councillor Evans, Chair of the Economic Development Board, Current Planning & Development, Economic Development and Protective Services. The current situation and impetus for examining business licensing in Sturgeon County is outlined below. Full notes from the interviews can be found in Appendix 1.

### Reason for looking at Business Licensing

Councillor Evans made the motion with the premise that information and data on businesses operating in the County is needed from an economic development standpoint. Without knowing what businesses are operating in the County, how can the County, through Economic Development, assist and promote these businesses to be successful and grow. Can business licensing be a tool to acquire that information?

Interviews with County staff see the need to implement and enforce the Land Use Bylaw fairly and consistently. From the for Protective Services standpoint, there is a desire to understand where businesses are located within the County. A business license system may be a tool to assist in these areas.

Why do municipalities pass business license bylaws? The impetus mainly comes from economic development and the need for information on businesses operating in the municipality. Information obtained through a licensing system forms the cornerstone of business retention and expansion (BR/E) strategies, which is the foundation of any economic development program. Statistics from Blane Canada Ltd.'s research shows that most of a community's job growth and capital investment comes from companies already located there. An urban/suburban community will average 76% of their growth from existing employers. A rural community is even more dependent on internal growth.

BR|E programs have five traditional goals:

- Identify companies with plans to expand
- Identify companies at risk of leaving/downsizing
- Identify company and community problems
- Provide assistance
- Build relationships

One component of a successful BR/E program is to start with a good database of who your businesses currently are and what they do. Communities that have business licensing rely on this database to provide that foundational information.

### History

In the early 2000's Sturgeon County had a robust business directory. This was a result of the Province providing grants to assist municipalities in data collection and the information was part of a province wide business directory. A hard copy directory was printed and neighbouring towns were part of the directory. The project was lead by economic development and staff was hired through the provincial program. However over time funding ran out from the province and the support to sustain the database was no longer a priority of the County.

### Current Permitting and Information Gathering Process

Sturgeon County currently issues development permits for commercial, industrial and home based businesses. Home based businesses in the 1, 2 and 3 category are issued development permits on a calendar year renewal. An excel spreadsheet is kept with a listing of each permit and when they are up for renewal. A letter is sent alerting the business owner that their permit is up for renewal . If they do not respond within a couple of months they are sent another letter. If the list shows after a couple of years that they still haven't renewed they are considered to be out of business. There is no cost for renewal. There is no automation of development permitting in the County and therefore no easy way for Current Planning & Development to share the information with Economic Development and other departments other than an excel spreadsheet.

Currently when a business comes in and they need a development permit, they deal with Current Planning & Development. Economic Development needs to know who they are and what business they are operating. The right information needs to be collected so it can be shared from Current Planning & Development to Economic Development.

The challenge currently faced in Economic Development is that there are data gaps around businesses operating in the County. For example to pursue agricultural initiatives there is not a good database of those type of businesses in the County. In order to do business retention and attraction it is necessary to have good information. Economic Development wants to be supportive of local businesses and develop programs that do that, but without a database of businesses operating in the County they can only work with the ones they are aware of.

From a Protective Services and Enforcement perspective they are reactionary and deal with complaints, mainly animals and stop orders for Current Planning & Development. Without a database of where

businesses are operating and what they may have stored on site, it is hard to deal with emergencies or be proactive.

### **Best Practice Research:**

In Alberta, only urban municipalities, towns and cities, have had business licensing. Traditionally Counties have not had business licensing. Through the research for this white paper, that is changing. It is being driven by economic development departments in conjunction with planning & development and emergency services departments.

For this white paper the four counties in the Capital Region were looked at. As well an additional four – two that have industrial bases and two that are on the periphery of a major urban centre. A snapshot of what is happening in these eight counties is outlined below. Full notes from each interview can be found in Appendix 2.

#### Lacombe County

- does not have a business license
- on ag land or residential they are issuing development permits for businesses for a 3 year term. Renewals can be 5 or 10 years depending on the type of business and impact on surrounding areas.
- They do check up on businesses that they think may be creating an issue or going beyond their permit conditions, but again this is usually done because a complaint has been lodged.

#### Lamont County

- Since about 2008 has had a voluntary business license.
- Anyone that comes in for a development permit is told about the voluntary business license. However there is no follow up to encourage the business to actually apply.
- Cost is \$25 per year.
- Managed through the Planning & Development section and information shared with Economic Development.

#### Leduc County

- Currently does not have a business license but is having discussions about it. Looking at it from an economic development standpoint as came out of their recently approved Economic Development and Growth Management Strategy 2016 – 2021.
- New regulations have just come out for home based businesses – issuing them temporary permits for the first year.

#### Mountainview County

- Currently don't have business licensing but looking at it. They are working with Ec Dev Solutions to develop a new economic development strategy and one of the things identified is that business licensing should be an action item.
- Currently they have a huge issue around development permits for homebased and change of use. People don't understand why they need permits as they are not "developing" anything.

Because of this confusion there needs to be a lot of education done. In 2017 they will be working on more clarity in their Land Use Bylaw.

- Part of discussion is whether or not they could use a business license to take the place of a development permit for low impact businesses.

#### Parkland County

- Had a business license, was done in conjunction with Spruce Grove and Stony Plain. When it was instituted it was part of their tri-municipal agreement and meant to allow businesses to work in all 3 municipalities. The business would take out the license in the community the business was located in. Then they paid an additional fee to be able to work in the other 2 municipalities.
- The County over time was not enforcing the business license bylaw and in fact neither CUrrent Planning & Development nor economic development, the two areas that needed the data, was in charge of the bylaw. It was in limbo. They looked at the purpose and outcome of having a business license and couldn't justify the value and it was seen as another tax. Six months ago they got rid of the bylaw.
- As part of the development permit process there is an approval to operate certificate issued.

#### Red Deer County

- Looking at implementing business licenses in 2017. Bylaw going to Council in December 2016
- Came about as an economic development initiative as well as emergency services. Can't do business attraction and retention without a good database of information on who operates what type of businesses in the County. From an emergency services perspective everyone is looking at the Wood Buffalo situation. When the fire happened and then the recovery process the municipality knew who to contact because they had business licensing and could reach out through that database.
- They issue al their development permits on a 5 year basis

#### Strathcona County

- Does not have business licensing and in fact they promote that fact as an incentive for business to locate in the County. Council supports this idea.
- They put together their business database from various sources:
  - Hoover's (a north American database that you pay to be a part of);
  - Chamber of Commerce directory;
  - Posse permitting system (they pull down monthly reports to see who has been granted permits to operate a business).

#### Wetaskiwin County

- Does not have a business license and have not considered implementing one.
- At one time the County got business information with the development permit and then put it into a business directory that was done in paper format.
- Data collection is not a current priority.

### **Observations from what the other Counties shared:**

1. Municipalities that have business licensing are using it as an economic development tool for their business retention and attraction programs. They are also using it as an emergency services tool as well and cite the Wood Buffalo recent experience.
2. Municipalities that have or are in the process of implementing business licensing, justify the fee charged for the license as a means to cover costs for maintenance of their business directory and for doing ongoing business promotion and education. Fees are part of the economic development budget.
3. Business Licensing is handled through the Planning & Development departments as it is the last step in the process once all other permits and conditions have been issued and met. The link through to economic development is critical.
4. Doing a voluntary business license does not work well. Lamont County only has 30 businesses that have paid the \$25 annual fee to get their voluntary license.
5. Having a voluntary business registration form does not work well. Strathcona County only has a fraction of businesses registered and gets about a 10% response rate to their mailout encouraging businesses to provide them with information. Time will tell on whether Parkland County has the same kind of response as they are only just starting down this path.
6. In the absence of a business license database, when development permits are issued by Planning & Development that information needs to be shared with economic development and emergency services. Having a shared electronic database is critical, as is having the right information areas on the forms to collect the data.
7. Municipalities are watching what is coming out of the MGA in terms of intermunicipal cooperation and grant funding and whether this will push for intermunicipal business licensing.

