



May 13, 2020

Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services
City of Vancouver
507 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Z 0B4

Dear Lon,

On behalf of the Vancouver BIA Partnership, a coalition of 22 BIAs in Vancouver representing approximately 25,000 businesses and commercial property owners, we respectfully request that the City of Vancouver work with us to identify innovative and efficient ways to support our business community as we move towards the recovery phase.

The concept of space and how we redefine, repurpose and reallocate our streets, laneways and parking areas in an effort to support continued physical distancing measures is of key consideration not only to the viability of our businesses, but also to the comfort and safety of our customers. As businesses re-open their doors and more people return to our commercial districts, we need to explore opportunities to expand our outdoor spaces to accommodate people and goods movement, as well as restaurant and retail uses. Businesses need every opportunity to survive as they adjust to a reduced level of operation for the foreseeable future.

This is the time to be bold, innovative, flexible and expedient. Ideas for consideration include:

- Temporary full or partial street reallocation to accommodate various public space interventions
- Side street closures to allow increased seating options, movement or operation of open air markets
- Commercial use of laneways for expanded retail or restaurant uses
- Conversion of parking spaces into patios, or designated pick-up and queuing zones
- Increase the number of allowable patios and allow use of Parklets for outdoor dining
- Allow businesses to utilize sidewalk space in front of adjacent vacant storefronts

BIAs are well-positioned to partner with the City of Vancouver to identify the unique needs and opportunities within their respective districts, effectively communicate with businesses and quickly execute public space interventions. On the administrative side, we need the city to be flexible, relax restrictions, expedite the permitting/renewal process and consider a full waiver or reduction of related fees to support our businesses during this challenging time.

We appreciate the strong relationship we have with the City of Vancouver and now more than ever we need to work together to ensure our businesses – the lifeblood of our neighbourhoods - can survive during this recovery phase.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teri Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Teri" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Smith".

Teri Smith, Chair – Street Use Committee
Vancouver BIA Partnership

cc: Mayor and Council

Gil Kelley, General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability