

**Subject:** Proposal for Separating Metro Vancouver from Richmond's Collective Bargaining Framework

**Member of Council:** Kash Heed

**Meeting:** General Purposes Committee

**Notice Provided on:** October 8, 2024

**For Consideration on:** October 15, 2024

## **Background**

The City of Richmond stands to gain numerous benefits by pursuing independent negotiations for collective agreements, separate from Metro Vancouver. By doing so, Richmond can craft agreements that cater specifically to the distinct needs of its workforce, align with its financial capabilities, and support its operational objectives, rather than conforming to a generalized framework that might not serve local interests. This independence provides the city with enhanced flexibility regarding negotiation strategies, approaches, and timelines, enabling it to adapt swiftly to shifts in priorities and circumstances without the necessity of coordinating with a larger regional body. Additionally, this autonomy allows for more effective management of employee compensation and benefits costs, as direct negotiations can facilitate solutions that strike a balance between equitable pay and fiscal realities.

Direct negotiations can also strengthen the relationship between city officials and employee representatives, fostering a collaborative environment in which both parties feel valued and understood. This closer collaboration can lead to a more nuanced understanding of local challenges, economic factors, and community needs, ultimately resulting in more pertinent and effective agreements.

Conducting negotiations at the city level will help mitigate potential disputes that may arise from regional bargaining, especially when Richmond's interests diverge significantly from those of other municipalities.

By negotiating collective agreements independently, the City of Richmond can establish a more tailored and responsive approach to labour relations, yielding benefits for both the city and its workforce.

## **Motion**

1. That staff examine current collective bargaining agreements to pinpoint any provisions involving Metro Vancouver.

2. That staff consult with legal and labour relations experts to fully comprehend the ramifications of detaching Metro Vancouver from the bargaining unit.
3. That staff initiate discussions with the unions representing city employees regarding potential amendments to the collective bargaining structure.
4. That staff identify legal frameworks pertinent to municipal governance and collective bargaining specific to Richmond.
5. That staff draft revisions to existing policies or agreements to reflect the proposed changes for Council to consider.