### **Considerations for Sturgeon County**

1. Is business licensing the right tool for Sturgeon County?

Business licensing is a tool for municipalities to collect and track businesses and business related data within their jurisdiction. There are commercial databases such as Hoovers, however you are reliant on the information they collect, which may not be the level of detail the County wants and may not cover off many home based or agricultural businesses.

Determining if it is the right tool for the County needs further examination. Part of that is a broader discussion around where does Economic Development and a BR/E strategy fall within Council's Strategic Plan.

2. Do the benefits of having a business license outweigh the perception that it is just another tax?

In communities that have licensing the annual fee charged is fairly small - \$50 - \$100 range. The funds collected could be revenue for the economic development program and support the BR/E strategy. There has to be perceived and real value for the businesses. Things that other counties are doing range from the virtual marketplace in Parkland County, to business lunch and learns in

Red Deer County.

3. If licensing is pursued will there be perception of additional 'Red Tape' in the County, which showcases itself as 'business friendly' ?

That perception will most likely always exist whether there is business licensing or not. One of the best ways to counter that is to make the administrative timeframes required to obtain a business licence flow seamlessly in with the development/building permit process. Education will also play a key role in assisting businesses understand why they need permits and/or licenses. Providing value for the money as outlined in #2 is also crucial.

4. Will the costs associated with bringing in business licensing outweigh the benefits?

No question that there will be costs associated with establishing business licensing. From development process review to data collection to issuing licenses annually to an actual database to store the information. Staff do not feel that they have the capacity, within currently staffing levels, to take this on.

Additional staffing costs were identified in the interviews. Until it is determined where business licensing will reside within the organization and proper process and documentation review is done, it is difficult to put an actual dollar amount on what implementation and ongoing maintenance of business licensing will cost.

The real question should be - What is the cost of not having a good database of information and how is that hampering economic development and the growth of the County? This may or may not include a business license system.

5. If a business license bylaw is implemented in the future, what is the priority of enforcement?

Passing a bylaw has commitment attached to it, both from administration and from Council. The old adage if you don't intend to enforce it, then don't pass it, needs to be considered. Enforcement is always an issue, but in the counties that have set clear parameters it is all about fairness to all.

### **Considerations for Next Steps**

1. Build a team approach within Current Planning & Development and Development, Economic Development, Protective Services (enforcement) and GIS (IS Group) to establish clear roles and responsibilities. In the absence of business licensing currently, information can still be collected and shared. This may mean adding in a few questions or a separate page to the development permit when the permit applied for is for a business. That information needs to be captured and shared with the other departments.
2. As part of #1 above there will most likely be process and documentation review that needs to be done. With the adoption of the new Land Use Bylaw this is quite timely.

3. Investigate commercial databases such as Hoovers to determine if it has sufficient data on County businesses that would make a business license system redundant at this time.
4. Continued monitoring of other counties, especially Red Deer County as they pass their bylaw and implement licensing in 2017.
5. Consider the Economic Development Board taking the lead for further investigation including business consultations. Many counties that have either implemented or are considering implementing licensing, have licensing and BR/E as part of their economic development strategic plan.



# APPENDIX 1

## Sturgeon County Interviews:

### Councillor Evans

- Made the following motion:  
That Sturgeon County Council directs staff to include an initiative to evaluate (in 2017) and as appropriate recommend implementation (2018) of Business Licensing for Council's consideration when approving the 2017-2019 Corporate Business Plan.
- The thought behind the motion is that information and data is needed from an economic development standpoint, on what businesses are operating in the county. Without knowing who is doing what, how can the county, through economic development, assist and promote these businesses to be successful and grow.
- The county has been moving from a rural one to a more rural one. In doing so it is important that businesses are compliant with the rules and regulations.
- Need to find a way to bring everyone together and work with them and promote them and protect them. Could business licensing be a tool to do this?
- Education will be key as many existing businesses don't know that they need permits. We need to work with them and assist them.
- There is a responsible rural component to this, the need to be more proactive not reactive.
- There is an aversion to red tape in the county so whatever is done needs to address that.
- Need to show what the benefits would be to businesses to implement a business license system.

### Pat Mahoney – Protective Services Manager

### Ken Lauinger – Supervisor Enforcement Services

- # 1 priority is to enforce municipal bylaws including the Land Use Bylaw. Currently mainly dealing with # animals and stop orders for planning. Not clear as to the extent of further enforcement for planning.
- If a business license bylaw was approved the enforcement responsibility would have to be clearly laid out. If enforcement services was expected to enforce it, they do not currently have the capacity to take on further work. Especially if that also means further LUB enforcement.
- Feel they would need a CPO2 to handle the added workload. Consideration should be given for a dedicated CPO2 for planning.
- Cost of hiring a CPO2 would be in the range of \$140,000 – salary, benefits, vehicle, computer, phone etc.

### Tyler Westover – Economic Development Manager

- The challenge currently faced in economic development is that there are data gaps around businesses operating in the county. For example to pursue agricultural initiatives there is not a good database of those type of businesses in the county. In order to do business retention and attraction it is necessary to have good information.

- Currently when a business comes in and they need a development permit, economic development needs to know who they are and what business they are operating. Not sure how that information is collected so it can be shared from planning to economic development.
- Economic development wants to be supportive of local businesses and develop programs that do that, but without a database of businesses operating in the county they can only work with the ones they are aware of.
- Needs to be value added shown to businesses in order to get them on board. One idea is to use the funds generated from business licensing for a grant program of some sort. Another idea could be an expedited development approval process for those businesses that comply.
- Perhaps a pilot project of some sort to transition from no data to full fledged licensing.
- Whatever tool is used, it needs to be integrated with planning for any kind of system to work.
- Not sure if the new MGA will force municipalities to come together on business licensing.
- Currently there is no capacity within economic development to take on management of a new process.

Clayton Kittlitz – Manager, Planning & Development

Shannon Gagnon – Planning & Development Assistant

- From a planning perspective the control and enforcement of home based businesses that have exceeded their permit conditions is an issue.
- Home Based Businesses 1,2 and 3 are issued development permits on a calendar year renewal. An excel spreadsheet is kept with a listing of each permit and when they are up for renewal. A letter is sent alerting the business owner that their permit is up for renewal . If they do not respond within a couple of months they are sent another letter. If the list shows after a couple of years that they still haven't renewed they are considered to be out of business. There is no cost for renewal.
- There is no automation of development permitting in the county and therefore no easy way for planning to share the information with economic development other than the excel spreadsheet. However e-site is used for building inspections and not sure if that system allows for the type of information that economic development would need.
- Current staffing does not have capacity for bringing on a new process.
- Cost of administrative position would be in the range of \$110,000 – salary, benefits, computer, phone etc.

Nancy Suranyi – Chair Sturgeon County Economic Development Board

- The Board has had some high level discussions about business licensing, and it may be the way to go to be able to collect the information and data that is needed to really do economic development. That is why the board has sent correspondence to their two councillor board members around the need for priority to be given to work with small business. In current economic times this needs to be more high profile and more a priority.
- Enforcement is an issue and hopefully in the new Land Use Bylaw that will be addressed.
- It is not about having a license for the sake of having a license. The businesses need to get something for it.
- There is a sensitivity to cost.
- Businesses in the county that need other provincial approvals may not be getting them as the county does not require a municipal license. Case in point is AMVIC.

- Value has to be shown to the businesses.

