

DOWNTOWN KELOWNA

Kelowna Downtown Business Improvement Area Society
Business Promotion Scheme 2024 - 2028

History

The Kelowna Downtown Business Improvement Area Society (Downtown Kelowna Association, DKA) is a registered not-for-profit society with a mission to ensure that Downtown Kelowna is a safe and desirable place to conduct business, live, work and play. While initially formed as a volunteer grass roots organization in the mid-1980s, the DKA officially incorporated in November 1989, funded through an improvement levy collected by the municipality from commercial properties in the area.

In recent years, the focus of BIA's has shifted from a marketing and promotion organization to being active members of the social safety network, helping keep downtowns clean and safe. In Kelowna, the DKA's Downtown on Call and Clean Teams have morphed into initiatives that meet this need, filling gaps in support of the RCMP, Bylaw Services and other emergency providers. This focus of effort for Downtown Businesses does not preclude the DKA from continuing marketing and promotion efforts but is another component and large cost centre of being a Business Improvement Association.

The annual levy becomes the DKA's base operating budget upon which the organization leverages additional funding from partners including various levels of governments, contracts for service and corporate sponsors to support programs and initiatives.

As the third community in British Columbia to initiate a Business Improvement Area (BIA), the DKA has grown to become a provincial leader in programs and initiatives.

Vision

Downtown Kelowna is recognized as a vibrant, healthy and thriving business community where people want to work, live and play.

Mandate

The Downtown Kelowna Association (DKA) plays a leadership role in fostering the continued development of the Downtown as a safe and desirable place to conduct business, live, work and play through cooperative efforts of its members and government.

The DKA achieves its mandate through:

- Advocacy on behalf of its members.
- Fostering collaboration among its members and other community stakeholders; and
- Introducing and executing innovative programs and events that promote Downtown Kelowna businesses and activities.

Accountability

The Downtown Kelowna Association is guided by a membership elected Board of Directors. The Board and sub-committees complete ongoing evaluations of programs and initiatives to ensure effectiveness and financial responsibility. Results from an annual Membership Survey on a wide range of issues are used, together with input from the Board of Directors, to develop annual priorities.

Strategies

From January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2028, the DKA will focus on the following five key strategic areas:

1. **Safe, Clean & Inviting Downtown** - Maintain a clean, safe, and welcoming Downtown.
2. **Membership Engagement** – Continue to engage our members through communications and programs.
3. **Advocacy & Relationships** – Continue on the work done to date developing and maintaining key relationships with appropriate city departments & government, RCMP, and other pertinent stakeholders.
4. **Marketing & Promotion** – Support Downtown by executing superior quality promotions and events that are consistently highly rated by members, valued by their consumers, and attract an increased level of interest in Downtown.
5. **Expansion** – Research the viability of expanding the boundaries of the DKA as new commercial / retail entities are built around the current Downtown boundaries.

Goals

To deliver key results within the identified strategies, the DKA will:

1. **Safe, Clean & Inviting Downtown**

Actively participate in creating and maintaining a clean, safe, welcoming, and friendly Downtown for businesses, consumers, and visitors through our On Street Services Programs.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Increased investment in Downtown on Call and Clean Team programs to expand staffing levels and increase hours of service.
- On Street Services program staff are to receive ongoing training where available.
- Downtown on Call continued coordination and relationship expansion with the RCMP and City of Kelowna Bylaw Service.
- Strong, collaborative relationships with key City of Kelowna departments, specifically but not limited to:
 - *Levy* – City of Kelowna Financial and Planning departments
 - *Clean Team and On Call Funding* – Corporate and Protective Services, Risk Management

