



The Corporation of the City of Cornwall
Regular Meeting of Council
Report

Department: Planning, Development and Recreation
Division: Planning
Report Number: 2020-323-Planning, Development and Recreation
Prepared By: Mark A. Boileau, General Manager
Meeting Date: June 22, 2020
Subject: Placemaking

Purpose

To provide Council with information concerning Placemaking in the community, as requested in a Motion approved on February 10, 2020.

Recommendation

- a. That Council receive Report 2020-323-Planning, Development and Recreation; and
- b. That the City seek public input regarding urban placemaking designs, either through the Recreation Master Plan review, or within a Waterfront Project if applicable, or through a separate public communications request; and,
- c. That staff continue to work with local businesses in creating or expanding parklets and patios.

Financial Implications

Placemaking can occur both on public and private property. When it occurs on the City's property, staff will include improvement costs within its Operating

Budget when required funds are minor; major projects would be requested annually through Capital Projects.

Strategic Priority Implications

This initiative meets the Corporate Strategic Priorities in: 1. Developing the waterfront; 2. Care and provide for the needs of the community; and 3. Accommodate pop-up businesses.

Background / Discussion

Following the presentation by Ms. Kelly Bergeron on February 10, 2020, Council requested that administration prepare a report.

What is Placemaking?

According to information provided by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, *Placemaking is a movement that re-imagines public spaces as the heart of every community. Rooted in community-based participation and grass roots collaboration, Placemaking guides the planning, design, management and programming of public spaces and capitalizes upon a community's assets – social and physical, as well as creative - to create vibrant destinations that serve a local as well as regional audience.*

As indicated in Ms. Bergeron's presentation, it can foster a community's sense of pride in, and ownership of, their public spaces. She provided two examples which have been reviewed, as follows.

Project #1: Paint Pitt and Second Crosswalk.

Ms. Bergeron's presentation included a few colourful crosswalk designs implemented in other communities, which incorporated street art. While the idea would certainly add to the vibrancy of the downtown and any other proposed locations, it raised some concern regarding liability for the municipality. The following information was therefore sought.

Comments from BFL Canada, the City's Insurance provider:

We have received a number of questions from other Municipalities that are considering the same type of projects. What is clear is that prior to proceeding, the Insurers want to understand exactly what is done. After conversations with a Municipal lawyer, here is some information that I believe would be helpful as guidance.

“My guess is these types of crosswalks have not been tested in court. Crosswalks have looked the same for many years. If the party who caused the loss, e.g. a motorist, sited he or she did not know it was a crosswalk, I have no idea if that would be considered reasonable and potentially result in a higher settlement against the municipality. Reason being, if the courts believed that the contributing factor in the accident was the untraditional crosswalk, the portion of negligence against the municipality could be increased and the portion of negligence against the driver decreased. The other difficulty is, depending on the severity of the accident, even if the motorist limits were exhausted, the municipality carries a much higher limit.”

In general terms, from a risk and claims perspective, until we can do more research, speak with legal counsel and get their further thoughts, my recommendation would be to not move forward unless providing full project information to us.

In addition to the above, Municipal Works typically need to repaint any roadway markings twice annually, particularly in heavier traffic areas such as downtown intersections. As a result, there would be an annual cost to repaint the artwork. It should be noted that the paint used for roadway line painting is a specialized and more expensive paint which bonds to the surface. If paint other than pavement marking paint was used for the artwork, it would likely wear off shortly after it was placed. The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) mandates the various types of paint and colour that can be used for pavement markings. If a large area was repainted on annual basis, it can often become very slippery after several paint coats have been applied which will increase possible liability for the City.

Roadway line painting is provincially regulated and must follow the Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM). As such, the line painting of crosswalks in the City follows the design details stipulated in the OTM which also includes the colour and reflectivity of the paint. The line painting at crosswalks provides a basic form of regulatory protection for the pedestrian crossing the road. If crosswalks were not painted in accordance with the OTM, the City could be held liable if an accident ever occurred. As such, painting artwork at crosswalks which experience high traffic volumes is not recommended. The proposed artwork may be most suitable for a surface which is only utilized by pedestrians. Additionally, artwork at City crosswalks was also considered as part of Heart of the City’s Centretown Streetscape Revitalization Plan but was not included/recommended at that time due to the same concerns.

