
CITY OF KELOWNA

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 17, 2007
File No.: 6530-12
To: City Manager
From: Manager, Policy/Research/Strategic Planning
Subject: Downtown Plan Review

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Council receive the July 17, 2007 report from the Planning and Development Services Department and the attached Downtown Plan Review for information;

AND THAT Council direct staff to forward a submission for consideration as part of 2008 budget deliberations, for completion of a new Downtown Plan based on the recommendations contained in Mr. Spaxman's Downtown Plan Review (see Attachment A).

BACKGROUND:

The Downtown Plan, adopted in 1999, is a broad framework of proposed policies and initiatives intended to make Downtown an economically vital and exciting "people place". The Downtown Plan, while recognizing the imperative of immediate and short-term initiatives, was intended as a long-term approach to the rejuvenation of the Plan area, which is roughly bordered by Doyle Avenue, the lake, Richter Street and Highway 97. While acknowledging the long term perspective of the Plan, there has been some sentiment in recent years that the Plan is not yielding results consistent with community expectations. As a result of that sentiment, earlier this year, the Planning and Development Services Department was asked to undertake a review of the Plan. In carrying out this task, staff have worked closely with the Downtown Task Force.

In January 2007, Ray Spaxman Consulting Group Ltd. was commissioned to undertake a review of the Downtown Plan. Specifically, Mr. Spaxman was asked to:

1. Review the Downtown Plan and related issues
2. Visit downtown Kelowna and discuss issues with staff, Council, and key local stakeholders
3. Assess the situation and draft a report identifying perceived strengths and weaknesses in the Plan and suggest where changes would be valuable
4. Finalize the report
5. Present findings to Council

On May 14th, 2007 staff provided Council with a brief overview of the review's purpose and distributed copies of the draft report. Council members were invited to review the draft over the subsequent weeks and provide comments to staff. External and internal stakeholders were also invited to comment on the draft report.

The Downtown Task Force has considered the draft Downtown Plan Review and supports the findings of the Review, although they suggest that the Review's reference to the negative influence of the Gospel Mission has been overplayed, and that they would prefer a more generic reference to the negative influence of the cluster of 'social agencies'. The Downtown Task Force recommends that Council receive the Downtown Plan Review and pursue creation of a new Downtown Plan to be based on Mr. Spaxman's findings and recommendations.

INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO:

Director of Planning and Development Services
Director of Works and Utilities
Parks and Landscape Planner
Parks Manager
Transportation Demand Supervisor
Community Planning Manager
Current Planning Supervisor
Park Design and Construction Supervisor
Cultural Services Manager
Engineering Traffic Technician
Projects Manager
Planner Specialist (Urban Design Planner)
Traffic and Transportation Engineer
RCMP

LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

Dependent on specific activities approved by Council after consideration at a later date.

LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

Dependent on specific activities approved by Council after consideration at a later date.

EXISTING POLICY:

Kelowna's Community Strategic Plan includes the goal of fostering the social and physical well-being of residents and visitors and the objective of achieving 'accessible, high quality living and working environments' (Goal 3, Objective 5). Action items towards achieving that objective include: developing policies and incentives to revitalize public and private properties within Urban Centres.

OCP Policy 6.1.17 states that the City of Kelowna will 'develop, as part of the City's on-going planning program, comprehensive plans for the Urban Centres. These plans should accommodate a variety of land uses, mixed use developments, housing densities and ownership patterns'.

FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no budgetary impacts directly associated with the recommendations forwarded with this report, but if Council, as part of the 2008 budget process, directs staff to pursue creation of a new Downtown Plan, there would be staff costs, in addition to consultant costs. Consultant costs could be in the order of \$100,000 – the exact budget would be dependent on the Terms of Reference developed for the project. It should be noted that, as per Mr. Spaxman's report, the area to be covered by a new Downtown Plan would encompass a larger area than is included in the current Downtown Plan.

In addition to there being costs to pursuing a new Downtown Plan, there would also be benefits. A new Downtown Plan would help generate excitement and galvanize action towards improving the functionality, attractiveness and economic viability of Kelowna's centre. The personnel and budget required initially could thus be seen as an investment in the future.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no personnel implications directly associated with the recommendations forwarded with this report, but if Council, as part of the 2008 budget process directs staff to pursue creation of a new Downtown Plan, then staff resources would have to be allocated to oversee the consultant work. The project management could be undertaken with existing resources, provided that other tasks allocated to the Planning team are kept in check.