- *Clean Team Sweeper Work* – Infrastructure Departments: Parks, Parking, Roadways and Civic Operations
- *Bylaw* – Corporate and Protective Services
- *Development and City Planning* – Real Estate and Planning
- *Events* – Continued relationship with the Active Living and Culture Department.
- Sustained relationship development with enforcement and regulatory agencies along with service providers (i.e., RCMP, Interior Health Authority, Fire and Paramedics, Kelowna Gospel Mission, Metro, John Howard Society, Kelowna Friendship Centre)
- Collaboratively share measurable data from Downtown On Call and Clean Team with City of Kelowna (Protective and Corporate Services, Bylaw), RCMP and City government/management to assist with On-Street Service department and the development of new event initiatives for Downtown.
- Cooperative working relationships and engagement with Tourism Kelowna, Active Living and Culture Department at City of Kelowna and the Chamber of Commerce
- Sustained relationship development with enforcement and regulatory agencies along with various service providers (i.e., RCMP, Interior Health Authority, BC Housing, Fire Department, BC Ambulance, Kelowna Gospel Mission, Metro, John Howard Society, Inn from the Cold, Living Positively, Kelowna Friendship Centre, etc.)
- Collaboratively share measurable data from Downtown On Call and Clean Team with City of Kelowna Bylaw and RCMP, working towards developing a robust overview of activity
- Cooperative working relationships and engagement with other organizations (i.e., Tourism Kelowna, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)

2. Membership Engagement

To continue increasing DKA membership engagement through electronic contact, Resource availability and onsite visits to business within the boundaries.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Facilitate relationship building and collaboration opportunities amongst members to support business growth.
- Continued monthly releases of Updates and Newsletters
- Create an “on boarding” package for new businesses.
- Continued evaluation of events regarding benefit to Downtown business.
- Downtown on Call continued Business Visits as part of our regular routine.
- Membership participation in Promotions and Events.
- Remain vigilant to changes in tenancy and business/property ownership.
- Members proactively initiate communication with DKA
- Number of businesses that utilize our various services and programs.
- Member survey results

3. Advocacy & Relationships

Advocate for Downtown businesses about Official Community Plans, Transportation Plans, the Community Safety Plan, City Bylaws, zoning and infrastructure developments in support of the overall wellbeing of business community in Downtown Kelowna.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Sustained relationship development with various City of Kelowna departments (i.e., Real Estate and Planning, Protective and Corporate Services, Bylaw, City Councillors, Mayor, City Manager, etc.)
- Collaborative relationships with Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Kelowna, Urban Development Institute, COEDC, Accelerate Okanagan, Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board where possible.
- Staff and Board to provide input and engage in all City consultation initiatives applicable to the Downtown (i.e., Imagine Kelowna, Journey Home, Transportation and Parking Strategy sessions)
- Executive Director continued participation on the Board of Directors for the Business Improvement Areas of BC.

4. Marketing & Promotion

Evolve promotions and events to best reflect dynamic landscape and demographic of Downtown. Ensure marketing focus generates excitement about Downtown and showcases the unique environment of Downtown with local ownership.

Key Performance Indicators:

- High consumer engagement in events and promotions.
- Maintenance of the Downtown prospectus map on the website.
- Strong consumer and business satisfaction with events and promotions through continued re-evaluation (ie: Block Party, Meet me On Bernard, Winter Street Market & others) to ensure they continue to have a positive effect on Downtown Kelowna.
- Sustained relationship development with Active Living and Culture department.
- Consistent marketing of Downtown using available digital tools including Google Ads through their not for profit grant program.
- Consistent marketing using local media outlets including broadcast and digital.
- Continued attendance at events like ICSC and BIABC Annual Conference to generate investment interest in Downtown and generate new ideas.

5. Expansion

Investigate the possibility of expanding the boundaries of the Association. Calls for service for the Downtown on Call and Clean Teams from the Brewery District are more frequent and are indicating a growing demand for those services.

Decision factors:

- Interest from property and business ownership will decide whether they want to join the Association.
- Determination of budget first will determine the levy charged to owners/businesses.
- Staffing levels need to be determined for On Call and Clean Teams.
- Contact with affected properties to determine interest.
- Involve Tourism Kelowna
- Look at the area that encompasses Commercial properties class 5 & 6 along Clement to Ethel, west side of Richter from Clement to Bailie and Vaughn to Ethel. (Brewery / Commercial district)

Downtown Kelowna Boundary & Membership

The Downtown Kelowna Association area is defined within a 42 square block radius from Harvey Avenue to Clement Avenue and from Okanagan Lake to Richter Street (see map on page 6). There are no proposed changes to the current Bylaw boundary. However, expansion is a current consideration. Calls for service by the Downtown on Call and Clean Teams in what is referred to as “The Brewery District” have increased. The Board of Directors will be striking a committee in 2024 to begin engagement within the area to gauge interest.

