

DOWNTOWN KELOWNA

May 20, 2020

City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 1J4

Dear Mayor and Council and JoAnne Adamson,

The Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA) represents businesses and commercial property owners in the Downtown core of our City. The DKA acts in the best interests of our members to promote Downtown Kelowna as a thriving place to work, live and play.

There is no doubt the recent closures of restaurants for dine in eating along with personal service businesses and others has caused great strain on businesses operating in Downtown Kelowna. Many have pivoted their business models to survive while the population has been staying home under guidance of the BC Public Health Officer and Health Minister causing a drastic cut in traffic volumes Downtown.

Further to recent discussions regarding the possible reallocation of Bernard Avenue as a pedestrian-only zone, we appreciate participating and being provided the opportunity to offer suggestions, ideas, and concerns. We welcome all opportunities to be involved with discussions of projects that directly affect Downtown Kelowna.

The DKA supports a temporary closure of Bernard Avenue this summer from St. Paul Street to the Sails statue, including a portion of Abbott Street from Bernard Avenue to Lawrence Avenue. The proposed dates are June 29, 2020 through to Labour Day Monday in September. This closure addresses physical distancing requirements for pedestrians accessing the Bernard Avenue core by expanding sidewalk space onto the street. The extended pedestrian space will also allow for ample room to accommodate queues that may be needed to access a store, service or restaurant.

The DKA also supports the allowance for food service establishments to expand their patio spaces beyond their current footprint to facilitate distancing requirements. In addition, other non-food related businesses will be permitted to utilize their store frontage sidewalk area for the duration of the closure using the existing City's Patio Seating Program guidelines.

Support from the DKA includes Downtown Kelowna businesses on streets other than Bernard Avenue to be granted the same opportunity to apply to expand their business outside onto the sidewalk through a brief online application. This will be adjudicated by a new committee formed to facilitate a streamlined process of approval.

Businesses may also apply to expand beyond their existing store frontage sidewalk area with permission from their business neighbour. This provides an opportunity for all Downtown Kelowna businesses to take advantage of this City of Kelowna driven initiative.

The Downtown Kelowna Association appreciates the consideration given to all Downtown businesses with this project. We are hopeful that this will help increase Kelowna's Downtown pedestrian traffic while alleviating sidewalk crowding as we enter Phase 2 of BC's Restart Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Burley', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mark Burley
Executive Director, Downtown Kelowna Association