

## St. Paul Street opened to pedestrians, businesses as weekend public space

**June 23, 2020** — The first road closure, as a means to provide space for pedestrians and local businesses to operate in the wake of COVID-19, will kick off this weekend.

With St. Catharines Downtown Association (SCDA) operating the area as a special-event permit holder, St. Paul Street will be closed to vehicles, from William Street to Carlisle Street on Friday, from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.; Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.; and Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m..

The expedited permit will allow the SCDA to operate a special-event area for expanded patios and outdoor shopping on sidewalks and streets, while opening the roadway to pedestrian traffic. The cooperative effort comes after City Council requested exploration of partnerships with local business groups to take over streets and sidewalks as public spaces for pedestrians and business.

“With limitations on physical distancing in indoor areas we are happy to partner with the SCDA on this initiative to allow our businesses to expand their operations out into public space,” said Director of Economic Development and Government Relations Brian York, adding, “COVID-19 hit our business community hard, so it is great to see life returning to the city, to see people getting out and enjoying all that downtown has to offer in a safe, responsible way.”

The hope is the partnership with the SCDA will continue on St. Paul Street during weekends going forward in 2020, with the area possibly expanding to support more businesses. The City is also eyeing the possibility of working with other business area groups for similar street-closure events elsewhere in the city.

“This means so much to our businesses, we’re definitely looking forward to running the outdoor area in the weeks and months to come,” said SCDA Executive Director Tisha Polocko, adding, “our businesses are excited to open their doors, but they need the space to do it safely, to ensure we keep moving forward in the fight against COVID-19.”

Businesses operating under the special-event permit on the sidewalk or in parking spaces will be required to remove any furniture or merchandise outside the street-closure hours mentioned above.

Additionally, the special-event space is distinct from the expanded temporary outdoor patio process in place for 2020. Businesses in the area wishing to operate a temporary patio in the closure area outside the stipulated special-event permit times will be

required to complete the temporary outdoor patio application process at [www.stcatharines.ca/temporarypatios](http://www.stcatharines.ca/temporarypatios).

Additional curbside pickup parking spaces will be set up on streets adjacent to St. Paul Street to offset those lost during the closures.

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