



District of Squamish  
PO Box 310  
Squamish, BC, V8B 0A3

July 26, 2017

**Re: Long-Term Leases at Squamish Airport**

Dear Mayor and Council,

The Squamish Chamber of Commerce is the oldest and largest business organization in the Squamish community. As the voice of business, the Chamber represents our membership on a number of business and economic development issues. For several years, we have been aware of concerns from businesses regarding lack of long-term leases at the Squamish Airport. With the upcoming 2040 Official Community Plan, and the significant growth in development, including plans for the Cheekye Fan area, it is prudent for us all to address this ongoing issue.

It is our understanding that the Squamish Airport generates significant economic benefit for the Squamish community. Five businesses / organizations have leases on the property (+MOE), employing a significant number of staff. Many of the technical jobs are highly skilled, well-paid jobs, which ultimately benefit economic activity and spending in our local economy. The businesses situated at the airport offer valuable services to many sectors, including transportation, transit, tourism, forestry and public safety.

The lack of long-term leases is significantly impacting the ability for businesses to improve the quality of operations, not least due to financing constraints. The Chamber recognises that there have been notable discussions around the airport, and it is a complex topic. However, there has not been a suitable resolution for the tenants. The Chamber is concerned for a potential negative economic impact, should businesses reduce operations or move location. Further, the inability to service current operations (e.g. mechanical servicing) in Squamish directly displaces economic activity to other communities.

To summarize:

- Squamish Airport services many industries and employs skilled staff, which benefits the local economy.
- Lack of long term leases limits the ability of tenants to improve operations & run successful businesses.
- Some operational servicing cannot be conducted on-site, resulting in displacement of economic activity to other communities.

While the Chamber understands that this subject is a complex matter, we are writing to request a full and transparent explanation of why the Squamish Airport tenants are not provided with long term leases.

Sincerely,

Louise Walker  
Executive Director, Squamish Chamber of Commerce