

11/18/2024 (Date of First Reading)

12/02/2024 (Date of Public Hearing)

ORDINANCE NO. M- 4476

AN ORDINANCE relating to business and occupation tax for revenue; adding a new chapter 5.03 to the Vancouver Municipal Code; enacting new sections VMC 5.03.010, 5.03.020, 5.03.028, 5.03.030, 5.03.050, 5.03.070, 5.03.076, 5.03.077, 5.03.078, 5.03.079, 5.03.100, 5.03.120, and 5.03.130; repealing sections 5.04.021, 5.04.030, 5.04.031, 5.04.032, 5.04.050, and 5.04.060; amending the title of chapter 5.04 of the Vancouver Municipal Code; and providing for savings, severability, referendum, and an effective date.

WHEREAS as related in Staff Report 239-24, the City's ability to provide a consistent service level to meet growing community needs for the core general fund supported services provided by the City, to include those in the areas of homeless services, have been impacted in recent years by statewide passage of tax limitation measures; and

WHEREAS, despite efforts by the City to address the structural challenge of the cost of providing such core services growing at a faster rate than revenues, including cost containment through organizational changes, budget cuts and investments in technology to automate processes and increase efficiencies, there remains a funding shortfall in the General, Street, and Fire Funds of approximately \$43 million; and

WHEREAS, the City is proposing to address that funding shortfall for the 2025-2026 biennial budget using a combination of targeted reductions in all General Fund supported departments and revenue increases; and

WHEREAS, there is no capacity in the current General Fund resources to fund construction and operations of a new 150-bed homeless shelter; and

WHEREAS, additional shelter is highly needed in the City of Vancouver to address the increasing number of unsheltered individuals; and

WHEREAS, as further set forth in the Staff Report, the revenues generated by re-establishment of the City's Business and Occupation (B&O) tax on Retailing could provide much of the revenues needed to fund the new 150-bed shelter; and

WHEREAS, as a first class city, Vancouver has authority to license for revenue under Article XI, Sec. 12 of the Washington Constitution and RCW 35.22.280(32); and

WHEREAS as related in Staff Report 239-24, since the City eliminated its Business and Occupation (B&O) tax in 2001, the Washington State Legislature adopted RCW 35.102.040, which required the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and the Association of Washington Businesses (AWB) to develop a model ordinance consistent with specified requirements for business and occupation taxation; and

WHEREAS, the AWC, in conjunction with a majority of the Washington cities with a business and occupation tax, developed a model ordinance consistent with RCW 35.102.040's requirements to achieve a fairer and more consistent state-wide implementation of business and occupation taxes and to help prevent against multiple taxation among various jurisdictions to the extent possible; and

WHEREAS, RCW 35.102.040 requires cities wishing to impose B&O taxes to adopt the model ordinance developed by AWC and consistent with requirements as stated in RCW 35.102.040; and,

WHEREAS, the AWC's model ordinance was updated in 2007, 2012, and 2019, and all B&O tax cities adopted the changes from 2019 with an effective date of January 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to substantially adopt the most recent version of the model ordinance consistent with RCW 35.102.040, while tailoring it where permitted to reflect the unique local characteristics of Vancouver; and

WHEREAS, City Council has determined that it is in the public interest to implement the business and occupation tax ordinance commencing January 1, 2026;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF VANCOUVER:

Section 1. The intent of this Ordinance is to replace the provisions of the Business & Occupation Tax in chapter 5.04 of the Vancouver Municipal Code in a newly created chapter by substantially adopting the Model Ordinance prepared by the Association of Washington Cities pursuant to RCW 35.102.040.

Section 2. A new chapter is created in Title 5 VMC, to be codified as chapter 5.03 VMC, which shall be entitled "Business and Occupation Tax."

Section 3. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.010, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.010 Purpose.**

The tax provisions of this chapter are intended to provide a uniform methodology for levying a gross receipts tax on business entities.

Section 4. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.020, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.020 Exercise of Revenue License Power.**

The provisions of this chapter shall be deemed an exercise of the power of the City to license for revenue. The provisions of this chapter are subject to periodic statutory or administrative rule changes or judicial interpretations of the ordinances or rules. The responsibility rests with the licensee or taxpayer to reconfirm tax computation procedures and remain in compliance with the City code.

Section 5. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.028, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.028 Administrative Provisions.**

The administrative provisions contained in chapter 5.01 VMC shall be fully applicable to the provisions of this chapter except as expressly stated to the contrary herein.

Section 6. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.030, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.030 Definitions.**

In construing the provisions of this chapter, the following definitions shall be applied. Words in the singular number shall include the plural, and the plural shall include the singular.

- A. “Advance,” “Reimbursement”
  - 1. “Advance” means money or credits received by a taxpayer from a customer or client with which the taxpayer is to pay costs or fees on behalf of the customer or client.
  - 2. “Reimbursement” means money or credits received from a customer or client to repay the taxpayer for money or credits expended by the taxpayer in payment of costs or fees of the customer or client.
- B. “Business” includes all activities engaged in with the object of gain, benefit, or advantage to the taxpayer or to another person or class, directly or indirectly.

- C. “Business and occupation tax” or “gross receipts tax” means a tax imposed on or measured by the value of products, the gross income of the business, or the gross proceeds of sales, as the case may be, and that is the legal liability of the business.
- D. “City” means the City of Vancouver.
- E. “Commercial or industrial use” means the following uses of products, including by-products, by the extractor or manufacturer thereof:
  - 1. Any use as a consumer; and
  - 2. The manufacturing of articles, substances or commodities;
- F. “Consumer” means the following:
  - 1. Any person who purchases, acquires, owns, holds, or uses any tangible or intangible personal property irrespective of the nature of the person’s business and including, among others, without limiting the scope hereof, persons who install, repair, clean, alter, improve, construct, or decorate real or personal property of or for a consumer other than for the purpose of:
    - a. Resale as tangible or intangible personal property in the regular course of business;
    - b. Incorporating such property as an ingredient or component of real or personal property when installing, repairing, cleaning, altering, imprinting, improving, constructing, or decorating such real or personal property of or for consumers;
    - c. Incorporating such property as an ingredient or component of a new product or as a chemical used in processing a new product when the primary purpose of such chemical is to create a chemical reaction directly through contact with an ingredient of a new product; or
    - d. Consuming the property in producing ferrosilicon which is subsequently used in producing magnesium for sale, if the primary purpose of such property is to create a chemical reaction directly through contact with an ingredient of ferrosilicon;
  - 2. Any person engaged in any business activity taxable under Section 5.03.050(A)(7);
  - 3. Any person who purchases, acquires, or uses any competitive telephone service as herein defined, other than for resale in the regular course of business;

4. Any person who purchases, acquires, or uses any personal, business, or professional service defined as a retail sale or retail service in Section 5.03.030, other than for resale in the regular course of business;
5. Any person who is an end user of software;
6. Any person engaged in the business of “public road construction” with respect to tangible personal property when that person incorporates the tangible personal property as an ingredient or component of a publicly-owned street, place, road, highway, easement, right-of-way, mass public transportation terminal or parking facility, bridge, tunnel, or trestle by installing, placing, or spreading the property in or upon the right-of-way of a publicly-owned street, place, road, highway, easement, bridge, tunnel, or trestle, or in or upon the site of a publicly-owned mass public transportation terminal or parking facility;
7. Any person who is an owner, lessee, or has the right of possession to or an easement in real property which is being constructed, repaired, decorated, improved, or otherwise altered by a person engaged in business;
8. Any person who is an owner, lessee, or has the right of possession to personal property which is being constructed, repaired, improved, cleaned, imprinted, or otherwise altered by a person engaged in business;
9. Any person engaged in “government contracting.” Any such person shall be a consumer within the meaning of this subsection with respect to tangible personal property incorporated into, installed in, or attached to such building or other structure by such person;

Nothing contained in this or any other subsection of this section shall be construed to modify any other definition of “consumer.”

