

## STC Holiday Square to offer Santa Claus Parade alternative

**Nov. 6, 2020** — There might not be a parade to welcome him this year, but that doesn't mean Santa Claus isn't coming to town.

As the community continues to pull together against COVID-19 the annual St. Catharines Santa Claus Parade, and the large crowds it gathers, won't be possible in 2020. Local families and children need not worry however, there will still be a chance to see the man in red, and enjoy some festive cheer as the City prepares to host the STC Holiday Square on St. Paul Street, on Nov. 21, 22, 28 and 29.

In lieu of the parade, from noon to 8 p.m. on all four days at the corner of St. Paul Street and James Street, holiday magic will be on full display, welcoming families and individuals to stop by, share in enjoying a hot beverage, some festive entertainment and the chance to see Santa himself.

"There's a bit of holiday magic to ensure kids can interact with Santa at a safe distance," said Community and Events Supervisor Brienne Wilson. She explained that with thousands attending the parade annually to take in Santa's arrival, the replacement event has been stretched across four days to ensure everyone gets their chance while avoiding the crowds often associated with a parade.

"The holidays are an important time for our residents, and we want to join with them and celebrate as we do every year, even if we have to rethink our traditions we can still come together," she said, noting the jolly old elf will appear on the hour, with some magical holiday elements, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Beyond the Santa appearances the space will feature Elsa, Anna and Kristoff from Disney's *Frozen*, alongside artisanal and warm beverage vendors.

Families will also be able to snap a holiday-themed photo with a touchless photo booth. A reminder to guests that they should only pose with members of their own household bubble to limit any possible spread of COVID-19.

Occupancy in the space will be limited in accordance with Provincial restrictions on gathering sizes, although Santa's appearances will be visible from the entire area of the intersection.

Plans are still being finalized for the event being held in cooperation with the St. Catharines Downtown Association and supported by funding provided through Innovate Niagara and Digital Main Street Future Proof Community Collaboration Projects. Details are still being finalized and updates will be available on the STC Holiday Square webpage at [www.OurHolidaySTC.ca](http://www.OurHolidaySTC.ca) starting next Wednesday.

The STC Holiday Square isn't the only new opportunity to celebrate with the City. With support from the City and downtown association The Watering Can will host a Winter Workshop at Market Square on Nov. 20, with attendees creating their very own festive arrangement in an embossed tin container. Registration is almost full for the event, and a second installment is being considered. Visit the events section of [www.mydowntown.ca](http://www.mydowntown.ca) for more information.

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