



City of Victoria Supports Business in Restart, Re-opening

Date: Friday, May 22, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Victoria City Council continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and explore ways to support the community.

This week, the Province initiated Phase Two of their recovery plan and coffee shops, boutique retailers, and shopping centres around Victoria have started the process of re-opening to the public. The City has been collaborating with the Downtown Victoria Business Association, Think Local Victoria, Community Micro-Lending and other business leaders to create a toolkit to support businesses re-open safely.

The toolkit helps highlight businesses that are practising physical distancing, taking hygienic measures, and exercising the necessary precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The toolkit includes:

- occupancy signage to communicate the number of customers businesses are allowing inside at one time
- a checklist of COVID-related measures expected of customers and being followed by employees
- design files that can be taken to many local printers for easy production and use for poster or floor stickers for businesses to mark places for people to stand with appropriate social distancing.

“The items in this new toolkit will help provide some certainty for customers visiting businesses that have re-opened downtown,” said DVBA Executive Director Jeff Bray. “The occupancy signage, COVID-19 checklist and floor stickers will give people confidence the businesses they’re visiting are committed to providing a safe shopping experience.”

In another move to support local business owners, Council recently brought forward several creative motions aimed at re-opening businesses safely, including the use of public spaces. Staff will report back to Council with options for flexible, innovative, and expedited permitting to promote economic recovery.

In addition to these initiatives, over the past four weeks, the City has been promoting campaigns focused on how local businesses can receive support from generous groups within the community, as well as encouraging residents to shop local whenever possible. The #yyjBizSupport campaign connects local business owners with resources to obtain a loan or get help building a website. The #ShopYYJ campaign encourages Victoria residents to support their favourite restaurants and retailers.

“All of these initiatives – from the new toolkit, to laying the groundwork for businesses to use public spaces, to campaigns aimed at supporting our local businesses – are important steps the City is taking towards re-opening and recovering in a way that gets us all back to work safely,” said Mayor Lisa Helps.

In other news this week, the City is partnering with BC Hydro to install an electric vehicle (EV) DC fast charger station with two chargers at the south end of Store Street, between Johnson Street and Pandora Avenue, near the Johnson Street Bridge. DC fast chargers can rapidly charge most EVs to 80 per cent capacity within 30 minutes. The charger is expected to be ready for public use by the end of 2020 and will be the first DC fast charger in Victoria.

“By making charging faster and easier, the City is confident that more residents will choose EVs over combustion engines,” said Mayor Lisa Helps. “This charger supports the City’s *Climate Leadership Plan* target of renewable energy powering 30 per cent of passenger vehicles registered in Victoria by 2030 and 100 per cent of passenger vehicles are renewably powered by 2050.”

To download the new business toolkit visit the City’s COVID-19 Business Resource page:

victoria.ca/bizresources

The Mayor’s Facebook Live COVID-19 updates take place on Fridays at 1 p.m. on the City of Victoria Facebook page. For more information on the City’s response to the pandemic, visit:

victoria.ca/covid19response.

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For More Information:

Bill Eisenhauer

Head of Engagement

City of Victoria

250.858.1061

beisenhauer@victoria.ca