- G. “Delivery” means the transfer of possession of tangible personal property between the seller and the buyer or the buyer's representative. Delivery to an employee of a buyer is considered delivery to the buyer. Transfer of possession of tangible personal property occurs when the buyer or the buyer’s representative first takes physical control of the property or exercises dominion and control over the property. Dominion and control means the buyer has the ability to put the property to the buyer’s own purposes. It means the buyer or the buyer’s representative has made the final decision to accept or reject the property, and the seller has no further right to possession of the property and the buyer has no right to return the property to the seller, other than under a warranty contract. A buyer does not exercise dominion and control over tangible personal property merely by arranging for shipment of the property

from the seller to itself. A buyer's representative is a person, other than an employee of the buyer, who is authorized in writing by the buyer to receive tangible personal property and take dominion and control by making the final decision to accept or reject the property. Neither a shipping company nor a seller can serve as a buyer's representative. It is immaterial where the contract of sale is negotiated or where the buyer obtains title to the property. Delivery terms and other provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code (Title 62A RCW) do not determine when or where delivery of tangible personal property occurs for purposes of taxation.

- H. “Digital automated service,” “digital code,” and “digital goods” have the same meaning as in RCW 82.04.192.
- I. “Digital products” means digital goods, digital codes, digital automated services, and the services described in RCW 82.04.050(2)(g) and (6)(b).
- J. “Director” means the Chief Financial Officer of the City, or the Director of any successor department of the City, or any officer, agent, or employee of the City designated to act on the Director’s behalf.
- K. “Eligible gross receipts tax” means a tax which:
  - 1. Is imposed on the act or privilege of engaging in business activities within Section 5.03.050; and
  - 2. Is measured by the gross volume of business, in terms of gross receipts and is not an income tax or value added tax; and
  - 3. Is not, pursuant to law or custom, separately stated from the sales price; and
  - 4. Is not a sales or use tax, business license fee, franchise fee, royalty or severance tax measured by volume or weight, or concession charge, or payment for the use and enjoyment of property, property right or a privilege; and
  - 5. Is a tax imposed by a local jurisdiction, whether within or without the State of Washington, and not by a Country, State, Province, or any other non-local jurisdiction above the County level.
- L. “Engaging in business” –
  - 1. The term “engaging in business” means commencing, conducting, or continuing in business, and also the exercise of corporate or franchise powers, as well as liquidating a business when the liquidators thereof hold themselves out to the public as conducting such business.
  - 2. This section sets forth examples of activities that constitute engaging in business in the City, and establishes safe harbors for certain of those

activities so that a person who meets the criteria may engage in de minimis business activities in the City without having to register and obtain a business license or pay City business and occupation taxes. The activities listed in this section are illustrative only and are not intended to narrow the definition of “engaging in business” in subsection (L)(1). If an activity is not listed, whether it constitutes engaging in business in the City shall be determined by considering all the facts and circumstances and applicable law.

3. Without being all inclusive, any one of the following activities conducted within the City by a person, or its employee, agent, representative, independent contractor, broker or another acting on its behalf constitutes engaging in business and requires a person to register and obtain a business license.
  - a. Owning, renting, leasing, maintaining, or having the right to use, or using, tangible personal property, intangible personal property, or real property permanently or temporarily located in the City.
  - b. Owning, renting, leasing, using, or maintaining, an office, place of business, or other establishment in the City.
  - c. Soliciting sales.
  - d. Making repairs or providing maintenance or service to real or tangible personal property, including warranty work and property maintenance.
  - e. Providing technical assistance or service, including quality control, product inspections, warranty work, or similar services on or in connection with tangible personal property sold by the person or on its behalf.
  - f. Installing, constructing, or supervising installation or construction of, real or tangible personal property.
  - g. Soliciting, negotiating, or approving franchise, license, or other similar agreements.
  - h. Collecting current or delinquent accounts.
  - i. Picking up and transporting tangible personal property, solid waste, construction debris, or excavated materials.
  - j. Providing disinfecting and pest control services, employment and labor pool services, home nursing care, janitorial services, appraising, landscape architectural services, security system



- services, surveying, and real estate services including the listing of homes and managing real property.
- k. Rendering professional services such as those provided by accountants, architects, attorneys, auctioneers, consultants, engineers, professional athletes, barbers, baseball clubs and other sports organizations, chemists, consultants, psychologists, court reporters, dentists, doctors, detectives, laboratory operators, teachers, veterinarians.
  - l. Meeting with customers or potential customers, even when no sales or orders are solicited at the meetings.
  - m. Training or recruiting agents, representatives, independent contractors, brokers or others, domiciled or operating on a job in the City, acting on its behalf, or for customers or potential customers.
  - n. Investigating, resolving, or otherwise assisting in resolving customer complaints.
  - o. In-store stocking or manipulating products or goods, sold to and owned by a customer, regardless of where sale and delivery of the goods took place.
  - p. Delivering goods in vehicles owned, rented, leased, used, or maintained by the person or another acting on its behalf
4. If a person, or its employee, agent, representative, independent contractor, broker or another acting on the person's behalf, engages in no other activities in or with the City but the following, it need not register and obtain a business license and pay tax.
- a. Meeting with suppliers of goods and services as a customer.
  - b. Meeting with government representatives in their official capacity, other than those performing contracting or purchasing functions.
  - c. Attending meetings, such as board meetings, retreats, seminars, and conferences, or other meetings wherein the person does not provide training in connection with tangible personal property sold by the person or on its behalf. This provision does not apply to any board of director member or attendee engaging in business such as a member of a board of directors who attends a board meeting.

- d. Renting tangible or intangible property as a customer when the property is not used in the City.
  - e. Attending, but not participating in a “trade show” or “multiple vendor events”. Persons participating at a trade show shall review the City's trade show or multiple vendor event ordinances.
  - f. Conducting advertising through the mail.
  - g. Soliciting sales by phone from a location outside the City.
5. A seller located outside the City merely delivering goods into the City by means of common carrier is not required to register and obtain a business license, provided that it engages in no other business activities in the City. Such activities do not include those in subsection (L)(4).

The City expressly intends that engaging in business include any activity sufficient to establish nexus for purposes of applying the tax under the law and the constitutions of the United States and the State of Washington. Nexus is presumed to continue as long as the taxpayer benefits from the activity that constituted the original nexus generating contact or subsequent contacts.

- M. “Extracting” is the activity engaged in by an extractor and is reportable under the extracting classification.
- N. “Extractor” means every person who from the person’s own land or from the land of another under a right or license granted by lease or contract, either directly or by contracting with others for the necessary labor or mechanical services, for sale or for commercial or industrial use, mines, quarries, takes or produces coal, oil, natural gas, ore, stone, sand, gravel, clay, mineral or other natural resource product; or fells, cuts or takes timber, Christmas trees, other than plantation Christmas trees, or other natural products; or takes fish, shellfish, or other sea or inland water foods or products. “Extractor” does not include persons performing under contract the necessary labor or mechanical services for others; or persons meeting the definition of farmer.
- O. “Extractor for Hire” means a person who performs under contract necessary labor or mechanical services for an extractor.
- P. “Gross income of the business” means the value proceeding or accruing by reason of the transaction of the business engaged in and includes gross proceeds of sales, compensation for the rendition of services, gains realized from trading in stocks, bonds, or other evidences of indebtedness, interest, discount, rents, royalties, fees, commissions, dividends, and other emoluments however designated, all without any deduction on account of the cost of tangible property sold, the cost of materials used, labor costs, interest, discount, delivery

costs, taxes, or any other expense whatsoever paid or accrued and without any deduction on account of losses.

- Q. “Gross proceeds of sales” means the value proceeding or accruing from the sale of tangible personal property, digital goods, digital codes, digital automated services or for other services rendered, without any deduction on account of the cost of property sold, the cost of materials used, labor costs, interest, discount paid, delivery costs, taxes, or any other expense whatsoever paid or accrued and without any deduction on account of losses.
- R. “In this City” or “within this City” includes all federal areas lying within the corporate city limits of the City.
- S. “Manufacturing” means the activity conducted by a manufacturer and is reported under the manufacturing classification.
- T. “Manufacturer,” “to manufacture.”
1. “Manufacturer” means every person who, either directly or by contracting with others for the necessary labor or mechanical services, manufactures for sale or for commercial or industrial use from the person’s own materials or ingredients any products. When the owner of equipment or facilities furnishes, or sells to the customer prior to manufacture, materials or ingredients equal to less than twenty percent (20%) of the total value of all materials or ingredients that become a part of the finished product, the owner of the equipment or facilities will be deemed to be a processor for hire, and not a manufacturer.
  2. “To manufacture” means all activities of a commercial or industrial nature wherein labor or skill is applied, by hand or machinery, to materials or ingredients so that as a result thereof a new, different or useful product is produced for sale or commercial or industrial use, and shall include:
    - a. The production of special made or custom made articles;
    - b. The production of dental appliances, devices, restorations, substitutes, or other dental laboratory products by a dental laboratory or dental technician;
    - c. Crushing and/or blending of rock, sand, stone, gravel, or ore; and
    - d. The producing of articles for sale, or for commercial or industrial use from raw materials or prepared materials by giving such materials, articles, and substances of trade or commerce new forms, qualities, properties or combinations including, but not limited to, such activities as making, fabricating, processing, refining, mixing, slaughtering, packing, aging, curing, mild

curing, preserving, canning, and the preparing and freezing of fresh fruits and vegetables.