Mr. Spaxman, in his report to the City, has stated unequivocally that *"action will not happen unless a champion emerges who has enthusiasm for and commitment to Downtown, and also has the authority and resources to turn those attributes into action. While several organizations exist with the enthusiasm and commitment to participate and help, only Council has the ability to champion and allocate or obtain the needed resources"*. "Championing" is needed both on a short-term basis (to create a new Downtown Plan), and in the longer term (to ensure implementation).

EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Please see Attachment 2 for formal comments submitted by:

- Kelowna Chamber of Commerce
- Kelowna Downtown Association
- Urban Development Institute

Randy Shier and Gail Temple submitted individual input/comments via email.

The Downtown Task Force provided input and guidance to the review from the initial stages of engaging a consultant, to the final stage of reviewing the consultant's draft. At their meeting on July 12, 2007, the Downtown Task Force passed the following resolution:

THAT the Downtown Task Force recommend that Council receive Ray Spaxman's Downtown Plan Review for information and direct staff to forward a budget submission for completion of a new Downtown Plan for consideration as part of 2008 budget deliberations.

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION:

If Council does not support the recommendations of the Downtown Plan Review, Council could instead consider just receiving this report for information:

THAT Council receive the Downtown Plan Review referred to in the Planning and Development Services Department's July 17, 2007 report for information.

CONSIDERATIONS THAT WERE NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS REPORT:

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Submitted by:

S. Bagh, MCIP
Manager, Policy/Research/Strategic Planning

Approved for Inclusion:



David Shipclark
Acting Director, Planning and Development Services

Cc: *Director, Works and Utilities*
Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Services

ATTACHMENT A – DOWNTOWN PLAN REVIEW

ATTACHMENT B – STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS



THE
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June 29, 2007

Mary Pynenburg
Director of Planning and Development Services
City of Kelowna
1345 Water Street
Kelowna BC
V1Y 1J4

Dear Mary,

Downtown Plan Review

I am pleased to forward to you our final report on the Downtown Plan Review. This covering letter is important to the whole report and should be read with it.

Following discussions with you at the end of last year about what was needed to revise the Downtown Plan, you asked us to begin the process by undertaking a review of the existing plan. This report completes that initial step other than making a presentation to Council and others, should you wish that.

Throughout the study we become aware of a strong concern in parts of the community that action needs to be taken both to produce a revised plan and to implement changes to Downtown. Some respondents have noted that while our review has described where and how the current plan needs to be amended, nothing may happen. We also believe action will not happen unless a champion emerges who has enthusiasm for and commitment to Downtown, and also has the authority and resources to turn those attributes into action. While several organizations exist with the enthusiasm and commitment to participate and help, only Council has the ability to champion and allocate or obtain the needed resources. Without that commitment we believe Kelowna will not find the way to improve it's Downtown.

The most desirable future scenario is the emergence of a champion with authority and commitment, with relevant resources to prepare and implement a new Downtown Plan and to ensure that ongoing developments are properly conceived while the plans are being developed.

However, two possible negative scenarios must also be recognized. The more negative is that the Downtown will continue to deteriorate and become a blighted undesirable place. The lesser negative is that the economy will support some physical change over time but that change will be piecemeal and poorly executed leading to an inefficient, disconnected and unattractive place.

Each new downtown development alters the form and function of the City. It either contributes to or detracts from the future livability of Kelowna and especially Downtown. Key to future success is the quality of the planning principles, policies, regulations and actions that direct change. Creative visioning, participatory community planning, and efficient, focused processes and adequate resources are vital to success.

We believe that the Downtown is facing serious challenges about its long-term livability and urge Council to pursue the recommendations that we are putting forward.

This is urgent; Kelowna must put resources to work.

Thank you for the opportunity to undertake this work. It would not have been possible without the enthusiastic participation of many people and organizations, and especially the initiative of the UDI. A special thank you to Signe Bagh, Manager, Policy/Research/Strategic Planning of the Kelowna Planning Department who has, with patience and diligence, assisted us throughout all aspects of the study.

