

Attachment # 1

Chamber of Commerce

Request Letter



November 7, 2024

Lisa Spitale, CAO & Shehzad Somji, Finance Director
City of New Westminster
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, BC V3L 1H9

Dear Lisa & Shehzad,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the New Westminster Chamber of Commerce, we would like to express our sincere gratitude for your ongoing interest and support of the Chamber's initiatives. The partnership between the City of New Westminster and the Chamber is vital to the continued growth and success of our local businesses and community, and we are truly appreciative of your collaborative spirit.

We are writing to bring to your attention two areas where we believe the City's support could make a significant impact on our ability to continue serving the community and promoting economic development.

A) Request for Fee-for-Service partnership Funds

The Chamber is currently facing financial challenges that will require additional operating funds to ensure our survival through the end of 2025. We are committed to continuing our role as a key driver of local business support and economic vitality, and securing operational stability is essential to that mission.

We want to emphasise that any new funding source will be dedicated to either programmatic activities or new fee-for-service projects. We have built a robust Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 program schedule that includes numerous networking, education, and advocacy events aimed at supporting our members. Concurrently, we are in a period of sustained and committed debt servicing. Our Treasurer has developed a comprehensive path to debt relief using existing revenue sources only. This plan should see the Chamber's COVID-era debts paid off within the next calendar year.

We are keen to explore opportunities to partner with the City's Economic Development office on fee-for-service projects, which we can deliver through our existing roster of contractors, or with an expanded team, if needed. Such projects could provide mutual benefit, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.



B) Sponsorship of Spring Economic Forum

We are also planning a significant event February 6th, 2025 the Anvil Centre—a half-day Economic Forum that will focus on key sectors such as Housing, Commercial Development, Industry, Health Sciences, Small Business, Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism.

The Chamber is excited to partner with local business groups (see attached letters of support) and industry sponsors to bring this Vision 2030 Economic Forum to life. The half-day event will feature: A Leaders Luncheon; Afternoon Industry Breakout Sessions; A Makers Showcase (tradeshow style) and networking throughout the afternoon. The audience will include regional and local leaders from Housing, Commercial, Industry, Health Sciences, Small Business, Retail, Hospitality, and Tourism.

Sponsorship will offset some costs of this event and we intend to draw support from the development community, local business and our area partners. We would like to formally request the City's sponsorship for this event in the form of an in-kind donation of event space. Specifically, we are seeking support for the provision of the Anvil Centre space, necessary staffing, and the Audio-Visual components required for a successful forum.

The Chamber will, in turn, support the event by covering all coordination, planning, staffing, and the Food & Beverage expenses expected for a luncheon during the forum. The Chamber will organise the event and facilitate the necessary payments for the event.

We believe this partnership opportunity would serve as a valuable platform to showcase the City's commitment to economic growth and would strengthen ties between key stakeholders across multiple industries.

We would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss these requests further at your earliest convenience, and I am available at any time to provide additional information or clarification.

Thank you once again for your continued support and for considering these proposals. We look forward to working closely with the City to foster a vibrant and thriving business community in New Westminster.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rich Patterson".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karima Jivraj".

Rich Patterson, Board Chair, New Westminster Chamber

Karima Jivraj, Board Vice-Chair