

March 4, 2022

Mayor Lyn Hall
Prince George City Council

CC: Mr. Walter Babicz
City Clerk

****Delivered Electronically****

Good afternoon, Mayor and Council

We are writing today with appreciation for the on-going discussions with businesses pertaining to outdoor patios and public spaces in or near roadways. We note the media coverage of March 3, 2022, with interviews including Councillor Ramsay and owner/operator of The Makerie, Ms. Kim Hayhurst.

Throughout the pandemic, we saw businesses and communities continuously pivoting to create opportunities to support their patrons, staff and families. These efforts, while monumental, are the steps small and medium sized businesses take every day to build a greater sense of inclusivity and engagement within our city. These owners and operators put everything on the line to employee locally, purchase locally, support *Our Hometown* and build a better Prince George for everyone.

Last summer and early autumn, areas of our community became more vibrant, more welcoming, more inclusive, and more accessible. And, importantly, provided a stronger revenue stream for businesses that faced the most significant and evolving COVID restrictions and regulations of any others. In addition, there was a greater sense of pride and a beautification that happened by the will and determination of several businesses.

We understand that the City is currently undertaking a process to review the street side patio program and how that may be included, once again, for our community. We applaud this discussion and appreciate the opportunity to lend our voice and fervent support for a strategic and fair approach.

Several communities across the country have implemented similar programs. Some successfully and with partnership in mind. Some unsuccessfully and with hours of red tape and onerous bureaucratic processes. We hope your consideration and discussion will lead to the former.

We respectfully submit the following option for your consideration:

- 1) That businesses looking to add structures to the angled parking areas be permitted, within reason, to do so
- 2) That an administration/application fee of \$100 be charged to cover internal costs for processing but do not encumber businesses unnecessarily
- 3) That the application form be digital, fillable and located on the city website
- 4) That the application not exceed a few basic questions and basic structure drawings – where possible
- 5) That the City reduce offstreet parking fees during the 'patio' period to encourage usage and compensate for any parking utilized for patio spaces

While we appreciate your consideration of the above, we hope the City is interested in a more robust conversation regarding permanent implementation of additional structures, similar to Danforth Ave in Toronto, Whyte Ave in Edmonton and many other world-class communities across the country.

Thank you for your consideration of our position in your discussions. It is our hope that you will see the value these spaces have provided *Our Hometown*.

Sincerely,

Todd Corrigan, CEO
Prince George Chamber of Commerce