Yours truly,
The **Spaxman Consulting Group Ltd.**

Ray Spaxman
President

Encl.

KELOWNA DOWNTOWN PLAN REVIEW

Final Report

29.06.07

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In early 2007 the Spaxman Consulting Group was commissioned by the City of Kelowna to undertake a review of the Downtown Plan. The objective is to provide an independent and impartial review of the plan, to identify its strengths and weaknesses and to suggest where changes would be valuable. The review has consisted of an examination of the plan, a review of supporting documentation, a “walkabout” Downtown and meetings with a number of people who affect and are affected by downtown. A draft report was circulated to participants for their comments and this final report includes consideration of those comments.

A sampling of quotes from people attending the meetings held in Kelowna is included to provide additional context to the discussion set out in the report.

2.0 COMMENTARY

It became apparent from the many meetings and discussions with stakeholders that people are generally disappointed in the lack of noticeable impact of the Downtown Plan on the downtown. However, they are also passionate about the future of Kelowna, see the good things that are happening elsewhere, especially in the Cultural District, and are concerned that if something isn’t done the Downtown may well continue its decline and become increasingly an undesirable place.

3.0 REPORT

It quickly became apparent from a review of the Downtown Plan, the walkabout and the comments received from virtually everyone interviewed, that the Downtown Plan is not achieving the goals that people believe the plan was supposed to achieve. The plan contains a number of good sentiments with little substance, includes many laudable objectives and policies but few precise descriptions of how those objectives can be achieved or what the product will look like when completed. The plan includes “encouragement” for a variety of agencies and other groups to pursue further work in the

future but with few measurable actions, the most tangible of which seems to be cosmetic street furnishings, most of which have not occurred. Street improvements are relevant; however, as many past downtown revitalization efforts have shown, they have little impact if the environmental and economic conditions are not supportive. Something more is needed to revitalize the Downtown.

A number of people said they don't like the fact that the historic downtown seems to be languishing, that while they enjoy and are proud of the achievements in the Cultural District, they are concerned not only that Downtown seems to be languishing but also that the lack of attention to Downtown will lead to further deterioration and a shift of viable commercial and residential uses northwards into the cultural and adjacent areas.

A major issue identified for Downtown is the discomfort people have with the concentration of social facilities on Leon Street. Especially harmful is the un-neighbourly street life that many believe stems from the Gospel Mission. While the Mission operates a uniquely valuable social resource in the community, its clients dominate the adjacent areas, rendering them unfriendly, if not unsafe, for the ordinary citizen. Similarly, although we did not observe the early morning impacts of this in February, the nightclub concentration in an adjacent area is also an unpleasant environment for the ordinary citizen. This occurs in two ways. During normal business hours the clubs present a blank, unfriendly façade to the sidewalk and in the early hours, when the clubs turn out at closing time, the street is given up to rowdy and sometimes dangerous behaviour, especially during the warm summer months. If not dealt with these conditions can spread and become increasingly problematic.

As well as learning about the weaknesses of the plan and of Downtown, the strengths were also pointed out or were in evidence during the walkabout. Unfortunately the plan does not include a map that identifies the strengths and positive attributes of Downtown, nor the weaknesses and negative influences. Plans will often commence with a description of the strengths and weaknesses for it is the attention given to those characteristics that leads to tangible actions to remedy the weaknesses and expand on the strengths. It is desirable to identify the location, nature and extent of those influences both by accurate description and in map form.

As many people pointed out, a strength can also be a weakness, and visa versa. An example of this is City Park. On one hand, it is clearly an enormous potential as a public amenity, yet, when poorly laid out and dominated by anti social behaviour, is a serious weakness. Similarly, while a large area of Downtown might be considered underutilized, it contains the possibility for comprehensive redevelopment to create an attractive new

neighbourhood. Hence, whether contemplating a weakness or a strength, it is important to concentrate on the positive future that could be created from existing conditions.

It is puzzling to note there is a stated intention in the current plan to increase densities and heights without a specific description of what maximum density might be appropriate, what overall form and character of development would be desirable, nor is there any guidance about how developments might relate to each other, to existing neighbours and to the street. Such factors as building scale and texture, community amenities, daylight, privacy, views and overall build out character are important to developers, future residents and business people who might contemplate moving to downtown. Guaranteeing the overall environmental character through measurable zoning bylaw provisions and design guidelines will help to provide confidence in the future.