“To manufacture” shall not include the production of digital goods or the production of computer software if the computer software is delivered from the seller to the purchaser by means other than tangible storage media, including the delivery by use of a tangible storage media where the tangible storage media is not physically transferred to the purchaser.

- U. “Person” means any individual, receiver, administrator, executor, assignee, trustee in bankruptcy, trust, estate, firm, co-partnership, joint venture, club, company, joint stock company, business trust, municipal corporation, political subdivision of the State of Washington, corporation, limited liability company, association, society, or any group of individuals acting as a unit, whether mutual, cooperative, fraternal, non-profit, or otherwise and the United States or any instrumentality thereof.
- V. “Product” or “byproduct.”
1. “Product” means tangible personal property, including articles, substances, or commodities created, brought forth, extracted, or manufactured by human or mechanical effort.
  2. “Byproduct” means any additional product, other than the principal or intended product, which results from extracting or manufacturing activities and which has a market value, without regard to whether or not such additional product was an expected or intended result of the extracting or manufacturing activities.
- W. “Retailing” means the activity of engaging in making sales at retail and is reported under the retailing classification.
- X. “Retail Service” shall include the sale of or charge made for personal, business, or professional services including amounts designated as interest, rents, fees, admission, and other service emoluments however designated, received by persons engaging in the following business activities:
1. Amusement and recreation services including but not limited to golf, pool, billiards, skating, bowling, swimming, bungee jumping, ski lifts and tows, basketball, racquet ball, handball, squash, tennis, batting cages, day trips for sightseeing purposes, and others, when provided to consumers. “Amusement and recreation services” also include the provision of related facilities such as basketball courts, tennis courts, handball courts, swimming pools, and charges made for providing the opportunity to dance. The term “amusement and recreation services” does not include instructional lessons to learn a particular activity such as tennis lessons, swimming lessons, or archery lessons.

2. Abstract, title insurance, and escrow services;
3. Credit bureau services;
4. Automobile parking and storage garage services;
5. Landscape maintenance and horticultural services but excluding (i) horticultural services provided to farmers and (ii) pruning, trimming, repairing, removing, and clearing of trees and brush near electric transmission or distribution lines or equipment, if performed by or at the direction of an electric utility;
6. Service charges associated with tickets to professional sporting events; and the following personal services: Physical fitness services, tanning salon services, tattoo parlor services, steam bath services, Turkish bath services, escort services, and dating services.
7. The term shall also include the renting or leasing of tangible personal property to consumers and the rental of equipment with an operator.

Y. “Sale,” “casual or isolated sale.”

1. “Sale” means any transfer of the ownership of, title to, or possession of, property for a valuable consideration and includes any activity classified as a “sale at retail,” “retail sale,” or “retail service.” It includes renting or leasing, conditional sale contracts, leases with option to purchase, and any contract under which possession of the property is given to the purchaser but title is retained by the vendor as security for the payment of the purchase price. It also includes the furnishing of food, drink, or meals for compensation whether consumed upon the premises or not.
2. “Casual or isolated sale” means a sale made by a person who is not engaged in the business of selling the type of property involved on a routine or continuous basis.

Z. “Sale at retail,” “retail sale.”

1. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” means every sale of tangible personal property (including articles produced, fabricated, or imprinted) to all persons irrespective of the nature of their business and including, among others, without limiting the scope hereof, persons who install, repair, clean, alter, improve, construct, or decorate real or personal property of or for consumers, other than a sale to a person who presents a resale certificate under RCW 82.04.470 and who:
  - a. Purchases for the purpose of resale as tangible personal property in the regular course of business without intervening use by such person; or

- b. Installs, repairs, cleans, alters, imprints, improves, constructs, or decorates real or personal property of or for consumers, if such tangible personal property becomes an ingredient or component of such real or personal property without intervening use by such person; or
  - c. Purchases for the purpose of consuming the property purchased in producing for sale a new article of tangible personal property or substance, of which such property becomes an ingredient or component or is a chemical used in processing, when the primary purpose of such chemical is to create a chemical reaction directly through contact with an ingredient of a new article being produced for sale; or
  - d. Purchases for the purpose of consuming the property purchased in producing ferrosilicon which is subsequently used in producing magnesium for sale, if the primary purpose of such property is to create a chemical reaction directly through contact with an ingredient of ferrosilicon; or
  - e. Purchases for the purpose of providing the property to consumers as part of competitive telephone service, as defined in RCW 82.04.065. The term shall include every sale of tangible personal property which is used or consumed or to be used or consumed in the performance of any activity classified as a “sale at retail” or “retail sale” even though such property is resold or utilized as provided in (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e) of this subsection following such use.
  - f. Purchases for the purpose of satisfying the person’s obligations under an extended warranty as defined in subsection (Z)(7) of this section, if such tangible personal property replaces or becomes an ingredient or component of property covered by the extended warranty without intervening use by such person.
2. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” also means every sale of tangible personal property to persons engaged in any business activity which is taxable under Section 5.03.050(A)(7).
3. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall include the sale of or charge made for tangible personal property consumed and/or for labor and services rendered in respect to the following:
- a. The installing, repairing, cleaning, altering, imprinting, or improving of tangible personal property of or for consumers, including charges made for the mere use of facilities in respect

thereto, but excluding charges made for the use of coin-operated laundry facilities when such facilities are situated in an apartment house, rooming house, or mobile home park for the exclusive use of the tenants thereof, and also excluding sales of laundry service to nonprofit health care facilities, and excluding services rendered in respect to live animals, birds and insects;

- b. The constructing, repairing, decorating, or improving of new or existing buildings or other structures under, upon, or above real property of or for consumers, including the installing or attaching of any article of tangible personal property therein or thereto, whether or not such personal property becomes a part of the realty by virtue of installation, and shall also include the sale of services or charges made for the clearing of land and the moving of earth excepting the mere leveling of land used in commercial farming or agriculture;
- c. The charge for labor and services rendered in respect to constructing, repairing, or improving any structure upon, above, or under any real property owned by an owner who conveys the property by title, possession, or any other means to the person performing such construction, repair, or improvement for the purpose of performing such construction, repair, or improvement and the property is then reconveyed by title, possession, or any other means to the original owner;
- d. The sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered in respect to the cleaning, fumigating, razing or moving of existing buildings or structures, but shall not include the charge made for janitorial services; and for purposes of this section the term "janitorial services" shall mean those cleaning and caretaking services ordinarily performed by commercial janitor service businesses including, but not limited to, wall and window washing, floor cleaning and waxing, and the cleaning in place of rugs, drapes and upholstery. The term "janitorial services" does not include painting, papering, repairing, furnace or septic tank cleaning, snow removal or sandblasting;
- e. The sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered in respect to automobile towing and similar automotive transportation services, but not in respect to those required to report and pay taxes under chapter 82.16 RCW;
- f. The sale of and charge made for the furnishing of lodging and all other services, except telephone business and cable service, by a

hotel, rooming house, tourist court, motel, trailer camp, and the granting of any similar license to use real property, as distinguished from the renting or leasing of real property, and it shall be presumed that the occupancy of real property for a continuous period of one month or more constitutes a rental or lease of real property and not a mere license to use or enjoy the same. For the purposes of this subsection, it shall be presumed that the sale of and charge made for the furnishing of lodging for a continuous period of one month or more to a person is a rental or lease of real property and not a mere license to enjoy the same;

- g. The installing, repairing, altering, or improving of digital goods for consumers;
  - h. The sale of or charge made for tangible personal property, labor and services to persons taxable under (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) of this subsection when such sales or charges are for property, labor and services which are used or consumed in whole or in part by such persons in the performance of any activity defined as a “sale at retail” or “retail sale” even though such property, labor and services may be resold after such use or consumption. Nothing contained in this subsection shall be construed to modify subsection (Z)(1) of this section and nothing contained in subsection (Z)(1) of this section shall be construed to modify this subsection.
4. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the providing of competitive telephone service to consumers.
5. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale”
- a. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the sale of prewritten software other than a sale to a person who presents a resale certificate under RCW 82.04.470, regardless of the method of delivery to the end user. For purposes of this subsection (5)(a) the sale of the sale of prewritten computer software includes the sale of or charge made for a key or an enabling or activation code, where the key or code is required to activate prewritten computer software and put the software into use. There is no separate sale of the key or code from the prewritten computer software, regardless of how the sale may be characterized by the vendor or by the purchaser.