While creative designs may not be supported for city streets and intersections for the above reasons, various pedestrian surfaces may be suitable. For example, hard surfaces within Lamoureux Park, the Benson Centre, the new Justice Building courtyard, the Provincial Courtyard off Pitt Street (City owned), and the Civic Complex are all areas that can be reviewed. As per the definition of Placemaking, the public can be invited to participate in the process. The City could seek design ideas from the community, which could then be voted on and implemented at a later date.

Project #2: Parklet Design Build Competition:

Ms. Bergeron's presentation included a parklet design proposal for the Pitt Street block from Second to Third Streets. Her report outlined the following:

Parklets repurpose part of the street next to the sidewalk into a public space for people. These small parks provide amenities like seating, planting, bicycle parking, and art. While they are funded and maintained by neighboring businesses, residents, and community organizations, they are publicly accessible and open to all. Parklets reflect the diversity and creativity of the people and organizations who sponsor and design them. They also reflect the City's commitment to encouraging walking, bicycling, and strengthening our communities.



Staff's report to Council dated May 25, 2020 on the subject of 'Closing Pitt Street' outlined a number of options in this area, including the Woonerf 'bump outs' which can accommodate public spaces or restaurant patios for example. In addition, there are numerous lanes and squares, such as the Justice Building courtyard, Provincial Courtyard, George Assaly Lane, Urquhart Lane, Truffles courtyard, and First Street Pop-up park which can accommodate more private or public opportunities. Finally, the City's Encroachment Agreement can review proposals for the use of public right-of-way (including parking bays) for restaurant patios.

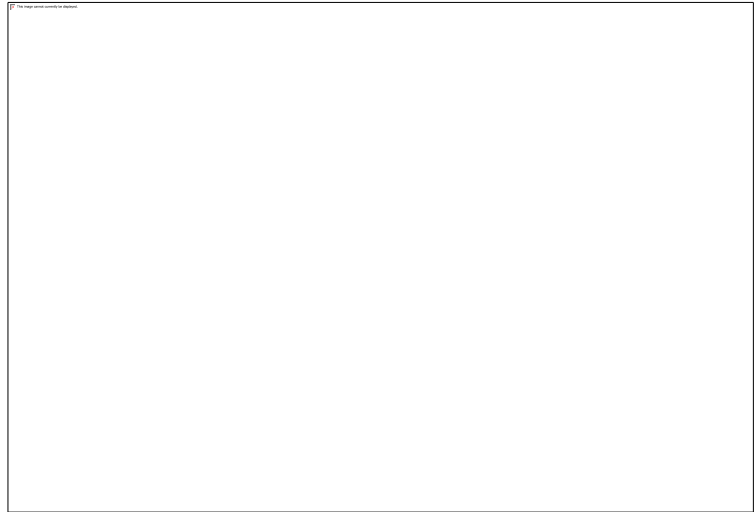
The COVID-19 pandemic has created a situation where the approvals process for many of these ideas is far more streamlined and simplified. In fact on Friday, June 12, staff and Ms. Bergeron met with a number of restaurant owners in the downtown to have preliminary conversations on their plans for outdoor space.

While all restaurants in Cornwall were contacted with a description of how we could assist, we are currently working with the following businesses:

- Spicy Pearl
- Birchwood Cafe
- Simply Jennifer
- Spinners Diner
- Truffles Burger Bar
- Schnitzel's European Flavours
- Edward's Bistro
- Riley's
- Val and Paulie's Diner
- Esca
- Rendez-Vous
- Brunch on Pitt
- The Glengarrian
- Lola's
- Village Diner