Additional density opportunities are often best left until development is proposed so that the potential uplift in value can be shared between the developer and the community.

In a related matter, it is disturbing to see residential development in the Cultural District that, while attractive and marketable in itself, has inadequate sidewalk and building setbacks from the major street. Design guidelines that achieve a comfortable and attractive interface between streets and buildings are important and must be implemented if a livable central area is to be achieved.

This report does not attempt a detailed analysis of the Downtown Plan, section by section, but instead zeros in on the primary issues that have been identified. These are addressed in a series of recommendations, as follows.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Identify the strengths of Downtown by description and by location, area and influence on a map, and list them in order of importance. These would include:**

4.1.1 City Park.

"It needs to be planned as an active people place in winter as well as summer."

"It might also be listed as a weakness due to the current usage."

- 4.1.2 The Lakefront.**
“What a phenomenal amenity.”
- 4.1.3 Bernard Avenue.**
“This is the soul of our city.”
- 4.1.4 Ellis Street.**
“It is the main access and orientation to the downtown core.”
- 4.1.5 Views to surrounding mountains on all sides.**
- 4.1.6 Views to lake.**
“We seem to be ignoring them.”
- 4.1.7 An existing and convenient grid system of roads.**
“We must slow the traffic down to make it friendlier.”
- 4.1.8 Some wonderful heritage structures.**
- 4.1.9 An emerging Cultural District.**
“We always take our visitors there.”
- 4.1.10 An emerging willingness for the market place to accept “downtown living”.**
“See what is happening next to the Cultural District.”
- 4.1.11 Good direct accessibility of major highway.**
- 4.1.12 Willingness to consider high-rise and high density.**
- 4.1.13 A large area of Downtown immediately adjacent and to the north of Harvey seems ripe for comprehensive redevelopment – if the right conditions are created.**
“Downtown can’t make it on its own, it needs community help.”
- 4.1.14 Mill Creek.**
“It is beautiful but seemingly unrecognized even to new commercial uses placed next to it.”
- 4.1.15 Adjacent heritage district and close-by residential areas.**
“We love walking down there and seeing the pride that owners have in their houses.”

Local people will be able to identify additional strengths and develop the order of importance of the items listed.

The purpose in identifying the strengths is to incorporate them in the Downtown Plan as features to be protected and enhanced.

4.2 Identify the weaknesses of Downtown by description and by location, area and influence on a map, and list them in order of concern. These would include:

4.2.1 The street activity generated by the Gospel Mission facility.

“We find it very uncomfortable and threatening to walk along that street.”

“The Gospel Mission continues to manage its frontage and there have been considerable improvements in their immediate area with street issues.”

4.2.2 Large underdeveloped areas.

4.2.3 Unwanted through traffic throughout Downtown and especially on one-way streets.

“We hear that the Provincial Highways is insisting that the one way streets through Downtown be maintained.”

4.2.4 Major traffic volumes, noise, pollution and disturbance from adjacent major highway.

“It is always busy and with the new bridge will get busier.”

4.2.5 Lack of attention to pedestrian movements both within Downtown and connecting Downtown to adjacent areas.

“Despite what the plan said there seems to be little priority given to the pedestrian anywhere.”

“We need a pedestrian master plan.”

4.2.6 Lack of attention to cyclists’ movements both within Downtown and connecting Downtown to adjacent areas.

4.2.7 Lack of facilities to encourage and support downtown living, including recent school closures.

“Our small family wanted to live near downtown, so we bought our house for that purpose but then they closed the school so we have to move away - as other like- minded neighbours.”

4.2.8 Concentration of nightclubs without resolution of impacts.

“Summer mornings when the bars close it is full of rowdies - no normal person wants to be there.”

4.2.9 Out of town centres are sapping the strength and opportunities of Downtown.

“The only place to get a modern office space is out of downtown so professionals are moving out.”

“They have to come back for a good business lunch though.”

- 4.2.10 The Downtown Plan lacks sufficient authority or status to ensure all public and private developments are undertaken in conformity with it.**

“It seems that the plan may not be recognized or supported by all city departments.”