The term “sale at retail” or “retail sale” does not include the sale of or charge made for:



- i. Custom software; or
    - ii. The customization of prewritten software.
  - b.
    - i. The term also includes the charge made to consumers for the right to access and use prewritten computer software, where possession of the software is maintained by the seller or a third party, regardless of whether the charge for the service is on a per use, per user, per license, subscription, or some other basis.
    - ii.
      - a. The service described in (b)(i) of this subsection (5) includes the right to access and use prewritten software to perform data processing.
      - b. For purposes of this subsection (b)(ii), “data processing” means the systematic performance of operations on data to extract the required information in an appropriate form or to convert the data to usable information. Data processing includes check processing, image processing, form processing, survey processing, payroll processing, claim processing, and similar activities.
- 6. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered in respect to the building, repairing, or improving of any street, place, road, highway, easement, right of way, mass public transportation terminal or parking facility, bridge, tunnel, or trestle which is owned by a municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state, the State of Washington, or by the United States and which is used or to be used primarily for foot or vehicular traffic including mass transportation vehicles of any kind.
- 7. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the sale of or charge made for an extended warranty to a consumer. For purposes of this subsection, “extended warranty” means an agreement for a specified duration to perform the replacement or repair of tangible personal property at no additional charge or a reduced charge for tangible personal property, labor, or both, or to provide indemnification for the replacement or repair of tangible personal property, based on the occurrence of specified events. The term “extended warranty” does not include an agreement, otherwise meeting the definition of extended

warranty in this subsection, if no separate charge is made for the agreement and the value of the agreement is included in the sales price of the tangible personal property covered by the agreement.

8. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered in respect to the constructing, repairing, decorating, or improving of new or existing buildings or other structures under, upon, or above real property of or for the United States, any instrumentality thereof, or a county or city housing authority created pursuant to chapter 35.82 RCW, including the installing, or attaching of any article of tangible personal property therein or thereto, whether or not such personal property becomes a part of the realty by virtue of installation (government contracting).
9. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall not include the sale of services or charges made for the clearing of land and the moving of earth of or for the United States, any instrumentality thereof, or a county or city housing authority. Nor shall the term include the sale of services or charges made for cleaning up for the United States, or its instrumentalities, radioactive waste and other byproducts of weapons production and nuclear research and development.
10. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall not include the sale of or charge made for labor and services rendered for environmental remedial action.
11. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the following sales to consumers of digital goods, digital codes, and digital automated services:
  - a. Sales in which the seller has granted the purchaser the right of permanent use;
  - b. Sales in which the seller has granted the purchaser a right of use that is less than permanent;
  - c. Sales in which the purchaser is not obligated to make continued payment as a condition of the sale; and
  - d. Sales in which the purchaser is obligated to make continued payment as a condition of the sale. A retail sale of digital goods, digital codes, or digital automated services under this subsection (Z)(11) includes any services provided by the seller exclusively in connection with the digital goods, digital codes, or digital automated services, whether or not a separate charge is made for such services. For purposes of this subsection, “permanent” means perpetual or for an indefinite or unspecified length of time. A right of permanent use is presumed to have been granted

unless the agreement between the seller and the purchaser specifies or the circumstances.

12. “Sale at retail” or “retail sale” shall also include the installing, repairing, altering, or improving of digital goods for consumers.
- AA. “Sale at wholesale” or “wholesale sale” means any sale of tangible personal property, digital goods, digital codes, digital automated services, prewritten computer software, or services described in subsection (Z)(5)(b)(i) of VMC 5.03.030, which is not a retail sale, and any charge made for labor and services rendered for persons who are not consumers, in respect to real or personal property and retail services, if such charge is expressly defined as a retail sale or retail service when rendered to or for consumers. Sale at wholesale also includes the sale of telephone business to another telecommunications company as defined in RCW 80.04.010 for the purpose of resale, as contemplated by RCW 35.21.715.
- BB. “Service” means those activities that do not fall within one of the other tax classifications used by a City. The term “service” excludes retail or wholesale services.
- CC. “Taxpayer” means any “person”, as herein defined, required to have a business license under this chapter or liable for the collection of any tax or fee under this chapter, or who engages in any business or who performs any act for which a tax or fee is imposed by this chapter.
- DD. “Value proceeding or accruing” means the consideration, whether money, credits, rights, or other property expressed in terms of money, a person is entitled to receive or which is actually received or accrued. The term shall be applied, in each case, on a cash receipts or accrual basis according to which method of accounting is regularly employed in keeping the books of the taxpayer.
- EE. “Value of products.”
  1. The value of products, including by-products, extracted or manufactured, shall be determined by the gross proceeds derived from the sale thereof whether such sale is at wholesale or at retail, to which shall be added all subsidies and bonuses received from the purchaser or from any other person with respect to the extraction, manufacture, or sale of such products or by-products by the seller.
  2. Where such products, including by-products, are extracted or manufactured for commercial or industrial use; and where such products, including by-products, are shipped, transported or transferred out of the City, or to another person, without prior sale or are sold under circumstances such that the gross proceeds from the sale are not

indicative of the true value of the subject matter of the sale; the value shall correspond as nearly as possible to the gross proceeds from sales in this state of similar products of like quality and character, and in similar quantities by other taxpayers, plus the amount of subsidies or bonuses ordinarily payable by the purchaser or by any third person with respect to the extraction, manufacture, or sale of such products. In the absence of sales of similar products as a guide to value, such value may be determined upon a cost basis. In such cases, there shall be included every item of cost attributable to the particular article or article extracted or manufactured, including direct and indirect overhead costs. The Director may prescribe rules for the purpose of ascertaining such values.

3. Notwithstanding subsection (EE)(2) above, the value of a product manufactured or produced for purposes of serving as a prototype for the development of a new or improved product shall correspond to (a) the retail selling price of such new or improved product when first offered for sale; or (2) the value of materials incorporated into the prototype in cases in which the new or improved product is not offered for sale.

FF. “Wholesaling” means engaging in the activity of making sales at wholesale, and is reported under the wholesaling classification.

Section 7. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.050, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.050 Imposition of the tax – tax or fee levied.**

- A. Except as provided in subsection (B) of this section, there is hereby levied upon and shall be collected from every person a tax for the act or privilege of engaging in business activities within the City, whether the person’s office or place of business be within or without the City. The tax shall be in amounts to be determined by application of rates against gross proceeds of sale, gross income of business, or value of products, including by-products, as the case may be, as follows:
  1. Upon every person engaging within the City in business as an extractor; as to such persons the amount of the tax with respect to such business shall be equal to the value of the products, including by-products, extracted within the city for sale or for commercial or industrial use, multiplied by the rate of 0.00 of one percent (0.0000). The measure of the tax is the value of the products, including by-products, so extracted, regardless of

the place of sale or the fact that deliveries may be made to points outside the City.

2. Upon every person engaging within the City in business as a manufacturer, as to such persons the amount of the tax with respect to such business shall be equal to the value of the products, including by-products, manufactured within the city, multiplied by the rate of 0.00 of one percent (0.0000). The measure of the tax is the value of the products, including by-products, so manufactured, regardless of the place of sale or the fact that deliveries may be made to points outside the City.
3. Upon every person engaging within the City in the business of making sales at wholesale, except persons taxable under subsection (4) of this section; as to such persons, the amount of tax with respect to such business shall be equal to the gross proceeds of such sales of the business without regard to the place of delivery of articles, commodities or merchandise sold, multiplied by the rate of 0.00 of one percent (0.0000).
4. Upon every person engaging within the City in the business of making sales at retail, as to such persons, the amount of tax with respect to such business shall be equal to the gross proceeds of such sales of the business, without regard to the place of delivery of articles, commodities or merchandise sold, multiplied by the rate of 0.100 of one percent (0.0010).
5. Upon every person engaging within the City in the business of (i) printing, (ii) both printing and publishing newspapers, magazines, periodicals, books, music, and other printed items, (iii) publishing newspapers, magazines and periodicals, (iv) extracting for hire, and (v) processing for hire; as to such persons, the amount of tax on such business shall be equal to the gross income of the business multiplied by the rate of 0.00 of one percent (0.0000).
6. Upon every person engaging within the City in the business of making sales of retail services; as to such persons, the amount of tax with respect to such business shall be equal to the gross proceeds of sales multiplied by the rate of 0.100 of one percent (0.0010).
7. Upon every other person engaging within the City in any business activity other than or in addition to those enumerated in the above subsections; as to such persons, the amount of tax on account of such activities shall be equal to the gross income of the business multiplied by the rate of 0.000 of one percent (0.0000). This subsection includes, among others, and without limiting the scope hereof (whether or not title to material used in the performance of such business passes to another by accession, merger or other than by outright sale), persons engaged in the business of

developing, or producing custom software or of customizing canned software, producing royalties or commissions, and persons engaged in the business of rendering any type of service which does not constitute a sale at retail, a sale at wholesale, or a retail service.

- B. The gross receipts tax imposed in this section shall not apply to any person whose gross proceeds of sales, gross income of the business, and value of products, including by-products, as the case may be, from all activities conducted within the City during any calendar year is equal to or less than \$50,000, or is equal to or less than \$12,500 during any quarter if on a quarterly reporting basis.
- C. The taxes imposed under subsections (A)(4) and (A)(6) of this section shall be used only for the purpose of funding the construction and operations of a new bridge shelter for the homeless. The rates described in subsections (A)(4) and (A)(6) of this section shall be amended to 0.000 of one percent on January 1, 2027 if the bridge shelter described in this section is not under construction as of that date. Further, should the City Council determine to close the bridge shelter, the rates described in subsections (A)(4) and (A)(6) of this section shall be amended to 0.000 of one percent on January 1 of the year following such determination.

Section 8. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.070, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.070 Multiple activities credit when activities take place in one or more cities with eligible gross receipt taxes.**

- A. Persons who engage in business activities that are within the purview of two (2) or more subsections of .050 shall be taxable under each applicable subsection.
- B. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, if imposition of the City's tax would place an undue burden upon interstate commerce or violate constitutional requirements, a taxpayer shall be allowed a credit to the extent necessary to preserve the validity of the City's tax, and still apply the City tax to as much of the taxpayer's activities as may be subject to the City's taxing authority.
- C. To take the credit authorized by this section, a taxpayer must be able to document that the amount of tax sought to be credited was paid upon the same gross receipts used in computing the tax against which the credit is applied.
- D. Credit for persons that sell in the City products that they extract or manufacture. Persons taxable under the retailing or wholesaling classification with respect to selling products in this City shall be allowed a credit against those taxes for any

eligible gross receipts taxes paid (a) with respect to the manufacturing of the products sold in the City, and (b) with respect to the extracting of the products, or the ingredients used in the products, sold in the City. The amount of the credit shall not exceed the tax liability arising under this chapter with respect to the sale of those products.

- E. Credit for persons that manufacture products in the City using ingredients they extract. Persons taxable under the manufacturing classification with respect to manufacturing products in this City shall be allowed a credit against those taxes for any eligible gross receipts tax paid with respect to extracting the ingredients of the products manufactured in the City. The amount of the credit shall not exceed the tax liability arising under this chapter with respect to the manufacturing of those products.
- F. Credit for persons that sell within the City products that they print, or publish and print. Persons taxable under the retailing or wholesaling classification with respect to selling products in this City shall be allowed a credit against those taxes for any eligible gross receipts taxes paid with respect to the printing, or the printing and publishing, of the products sold within the City. The amount of the credit shall not exceed the tax liability arising under this chapter with respect to the sale of those products.

Section 9. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at

VMC 5.03.076, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.076 Assignment of gross income derived from intangibles.**

Gross income derived from the sale of intangibles such as royalties, trademarks, patents, or goodwill shall be assigned to the jurisdiction where the person is domiciled.

Section 10. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.077, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.077 Allocation and apportionment of income when activities take place in more than one jurisdiction.**

Gross income, other than persons subject to the provisions of chapter 82.14A RCW, shall be allocated and apportioned as follows:

- A. Gross income derived from all activities other than those taxed as service or royalties under VMC 5.03.050(A)(7) shall be allocated to the location where the activity takes place.
- B. In the case of sales of tangible personal property, the activity takes place where delivery to the buyer occurs.
- C. In the case of sales of digital products, the activity takes place where delivery to the buyer occurs. The delivery of digital products will be deemed to occur at:
  1. The seller's place of business if the purchaser receives the digital product at the seller's place of business;
  2. If not received at the seller's place of business, the location where the purchaser or the purchaser's donee, designated as such by the purchaser, receives the digital product, including the location indicated by instructions for delivery to the purchaser or donee, known to the seller;
  3. If the location where the purchaser or the purchaser's donee receives the digital product is not known, the purchaser's address maintained in the ordinary course of the seller's business when use of this address does not constitute bad faith;
  4. If no address for the purchaser is maintained in the ordinary course of the seller's business, the purchaser's address obtained during the consummation of the sale, including the address of a purchaser's payment instrument, if no other address is available, when use of this address does not constitute bad faith; and
  5. If no address for the purchaser is obtained during the consummation of the sale, the address where the digital good or digital code is first made available for transmission by the seller or the address from which the digital automated service or service described in RCW 82.04.050(2)(g) or (6)(b) was provided, disregarding for these purposes any location that merely provided the digital transfer of the product sold.



- D. If none of the methods in subsection 5.03.077(C) for determining where the delivery of digital products occurs are available after a good faith effort by the taxpayer to apply the methods provided in subsections 5.03.077(C)(1) through 5.03.077(C)(5), then the city and the taxpayer may mutually agree to employ any other method to effectuate an equitable allocation of income from the sale of digital products. The taxpayer will be responsible for petitioning the city to use an alternative method under this subsection 5.03.077(D). The city may employ an alternative method for allocating the income from the sale of digital products if the methods provided in subsections 5.03.077(C)(1) through 5.03.077(C)(5) are not available and the taxpayer and the city are unable to mutually agree on an alternative method to effectuate an equitable allocation of income from the sale of digital products.
- E. For purposes of subsections 5.03.077(C)(1) through 5.03.077(C)(5), the following definitions apply:
1. “Digital automated services,” “digital codes,” and “digital goods” have the same meaning as in RCW 82.04.192;
  2. “Digital products” means digital goods, digital codes, digital automated services, and the services described in RCW 82.04.050(2)(g) and (6)(c); and
  3. “Receive” has the same meaning as in RCW 82.32.730.
- F. Gross income derived from activities taxed as services and other activities taxed under subsection 5.03.050(A)(7) shall be apportioned to the city by multiplying apportionable income by a fraction, the numerator of which is the payroll factor plus the service income factor and the denominator of which is two.
1. The payroll factor is a fraction, the numerator of which is the total amount paid in the city during the tax period by the taxpayer for compensation and the denominator of which is the total compensation paid everywhere during the tax period. Compensation is paid in the city if:
    - a. The individual is primarily assigned within the city;
    - b. The individual is not primarily assigned to any place of business for the tax period and the employee performs fifty percent or more of his or her service for the tax period in the city; or
    - c. The individual is not primarily assigned to any place of business for the tax period, the individual does not perform fifty percent or more of his or her service in any city and the employee resides in the city.

