

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Development Services
FROM: Administration
DATE: April 17, 2023
RE: Road Closure Bylaw – Main Street Town Square

ISSUE

A proposed bylaw for a temporary closure of a portion of Main Street and its adjacent alleyways between Front Street and Second Avenue, to enable a Main Street Town Square pilot project.

REFERENCE

- Location Map (Attachment 1)
- Proposed Bylaw 2023-15 (Attachment 2)
- [2015 Municipal Act](#)
- [Special Events Road Closure Bylaw](#)
- [2022 – 2024 City of Whitehorse Strategic Priorities](#)
- [2018 Downtown Plan](#)
- [2020 National Building Code of Canada](#)
- [2020 National Fire Code of Canada](#)
- [Lease, Encroachment, and Property Use Policy](#)

HISTORY

On January 16, 2023, Council approved a motion for Administration to prepare a proposal and analysis on developing a one-year pilot project to convert Main Street between Front Street and Second Avenue (study area) into a pedestrian-only town square for June, July, and August 2023.

The City conducted a survey for residents and business owners, which has received over 1500 responses. Administration is also consulting with adjacent and impacted businesses.

The study area is currently open to motor vehicle traffic year round and has paid meter parking along both sides of the street. Converting the study area to a Main Street Town Square will require the road to be temporarily closed to motor vehicle traffic for the previously mentioned months.

Road Closure Bylaw

The *Municipal Act* requires a bylaw and Public Hearing for permanent road closures. The Special Event Road Closure Bylaw provides for closures for up to 7 days. As neither of these processes apply to a 3-month closure as proposed, a bylaw with a Public Input session is proposed to ensure opportunities to hear concerns from interested citizens.

The proposed schedule for the proposed Bylaw is:

Planning Committee:	April 17, 2023
First Reading:	April 24, 2023
Newspaper Ads:	April 28 and May 5, 2023
Public Input Session:	May 8, 2023
Report to Committee:	May 15, 2023
Second and Third Reading:	May 22, 2023

Administration will provide a Public Input Report at the May 15 Standing Committee, as well as a report on the engagement to date and with a budget amendment request for the materials and costs for the Pilot Project. These reports will come at the same time in order for Council to have all of the information for a final decision on May 22.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Proceed with the proposed bylaw under the bylaw process; or
2. Do not proceed with the proposed bylaw.

ANALYSIS

City of Whitehorse Strategic Priorities 2022 – 2024 and 2018 Downtown Plan

One of the goals in the City of Whitehorse 2022 – 2024 Strategic Priorities and the Downtown Plan is to enhance the downtown core, reflecting its place as the centre of the City, more specifically in the core block between Main, Front and Steele Street, and Second Avenue.

Possible City Operational impacts

Three accessible parking spaces within the study area may be impacted by a road closure, depending on the final design of the Main Street Town Square. Administration is exploring alternative parking spaces and design options that would replace lost accessible parking spaces.

Due to the fire hydrants located within the study area, Fire Services require a minimum 6-metre-wide access route to ensure the hydrants can be accessed and any operations can be conducted effectively and safely. This requirement is based on the National Building Code of Canada and the National Fire Code of Canada requirements for emergency access routes. The fire access route will need to be kept accessible, with light installations closing the road that can be removed quickly (such as a temporary barrier).

There are 30 paid parking metre spaces within the study area. Administration estimates the maximum potential revenue loss from removing these paid parking spaces as \$4,725 per week and \$75,600 for 16 weeks. These figures assume the spaces are rented for the

entire daily pay period, Monday to Saturday. A budget amendment will be required to reduce revenues for the determined period of closure which will be brought forward May 15.

Benefits to road closure

The project has many objectives related to the well-being of street users and urban life: increased pedestrian safety, reduction of automobile-related nuisances, commercial activity, and attractiveness of the environment.

Administration is exploring design options to extend existing patios, add planters and outdoors furniture such as picnic tables, enhance street beautification through art and to allow food and retail vendors to sell goods from the street.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct that Bylaw 2023-15, a bylaw to temporarily close a portion of Main Street and adjacent laneway right-of-ways, between Front Street and Second Avenue, be brought forward for consideration under the bylaw process.