- 4.2.11 Insufficient funding is provided to undertake improvements recommended in the plan.**

“There was no funding allocated in the City’s 10 year capital plan.”

- 4.2.12 There is a lack of leadership to promote and implement the plan.**

“The plan does not have a champion or leader that ensures the vision is realized.”

- 4.2.13 There are too many overlapping planning documents.**

“There are too many overlapping planning reports - causing confusion or overwhelming users.”

Local people will be able to identify additional weaknesses and list them in order of importance.

The purpose in identifying the weaknesses is to ensure that policies are included in the plan to remedy the harmful impact of those features.

- 4.3 Identify and map where there are potential areas for redevelopment that arise from the above noted conditions.**

- 4.3.1 Adjacent City Park.**

“Surely people would love to live next to the park?”

- 4.3.2 Adjacent Highway. New development would have to provide a “face” for downtown and a “shield” for it at the same time.**

- 4.3.3 Redevelopment of underdeveloped areas especially in the south downtown area.**

“There are number of underdeveloped blocks that could be developed into a new residential community if a comprehensive plan was done.”

4.3.4 Creating strong pedestrian linkages to adjacent areas.

Across Harvey, linking to Mill Creek, along Ellis, over to the Park and Lakeside, along Richter and so on.

4.3.5 Enhancing and linking to existing natural amenities (Mill Creek) and built amenities (Bernard and heritage structures).

Local people will be able to identify other development opportunities and their order of importance.

The purpose in identifying these development opportunities is to ensure that specific urban design studies are completed to show how development can occur to maximize the advantages of the sites and remedy or minimize the weaknesses.

4.4 Prepare a specific urban design vision that illustrates the following opportunities: (The new city computer model provides a wonderful design opportunity to draw up and discuss alternatives.)

4.4.1 How high and what form can buildings be that front on City Park? A lively discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of various forms and heights is needed.

4.4.2 What overall layout, form, densities, heights and phasing may be permitted to create a new residential community to the south of Bernard? And what public amenities are needed to ensure its livability? There seems to be enough physical space to permit comprehensive design solutions to be drawn up, which is what is needed here.

How can the issues around the Gospel Mission be handled, either on site or with relocation? Clearly if the issue is not resolved it will continue to blight this part of town. Many people referred to the work of Father Joe in San Diego as an example to be emulated here.

Three-dimensional urban design studies need to show how phased development can achieve a new, mixed use but predominantly residential community with needed community amenities such as, local open and green spaces, community centre, child care facilities, local shopping and commercial services.

4.4.3 What form of development is appropriate for Harvey frontage? What width is needed for Harvey to accommodate the flows from the bridge and avoid having to accept through traffic on downtown streets? This is where the planning and design guidelines for identified “gateways” are needed. Perhaps, because this is a provincial highway, the Province could acknowledge the responsibility to mitigate the impact of the highway on the local community. This will need strong political leadership.

4.4.4 What design decisions are needed to ensure attractive and convenient linkages between Downtown and all adjacent areas? A defined pedestrian route plan is needed and deliberate implementation programs and design guidelines implemented to achieve these. Destination points should be identified throughout the central area and linked by the network. Bus stops should be part of that. As well, locations for small downtown gathering places, some in the form of new urban squares, should be identified.

4.4.5 What will it take to incorporate Mill Creek into the public realm? This is a unique and valuable albeit hidden resource. It is understood that there is a Master Plan for the Creek. The goal must be to incorporate it as an amenity into the fabric of the city. It should be opened up to public access with strategies, incentives and budgets that show how the Creek and adjacent development can be integrated to add both to the Creek and the development.

4.4.6 What incentives and/or development cost charges are warranted to achieve these major redevelopments as well as preserving the heritage character of Bernard? If a comprehensive plan is produced with the needed regulatory back-up in the form of zoning, design guidelines, city infrastructure investment and density bonusing, the development community may be willing to participate in cost

sharing through development cost charges, amenity contributions and voluntary donations to other community amenities in exchange for development benefits. It is important not to give away development benefits before rezoning so that the public can share in the increased value created. The private sector needs the confidence in a plan that clearly defines and illustrates the creation of a livable community. Future planning should include an evaluation of the costs and benefits of rezonings.

