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## Charter Agreement

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### Introduction

This Charter is a commitment between your council and the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) to work together to create a fair and competitive trading environment for Victorian small businesses. It also tells you what you can expect as a business owner from your local council and the VSBC. By signing the charter, the VSBC and local councils agree to meet these commitments within 12 months.

### Commitments and what you can expect from us

#### Part 1 | Work with small businesses disrupted by infrastructure projects

The VSBC will:

- a. provide councils with VSBC resources for managing the impacts of disruption
- b. provide dispute resolution services in relevant matters
- c. advocate on behalf of small businesses with authorities who undertake major works
- d. work collaboratively with council to develop practical initiatives that benefit small businesses

Your council will:

- a. refer to the VSBC's [Small business engagement guidelines](#) when planning new works and request that external project managers do the same
- b. provide small businesses with the VSBC's [Guide for small businesses on managing disruption](#)

#### Part 2 | Support the creation of small business networks across Victoria

The VSBC and your council will:

- a. distribute the VSBC's [Guide to building stronger networks](#)
- b. actively engage with small business networks and identify new opportunities for development
- c. include representatives of associations in conversations concerning small businesses

#### Part 3 | Streamlined permit approvals processes for small businesses

Your council will:

- a. work towards improving permit approvals processes for new small businesses. This may mean:
  - i. an ongoing commitment to consolidating processes; or
  - ii. implementing new strategies to streamline permit approvals processes for small businesses

#### **Part 4 | Prompt payment to small businesses**

The VSBC and your council will:

- a. initiate processes to [ensure invoices from small businesses are paid within 14 days](#)

#### **Part 5 | Easy to read, easy to understand information for Victorian small businesses**

The VSBC will:

- a. liaise with Small Business Victoria on the development of new resources for your business and communicate requests from your council about what is needed
- b. create timely and relevant resources for your business as required
- c. refer your council to new resources as they are made available

Your council will:

- a. link your business with the resources available at [business.vic.gov.au](http://business.vic.gov.au)
- b. provide the VSBC's [retail leases information brochure](#) to prospective tenants
- c. share resources of relevance from the VSBC with you

Both parties will:

- a. identify opportunities for the development of new resources for your business

#### **Part 6 | Open channels of communication between the VSBC and local councils**

The VSBC will:

- a. advocate on behalf of small business when your council notifies VSBC of key issues of concern
- b. work with relevant agencies to progress matters of concern to local councils and small businesses

Your council will:

- a. notify the VSBC of issues affecting local small business communities
- b. refer commercial disputes to the VSBC dispute resolution team as appropriate
- c. provide details of the VSBC's dispute resolution services on its website

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## **Additional commitments**

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### **Promotion of Initiative**

The VSBC will:

- a. provide all participating councils with the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative logo to use in their own materials
- b. provide all participating councils with an animated video promoting the benefits of having a small business friendly council to Victorian small businesses
- c. share success stories and case studies from participating councils in the VSBC eNewsletter and on social media
- d. list all participating councils on the VSBC website

Your council will:

- a. utilise the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative and videos in relevant communications
- b. provide VSBC with case studies and success stories associated with the initiative

### **Quality assurance and review**

The VSBC will:

- a. contact your council 12 months after signing the charter to assess their status on each commitment
- b. review feedback from your council about the value of the charter and modify it as appropriate after 12 months

Your council will:

- a. work towards fulfilling each commitment within the first 12 months of signing the charter
- b. work with the VSBC to amend the charter if required

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## Acceptance

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On behalf of ..... we agree to the terms outlined in this Charter and agree to implement the Small Business Friendly Council Initiative.

**Name**  
**Position**  
**Signature**

.....

**Date** / /

**Name**  
**Position**  
**Signature**

Mark Schramm  
Acting Victorian Small Business Commissioner

.....

**Date** / /

Please provide the contact details for the CEO for your organisation, and the details of a contact person that we can use as matters for discussion arise.

	<b>CEO</b>	<b>Point of contact</b>
<b>Name</b>		
<b>Position</b>		
<b>Phone</b>		
<b>Email</b>		
<b>Postal address</b>		

