

Chamber members provide feedback on Sunday shopping hours

For immediate release
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(FREDERICTON, NB) – The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce, along with representatives of Downtown Fredericton Inc., and Business Fredericton North recently met with a representative of the Retail Council of Canada, who had been in New Brunswick to advocate in various municipalities for choice in Sunday hours of operation for retailers. Fredericton City Council, through Mayor Brad Woodside requested an opinion from the chamber on the matter.

Sunday shopping regulations differ amongst the Atlantic Provinces. In Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, regulations apply to all businesses in those provinces whereas in New Brunswick, the provincial legislation downloads decision making to the municipalities. Newfoundland and Nova Scotia regulations retailers are able to choose what (if any) hours they open on Sundays. In PEI, retailers cannot open until noon, but have choice regarding when to close. In the majority of New Brunswick municipalities, retailers are able to open from noon until 5:00 pm on Sundays.

The Fredericton chamber has polled its retail-based members via phone and email for their opinions on the matter.

65% of respondents in the chamber survey indicated that they support each individual retailer being able to choose which hours to open on Sundays. In many cases, these respondents emphasized that this potential change to local bylaws should not affect required hours of operation in current lease agreements, specifically with regard to shopping malls. In other words, no retailer should be required to expand current hours of operation.

21% of respondents favoured the status quo of Sunday shopping hours being restricted to noon to 5:00 pm for most retailers, while 14% believe that Sunday shopping should be eliminated entirely. It should also be noted that these two categories produced the most passionate responses, for both business and non-business reasons.

The Fredericton chamber has communicated the results of this survey of members to the Atlantic Canada chapter of the Retail Council of Canada and Brad Woodside, Mayor of the City of Fredericton.

With more than 900 members, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is one of Atlantic Canada's largest chambers of commerce. A dynamic business organization, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is actively engaged in policy development that affects the competitiveness of our members and of the Canadian business environment.

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