- 4.4.7 What role could the City play in initiating land assemblies and promoting redevelopment to achieve public goals as well as market development?** Because of the wider public benefits that would accrue from an attractive and redeveloping downtown, strong City leadership and involvement in obtaining well developed plans, policies and guidelines and assisting in the creation of public amenities are both desirable and necessary.
- 4.4.8 What would the central area look like if these studies were completed and considered as part of a whole central area for Kelowna including Downtown, the Cultural Centre, the Waterfront and inner residential areas?** It seems that many people would prefer to have one set of plans for the central area rather a miscellany of different plans. It would also help to remedy the belief that Downtown has been left out. Similarly it would be helpful for the various advisory committees to be amalgamated to overview the whole central area.
- 4.4.9 Show how coordinated public policies could achieve a more coherent and cohesive central area. This would include coordinated land use, built and open space form, public transit, and pedestrian and bicycle linkages to and between the adjacent neighbourhoods of North Central and South Central.**

Local people will be able to identify additional helpful planning investigations.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This report sets out the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the Downtown Plan, and describes the principal strengths and weaknesses of Downtown itself. It responds to the request to identify where changes would be valuable by recommending a number of policy areas, plans, guidelines and actions that should be addressed. It proposes that planning and implementation actions be coordinated as one program over the whole central area of Kelowna. It is assumed that the revised plan would be prepared and thereby enriched through a program of public participation.

It is further recommended that once the revised plan is finalized Council provides for leadership of the plan at the political and staff levels, and allocates the necessary budgets to implement the public components of the plan.

These steps should provide renewed confidence in the positive redevelopment of the area.

A successful Downtown depends on a healthy economy, a positive market for growth, and a sound plan with clear policies and directions. This report addresses the steps that can lead to a sound plan and clear policies. There are a number of significant shifts occurring in societal values that will affect market demand and, in turn, will benefit Downtown. This relates to society's growing awareness of the impact of global warming and an increasing interest in sustainability. This is leading to major public interest in Downtown living and environmentally sound building practices.

The Downtown Plan can show how the environment of Downtown can be improved to become a good place to live, to shop and carry on a business. It can be a good place for a diversity of households, accommodating families with children, singles and retirees. It can again become the central focus of Kelowna.

KELOWNA DOWNTOWN PLAN REVIEW

APPENDIX 1

MEETINGS:

On February 27th 2007, a number of meetings were held with a broad range of local stakeholders to discuss the Kelowna Downtown Plan. Invitations to participants contained the following introduction.

“The meeting is an opportunity for you to describe your thoughts about Downtown. Specifically, Mr. Spaxman would like to hear your thoughts about what you think has been successful, and what hasn’t. He would also like to know what you would like to see happen Downtown. Finally he would like to hear your ideas for actions that could be taken. Mr. Spaxman will summarize what he has learned in his review of the Downtown Plan and supporting Documents and will talk about what he believes needs to be addressed in his review. He will also seek your feedback on the following questions:

- Is the Downtown Plan providing satisfactory guidance to Downtown growth and change?
- What isn’t satisfactory about the changes that are taking place?
- What is satisfactory about the changes that are taking place?
- Are you clear what the vision is for Downtown is?
- Do you have a vision of what it should be?”

The following meetings were held with the noted attendees. Each meeting was introduced by Signe Bagh, Manager, Policy and Research & Strategic Planning, City of Kelowna. Signe Bagh and Ray Spaxman took informal notes of the discussions, which were otherwise not recorded.

Meeting #1. City of Kelowna Staff

Terry Barton – Parks and Landscape Planner

Joe Creron – Parks Manager

Jerry Dombowsky – Transportation Demand Management Supervisor

Theresa Eicher – Community Planning Manager

Shelley Gambacort – Acting Development Services Manager

Andy Gibbs – Park Design & Construction Supervisor

Lorna Gunn – Cultural Services Manager

Ken Henning – Engineering Traffic Technician

Garth Letcher – RCMP, Community Policing

Rob Mayne – Projects Manager

Pat McCormick – Urban Design Planner
Mary Pynenburg – Director, Planning and Development Services
David Shipclark – Director, Corporate Services
Harry Thompson – Traffic and Transportation Engineer
John Vos – Director, Works and Utilities