#### Other Background Information

In the early 2000's Sturgeon County had a robust business directory. This was a result of the Province providing grants to assist municipalities in data collection. Neighbouring towns were part of the directory. No fees were charged to the businesses. Staff was hired through this program however over time funding ran out from the province and the support to sustain the database was no longer a priority.

## APPENDIX 2

### Research from other Counties

#### Lacombe County

Dale Freitag – Manager Planning 403-782-8389 ext 217

- Do not have a business license.
- They want to foster opportunities and feel that having a business license might hamper that.
- Currently on ag land or residential they are issuing development permits for businesses for a 3 year term. Renewals can be 5 or 10 years depending on the type of business and impact on surrounding areas. Plus they rely on complaints and that plays into whether or not the permit is renewed.
- They do check up on businesses that they think may be creating an issue or going beyond their permit conditions, but again this is usually done because a complaint has been lodged.

#### Lamont County

Jim Newman – Manager Economic Development 780-895-2233

- Since about 2008 has had a voluntary business license. Came about through economic development to promote and encourage local businesses. Currently have 30 businesses that have taken out their voluntary license. In return they get promoted on the County's web site and profiled in the Lamont Leader newspaper.
- Anyone that comes in for a development permit is told about the voluntary business license. However there is no follow up to encourage the business to actually apply.
- Cost is \$25 per year.
- Managed through the planning section and information shared with economic development.

Copy of their business license form is attached

#### Leduc County

Grant Bain – Director of Planning 780-979-2113

- Currently does not have a business license but is having discussions about it. Looking at it from an economic development standpoint as came out of their recently approved strategy:

Economic Development and Growth Management Strategy 2016 - 2021

#### 2.3 INITIATIVE E3: MONITOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Develop and implement a system to track businesses and increase understanding of business trends.

A significant recommendation intended to enhance the ability of the County to monitor business development is to create a cost neutral business permit system. Business permitting will aid in providing metrics to Council on yearly growth and development as well as provide an approved database for the Leduc-Nisku EDA to access for business engagement and promotion.

- Leduc Nisku Economic Development Authority does the County's economic development and it would be of interest to them to have a business inventory of the county.
- New regulations have just come out for home based businesses – issuing them temporary permits for the first year.
- Don't have an electronic system for issuing permits however use a system called OnBase to deal with processes. They can flag businesses that they need to contact to reapply for renewal. If they don't reapply then the system flags it for an inspection and then if needed enforcement.
- Have support of Council to do enforcement.

### **Mountainview County**

Adena Malyk – Economic Development Officer 403-335-3311 ext 161

- Currently don't have business licensing but looking at it. They are working with Ec Dev Solutions to develop a new economic development strategy and one of the things identified is that business licensing should be an action item. You can't do business attraction and retention, a fundamental part of economic development, without the foundational piece being a good business database.
- They have investigated business licensing many times over the years, but have not gotten the buy in from Council.
- Currently they have a huge issue around development permits for homebased and change of use. People don't understand why they need permits as they are not "developing" anything. Because of this confusion there needs to be a lot of education done. In 2017 they will be working on more clarity in their Land Use Bylaw.
- The county has a strong reputation for not being business friendly, so there is a lot of work to be done there as well.
- Part of discussion is whether or not they could use a business license to take the place of a development permit for low impact businesses.
- Everyone is looking at what happened in Wood Buffalo. They could reach out to businesses in the community because they had a database from business licensing. They could communicate information out to the businesses about the programs that business could avail themselves of as part of the recovery process.
- The MGA looks like it will push more intermunicipal cooperation and business licensing could be one of those things. Discussions on how Mountainview County could work with their municipal partners on this.

### **Parkland County**

Scott Kovatch – BR&E Specialist 1-888-880-0858

Barb Skully – Connected Communities Coordinator

- Had a business license, was done in conjunction with Spruce Grove and Stony Plain. When it was instituted it was part of their tri-municipal agreement and meant to allow businesses to work in all 3 municipalities. The business would take out the license in the community the business was located in. Then they paid an additional fee to be able to work in the other 2 municipalities.
- The county over time was not enforcing the business license bylaw and in fact neither planning nor economic development, the two areas that needed the data, was in charge of the bylaw. It was in limbo. They looked at the purpose and outcome of having a business license and couldn't justify the value and it was seen as another tax. Six months ago they got rid of the bylaw.

- As part of the development permit process there is an approval to operate certificate issued.
- They have an online business registration process that is tied into their planning process. A business can submit their information and the planning department is notified so they can see all appropriate permits have been obtained. Only then will the business information show up in the online business directory.
- The county has also undertaken a new initiative through their connected communities project – Smart Parkland. It is Think Local Market an online virtual farmer’s market type site. Think Local Market was initiated by a consortium of municipalities in Northwestern Alberta. They included the County of Northern Lights in partnership with Northern Sunrise County, Mackenzie County, Smoky River Regional Economic Development, the Town of Peace River, Lac Cardinal Country and the Town of High Level. It is not meant for all businesses but rather for small home based craft, agri food etc. type businesses that you would see at a farmer’s market. The county was the first one outside the northern communities to be a part of this virtual market. They paid \$11,500 and half of that per year based on the county population.
- The Think Local Market and the online business directory on the economic development site are two separate tools and work is still being done to see if they can work together or be totally stand alone.

Copy of their online business registration form is attached.

### **Red Deer County**

Sandra Badry – Economic Development Coordinator 403-3572395

- Looking at implementing business licenses in 2017. Bylaw going to Council in December 2016
- Came about as an economic development initiative as well as emergency services. Can’t do business attraction and retention without a good database of information on who operates what type of businesses in the county. From an emergency services perspective everyone is looking at the Wood Buffalo situation. When the fire happened and then the recovery process the municipality knew who to contact because they had business licensing and could reach out through that database.
- A year ago they brought in house their planning and permitting process so they hired staff to do that as well as a database to house the information. So they won’t need any new staff to manage business licensing.
- They issue all their development permits on a 5 year basis
- Have done a lot of consultation with the community on business licensing
- Looking at implementing a phased in approach to licensing. First year will be all new business automatically will have to obtain a business license. Existing businesses will be voluntary and then following year mandatory.
- Fees collected through business licensing will go into the economic development budget to help pay for business directory maintenance and to host lunch and learn businesses session.

Attached are copies of the two presentations that went to Red Deer County Council October 2016.

### **Strathcona County**

Noreen Robertson – Economic Development

- Does not have business licensing and in fact they promote that fact as an incentive for business to locate in the county. Council supports this idea.
- They put together their business database from various sources:
  - Hoover's (a north American database that you pay to be a part of);
  - Chamber of Commerce directory;
  - Posse permitting system (they pull down monthly reports to see who has been granted permits to operate a business).
- They follow up with a letter and mailout questionnaire to businesses in order to maintain the data they have. However they only get about a 10% response rate.
- They have an online voluntary business license registration form. Information is put into an online business directory.

Copy attached of their online voluntary business registration form.

### **Wetaskiwin County**

David Blades – Planning & Economic Development Manager 780-361-6235

- Does not have a business license and have not considered implementing one.
- At one time the county got business information with the development permit and then put it into a business directory that was done in paper format.
- Data collection is not a current priority.
- Focus on economic development through the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) and the Central Alberta Partnership.
- They deal with businesses that have outgrown their permit conditions by getting them to apply for rezoning and through the public consultation process issues can be resolved, including having to move the business if the rezoning does not go through.
- In approving business permits they look at compatibility with surrounding uses.



**BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATION / RENEWAL**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Permit Application Number \_\_\_\_\_ (Office Use Only)

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Contact Information**

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/County \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Land Description \_\_\_\_\_

Directions on how customers can find your business

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers Business \_\_\_\_\_ Cellular \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

E mail \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

**Land Ownership**

Is the Business owner/ operator the registered landowner (circle one). YES NO  
If no indicate land owner's name & address below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Business Location** (check applicable location)  
In Residence \_\_\_\_\_ Existing Building \_\_\_\_\_ New Building \_\_\_\_\_

Depending upon the nature of the business and facility a development permit may be required. Detailed information can be obtained by reviewing Land Use Bylaw # 675/07 at [www.lamontcounty.ca](http://www.lamontcounty.ca) -in particular, section 6 Special Land Use Provisions 6.23, 6.24, 6.25, 6.26, 6.30. For further information, contact Lamont County Planning and Development Department (780) 895-2233.

**Business Description/Information**

Describe in detail the type of service(s) or product(s) offered.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Is the business seasonal? (Circle one) YES NO

If no, define the dates of operation.

Hours of Operation \_\_\_\_\_

Current Land Use \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Land Use \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Employees

Full time \_\_\_\_\_ Part time \_\_\_\_\_

Traffic Impact (cars, trucks, deliveries etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Expansion and New Development - Municipal, Provincial & Federal Regulations**

The business owner is responsible for obtaining from the appropriate municipal, provincial and federal authority, the permits relating to building, plumbing, gas, sewer, water mains, electricity, highways and all other permits required in connection with any new development.

**County Business Promotions**

Businesses in Lamont County have an opportunity to be listed in County Business Directories, on the Lamont County Website and on Albertafirst.ca.

Business description and contact information may be published by the County unless the business owner/operator notifies Lamont County Economic Development department otherwise in writing.

**Renewal Date**

Lamont County Business Licence expires December 31<sup>st</sup>. This permit is renewable on an annual basis. Renewal applications are available at [www.lamontcounty.ca](http://www.lamontcounty.ca) or through the Economic Development office.

***This is to certify that the below named persons have read, understand and agree to the information and criteria outlined on this form.***

Name of Applicant (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Landowner (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Landowner \_\_\_\_\_

**Make cheque (\$25.00) payable to: Lamont County**

Mail to:

Lamont County  
Administration Building 5305 – 50th Avenue  
Lamont Alberta T0B 2R0  
Ph (780) 895-2233 Fax (780) 895-7404



(<http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/index.aspx>)



### Business Information

[← Back to Directory \(✓\)](#)

The following fields will be displayed on your public listing. Fields marked with a \* are mandatory.

**Business Name \***

**Phone \***

**Toll Free Phone**

**Fax**

**Email**

**Website**

**Parent Company**

**Facebook URL**

**Twitter URL**

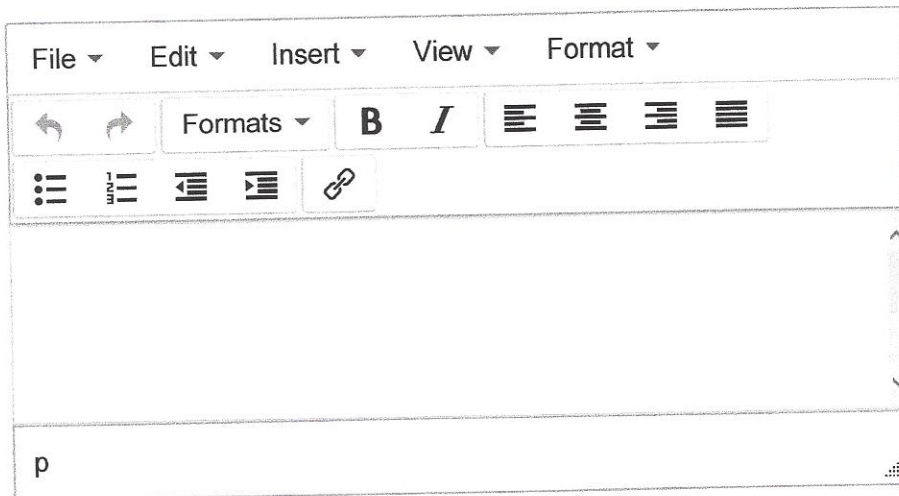
**Logo**

**Other Images**

+Add New Image

**Products and Services \***



A rich text editor interface with a menu bar (File, Edit, Insert, View, Format) and a toolbar containing icons for undo, redo, bulleted list, numbered list, indent, outdent, bold, italic, and link. The main content area is empty, and the bottom status bar shows a paragraph symbol (p).

**Address Information**

You can choose to display your address information to the public or keep it private. Fields marked with a \* are mandatory.

Feedback

### Physical Address

**Street Address 1**

**Street Address 2**

**City**

**Province**

**Country \***

**Postal/Area Code**

**Latitude**

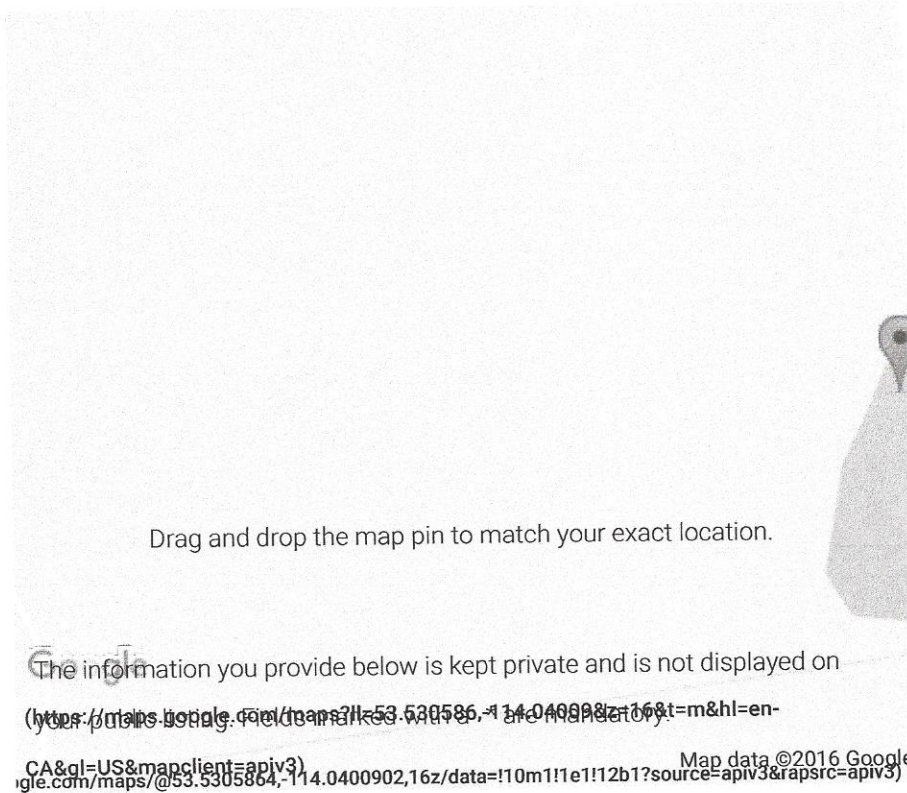
**Longitude**

**Display my address to the public? Yes/ No**

Yes  No

**Feedback**





Drag and drop the map pin to match your exact location.