2. The service income factor is a fraction, the numerator of which is the total service income of the taxpayer in the city during the tax period, and the denominator of which is the total service income of the taxpayer everywhere during the tax period. Service income is in the city if the customer location is in the city.
3. Gross income of the business from engaging in an apportionable activity must be excluded from the denominator of the service income factor if, in respect to such activity, at least some of the activity is performed in the city, and the gross income is attributable under subsection (F)(2) of this section to a city or unincorporated area of a county within the United States or to a foreign country in which the taxpayer is not taxable. For purposes of this subsection (F)(3), “not taxable” means that the taxpayer is not subject to a business activities tax by that city or county within the United States or by that foreign country, except that a taxpayer is taxable in a city or county within the United States or in a foreign country in which it would be deemed to have a substantial nexus with the city or county within the United States or with the foreign country under the standards in RCW 35.102.050 regardless of whether that city or county within the United States or that foreign country imposes such a tax.
4. If the allocation and apportionment provisions of this subsection (F) do not fairly represent the extent of the taxpayer’s business activity in the city, the taxpayer may petition for or the tax administrators may jointly require, in respect to all or any part of the taxpayer's business activity, if reasonable:
  - a. Separate accounting;
  - b. The exclusion of any one or more of the factors;
  - c. The inclusion of one or more additional factors that will fairly represent the taxpayer's business activity in the city; or
  - d. The employment of any other method to effectuate an equitable allocation and apportionment of the taxpayer's income.
5. The party petitioning for, or the tax administrator requiring, the use of any method to effectuate an equitable allocation and apportionment of the taxpayer’s income pursuant to subsection (4) of this subsection (F) must prove by a preponderance of the evidence:
  - a. That the allocation and apportionment provisions of this subsection (F) do not fairly represent the extent of the taxpayer’s business activity in the city; and

- b. That the alternative to such provisions is reasonable. The same burden of proof shall apply whether the taxpayer is petitioning for, or the tax administrator is requiring, the use of an alternative, reasonable method to effectuate an equitable allocation and apportionment of the taxpayer's income.
  6. If the tax administrator requires any method to effectuate an equitable allocation and apportionment of the taxpayer's income, the tax administrator cannot impose any civil or criminal penalty with reference to the tax due that is attributable to the taxpayer's reasonable reliance solely on the allocation and apportionment provisions of this subsection (F).
  7. A taxpayer that has received written permission from the tax administrator to use a reasonable method to effectuate an equitable allocation and apportionment of the taxpayer's income shall not have that permission revoked with respect to transactions and activities that have already occurred unless there has been a material change in, or a material misrepresentation of, the facts provided by the taxpayer upon which the tax administrator reasonably relied in approving a reasonable alternative method.
- G. The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section.
  1. "Apportionable income" means the gross income of the business taxable under the service classifications of a city's gross receipts tax, including income received from activities outside the city if the income would be taxable under the service classification if received from activities within the city, less any exemptions or deductions available.
  2. "Business activities tax" means a tax measured by the amount of, or economic results of, business activity conducted in a city or county within the United States or within a foreign country. The term includes taxes measured in whole or in part on net income or gross income or receipts. "Business activities tax" does not include a sales tax, use tax, or a similar transaction tax, imposed on the sale or acquisition of goods or services, whether or not denominated a gross receipts tax or a tax imposed on the privilege of doing business.
  3. "Compensation" means wages, salaries, commissions, and any other form of remuneration paid to individuals for personal services that are or would be included in the individual's gross income under the federal internal revenue code.

4. “Customer” means a person or entity to whom the taxpayer makes a sale or renders services or from whom the taxpayer otherwise receives gross income of the business.
5. “Customer location” means the following:
  - a. For a customer not engaged in business, if the service requires the customer to be physically present, where the service is performed.
  - b. For a customer not engaged in business, if the service does not require the customer to be physically present:
    - i. The customer’s residence; or
    - ii. If the customer’s residence is not known, the customer’s billing/mailling address.
  - c. For a customer engaged in business:
    - i. Where the services are ordered from;
    - ii. At the customer’s billing/mailling address if the location from which the services are ordered is not known; or
    - iii. At the customer’s commercial domicile if none of the above are known.
6. “Individual” means any individual who, under the usual common law rules applicable in determining the employer-employee relationship, has the status of an employee of that taxpayer.
7. “Primarily assigned” means the business location of the taxpayer where the individual performs his or her duties.
8. “Service-taxable income” or “service income” means gross income of the business subject to tax under either the service or royalty classification.
9. “Tax period” means the calendar year during which tax liability is accrued. If taxes are reported by a taxpayer on a basis more frequent than once per year, taxpayers shall calculate the factors for the previous calendar year for reporting in the current calendar year and correct the reporting for the previous year when the factors are calculated for that year, but not later than the end of the first quarter of the following year.

- H. Assignment or apportionment of revenue under this Section shall be made in accordance with and in full compliance with the provisions of the interstate commerce clause of the United States Constitution where applicable.

Section 11. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.078, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.078 Allocation and apportionment of printing and publishing income when activities take place in more than one jurisdiction.**

Notwithstanding RCW 35.102.130, effective January 1, 2026, gross income from the activities of printing, and of publishing newspapers, periodicals, or magazines, shall be allocated to the principal place in this state from which the taxpayer's business is directed or managed. As used in this section until December 31, 2023, the activities of printing, and of publishing newspapers, periodicals, or magazines, have the same meanings as attributed to those terms in RCW 82.04.280(1) by the department of revenue. Beginning January 1, 2024, until January 1, 2034, the activities of printing, and of publishing newspapers and periodicals or magazines are those activities to which the exemption in RCW 82.04.759 and the tax rate in RCW 82.04.280(1)(a) apply.

Section 12. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.079, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.079 Exemptions**

- A. Public utilities. This chapter shall not apply to any person in respect to a business activity with respect to which tax liability is specifically imposed under the provisions of chapter 5.10 VMC.
- B. Investments - dividends from subsidiary corporations. This chapter shall not apply to amounts derived by persons, other than those engaging in banking, loan, security, or other financial businesses, from investments or the use of money as such, and also amounts derived as dividends by a parent from its subsidiary corporations.
- C. Insurance business. This chapter shall not apply to amounts received by any person who is an insurer or their appointed insurance producer upon which a tax based on gross premiums is paid to the state pursuant to RCW 48.14.020, and

provided further, that the provisions of this subsection shall not exempt any bonding company from tax with respect to gross income derived from the completion of any contract as to which it is a surety, or as to any liability as successor to the liability of the defaulting contractor.

D. Employees.

1. This chapter shall not apply to any person in respect to the person's employment in the capacity as an employee or servant as distinguished from that of an independent contractor. For the purposes of this subsection, the definition of employee shall include those persons that are defined in the Internal Revenue Code, as hereafter amended.
2. A booth renter is an independent contractor for purposes of this chapter.

E. Amounts derived from sale of real estate. This chapter shall not apply to gross proceeds derived from the sale of real estate. This, however, shall not be construed to allow an exemption of amounts received as commissions from the sale of real estate, nor as fees, handling charges, discounts, interest or similar financial charges resulting from, or relating to, real estate transactions. This chapter shall also not apply to amounts received for the rental of real estate if the rental income is derived from a contract to rent for a continuous period of thirty (30) days or longer.

F. Mortgage brokers' third-party provider services trust accounts. This chapter shall not apply to amounts received from trust accounts to mortgage brokers for the payment of third-party costs if the accounts are operated in a manner consistent with RCW 19.146.050 and any rules adopted by the director of financial institutions.

G. Amounts derived from manufacturing, selling or distributing motor vehicle fuel. This chapter shall not apply to the manufacturing, selling, or distributing motor vehicle fuel, as the term "motor vehicle fuel" is defined in RCW 82.38.020 and exempt under RCW 82.38.280, provided that any fuel not subjected to the state fuel excise tax, or any other applicable deduction or exemption, will be taxable under this chapter.

H. Amounts derived from liquor, and the sale or distribution of liquor. This chapter shall not apply to liquor as defined in RCW 66.04.010 and exempt in RCW 66.08.120.

I. Casual and isolated sales. This chapter shall not apply to the gross proceeds derived from casual or isolated sales.

- J. Accommodation sales. This chapter shall not apply to sales for resale by persons regularly engaged in the business of making retail sales of the type of property so sold to other persons similarly engaged in the business of selling such property where (1) the amount paid by the buyer does not exceed the amount paid by the seller to the vendor in the acquisition of the article and (2) the sale is made as an accommodation to the buyer to enable the buyer to fill a bona fide existing order of a customer or is made within fourteen days to reimburse in kind a previous accommodation sale by the buyer to the seller.
- K. Taxes collected as trust funds. This chapter shall not apply to amounts collected by the taxpayer from third parties to satisfy third party obligations to pay taxes such as the retail sales tax, use tax, and admission tax.

Section 13. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.100, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.100 Deductions.**

In computing the tax, there may be deducted from the measure of tax the following items:

- A. **Receipts from tangible personal property delivered outside the State.** In computing tax, there may be deducted from the measure of tax under retailing or wholesaling amounts derived from the sale of tangible personal property that is delivered by the seller to the buyer or the buyer's representative at a location outside the State of Washington.
- B. **Cash discount taken by purchaser.** In computing tax, there may be deducted from the measure of tax the cash discount amounts actually taken by the purchaser. This deduction is not allowed in arriving at the taxable amount under the extracting or manufacturing classifications with respect to articles produced or manufactured, the reported values of which, for the purposes of this tax, have been computed according to the "value of product" provisions.
- C. **Credit losses of accrual basis taxpayers.** In computing tax, there may be deducted from the measure of tax the amount of credit losses actually sustained by taxpayers whose regular books of account are kept upon an accrual basis.
- D. **Constitutional prohibitions.** In computing tax, there may be deducted from the measure of the tax amounts derived from business which the City is prohibited from taxing under the Constitution of the State of Washington or the Constitution of the United States.

- E. **Receipts from the Sale of Tangible Personal Property and Retail Services Delivered Outside the City but Within Washington.** Effective January 1, 2026, amounts included in the gross receipts reported on the tax return derived from the sale of tangible personal property delivered to the buyer or the buyer's representative outside the City but within the State of Washington may be deducted from the measure of tax under the retailing, retail services, or wholesaling classification.
- F. **Professional employer services.** In computing the tax, a professional employer organization may deduct from the calculation of gross income the gross income of the business derived from performing professional employer services that is equal to the portion of the fee charged to a client that represents the actual cost of wages and salaries, benefits, workers' compensation, payroll taxes, withholding, or other assessments paid to or on behalf of a covered employee by the professional employer organization under a professional employer agreement.
- G. **Interest on investments or loans secured by mortgages or deeds of trust.** In computing tax, to the extent permitted by Chapter 82.14A RCW, there may be deducted from the measure of tax by those engaged in banking, loan, security or other financial businesses, amounts derived from interest received on investments or loans primarily secured by first mortgages or trust deeds on non-transient residential properties.

Section 14. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at

VMC 5.03.120, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.120 Tax part of overhead.**

It is not the intention of this chapter that the taxes or fees herein levied upon persons engaging in business be construed as taxes or fees upon the purchasers or customer, but that such taxes or fees shall be levied upon, and collectible from, the person engaging in the business activities herein designated and that such taxes or fees shall constitute a part of the cost of doing business of such persons.



Section 15. A new section is enacted and added to chapter 5.03 VMC, to be codified at VMC 5.03.130, and shall read as follows:

**5.03.130 Severability.**

If any provision of this chapter or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the chapter or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

Section 16. The following sections of Chapter 5.04 VMC are hereby repealed in their entirety: 5.04.021, 5.04.030, 5.04.031, 5.04.032, 5.04.050, 5.04.060.

**~~5.04.021 Competitive telephone service.~~**

~~"Competitive telephone service" means the providing by any person of telephone equipment, apparatus, or service, other than toll service, which is of a type which can be provided by persons that are not subject to regulation as telephone companies under RCW Title 80, and for which a separate charge is made.~~

**~~5.04.030 Enumeration of persons subject to tax—Rates of tax.~~**

~~There is levied upon and shall be collected from and paid as hereinafter provided by every person on account and for the privilege of engaging in business activities, a license fee or occupational tax, sometimes referred to as "the tax," in amounts to be determined by application of rates here provided against gross proceeds of sales, or value of goods manufactured, or gross income of personal services or of business, as the case may be, for the three calendar months next preceding the beginning of each quarterly period as follows:~~

~~a. Upon every person engaging within this city in the business of making sales at wholesale, except persons taxable under subsection (b) of this section, as to such persons the amount of tax with respect to such business shall be equal to the gross proceeds of such sales of the business without regard to the place of delivery of articles, commodities or merchandise sold, multiplied by the rate of .0011; provided, that as of January 1, 1993, the tax herein on making of sales at wholesale is reduced by the percentage shown on the chart in Exhibit A, attached to Ordinance M-3003 and on file in the office of the city clerk, and it shall be reduced by an additional amount each January 1st thereafter, as shown on said chart, until such tax has been eliminated.~~

~~b. Upon every person engaging within this city in the business of (1) printing and publication of newspapers, periodicals or magazines, (2) building, repairing or improving~~

any publicly owned street, place, road, highway, bridge or trestle which is used, primarily, for foot or vehicular traffic, as to such persons, the amount of tax on such business shall be equal to the gross income of the business multiplied by the rate of .0011; provided, that as of January 1, 1993, this tax is reduced by the percentage shown on the chart in Exhibit A attached to Ordinance M-3003 and on file in the office of the City Clerk, and it shall be reduced by an additional amount each January 1st thereafter, as shown on the attached chart, until such tax has been eliminated;

c. Upon every person engaging in business within this city as a manufacturer, as to such persons the amount of the tax with respect to such businesses shall be equal to the value of the products, including byproducts, so manufactured, multiplied by the rate of .00022, regardless of the place of sale or the fact that deliveries may be made to points outside the state; provided, that as of January 1, 1993, this tax is reduced by the percentage shown on the chart in Exhibit A attached to Ordinance M-3003 and on file in the office of the City Clerk, and it shall be reduced by an additional amount each January 1st thereafter, as shown on the attached chart, until such tax has been eliminated;

d. Except as provided in subsections (c) and/or (e) of this section, upon all persons engaging within this city in any business activity other than or in addition to those enumerated in other subsections of this section, and including national banks, state banks, trust companies, mutual savings banks, building and loan associations, savings and loan associations and other financial institutions including loan companies, all subject to and in accordance with the definitions, deductions and exemptions set forth in RCW Chapter 82.04, insofar as the same may be applicable, and in accordance with RCW 82.14A.010, as amended, as to such persons the amount of tax on account of such activities shall be equal to the gross income of the business multiplied by the rate of .0011; provided, that as of January 1, 1993, this tax is reduced by the percentage shown on the chart in Exhibit A attached to Ordinance M-3003 and on file in the office of the City Clerk, and it shall be reduced by an additional amount each January 1st thereafter, as shown on the attached chart, until such tax has been eliminated;

e. Upon every person engaging within this city in any professional activities other than or in addition to those enumerated in subsections (a), (b), (c), (d) or (f) of this section, as to such persons the amount of tax on account of such activities shall be equal to the gross income of the business or professional activity, multiplied by the rate of .0022. Included within the professional activities, but not limited thereof, upon which the license fee or tax is paid at .0022 as provided in this section are the following: physicians, veterinarians, dentists, lawyers, accountants, engineers, architects, optometrists, real estate brokers and bond brokers; provided, that as of January 1, 1993, this tax is reduced by the percentage shown on the chart in Exhibit A attached to Ordinance M-3003 and on file in the office of the City Clerk, and it shall be reduced by an additional amount each January 1st thereafter, as shown on the attached chart, until such tax has been eliminated;

f. Upon every person engaged within the city in "competitive telephone business," as to such persons the amount of tax shall be equal to the gross income of the business

multiplied by the rate of .0011; provided, that as of January 1, 1993, this tax is reduced by the percentage shown on the chart in Exhibit A attached to Ordinance M-3003 and on file in the office of the City Clerk, and it shall be reduced by an additional amount each January 1st thereafter, as shown on the attached chart, until such tax has been eliminated;

g. Every person engaged in activities which are within the purview of two or more subsections of this section shall be taxable under each paragraph applicable to the activities engaged in; provided, that persons taxable under (a), (b), (d), (e) or (f) of this section shall be not taxable under (c) with respect to manufacturing the goods so sold. The tax imposed at (c) on the process of manufacturing shall be collected only from persons in the city who are not liable for the tax imposed at (a) on the wholesale sale of the articles so manufactured. In no event shall any taxpayer be liable for double taxation from application of both (a) and (c), but if any activities are subject to the tax under more than one of the subsections in this section, then such activities shall be taxed at the highest applicable rate.

