

July 14, 2026

Mayor and Council
Town of Banff
110 Bear Street, Banff, Alberta T1L 1A1

Re: Proposed Increase to the Parking Cash-in-Lieu Rate (\$21,000 to \$40,000 per Stall) Impact on Small Business

Mayor DiManno and Members of Council,

The Bow Valley Chamber of Commerce writes to raise concerns, on behalf of our small business membership, about the proposed increase to the Parking Cash-in-Lieu rate. Our mandate is to ensure businesses of every size have a voice in decisions that affect their ability to operate and grow, and this policy, as currently structured, places a disproportionate burden on precisely the businesses least equipped to absorb it.

- 1. The fee applies even where compliance is physically impossible.** A charge that applies whether or not compliance is even possible falls hardest on exactly the operators with the least flexibility to respond to it. The Town has confirmed that a small tenant, such as a café or retail business taking over existing space with a fixed, unchangeable footprint (that triggers cash-in-lieu) owes the fee in full regardless of whether there is any practical way to build the required parking on site.
- 2. This cost does not land in isolation.** A \$40,000-per-stall fee stacks on top of licensing, permitting, and other rising costs that already make it harder to open or reinvest in a business here. Each additional fee draws from the same limited pool of capital an independent operator has to work with, in a way that barely registers for a larger, better-capitalized company.
- 3. Larger properties have options that small tenants do not.** Businesses on larger sites, or with the capital to incorporate parking into a broader redevelopment, have a realistic path to avoiding this fee altogether. A small, independent tenant in a dense downtown space does not. The result is a policy that, in practice, is least avoidable for the businesses with the fewest resources to absorb it.

We respectfully ask Council to oppose adoption of the proposed policy and rate.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with Council and Administration to ensure Banff's small business community can continue to thrive.

With Gratitude,

Sarah Freeman (She/Her)
Executive Director
Bow Valley Chamber of Commerce