The information you provide below is kept private and is not displayed on (https://maps.google.com/maps?ll=53.530586,-114.040092&hl=en-CA&gl=US&mapclient=apiv3) the public. Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

Map data ©2016 Google  
 gle.com/maps/@53.530586,-114.040092,16z/data=!1m1!1e1!12b1?source=apiv3&mapsrc=apiv3)

Feedback

### Contact Information

Name \*

Title

Phone \*

Email \*

Job Title

Password \*

**Confirm Password \***

**Company Description**

**Description**

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Feedback

**Keywords**

**Honours and Awards**

**Number of Employees**

**Full Time Employees**

**Part Time Employees**

**Seasonal Employees**

**Sites Located Outside Area**

**Head office**

Yes  No

**Annual Sales**

**Unionized**

Yes  No

**Union Name and Number**

**Year Established**

**Floor Space**

**Lease or Owned**

**Lot Size**

**Year Established In City**

**Ownership Type**

**Home Based Business**

Yes  No

**Feedback**

### International Activity

#### Currently Exporting

Yes  No

#### Exporting To

#### Wants to Export

Yes  No

#### Wants to Export To

#### Seeking Foreign Distributor

Yes  No

#### Seeking Participation in Foreign Mission

Yes  No

### Local Intentions

#### Expand on Site

Yes  No

#### Establish Additional Facilities

Yes  No

#### Relocate in Region

Yes  No

#### Relocation Outside of Region

Yes  No

#### Needs Assistance with Succession Planning

Yes  No

Feedback



**Looking to Hire Additional Staff**

**Looking to Reduce Staff**

Yes  No

**Comments**

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Feedback

[Live and Play \(http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/live-and-play/Live-and-Play.aspx\)](http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/live-and-play/Live-and-Play.aspx)
[Explore Parkland County \(http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/explore-parkland-county/Explore-Parkland-County.aspx\)](http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/explore-parkland-county/Explore-Parkland-County.aspx)
[Do Business \(http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/do-business/Do-Business.aspx\)](http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/do-business/Do-Business.aspx)
[County Office \(http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/county-office/County-Office.aspx\)](http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/county-office/County-Office.aspx)
[Online Services \(http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/online-services/Online-Services.aspx\)](http://www.parklandcounty.com/en/online-services/Online-Services.aspx)
[Sitemap \(http://www.parklandcounty.com/Common/sitemap.aspx\)](http://www.parklandcounty.com/Common/sitemap.aspx)

The following business and contact information **will be made available publicly** and used as a resource at Strathcona County Library, Information and Volunteer Centre, Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce, and published on Strathcona County Economic Development & Tourism's Website. Strathcona County cannot guarantee how this information may be used thereafter.

**Public Information**

Business name \_\_\_\_\_

Business type  service  manufacturing  retail  
 wholesale  home-based

Brief description of business

List of products manufactured (if applicable)

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Hamlet

Postal code

Civic address  same as above or \_\_\_\_\_

Owner of business \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number \_\_\_\_\_ Toll free number \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

ISO certified  yes  no Year established in the County \_\_\_\_\_**Check markets served**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local, including Edmonton area   | <input type="checkbox"/> Australia and New Zealand                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alberta                          | <input type="checkbox"/> East Asia, excluding China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Canada                   | <input type="checkbox"/> China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Canada                   | <input type="checkbox"/> India   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Territories                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle East   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USA                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Africa  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central and South America        | <input type="checkbox"/> World wide  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Europe                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Europe, including Russia |  |

## Voluntary Business Directory – Registration

(Page 2 of 2)

The following information will be **used only** by Strathcona County and will **not be** made available to the public in any manner. It will be used for statistics and promoting growth opportunities.

### Confidential Information

Number of employees full-time \_\_\_\_\_ part-time \_\_\_\_\_  
(include owner)

Future plans for expansion  yes  no

Future plans for relocation  yes  no

Square footage \_\_\_\_\_  
(not necessary for home-based businesses)

### Check markets sought

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local, including Edmonton area   | <input type="checkbox"/> Australia and New Zealand                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alberta                          | <input type="checkbox"/> East Asia, excluding China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Canada                   | <input type="checkbox"/> China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Canada                   | <input type="checkbox"/> India   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Territories                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle East   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USA                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Africa  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central and South America        | <input type="checkbox"/> World wide  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Europe                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Europe, including Russia |  |

### Collection and use of personal information

Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection Act (FOIP)* and is managed in accordance with the provisions of FOIP. This information will be used to register your business information in the Strathcona County Voluntary Business Directory and to develop our program. If you have any questions about the collection and use of your personal information, contact the Business Development Specialist, Economic Development and Tourism, Strathcona County at 780-464-8241.

Red Deer County



# COUNCIL WORKSHOP

REQUEST FOR DIRECTION RE: BUSINESS LICENSING

COUNCIL – October 11, 2016

## BACKGROUND

- Red Deer County does not issue municipal business licenses, however a development permit is required prior to a business occupying a residential, retail, commercial or industrial unit, building or property as an 'approval of use', or as a home business minor or major. Should a change of occupancy occur but the use remains unchanged, a new development permit is not required as per the Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Government Act.
- Administration has been looking into the possibility of instituting a business license program in the County. The purpose is to equip the County with timely data on local businesses in order to provide this information to residents, prospective residents and industry. In addition, the procurement of a business license can lend validity and legitimacy to home-based businesses.

## BACKGROUND

- Many business operators have expressed their desire to have a business license issued by Red Deer County. They believe that a business license is a good investment. Having a license demonstrates to customers that the business is legitimate which complies with local bylaws and regulations.
- On the March 8, 2016, Council Workshop, following a presentation to Council, Administration inquired as to whether or not Council supports Administration moving forward with establishing a bylaw for the provision of providing business licenses?
- After some discussion Council requested more information from Administration before making a decision. Specifically, whether the County could require licensing in certain areas of the County and optional elsewhere? And could the Bylaw apply only to certain land use districts (i.e. Industrial & Commercial)?

## BACKGROUND

- Upon Council's request, Administration investigated the viability of issuing business licenses for specific areas within the County.
- However, legal counsel advised that the County would be unable to discriminate based on location of specific business operations.
- "Section 8(b) of the MGA provides that council can deal with businesses in different ways and divide business into classes and deal with each class in a different way. Based upon this provision, we are of the opinion that a business license bylaw can require that licenses be obtained by certain types of businesses or classes of business, and not be required to be obtained by other types of businesses or classes of business. What is not possible is to treat businesses which are essentially the same type of business or in the same class of business in different ways—a restaurant located in Gasoline Alley, could not be treated differently than a similar type of restaurant in another location in the county. This is due to the wording used in s. 8 and the court decisions which have interpreted this section as allowing a municipality to discriminate between different types of businesses or classes of business, but not among businesses in the same class. Based upon this, I think it unlikely that the requirement for a license can be based upon where the business is located."