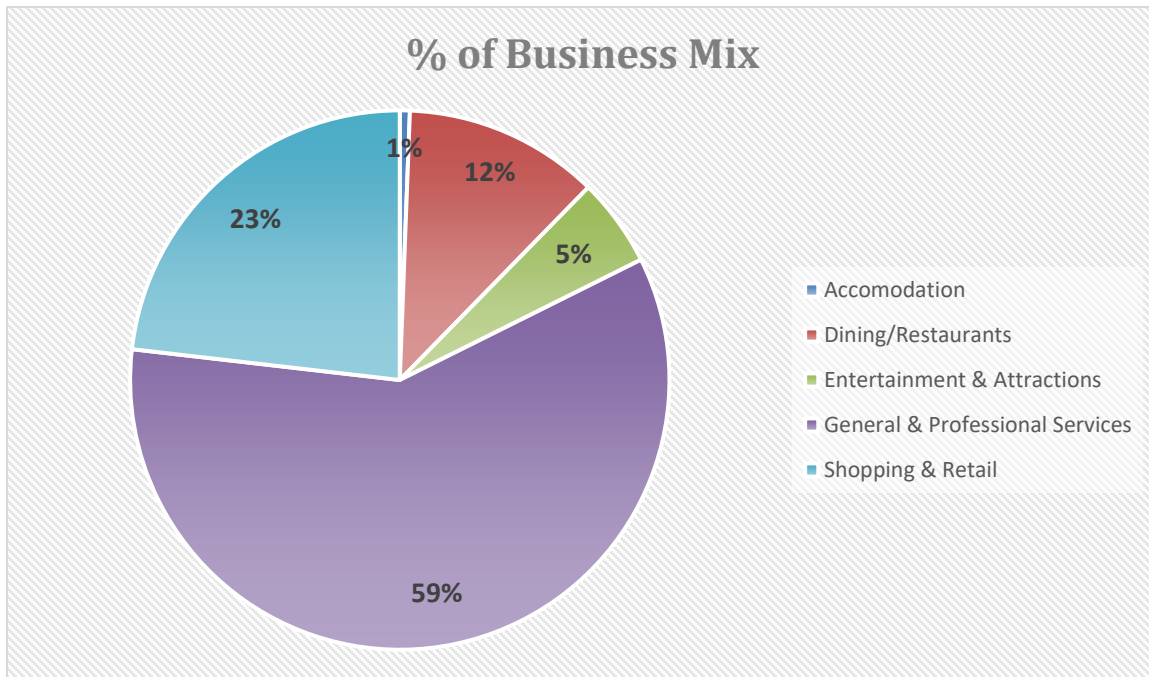
The Downtown Kelowna membership is highly diverse, from professional services to arts and culture to entertainment and attractions. The diversity of Downtown Kelowna adds to the vibrant atmosphere and the resurgence of our area to live, work and play. Analyzing data across other cities that share our size and our level of tourism, we can see that the downtown core is trending in the right direction. In 2022, Downtown Kelowna was ranked as the 2nd fastest growing downtown, growing by 23.6% since 2016. With an increase of 40,000 to 50,000 in population expected by 2040, we expect Downtown Kelowna to continue this fast-paced growth every year.

Below are figures current as of December 31, 2022. Recent technological improvements are being implemented this year, making the data collection of members and businesses more accurate. Our new system will integrate real-time data from Google listings, allowing us to know the businesses' categoric information, exact location, business name, and other pieces of information.

Membership consists of property owners or tenants of Class 5 or 6 properties within the Downtown Kelowna BIA boundary.

Class 5, Light Industry — property used or held for extracting, processing, manufacturing or transporting products, including ancillary storage. Scrap metal yards, wineries and boat-building operations fall within this category. Exceptions include properties used for the production or storage of food and non-alcoholic beverages and retail sales outlets, which fall into Class 6.

Class 6, Business Other — property used for offices, retail, warehousing, hotels and motels all fall within this category. This class includes properties that do not fall into other classes.



Top Ranking Categories:	#	% of Business Mix
Accommodation	7	0.6%
Dining / Restaurants	128	11.71%
Entertainment & Attractions	58	5.30%
General & Professional Services	647	59.1%
Shopping & Retail	253	23.1%
TOTAL	1093	

As of January 2022, there are 1305 members – 212 property owners and 1093 businesses.

