



LINDSAY DOWNTOWN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

October 29th, 2020

Andy Letham, Mayor
& Members of City of Kawartha Lakes Council

As you're aware, the Lindsay Downtown BIA has taken an ongoing, active role in the parking in our downtown area, and have been leading the enforcement since Spring 2018. With this role, our Community Liaison also has done an exemplary job of addressing other issues and challenges for businesses and visitors using our downtown streets, sidewalks, and parking lots, as they arise.

With winter quickly approaching, we wanted to take this opportunity to voice some concerns that have been brought to our attention. With the challenges we continue to face in our downtown community with reconstruction and the Covid-19 pandemic, we want to ensure that our downtown is a safe, accessible, and thriving place to visit and conduct business.

DOWNTOWN SIDEWALKS

As a result of By-Law 1995-004, the winter maintenance and clearing of snow and ice from sidewalks in the downtown core is the responsibility of the property owner (and is usually passed onto their commercial tenant), versus the City, as other sidewalks in the municipality are. This creates inconsistencies in the level of service, and pressure on downtown businesses who may open later in the day, are closed Sundays, etc. We've also had an increase in storefront vacancies in 2020, and are concerned that property owners, who are often absentee and who we do not have a relationship with, may not maintain these areas as required. **We understand that the By-Law department has a responsibility to have those areas maintained if the property owner does not, and pass the cost on to them, but there is an inevitable delay with this process, and in the meantime we could have areas not shoveled or salted, causing a safety and accessibility risk for pedestrians.** The BIA proposed to the Manager of By-Law Enforcement that our Community Liaison monitor these areas and use our own contractors for snow removal and pass the costs forward, but were told this would not be possible. Our Community Liaison will monitor these areas and pass the information on to By-Law in a timely fashion, with the expectation that they will then be maintained as soon as possible, before safety is a concern.

The enhancements to our downtown as a result of the Downtown Reconstruction are a welcome addition and the majority of the feedback received regarding the improvements has been overwhelmingly positive. **We believe that it would be a disservice to the hard work that's been done, if all of these areas were not properly maintained this winter and would welcome the opportunity to work further with the City to ensure that this is not the case.** We believe professionally maintained sidewalks would help garner additional public support for the reconstruction as we move into Phase 3 this winter, to showcase the beautiful new improvements. It is notable that the block of Kent Street from William Street to Cambridge Street will be under construction for the winter season and snow removal in this area will be the responsibility of the contractor.

We have been pleased and grateful with the proactive communications we have received from Public Works in clearing snowbanks from the downtown curbs following snow events, and appreciate the ongoing relationship that we have formed with Public Works staff, who have been more than willing to attend our meetings and work with us in a very positive way.

Question:

With the addition of 'bumpouts' in the newly reconstructed area of Kent Street (east of William), what is the City's plan for snow removal in these areas? They are not part of the main sidewalk that property owners are responsible for, and snow cannot be piled there prior to snowbank removal, as it will impede the pedestrian crosswalk.

PARKING LOTS

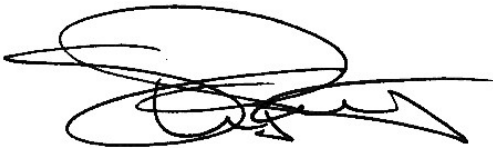
Our Community Liaison communicates with the Manager of By-Law Enforcement on a regular basis in the winter and will inform him when the piles of snow in the parking lots begin to excessively impact our parking supply. With Phase 3 of Downtown Reconstruction commencing in January 2021, we as a downtown cannot afford to lose parking lot supply, as on-street parking will not be available in a large section due to the closure, and Lot M1, north of Kent Street (bordered by Cambridge, Peel & William Streets) is already the most utilized lot in our downtown.

Our Community Liaison is in a position to monitor the snow piles in the parking lots in winter, and will continue to communicate with the Manager of By-Law Enforcement. With the additional burden of the construction in this area, **we would like to ensure that the snow pile removal occurs overnight**, not during the day as it often occurred last year, impacting businesses and traffic in the lots.

In conclusion, the Lindsay Downtown BIA, representing 170 businesses in the economic hub of the City of Kawartha Lakes would like to most respectfully request that all by-laws, policies and procedures pertaining to winter maintenance and snow removal be reviewed. For all of the reasons stated above, we believe that now is the ideal time to be reviewing the levels of service; how and when snow is removed; and which areas are to be maintained by the City and which are left up to property owners. We would welcome being a part of this conversation with the various City Staff departments responsible for different tasks of winter maintenance, as we believe that we all have a common goal – a vibrant and thriving downtown, that is (most importantly, when considering risk assessment) safe and accessible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Podolsky', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Steve Podolsky
Vice-Chair, Lindsay Downtown BIA Board of Directors
Chair – Parking Sub-Committee