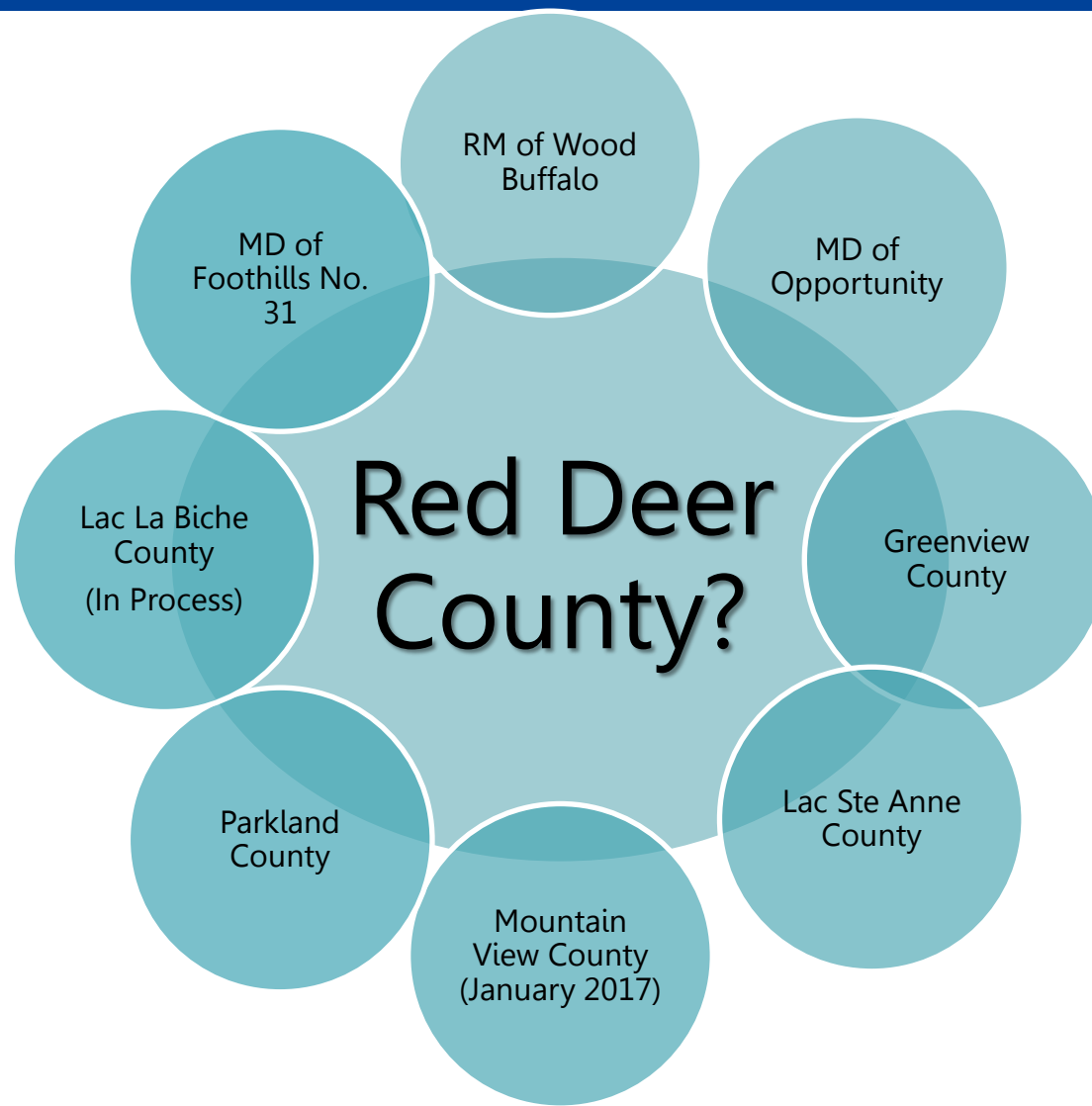


# RESEARCH

- Administration has looked into potential avenues for how to create a viable Business License Bylaw by investigating other municipalities and the current scope of Red Deer County businesses.
- Administration conducted some initial research respecting business license practices in other municipalities within Alberta for Council's consideration. The research included a survey of urban municipalities, of which **all** require business licenses. Of the 28 rural municipalities surveyed (Counties and Municipal Districts), 8 have either adopted a business license bylaw or are in the process of establishing a bylaw.



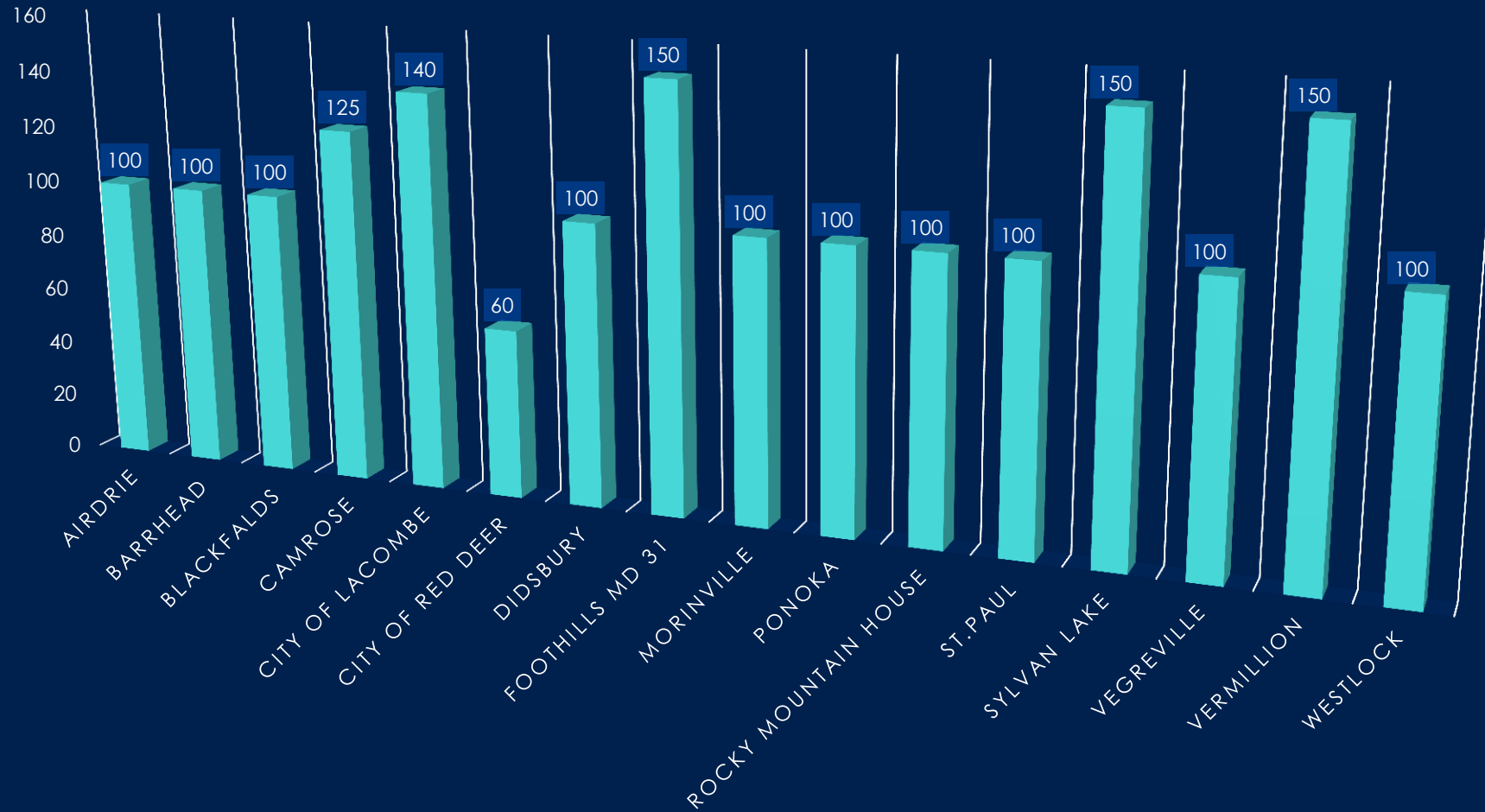
# COUNTIES CURRENTLY USING BUSINESS LICENSING



# RESEARCH

- Looking at other municipalities within the region, a fee of \$100.00 for an annual business license would be deemed appropriate.
- This would apply to all home businesses, both minor and major, approval of uses, and non-resident operators.
- There will be some businesses that will remain exempt from this bylaw, such as:
  - **Charitable Organizations**
  - **Buskers**
  - **County Operated Businesses**
  - **Provincial/Federal Exemptions**
  - **Temporary Businesses (<2 week operating period)**

# BUSINESS LICENSE FEES BY MUNICIPALITY (IN DOLLARS)



# BUSINESS LICENSE FEES BY MUNICIPALITY (IN DOLLARS)

Municipality	Min. Annual Fee	Revenue Allocation	Advertising
Airdrie	\$ 100.00		
Barrhead	\$ 100.00		
Blackfalds	\$ 100.00	90% General revenue 10 % Economic Development	District Chamber of Commerce
Camrose	\$ 125.00	Funds to community peace officer and animal control	advertise on website directory
City of Lacombe	\$ 140.00	General revenue	option to list on directory
City of Red Deer	\$ 60.00		
Didsbury	\$ 100.00		option to list on directory
Foothills MD 31	\$ 150.00		option to list on directory
Morinville	\$ 100.00		exposure on Morinville's website
Ponoka	\$ 100.00	Funds to General Revenue	on business directory
Rocky Mountain House	\$ 100.00		option to list on directory
St Paul	\$ 100.00		option to list on directory
Sylvan Lake	\$ 150.00	Funds to Planning & Development	option to be on directory
Vegreville	\$ 100.00	Funds to Planning & Development	advertise on website directory
Vermillion	\$ 150.00	Funds to Administration	
Westlock	\$ 100.00	Funds to Economic Development, surplus for park benches	local directory

# BENEFITS

- Revenue allocation would go toward the provision of economic development services - with the department preparing annual updates occurring for each business.
- The County would develop and maintain a registry of local businesses that is accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive, which would;
  - Aid Economic Development Services to connect businesses with the resources they need to succeed, by compiling a variety of statistics and publications about the County's economic environment.
  - Assist Emergency Services and GIS by sustaining a complete and precise database of business addresses, locations and contact information.
  - Achieve compliance through education and cooperation as it relates to the Land Use Bylaw and Safety Codes Act.

# BENEFITS

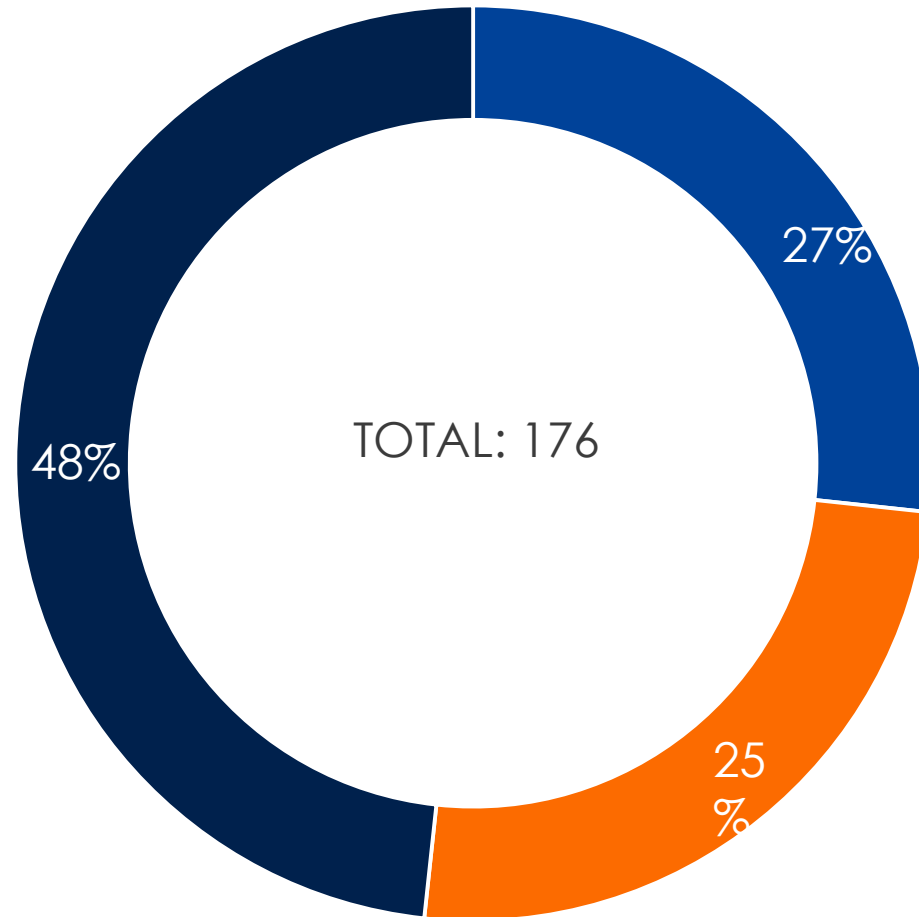
- Comprehensive database of businesses within the County available to Administration and ratepayers (summarizing businesses by NAICS – North American Industry Classification System).

Open	Item	Category	Condition	Location	Purchase Price	Owner	Acquired Date
<a href="#">Open</a>	ABC Business	NAICS Code	Issued	123 Leva Avenue	\$100.00	Moira Duley	2016-08-26
<a href="#">Open</a>	123 Alberta Ltd.	NAICS Code	Pending		\$0.00		
<a href="#">Open</a>	Red Deer County	NAICS Code	Out of Operation		\$0.00		

# RECOMMENDATION

- Based on this research, Administration recommends that Council moves forward with a Business License Bylaw that will positively impact economic development tracking, business needs fulfillment, and retention and attraction of desirable businesses within the County.

# HOME BUSINESSES AND APPROVAL OF USE PERMITS 2012-2016



■ Home Business Major

■ Home Business Minor

■ Approval of Use



Red Deer County



# COUNCIL WORKSHOP

BUSINESS LICENSING

COUNCIL – October 25, 2016

# BACKGROUND

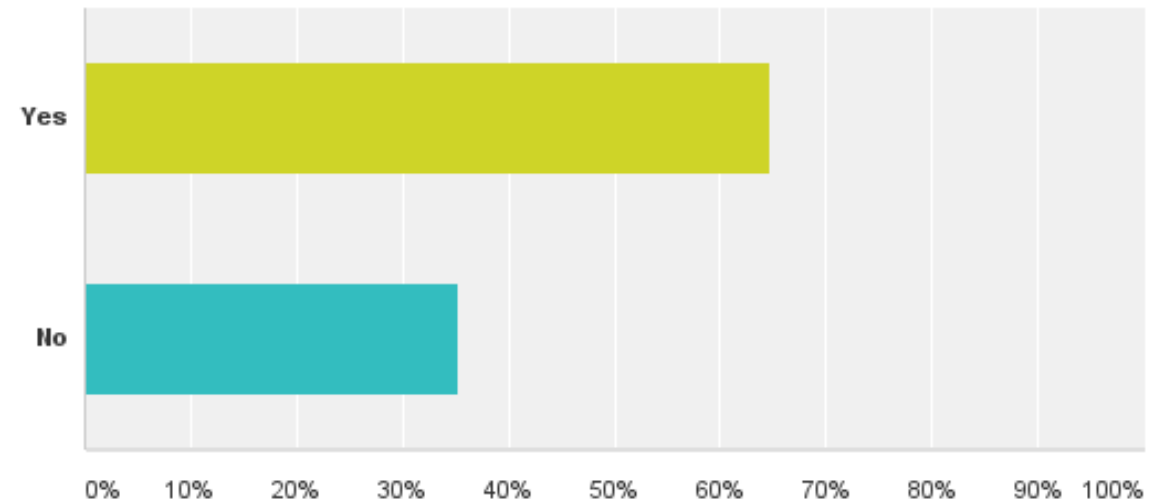
- On the October 11, 2016, Council Workshop, following a presentation to Council, Administration recommended that Council move forward with a Business License Bylaw that will positively impact economic development tracking, business needs fulfilment, and retention and attraction of desirable businesses within the County.
- After some discussion Council requested more information from Administration before making a decision. Specifically, Council instructed Administration to survey existing businesses in order to determine the level of support the business licensing program may have.

# BACKGROUND

- Using an online surveying tool (SurveyMonkey.net), Administration sent a short, three question survey to a total of 52 existing businesses operating within the County. There were 17 respondents.
- When asked if their organization sees the value in obtaining a business licence, 11 answered yes and 6 answered no.