Membership Communications

In 2022, the DKA made a concerted effort to improve communications with members. This included more in-person visits to businesses, follow up phone calls, the monthly DKA Business Update, and Meet me On Bernard updates. We also continued to send out ‘as needed’ special bulletins about on-going challenges that affect our members like homelessness, property crime, and protests. Pandemic restrictions still meant the absence of networking events and limits on face-to-face communication. However, as pandemic measures eased, we were able to resume producing events and promotions which required more member communications. The DKA created a print copy of the first Business Update of 2022 and was distributed by hand by the Downtown on Call (DOC) team and was also sent electronically.

A total of fifty notices, alerts, reminders, and Updates were sent in 2022 with a combined open rate of 46%. The Newsletter continued circulation at or near the beginning of each month, with a combined open rate of 66%. Open rates above 25% are an indication of interest. The open rate of 66% is a phenomenal indication of interest in what the DKA publishes. Also, there was substantial growth in our main subscriber lists; the DKA Business Owners/Employees list grew from 681 to 885 subscribers, and DKA Newsletter list grew from 256 to 960 subscribers.



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**Kelowna Downtown
 Business Improvement Area**

July 2023

Downtown Kelowna On Street Services

As the growth of Downtown Kelowna progresses, the demands placed on the Downtown On Call (security) and Clean Team programs continue to increase. Rare in nature, the On Call team is the “go to” call businesses make for safety assistance. The Clean Team is the other “go to” call when there is a mess in front of a building that requires cleaning, pressure washing and/or garbage removal.

A welcomed increase in funding from the city for the DKA On Street Services initiative was received in 2023. While the additional \$30,000 for Downtown on Call and \$36,000 for Clean Team help the programs be sustained, additional funding from the city will be required over the next 5 years. This is particularly true for growth of the programs as Downtown Kelowna continues to expand with commercial and residential properties being built.

Still, in the next five years the DKA will invest in and enhance the On Street Services programs. Manpower and equipment will be aligned to increase efficiencies. A new facility to house equipment and staff will be found to also increase efficiencies. **These programs are most valued by the membership and vital in keeping Downtown clean and safe.**

1. Downtown On Call

The Downtown Kelowna membership values the Downtown On Call (DOC) team as one of the top services provided by the Downtown Kelowna Association. The DOC team is trained to deal with front line issues related to personal safety, hospitality and help create a positive social environment in Downtown Kelowna.

Downtown On Call duties include but are not limited to:

- On site assistance
- De-escalation
- Bank deposit escort
- Employee safe walk
- Paraphernalia recovery
- Visitor information

An indication of the demand for the services of Downtown On Call is in the data the DKA keeps. In the 4 years from January 2019 through December 2022, DOC data shows the following:

Used Needles picked up:	12,152
Unused Needles picked up:	4,192
Naloxone kits (used/unused):	2,114
DOC Incidents:	21,687
RCMP Called:	1,995
Business Visits:	40,192

The above statistics show that for approximately every 100 calls the Downtown On Call team attends, RCMP are only called 10% of the time. While this percentage fluctuated between 10% & 12% over the last 4 years, it does indicate how much DOC takes off the plate of the RCMP. This emphasizes the integral roll that Downtown On Call contributes to the safety and sense of same in Downtown Kelowna.

Since 2019, expansion of the DOC team has been a priority as densification and visitation of Downtown has increased. More expansion is required and additional funding directly from the city will expedite that expansion.

In 2022, Brent Lobson took over the management of our On-Street Services department from Ron Beahun who retired. As Director of Operations, Brent has completely revamped the department and instituted new systems that are making the department more efficient. We continually re-assess the scope of the DOC program to continue to best serve our membership.

2. Downtown Clean Team

The demand for the Downtown Clean Team has grown significantly as Downtown Kelowna grows. What was originally a seasonal initiative, Clean Team is now 3 fulltime employees year-round. The Team is responsible for assisting with cleaning 42 blocks within the DKA boundary, which includes such duties as sidewalk sweeping, operating the city supplied MadVac, power washing where required, debris and biohazard removal, and assisted snow removal.