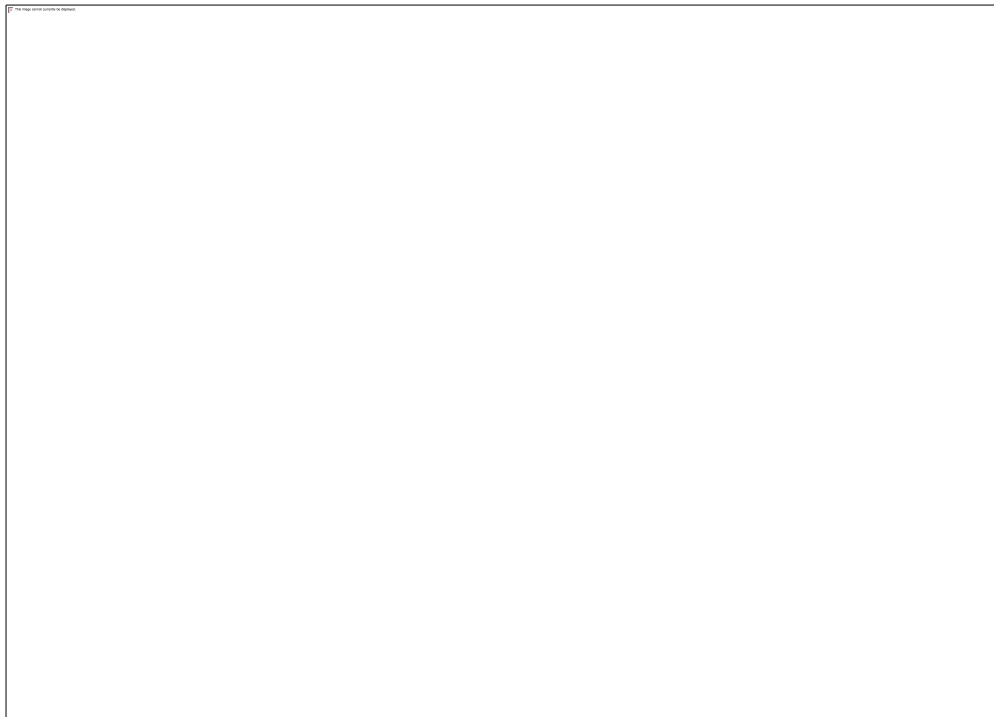


- Thum's Kitchen
- Rurban
- Au Vieux Duluth
- Hops and Barley – Best Western Inn
- Boston Pizza
- St. Lawrence Blvd.
- La Maison
- Stomping Grounds
- East Side Marios
- Shoeless Joes
- Wing House



When utilising public space, a brief agreement, including insurance coverage by the business, is required.

Our intention is to assist any restaurant or retailer with outdoor opportunities, where possible.





With respect to City materials to install in public places, or to assist private businesses if possible, staff are reviewing its inventory to determine what may be available.

As an example, the City has painted several park picnic tables in vibrant colours to be established throughout the downtown and Le Village.

Cornwall Waterfront:

The City's Waterfront Plan, approved in August 2019, was also referenced in Ms. Bergeron's report. Of course, the Plan includes a number of enhancements or new creations for public space within the City's five districts, including the following projects (not inclusive, but selected few):

Guindon Park

- Campground
- Beach
- Floating playground

Canal Lands

- Wakeboard Cable Water Park
- Ice skating/rowing on canal
- Creation of Canal Park



Lamoureux Park

- Lamoureux Park Promenade
- Augustus Street Swing Bridge
- Major Street Gateways

Harbour to College

- Pointe Maligne
- Off-leash Dog Park



- New Public Building (washrooms, ice cream, bicycle rentals, café, etc.)

East Front

- Various lookouts
- NAV Centre dock
- Boundary Road Boat Launch enhancements.



Many of these projects were arrived at with considerable community engagement. The next step is to establish a new Waterfront Committee, which will assist in implementing the projects recommended in the Plan.

Potential Future Projects:

Ms. Bergeron's report outlined other potential future projects.

- Cornwall Public Library Front Entrance Space: we would look to the Library administration to assist with a design, including community input, for this prominent space. In the past, a café has been established; this could be reconsidered, or other options reviewed. It is typically a very warm area during the summer months.
- Downtown Murals: Additional murals can be considered for the community, such as an image of Bob Turner as suggested. The challenge with murals is often maintenance costs, and finding willing property owners.
- Brick and Mortar Pop-up: The City is currently working to establish pop-up businesses. Small Sea Containers were purchased and were planned for the summer 2020, however COVID has affected its implementation. We are however giving thought to various options for these.
- Lit up Cornwall sign: Staff have considered this idea for Cornwall, as established in many other cities. There is of course a cost to it, which needs to be budgeted for. It can fall into a Waterfront project, or be an urban design contest as part of the Recreation Master Plan, or on its own.
- Community Ideas: Staff are supportive of requesting additional ideas, either through existing websites, or through a specific site for urban design.



Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Placemaking - 2020-323-Planning, Development and Recreation.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jun 17, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Maureen Adams - Jun 17, 2020 - 9:15 AM