**Q1 With business licensing, the County can provide services to businesses through economic development aid, an active business registry and more. Would your organization see the value in obtaining a business licence?**

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

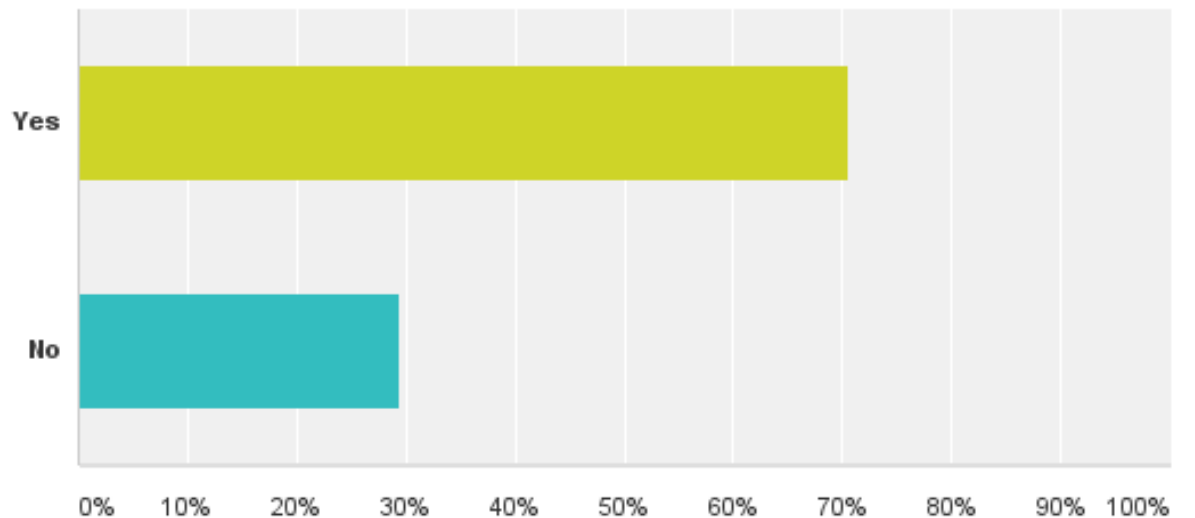


# BACKGROUND

- When asked if they would like to see business licences within Red Deer County, 12 answered yes and 5 answered no.

## Q2 Would you like to see business licences within Red Deer County?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

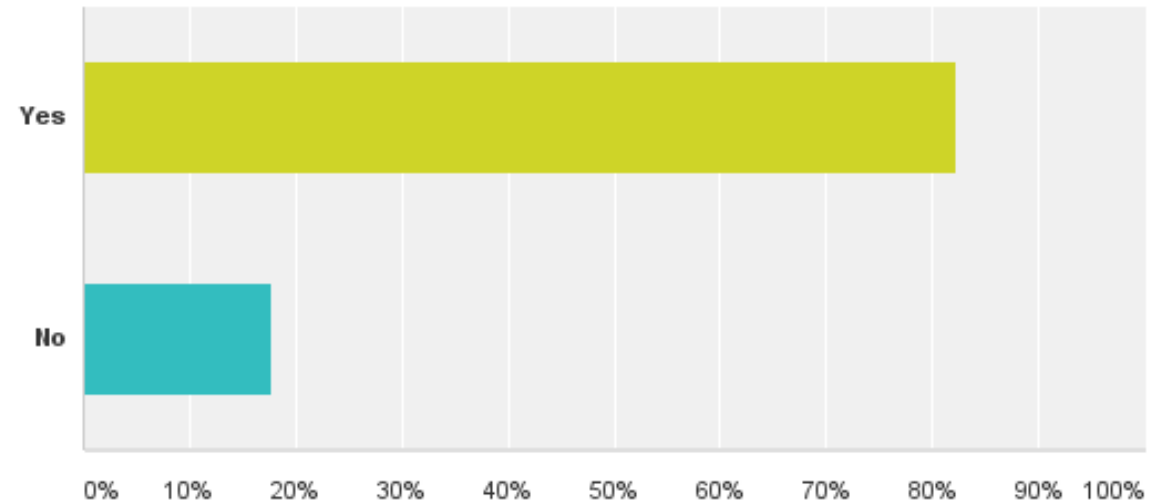


# BACKGROUND

- When asked whether they feel an annual license fee of \$50.00-\$100.00 is fair, 14 answered yes, and 3 answered no.

**Q3 The proposed fee would range from 50.00-100.00/year. Do you feel as though this a fair fee?**

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



# BACKGROUND

- Of the 17 respondents, 6 currently operate home businesses. All but one home business responded that they are completely in favour of a business license program within the County.
- Based on this research, Administration recommends that the County proceed with further public consultation by way of holding an Open House on November 17, 2016. Administration would invite all known businesses operating within the County and businesses from other municipalities to attend.

# PROPOSED POLICIES

- Administration is recommending the following fee table:

➤ Resident Business	\$60
➤ Non-Resident Business	\$120
➤ Home Based Business (Major or Minor)	\$25
➤ Late Payment Fee	\$20
➤ Temporary Business (Resident)	\$25
➤ Temporary Business (Non-Resident)	\$50
  
- The fee payable for a License issued between the first day of January and the thirteenth day of June in any year shall be the License fee for the full year. The fee for a license issued after the thirteenth day of June in any year shall be one-half of the License fees for the full year.

## PROPOSED POLICIES

- All agricultural operations shall not be required to obtain a business license, however may do so voluntarily.
- Where an applicant only requires a Business License for a short period of time, or does not have a permanent location, a Temporary Business License may be purchased and this license will have a term of validity of no more than a seven (7) day period.
- The fee payable for a License issued between the first day of January and the thirtieth day of June in any year shall be the License fee for the full year. The fee for a license issued after the thirtieth day of June in any year shall be one-half of the License fees for the full year.
- Up to two home based businesses may operate from any one dwelling while holding a single Business License.



# BENEFITS

- Revenue allocation would go toward the provision of economic development services - with the department preparing annual updates occurring for each business.
- The County would develop and maintain a registry of local businesses that is accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive, which would;
  - Aid Economic Development Services to connect businesses with the resources they need to succeed, by compiling a variety of statistics and publications about the County's economic environment.
  - Assist Emergency Services and GIS by sustaining a complete and precise database of business addresses, locations and contact information.
  - Achieve compliance through education and cooperation as it relates to the Land Use Bylaw and Safety Codes Act.

# RECOMMENDATION

- Administration recommends that the County proceed with further public consultation by way of holding an Open House on November 17, 2016.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Municipal Powers to Establish a Business License Bylaw:**

The Municipal Government Act of Alberta, July 2016, gives municipalities the ability to pass Business License bylaws. Specifically section 8 Powers Under Bylaws state:

Without restricting section 7, a council may in a bylaw passed under this Division

- (c) provide for a system of licences, permits or approvals, including any or all of the following:
  - (i) establishing fees for licences, permits and approvals, including fees for licences, permits and approvals that may be in the nature of a reasonable tax for the activity authorized or for the purpose of raising revenue;
  - (ii) establishing fees for licences, permits and approvals that are higher for persons or businesses who do not reside or maintain a place of business in the municipality;
  - (iii) prohibiting any development, activity, industry, business or thing until a licence, permit or approval has been granted;
  - (iv) providing that terms and conditions may be imposed on any licence, permit or approval, the nature of the terms and conditions and who may impose them;
  - (v) setting out the conditions that must be met before a licence, permit or approval is granted or renewed, the nature of the conditions and who may impose them;
  - (vi) providing for the duration of licences, permits and approvals and their suspension or cancellation for failure to comply with a term or condition or the bylaw or for any other reason specified in the bylaw;

## **Consultant Information**

Terry Stacey was employed by the City of Fort Saskatchewan for 27 years; 1987 - 2014. Held positions of assistant development officer and for the last 22 years of her career, as Economic Development Director. Business Licensing was one of her areas of responsibility.