



The City of Maple Ridge

Business Law for Small Businesses

2025 SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

October 21, 2025





Territory Acknowledgement

The City of Maple Ridge respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territories of the q̓íćəy' (Katzie) First Nation and q'w̓a:n̓λ'ən' (Kwantlen) First Nation.



Notice of Recording

Today's session is being recorded and may be published on the City's website for future playback.

7 DAYS OF SMALL BUSINESS

MapleRidge.ca/SmallBusinessWeek



**Maple
Ridge**



Presenter



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Partner

MHWP
LAW

Lawyers & Notaries

www.MHWP.law

Session Overview

Business Law for Small Businesses

01 Managing Business Risk

02 Business Structure & Reorganization

03 Intellectual Property

04 Exiting Your Business

05 Commercial Real Estate
(The Tenant's View)

06 Q&A



Managing Business Risk

- Have clear, written contracts – even short ones.
- Document hiring, performance, and termination.
- Employment agreements protect confidentiality and IP.
- You can't eliminate risk, but you can contain it.

Choosing the Right Business Structure

- Sole Proprietorship – simple, but you're personally liable.
- Partnership – joint liability unless limited by agreement.
- Corporation – separate legal entity with limited liability.
- Federal vs Provincial incorporation: federal protects your name Canada-wide; provincial is simpler for BC operations.
- Don't forget a City of Maple Ridge business licence.

Corporate Maintenance

- Keep your corporate records up to date – annual filings, resolutions, and a minute book protect your limited liability.

Intellectual Property

- Corporate name ≠ trademark – incorporation protects your name only in BC.
- Trademark rights can arise through use, but registration gives nationwide protection.
- Employees' IP belongs to employer; contractors' IP must be assigned in writing.
- Register domains early; keep dated records of content creation.

Exiting or Succession Planning

- Shares vs Asset Sale – big tax differences.
- Capital Gains Exemption – up to ~\$1M tax-free on qualifying small business shares.
- Family Succession – holding companies and trusts ease transition.
- Shareholder Agreements – plan for buyouts or disputes early.
- Plan Early – more options, less tax.

Commercial Real Estate: The Tenant's View

- Rent Abatement – request rent-free period during build-out or delays.
- Repairs – clarify HVAC, roof, and structure responsibilities.
- Assignment/Sublease – ensure flexibility.
- Personal Guarantees – limit amount or duration.
- Tenant Improvements – define ownership/removal.
- Rights of Renewal – negotiate terms and rent formula early.
- Lease Renewals – review terms before re-signing.

Key Takeaways

- **Protect** – use proper structure and contracts.
- **Plan** – for growth and transition.
- **Document** – clarity prevents disputes.
- **Review** – major agreements before signing.

Contact

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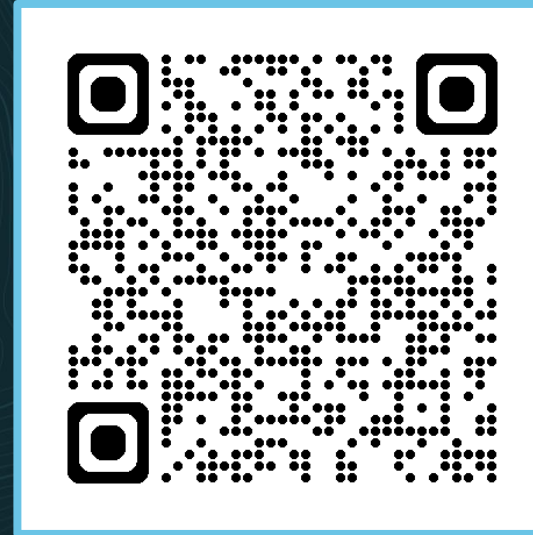
Q&A

Submit your questions using
the **Q&A** tool in the Teams
meeting toolbar

Resources



MHWP.law



**MapleRidge.ca/
BusinessResources**

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JOIN AN EVENT

Oct 20 - Maple Ridge Innovates!

5-7pm | The Patch Brewery | Awards & Networking

Oct 21 - Business Licensing Virtual Workshop

2-3pm | Why licensing matters, avoid application errors

Oct 22 - Home Business & Entrepreneur Pop-Up

3-6pm | ValleyFair Mall | Ask our experts about your business

Oct 22 - Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours

5-7pm | Foamers' Folly | Network with local business owners

Oct 23 - Business Law For Small Businesses Webinar

10-11am | Learn about contracts, IP, risk management & more

Oct 24 - Making Film Work For Small Business

12-2pm | Chameleon | Lunch & learn on opportunities in film





Thank You

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