

January 13, 2023

Her Worship Mayor Bonnie Crombie and Members of Mississauga City Council
Mississauga Civic Centre
300 City Centre Drive
Mississauga, Ontario
L5B 3C1

RE: Item 15.1 - January 18 City Council Meeting: A motion to request staff report to Council on the potential of considering the complete banning of fireworks as has been done in Caledon and Brampton.

Dear Madam Mayor and Members of Council,

Since being established in 1961, the Mississauga Board of Trade (MBOT) has played an important leadership role serving and representing the interests of businesses of all sizes and sectors in our community. MBOT is the voice of business in the City of Mississauga. With a membership of close to 1,000 businesses in every sector of the economy, we maintain a positive and constructive relationship with the City of Mississauga and Region of Peel and have been a strong stakeholder and advocate for the interests of our local business community.

Mississauga is home to 20 individual fireworks vendors that employ several hardworking individuals who operate small businesses, supporting our local economy. At your December 2022 Budget Committee meeting, a motion was passed without any consultation with affected businesses to increase fireworks vendor fees more than threefold to \$1,000. While this amount may seem insignificant to some, this impacts small business owners where every dollar counts – particularly after the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The motion before you proposes to go several steps further. However unintentional, the motion serves to hurt small businesses by increasing fireworks vendor fees to \$1,000 *per designated holiday* in order to be allowed to operate in Mississauga. As the City currently permits fireworks vendors to sell their products during four designated holidays, the increase to \$1,000 now becomes a significant \$4,000 annually! While MBOT agrees that recent unlawful activity in the Region of Peel by some irresponsible residents and visitors is completely unacceptable, we strongly feel that reacting in such a knee-jerk fashion amounts to a tunnel-vision approach to policymaking, ignoring the important steps of thorough analysis and consultation with affected businesses.

The proposed motion refers to a recent ban in the City of Brampton which is arguably unenforceable. This should not be the basis for following suit in Mississauga. Moreover, if vendor fees in Mississauga are allowed to increase from \$226 to \$4,000 annually in a matter of only two months (without any consultation with industry), MBOT members would be understandably concerned that this same approach could be applied to other industries and business owners. In fact, the matter is in some ways similar to the issue of cannabis retail sales not being permitted in the City. Consumers will simply be forced to travel to the nearest municipality that allows for the sale of the banned product. In short, this solution is very unlikely to solve the problem it is seeking to address. Let's not penalize hardworking business owners for the unacceptable behaviour of certain residents and visitors.

On behalf of MBOT's Policy and Government Affairs Committee and all MBOT members, we urge you to "take a pause" and reject the motion in front of you in its current form, with its incremental impact on vendor fees and other elements that should be evaluated appropriately. We implore Council to direct City staff to complete a comprehensive report built on empirical evidence and inclusive of valuable input from a business community that has not yet been consulted on this matter.

If Council chooses to support the motion before you today, an alarming message will be sent to the entire business community in Mississauga about how Council is flippant in its approach to matters of business costs and would only serve to caution anyone considering new business investments in our city.

Thank you for considering the voice of Mississauga's business community regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



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