Meeting #2. Mayor Shepherd

Meeting #3. Downtown Task Force

Councillor Colin Day
Gordon Hartley
Weldon LeBlanc
Clint McKenzie (Exec Director of DKA , not member of DTF)
Rita Milne
Dale Knowlan

Meeting #4. Downtown Kelowna Association

Jerry Hlaty
Rita Milne
John Perrott (DKA staff)

Meeting #5. Urban Development Institute

Rick Miller
Todd Sanderson
Randy Shier
Gail Temple
Ken Webster

Meeting #6. Advisory Planning Commission

Lorne Antle
Barry Braden (Vice Chair)
Rolli Cacchioni (Chair)
Janet Digby
Roland Harvey
Don McConachie
David Rush
Ryan Smith (Staff)
Luke Stack
John Welder

Bill Wostradowski

KELOWNA DOWNTOWN PLAN REVIEW

APPENDIX 2

DOCUMENTS:

While the KELOWNA PLAN dated October 1999 was the principal document under review for this study, reference was also made to the following:

C7 ZONE DESIGN GUIDELINES, City of Kelowna, January 2006

CULTURAL DISTRICT STRATEGY AND MARKETING PLAN for City of Kelowna, June 2000

DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT, PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE (undated)

KELOWNA, A PICTORIAL HISTORY, the Kelowna Museum, 1992

KELOWNA'S CULTURAL DISTRICT CHARRETTE February 2004

KELOWNA DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GUIDELINES, November 1995

KELOWNA, ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF HISTORY, Kelowna Publishers, 2005

MILL CREEK LINEAR PARK MASTER PLAN. Kelowna Parks Department

MINUTES OF Downtown Centre Strategy Task Force in 2006

ONE-WAY COUPLETS IMPACT ANALYSIS, for Downtown Kelowna Association, July 2003

TIME TO GROW UP? KELOWNA'S CHANGING SKYLINE, Bernard Momer, PIBC Journal, December 2006



May 17, 2007

Signe Bagh
Manager, Strategic Planning
Development Services
City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna BC V1Y 1J4

RE: Kelowna Downtown Plan Review

Dear Signe,

On behalf of the Downtown Kelowna Association I would like to thank the Downtown Plan Taskforce for engaging and involving us in an independent review of the Downtown Plan to identify our strengths and weaknesses and opportunities to move forward on several Downtown fronts.

We would agree with the recommendations highlighted by Mr. Spaxman as features that need to be protected and enhanced. We would like to specifically point to the opportunity and the current timing in working on Recommendation 4.1.13 *"A large area of Downtown immediately adjacent and to the north of Harvey seems ripe for comprehensive redevelopment – if the right conditions are created."* The market conditions will continue to make this a very key goal in the months to come.

In relation to that comment, the most prominent weakness was seen specifically as the street activity generated on Leon Avenue by the Gospel Mission facility. The concentration of services in the Leon Avenue corridor are the most prominent concern, however, the Gospel Mission continues to manage its frontage and there have been considerable improvements in their immediate area with street issues. In this case community perception has not caught up to the improvements that are being experienced by those in the 200 block of Leon Avenue and the concentration issues now focus east in the 400 and 500 blocks.

We are eager to assist with the revisions outlined and communicating with the public on the opportunities that are before us. The template and the focus points are identified in the report and now creating a strong team of partners that can assist the City in achieving the vision will be the next stage of engagement and commitment.

We look forward to continuing to work with the taskforce on making these goals a reality.

Sincerely,


Clint McKenzie
Executive Director

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The Voice of Business

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www.kelownchamber.org

May 14, 2007

Mayor Sharon Shepherd and Members of Kelowna City Council
1435 Water Street
Kelowna BC, V1Y 1J4

Dear Mayor Shepherd:

The Kelowna Chamber of Commerce has been asked to provide feedback through the Downtown Task Force on the review of the Downtown Plan conducted by The Spaxman Consulting Group. We welcome this opportunity to work with the City toward revitalizing our downtown.

The City of Kelowna is to be congratulated for being forward thinking and proactive in contracting Spaxman to undertake a review of the Downtown Plan. As the heart of our city, the economic health of the downtown is crucial to maintaining a vibrant city.

