

City launches Economic Recovery Task Force to support local business

(Penticton, BC – March 31, 2020) – The City of Penticton’s Economic Development Department has engaged with key stakeholders in the local business community to create an Economic Recovery Task Force to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Task Force held its first virtual meeting on March 27 to investigate measures the City can take to support local residents, businesses and workers during these challenging times. The Task Force will continue to meet as often as required to develop a plan for relief and recovery.

As part of this process, local businesses will soon be asked to complete a survey to give the Task Force a better understanding of the situation and of what support may be required.

“The health and safety of the public and staff has been our first priority as this crisis unfolds, but we also need to do everything we can to help both our businesses and residents who are financially impacted, ensuring we come out of this situation in a strong position,” said Penticton Mayor, John Vassilaki. “This Task Force, made up of business leaders in the community, is a positive first step to work together on a path to recovery.”

Although City Hall is closed, City staff work behind the scenes to ensure services will continue. Penticton’s Economic Development team is available to answer any questions and offer support. They’re also collaborating with Travel Penticton, Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce, WorkBC, Small Business BC and Community Futures Okanagan Similkameen on various initiatives, including creating webinars to help businesses access government support and training, as well as a campaign to promote buying local.

Importantly, Penticton’s Development Services team will continue to provide the development industry the support it needs to continue construction projects. This includes issuing building permits and conducting inspections.

Membership:

The new task force will include the following membership:

- Blake Laven, Director Development Services, City of Penticton
- Ken Kunka, Deputy Director Development Services, City of Penticton

- Andrew Kemp, Economic Development Specialist, City of Penticton
- Thom Tischik, Executive Director, Travel Penticton
- Larry Olson, Regional Manager Rural Development, Ministry of Forest, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development
- Charles Cornell, General Manager, Community Futures Okanagan Similkameen
- Lee Agur, Co-Owner, Bad Tattoo Brewery
- Judy Richards, General Manager, Cherry Lane Shopping Centre
- Mark Melissen, President, Wildstone
- Frank Conci, President, Penticton Industrial Development Association
- Diane Kereluk, Executive Director, Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce
- Jonathan Baynes, CEO, K'ul Management
- Lynn Allin, Executive Director, Downtown Penticton Association
- John Skinner, Proprietor, Painted Rock Estate Winery

Keeping our community informed

The following resources are available to stay up-to-date with the latest City updates involving COVID-19.

- The Economic Development Department launched a business support resource page at starthereokanagan.com/blog.
- View the City's toolkit at penticton.ca/covid19toolkit, which provides support for residents and businesses who have been affected.
- Access the latest City announcements and updates at penticton.ca/covid19.

Additional steps taken by the City

- Free street parking to support local businesses downtown
- Opened a Call Centre to handle inquiries
- Suspending utility disconnections for non-payment
- Evaluating the possibility of deferring property tax deadline
- Continuing as many business-related services as possible
- Temporary cashier at the SOEC

How to contact us

If you're a local business that has questions or would like to be connected with resources, please contact the City of Penticton Economic Development department at 250-490-2591 or email economicdevelopment@penticton.ca.

Contact:

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