

# **Downtown Kelowna Association Strategic Plan 2015-2018**

## **VISION**

*"Our vision is for Downtown Kelowna to be recognized as a vibrant and thriving business community."*

## **PURPOSE**

*"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 the cooperative efforts of its members and government."*

### **We do this through the following:**

1. Advocacy on behalf of our members;
2. Fostering collaboration among our members and other community stakeholders; and
3. Introducing and executing innovative programs and events.

## **MISSION**

### **Our Mission to December 31, 2018 is to achieve the following key results:**

- A. Attract more business and development to Downtown.
- B. Continue to create a clean and safe Downtown.
- C. Increase our members' knowledge of the services, value and advocacy provided by the DKA to the Downtown community, including increased awareness of the Clean Team and Downtown On Call.
- D. Establish our 2015 to 2018 advocacy priorities and a plan that enables us to achieve our goals.
- E. Execute promotions and events that are consistently top rated by members and attract a high level of interest in the community.

## **KEY RESULT AREAS**

### **A. Attract Business and Development**

In the past three years we have seen tremendous investment and development in the Downtown. Now we must focus on filling our space with more successful businesses that will contribute to a vibrant Downtown community.

The DKA's focus over the next three years will be on marketing Downtown to businesses and developers as the most attractive neighborhood for investment, among competition coming from Landmark, South Pandosy and retail along the highway. A key factor in this marketing effort will be improving Leon and Lawrence Avenues as attractive venues for new business development.

**By (or before) December 31, 2018, we will achieve the following outcomes:**

1. Obtain market research to assist in developing a Downtown marketing strategy.
2. Create a pragmatic Leon and/or Lawrence revitalization plan.
3. Attend international conference(s) annually.
4. Maintain the interactive map on the DKA website.
5. Produce a Downtown Kelowna promotional video, in coordination with select business owners and real estate developers.

### **B. Create a Clean and Safe Downtown**

Following the considerable increase in the DKA's investment into the Clean Team and Downtown On Call, the DKA will continue working with the City, the RCMP and Bylaws to create a clean and safe Downtown.

The DKA will communicate and clarify the respective roles of the Clean Team, Downtown On Call, the RCMP and Bylaws to the membership. Beyond this, the DKA will help educate the membership on topics that will advance a positive Downtown environment.

**By (or before) December 31, 2018, we will achieve the following outcomes:**

1. Create and distribute educational materials to members that will assist them in creating a safe and positive Downtown environment. In particular, rack cards or handouts may be developed on the following topics:
  - a. “Understand Your Bylaws” - Clarifying municipal rules on smoking, unlawful shelter, loitering/overnight abode, illegal dumping and fines.
  - b. “How to Keep Your Business/Building Safe” - Covering strategies such as improved street lighting and other measures to improve safety at the member level.
  - c. “How to Handle Panhandlers” - Clarifying panhandlers’ and pedestrians’ respective rights, and providing information about available downtown social services and their hours of operation.
2. Work with the City to identify solutions and implement a plan to keep Bernard Avenue clean and safe during the high volume months.
3. Work with social services groups, such as Metro and Gospel Mission, to help ensure they are equipped with appropriate facilities and resources to meet their patrons’ needs.
4. Create and budget for a DKA light enhancement, façade or beautification program, possibly with a focus on Leon and/or Lawrence Avenues.

**C. Improve Membership’s Knowledge of DKA’s Services and Advocacy Priorities**

In the past three years we focused our membership communication on members’ engagement in the DKA’s events and promotions and ensuring that members were aware of the DKA’s priorities and positions.

The DKA has made great strides in these areas. Membership now has a high awareness of our promotions and events and engagement is the highest it has been in years. Overall members are more satisfied with the DKA compared to three years ago, and increasingly our members trust that the DKA represents the membership and not “the City’s best interest”.

Moving forward, with the considerable increase in funding for our on On-Street Services (Clean Team and Downtown On Call), the DKA now needs to focus on communicating the scope and value of those services, and generally increasing members’ knowledge of the DKA’s advocacy priorities.

**By (or before) December 31, 2018, we will achieve the following outcomes:**

1. Implement a well-maintained and accurate database of members to improve knowledge of Downtown office building occupants.
2. Create and implement a marketing and communication plan for DKA's services. Ideas that may be incorporated in the plan include the following:
  - a. brand the DKA's vehicles and uniforms, including the Clean Team's and Downtown On Call's;
  - b. create branded sandwich boards to place on sidewalks while DKA-led projects are ongoing;
  - c. develop a rack card and handout articulating the DKA's services; and
  - d. Execute a bi-annual street blitz and open house to advance member communication.
3. Provide communication training for staff and set communication protocols.
4. Increase readership of the DKA membership newsletter. Investigate production of a hard-copy newsletter and/or increase the average open rate of the online newsletter from 35% to 45%.

**D. Advocacy and Downtown Plan Priorities**

The DKA worked closely with the City over the past three years on key points of advocacy. During this time, the DKA made its short term goals very clear, as the Board of Directors identified the top six short term priorities (the items marked with an asterisk (\*) are now complete):

1. \*Bernard Avenue Revitalization – Other than one small block due to a Fortis issue, Bernard Avenue is nearly complete.
2. \*The change of the Ellis Street Truck Route was passed this year. In the 2014 budget, the improvements to Gordon Drive will be made and the truck route will be moved out of Downtown.
3. \*Parking – Two new parkades have been included in the 2014 budget.
4. The ongoing creation of one or more prominent entrance features to Downtown Kelowna – Working with the City of Kelowna and Ministry of Transportation to install prominent signage on Highway 97 identifying Downtown Kelowna and creating a prominent entrance to Downtown.

5. The revitalization of Leon and Lawrence Avenues – Identify the priorities from the business owners.
6. Ensure Kerry Park will be redesigned with the Westcorp hotel development.
7. City Park Plan – now complete and approved by City Council. Next step – City Staff will inventory and determine life span of current structures in the Park and will attach dollar figures to each initiative in the new City Park Plan. Once this is completed, DKA needs to set priorities for execution.

**By (or before) December 31, 2018, we will have in place the following outcomes:**

1. The Board of Directors will determine the DKA's 2015 to 2018 advocacy priorities.
2. The DKA will work with the Mayor, Council and City staff to complete its priorities.
3. The DKA will create a revitalization plan for Leon Avenue and/or Lawrence Avenue. In particular, consider:
  - a) reverting Leon and/or Lawrence back to a two-way traffic pattern;
  - b) targeting Leon and/or Lawrence for an improved light, façade or beautification program; and
  - c) Securing a sensible allocation of City funds for street enhancement along Leon and/or Lawrence, for budget-friendly improvements such as hanging baskets, garbage cans and sidewalk repair.
  - d) Achieve a solution for the occupancy and/or development of vacant premises.
4. Expand the DKA service boundary to cover Sunset Drive to include the Manhattan development and immediately surrounding area.

## **E. Events and Promotions**

Execute promotions and events that are consistently top rated by members and attract a high level of interest by the community.

Over the past three years the DKA has built a solid foundation for events and promotions. The DKA will execute similar marketing initiatives, promotions and events, building on the solid platform we have created.

**By (or before) December 31, 2018, we will have in place the following outcomes:**

1. Create and execute an annual marketing and events plan.
2. Maintain membership engagement.
3. Increase attendance to events and promotions.
4. Increase exposure to all sectors and geographical areas of Downtown.
5. Continue to conduct post event/promotion membership surveys.
6. Encourage and support non-DKA events to take place in Downtown while engaging the membership to leverage those events.