In participating in this process, it became apparent that many of the downtown issues identified in the review are those that we are dealing with throughout the community overall; issues such as:

- Transportation
- the need for development guidelines
- the need for streetscape guidelines
- enhanced coordination among stakeholders
- the provision of social services.

By preparing a revised Downtown Plan focusing on these key issues, we will be moving in the right direction to solve a number of significant challenges of our community overall.

The report provided by The Spaxman Consulting Group provides a general overview of the existing Downtown Plan which was compiled in 1999. While critical in some areas of what we are doing, the report points out many positive attributes for us to focus on. Generally, the Kelowna Chamber views this report as a positive template to revitalize our downtown, and an opportunity to avoid deterioration of the traditional downtown. By identifying the strengths, weaknesses, and other points of interest, the report creates the needed momentum to move forward.

Our intent is not to put the burden of downtown revitalization solely on the City of Kelowna. Collectively, the various stakeholders such as the Kelowna Chamber, Downtown Kelowna Association, UDI, the Economic Development Commission, and the City of Kelowna all have a vested interest in maintaining a vibrant and healthy downtown.

Recognizing this, the Kelowna Chamber is encouraging the City to take a leadership role in providing the infrastructure and a positive regulatory environment for business to operate. The report by Spaxman identifies areas where we can work with the City to create this climate such as:

- revising the Downtown Plan
- implementation of the Downtown Plan
- coordination of overlapping documents and reports
- impact of traffic on the downtown
- concentration of social agencies
- concentration of night clubs
- development guidelines
- streetscape guidelines
- providing sufficient resources (funding and human resources)

The review of the Downtown Plan by The Spaxman Group clearly indicates that much has changed in Kelowna since the original plan was prepared in 1999. In recognizing this, the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce requests that the City of Kelowna create and implement a comprehensive Downtown Plan to create a renewed long-term vision for revitalization of our downtown. In preparing the new Downtown Plan, we recommend using a high calibre outside consultant to provide a fresh perspective in creating a blueprint for future development within our community.

As a leading business organization in Kelowna, the Kelowna Chamber pledges its support to work with the elected officials and staff of the City of Kelowna, and the other stakeholders, to create a comprehensive and productive Downtown Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura A. Thurnheer", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Laura A. Thurnheer, President
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce



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May 14, 2007

Mary Pynenburg, Direct of Planning
City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4

Dear Ms. Pynenburg,

UDI welcomed the opportunity to be part of the February 27th, 2007 Kelowna Downtown Plan Review process facilitated by Ray Spaxman. We are now also pleased to provide feedback to the Kelowna Downtown Plan Review document created by the Spaxman Consulting Group.

Our Downtown core is a vital part of the identity of Kelowna as a city. Like other stakeholders, we are encouraged by the proactive steps Council is taking, through this process, toward revitalization of the Downtown core. Overall, we are very pleased with the Review document and think that it is a realistic, objective, and encouraging first step.

We like the format of identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the downtown, and realize that, through public consultation, these will be further refined. For example, while City Park is a tremendous asset to the city and as such, is listed as a strength, it might also be listed as a weakness due to the current usage of the park. We agree with the Review that it is very important that these strengths and weaknesses need to be enhanced, and/or addressed, through an updated Downtown Plan.

We are also fully supportive of the creation of a more specific urban design vision, especially in important development opportunity areas. While this urban design vision should not constrain the creative development community, it should however, help to provide confidence in the direction we are working toward in the creation of "place" in our downtown core. It should provide the blueprint for the place we wish to create, and as well, be attended by an implementation plan.

Very importantly, the Review document also stresses the importance of a Downtown Plan that is more comprehensive. It recognizes the need to address a larger area, as well as the need to incorporate the many public policies and plans that relate to this area of the city. We agree that a more comprehensive document and vision is required.

We encourage the City of Kelowna to use the Spaxman Review as the first step in the creation of a revised Downtown Plan with clear policies and directions. We believe public interest in the downtown has likely never been higher, and that we have a tremendous opportunity to harness that current interest to create a revised vision for the heart of our city. We hope that the steps outlined in the Spaxman Review will be undertaken in the very near future, and we look forward to being an active participant in the process.

Yours truly,
Urban Development Institute – Kelowna Chapter

Per: Rick Miller
President