The DKA currently fulfills a contract with the City of Kelowna to clean the three parkades. The aging sweeper has been retired from sidewalk sweeping and now only services the 3 parkades following annual major cleaning by a Power Sweeping company which the DKA contracts. The DKA will endeavour to continue this sweeping contract with the City for the 2024-2028 renewal period.

As Downtown continues to densify, additional team members and equipment will be required. Funding will also be allocated to replace and maintain aging equipment, including the street sweeper, utility vehicles, power washers, as well as general handheld equipment, including but not limited to brooms, shovels, etc.

3. Data Acquisition

The On Street Services teams, both the Downton On Call and Clean teams, have been utilizing mobile software applications that assist in tracking all activities relating to both teams since 2015. This data has been indispensable when it comes to providing a more accurate view of the activities occurring Downtown and help determination of the direction of both On Street Services programs. The DKA will continue to share this valuable data and work collaboratively with the RCMP and Bylaw Services.

Downtown Kelowna Marketing

Downtown Kelowna promotions and events help to encourage visitation to Downtown and ultimately to increase awareness of the membership variety. In Downtown Kelowna, we are more than just a geographical location – we are an active hub of business growth and opportunity. Our commitment to community engagement, data-driven strategies, and tailor-made marketing solutions is transforming our local businesses, fostering relationships, and building a vibrant, dynamic downtown area.

The DKA has a solid foundation with branding and materials for each promotion. Two Small Shop campaigns promote the extensive local retail sector, Meet me On Bernard provides a vehicle free space for residents and visitors alike to experience the summer in Downtown Kelowna and visit retail and restaurants on their expanded

patios. The After 5 networking events provide a place for businesspeople to gather and experience different venues throughout Downtown Kelowna. Block Party (now over 30 years old!) and Winter Street Market (formerly Light Up) are the DKA's two large community events that combined draw some 25,000 – 30,000 people Downtown.

As Downtown densifies and becomes more sophisticated, the DKA promotions and events have grown in some cases and changed in others. Online contesting in December has become a popular promotion for the DKA. Meet me On Bernard is in its infancy having been born in summer 2020. As time has passed that initiative has changed and will continue to evolve and require changing investment. The Taste of Downtown promotion has run its course and was not an option for most restaurants in the post pandemic climate. To maintain the same level of high-quality that members and visitors to Downtown have come to expect, current marketing, promotions and events will require ongoing refreshing in the years to come.

The DKA Marketing effort includes:

1. Personalized Marketing Assistance

Each month, our dedicated marketing manager conducts personalized meetings with local businesses seeking marketing guidance. Through this initiative, we have not only provided insights on SEO, loyalty programs, and social media advertising but also integrated these businesses into our broader marketing ecosystem, enhancing their visibility through our newsletters, social media platforms, and programs.

2. Data-Driven Approach

Our transition towards a data-driven business model is well underway. By leveraging Google data, we are cataloging and tracking downtown businesses by category to obtain an accurate picture of our commercial landscape. This real-time data gathering informs our marketing strategies and helps businesses better understand their standing within the community.

3. Google Ad Grant Utilization

Our monthly \$10,000 Google Ad Grant serves as a vital resource in driving traffic to our website and promoting local businesses. Targeted keyword ads are funnelling potential customers to relevant sections of our website, effectively advertising local businesses free of charge and delivering tangible value.

4. Search Engine Optimization

We have helped numerous downtown businesses extend their digital reach via our Search Engine Optimization (SEO) efforts. We have bridged the gap for businesses without a website or lacking optimal SEO, enabling them to appear in Google search results and directing thousands of potential customers to their offerings via our website. Last year alone, we appeared in 5 million search results, generating 47,000 organic clicks to our website, excluding paid clicks.

5. Events and Ticketing

As downtown Kelowna becomes busier, we are now one of the top-visited sites for local event information. By scraping data for all downtown events, we have made our website an invaluable resource for the community and businesses alike. We have recently integrated a ticketing system, allowing us greater control over event management, data ownership, and fee structures.

6. Video Content and Social Media

Our move towards creating more video content represents our dedication to staying at the forefront of marketing trends. By applying for verification on all our social media accounts, we are expanding our reach and ability to engage with a broader audience. DKA Social Media accounts enjoy “influencer” status which benefits not only Downtown Kelowna but the city as a whole.

