

July 21, 2026

RE. Advocacy Update: Progress, Decisions and Next Steps

Dear BLLHA Members & Partners,

I hope this note finds you well and that you're finding a chance to enjoy some of the incredible summer season, despite how busy this time of year can be. It goes without saying, but thank you for everything you, and your teams do, to welcome visitors and help make Banff & Lake Louise such extraordinary place to experience.

Over the past several weeks, BLLHA has been actively engaged on several important destination initiatives that will help shape the future of Banff & Lake Louise, including the Business Licence Review, Parking Cash-in-Lieu Policy, the Town's Draft 2027–2030 Strategic Plan, and the development of the 2027 Financial Plan.

Our role is to ensure industry's perspective is represented throughout these discussions, while continuing to advocate for practical, evidence-based solutions that support both our businesses and our community.

Our Approach: Outcome-Focused, Solutions-based Advocacy

BLLHA's role is to ensure the hospitality and tourism industry's perspective is represented in the decisions that shape Banff & Lake Louise's future. While we always advocate for outcomes that support our members, not every recommendation is adopted.

Effective advocacy is about more than a vote. It means showing up and engaging early, bringing forward evidence-based recommendations, proposing practical alternatives, and continuing to work with decision-makers as policies are implemented.

We remain committed to constructive, outcome-focused, solutions-based advocacy that builds relationships, earns credibility, and advances the long-term interests of the destination.

Business Licence Bylaw Review

Banff Town Council has now approved the updated Business Licence Bylaw, including the requirement for businesses to report employee counts as part of the annual licensing process.

Throughout the review, BLLHA advocated for an approach that recognized the limitations of employee count data on its own and encouraged the Town to leverage the forthcoming BLLHA Labour Workforce Study as the foundation for future workforce planning. We also highlighted the importance of minimizing administrative burden on our members, while ensuring the Town has access to meaningful information to support decision-making.

What's next?

- **Help shape a better approach to workforce data.** The Town has expressed a willingness to work with the business community to determine whether FTE is the most appropriate employee measure. If a more practical and meaningful alternative exists, BLLHA intends to work collaboratively with the commercials sector and Administration to help develop it.
- **Leverage our NEW Labour Workforce Study.** BLLHA will use the findings from our upcoming Labour Workforce Study to provide evidence-based recommendations that support future workforce, housing and policy decisions across the community.

Parking Cash-in-Lieu

Council approved a new Parking Cash-in-Lieu rate of \$35,000 per stall, rather than the \$40,000 originally proposed by Administration. While the final rate was lower than initially proposed, BLLHA's position was that any increase should be supported by a clear business case and form part of a broader parking strategy, not simply a higher fee.

Throughout the review, BLLHA raised three key concerns:

- **There is no defined, budgeted plan for the funds.** While the Town has identified potential future uses for the reserve, there is currently no costed capital plan, confirmed stall count or implementation timeline attached to those concepts.
- **The proposed rate lacked a clear cost justification.** The increase was presented largely as a catch-up after 27 years without adjustment, but the published material did not demonstrate how the proposed increase was calculated or how it related to the actual cost of future parking infrastructure.
- **The policy does not adequately reflect real-world business impacts.** The fee applies even when providing on-site parking is physically impossible, leaving some businesses with no way to avoid the charge. It may also create a significant additional cost for tenant improvements, commercial revitalization and redevelopment.

What's next?

- Continue advocating for greater transparency around how Parking Cash-in-Lieu funds will be invested, including a long-term parking strategy and clearly defined priorities for the reserve.
- Seek formal hospitality industry participation in future parking and mobility planning initiatives.



- Work with the Town to monitor implementation of the policy and identify opportunities to reduce unintended impacts on business investment, redevelopment and economic vitality.

Draft Banff 2027–2030 Strategic Plan

Council has deferred consideration of the Draft Strategic Plan until August 11, creating additional opportunity for discussion before the Plan is finalized.

BLHA's submission supports the overall direction of the Plan, particularly its emphasis on housing, while reinforcing economic sustainability and recommending two important enhancements:

- Formal hospitality industry representation in the development of Human Use Management; and
- Clearly defined outcome measures to track progress over the life of the Plan, including economic indicators.

What's next?

- Continue engaging with members and partners ahead of the August meeting.
- Advocate for meaningful industry participation in implementation, not simply consultation.
- Support a strategic plan that achieves balanced environmental, community and economic outcomes.

2027 Financial Plan

Council has also advanced development of the Town's 2027 Financial Plan. The current outlook includes a 6.05% municipal tax increase in 2027, followed by 3.74% in 2028, with the Service Review process continuing throughout the fall before final budget approval later this year.

As the budget evolves, BLHA will remain engaged to ensure the hospitality industry's perspective is considered alongside the Town's long-term financial priorities.

What's next?

- Review draft service plans and budget documents as they are released this fall.
- Engage with members to better understand priorities and potential operational impacts.
- Provide evidence-based feedback throughout the budget process prior to final budget approval.



Looking Ahead: Your Input Matters

Later this summer, we'll be launching our [2027 Business Outlook Survey](#). This annual survey plays an important role in shaping BLLHA's advocacy priorities by helping us better understand the opportunities, challenges and emerging issues facing our members. We encourage all members to take a few minutes to participate when the survey is released.

In the meantime, we always welcome the opportunity to connect directly. If there's an issue affecting your business, an idea you'd like to discuss, or simply an opportunity to have a conversation, please don't hesitate to reach out.

As always, our Board and Admin team appreciates your continued engagement and support. The strongest advocacy begins with listening, and your input continues to shape the work we do on behalf of our industry every day. We will keep members informed as these and other initiatives continue to evolve.

Rooted in Place. Rising Together.



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