**5.04.031 — Deductions — Manufactured goods sold outside city.**

a. Persons subject to tax under subsection (c) of Section 5.04.030 of this chapter may deduct from the value of the products manufactured the amount of the value of the products thus manufactured which are sold outside Vancouver when all the following conditions have been met:

1. A state of the United States, other than Washington, a political subdivision of a state or a recognized Indian tribe with taxing authority, the District of Columbia, or any foreign country or political subdivision thereof (the "tax jurisdiction") uses the value of the products manufactured in Vancouver in measuring and applying a gross receipts tax on the act or privilege of engaging in manufacturing or in the business of making sales of the product; and
2. The tax so imposed by the taxing jurisdiction is a "gross receipts tax," measured by the gross volume of business, in terms of gross receipts or in other terms and in the determination of which the deductions allowed would not constitute the tax an income tax or value added tax; and
3. The tax is not, pursuant to law or custom, separately stated from the sales price; and
4. The taxpayer can document that gross receipts taxes were paid to the other taxing jurisdiction(s) that included in the calculations of the amount due the value of the products for which a deduction was made.

b. Any determination by the State of Washington, Department of Revenue, or by the Washington State Attorney General that an out-of-state or foreign tax does qualify under RCW 82.04.440(4)(c) for a credit upon the State of Washington business and occupation tax shall satisfy conditions (2) and (3) of subsection (a) of this section; conversely, unless the taxpayer proves otherwise to the city, a determination by the state that such tax does not

qualify under RCW 82.04.440(4)(c) shall render the amounts so considered ineligible for a deduction under this section.

**5.04.032 — Deductions — Sale of goods manufactured outside city.**

~~Persons subject to tax under Section 5.04.030 of this chapter may deduct from the gross proceeds of retail or wholesale sales the amount of the value of the products manufactured outside Vancouver where all the following conditions have been met:~~

- ~~1. A state of the United States, other than Washington, a political subdivision of a state, other than Washington, or a recognized Indian tribe with taxing authority, the District of Columbia, or any foreign country or political subdivision thereof (the "taxing jurisdiction") uses the value of the products manufactured in such taxing jurisdiction in measuring and applying a gross receipts tax on the act or privilege of engaging in the business of manufacturing; and~~
- ~~2. The tax so imposed is a "gross receipts tax," which is measured by the gross value of business, in terms of gross receipts or in other terms, and in the determination of which the deductions allowed would not constitute the tax an income tax or value added tax; and~~
- ~~3. The tax is not, pursuant to laws or custom, separately stated from the sales price; and~~
- ~~4. The taxpayer can document that gross receipts taxes were paid to the other taxing jurisdiction(s) that included in the calculation of the amount due the value of the products for which deduction was made.~~

**5.04.050 — Taxing business carried on partially outside the city.**

~~Persons engaged in business both within and without the city, or partially within and partially without the city, and maintaining an office or place of business within the city and not elsewhere shall be taxable on the gross income from the business without regard to the place where such business is transacted; and such persons having an office or place of business inside the city and also elsewhere and such persons engaged in business within the city but without an office or place of business within the city shall, for the purpose of computing tax liability under this chapter, apportion to the city that portion of his gross income which is derived from business transacted within the city. Where such apportionment cannot be made by separate accounting methods, the taxpayer shall apportion to the city that portion of his total income which the cost of doing business within the city bears to the total cost of doing business within and without the city.~~

~~Persons maintaining an office, plant, warehouse or other business establishment which is partly within and partly outside of the city shall be taxable on gross proceeds of sales, or gross income of the business, attributable to business within the city, ascertained either (1) by a segregation of business within and business without the city, shown and supported by separate account records, of (2) if such segregation cannot be practicably~~

~~made, by apportionment to the city of that part of the gross proceeds of sales, or gross income of the business, derived from business both within and outside the city (a) in the proportion that the cost of doing business within the city bears to the cost of doing business both within and outside the city, or (b) when the use of such apportionment factor is impractical or inequitable, by a fair and equitable apportionment of such values, proceeds or income between business within the city and business outside the city upon such basis, comparable in character to that prescribed in (a) above, as shall be agreed upon by the Director of Financial & Management Services and the taxpayer after consideration of the facts; provided, in the case of financial institutions upon which the business and occupation tax is imposed by this chapter and which are engaged in business both within and without the city, such computation shall be pursuant to rules promulgated by the Washington State Department of Revenue as contemplated by Section 3 of Chapter 134, Laws of Washington, 1972.~~

**5.04.060 — Sales by consignee, bailee, factor or auctioneer.**

~~Every consignee, bailee, factor or auctioneer having either actual or constructive possession of tangible personal property, or having possession of the documents of title thereto, with power to sell such tangible personal property in his or its own name and actually so selling, shall be deemed the seller of such tangible personal property within the meaning of this chapter, and further, the consignor, bailor, principal or owner shall be deemed a seller of such property to the consignee, bailee, factor or auctioneer.~~

~~The burden shall be upon the taxpayer in every case to establish the fact that such taxpayer is not engaged in the business of selling tangible personal property but is acting merely as broker or agent in promoting sales for a principal. Such claim will be allowed only when the taxpayer's account records are kept in such manner as the Director of Financial & Management Services by general regulation provides.~~

Section 17. The title of chapter 5.04 VMC shall be amended to delete the words “and occupation” and “tax” and amend “license” to “licenses.” The title shall now read: “Business Licenses.”

Section 18. Savings. Those ordinances or parts of ordinances which are amended or repealed by this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect until the effective date of this ordinance.

Section 19. Severability. If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance should be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance.

Section 20. Referendum. This ordinance is subject to the referendum procedure specified in RCW 35.21.706. A referendum petition may be filed within seven days of the passage of the ordinance with the filing officer of the City, which is hereby designated to be the City Clerk, 415 West 6th Street, Vancouver, Washington. Within ten days of filing the petition, the City Clerk shall confer with the petitioner concerning the form and style of the petition, issue the petition an identification number, and secure an accurate, concise, and positive ballot title from the City Attorney. The petitioner shall then have thirty days in which to secure the signatures of not less than fifteen percent of the registered voters of the City, as of the last municipal general election, upon petition forms which contain the ballot title and the full text of the measure to be referred. Signed petition forms that are timely submitted to the City Clerk shall be transmitted to the Clark County Auditor who shall verify the sufficiency of the signatures on the petition and report to the City Clerk. If sufficient valid signatures are properly submitted, the City Clerk shall so inform the City Council, which shall submit the referendum measure to the voters at a special election to be held on the next City election date, as provided in RCW 29A.04.330, that occurs not less than forty-five days after the County Auditor's report of sufficiency is received by the City Clerk, unless a general election will occur within ninety days of receipt of that report, in which event the proposed ordinance will be submitted at the general election. Pursuant to RCW 35.21.706, the

referendum procedure in this section is exclusive, and as such this ordinance is not subject to any other referendum or initiative process.

Section 21. Effective date. This ordinance shall become effective on the later date of (a) January 1, 2026, or (b) if a timely referendum petition is filed as provided for in the previous section, the effective date shall be the date on which the referendum petition is found to be insufficient under the law or the ordinance is approved by the voters at the election.

DATE OF FINAL PASSAGE at a Regular Meeting of the Vancouver City Council:  
December 2, 2024, 2024.

SIGNED this 2nd day of December, 2024.

DocuSigned by:  
*Anne McEnerny-Ogle*  
6C89D9089EC5424...  
Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Mayor

Attest:

DocuSigned by:  
*Natasha Ramras*  
493E940414AE4BD...  
Natasha Ramras, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

DocuSigned by:  
*Jonathan Young*  
9A7DC2E34F694A2...  
Jonathan Young, City Attorney

## SUMMARY

### ORDINANCE NO. M- 4476

AN ORDINANCE relating to business and occupation tax for revenue; adding a new chapter 5.03 to the Vancouver Municipal Code; enacting new sections VMC 5.03.010, 5.03.020, 5.03.028, 5.03.030, 5.03.050, 5.03.070, 5.03.076, 5.03.077, 5.03.078, 5.03.079, 5.03.100, 5.03.120, and 5.03.130; repealing sections 5.04.021, 5.04.030, 5.04.031, 5.04.032, 5.04.050, and 5.04.060; amending the title of chapter 5.04 of the Vancouver Municipal Code; and providing for savings, severability, referendum, and an effective date.

The full text of this ordinance will be mailed upon request. Contact Raelyn McJilton, Records Officer at 487-8711, or via [www.cityofvancouver.us](http://www.cityofvancouver.us) (Go to City Government and Public Records).