The DKA marketing team delivers a robust, multi-faceted strategy to maximize visibility, engagement, and growth for downtown Kelowna businesses. Our strategic use of digital tools, data analytics, and personalized support is making a measurable difference in our community, and we are excited about the future as we continue to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of Downtown Kelowna.

Funding

Levy

The DKA is proposing a onetime increase of 12% for the first year, which will be invested in the On Street Services programs and the move to a new facility necessary for growing equipment assets which will result in budget efficiencies and long-term savings for our membership and the city. The second year of the mandate will see a 7% increase and then 5% annually for the duration of the term ending December 31, 2028. **Over the 5-year term, the levy will increase 30.82% which is comparable to previous renewals by approximately 1%.** Projections done for this renewal show that contributions to reserves will be accomplished throughout the term. Reserve funds are used for future capital projects such as replacement of our key equipment such as the aging sweeper and Kubota vehicles.

Levy Contribution by Downtown Property Owner:

2023 Levy	2024 Levy	2025 Levy	2026 Levy	2027 Levy	2028 Levy
\$1,148,954	\$1,263,741	\$1,335,860	\$1,390,040	\$1,445,320	\$1,503,075

2023 Property Value: \$1,125,806,200 on Class 5 and 6 properties.

2018 Mill Rate: 1.0215 per \$1000 of assessed value on Class 5 and 6 properties.

Other Funding

The Downtown On Call and Clean Team received \$70,000 from the City for the On Call program in 2022, and a combination of \$37,973 for the Clean Team funding and contract work for the city including sidewalk sweeping, cleaning parkades and other. In 2023, funding for DOC and Clean Team was increased by the city to \$100,000 and \$60,000, respectively. We have budgeted for marginal increases in that funding which we will have to discuss with our city partners. These services are integral to a clean and safe Downtown Kelowna and the DKA feels that additional funding support is crucial to the continuation and expansion of the programs.

The DKA also earned approximately \$48,884 in 2022 through a combination of event sponsorships and promotions.

Revenue	2022 Year End
Downtown On Call	\$70,000
Downtown Clean Team	\$37,973
Downtown Concierge	\$14,584
Events	\$47,682
Other	\$1,202
TOTAL	\$171,441

Expenditures

Program Expenditures 2022 Year End:

Business Recruitment	\$8,277	0.56%
Clean Team	\$225,594	15.23%
Communications	\$5,509	0.37%
Downtown Concierge	\$29,917	2.02%
Downtown On Call	\$482,055	32.54%
Events	\$131,149	8.85%
Insurance	\$9,163	0.62%
Marketing and Promotions	\$94,617	6.39%
Office and Administration	\$58,644	3.96%
Professional Development	\$5,774	0.39%
Professional Fees	\$19,499	1.32%
Rent	\$49,071	3.31%
Wages and Benefits	\$327,317	22.10%
Total	\$1,481,405	100.00%

Meet Our Team

EXECUTIVE

Renata Mills	President	<i>Festivals Kelowna</i>
Jaspal Dhal	Treasurer	<i>GSL Group (Prospera Place)</i>
Travis Pye	Vice President	<i>Lakehouse Homestore</i>
Caroline Bye	Secretary	<i>Kelowna Yacht Club</i>
Yarden Gershony	Past President	<i>Rush Ihas Hardwick LLP</i>

DKA DIRECTORS

Jenna Kopperson	<i>Deville Coffee</i>
Tina Thygesen	<i>Mission Group</i>
Warren Turner	<i>Turner Group</i>
JoAnne Adamson	<i>UBC Property Trust</i>
Crystal Dougan	<i>Little Hobo Soup & Sandwich Shop</i>
Thomas Eaves	<i>Pushor Mitchell LLP</i>
Nathan Matis	<i>Sweat Studios</i>
Jillian Povarchook	<i>Olive & Elle Boutique</i>

EX – OFFICIO

Councillor Rick Webber, City of Kelowna

STAFF

Mark Burley, Executive Director
Brent Lobson, Director of Operations
Elizabeth Densmore, Administrative Assistant
Kris Johnson, Communications & Events Manager
Facundo Rodriguez, Marketing Manager
Pawan Sandhu, Data & Web Coordinator

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