



QUEEN STREET PATIOS

Creating a vibrant Queen street.

December 2024

Insights

During the COVID years of 2020/21 Queen Street hospitality businesses and the Kincardine community embraced seasonal patios on Queen Street. The results included:

- Businesses experienced increased seating, generating increased revenue during summer.
- Businesses hired more people.
- Queen Street appeared more vibrant with enhanced, unplanned social interactions.
- Downtown residents found opportunities to meet, spend more time, and interact on Queen Street for prolonged time periods.



2024 Observations

The BIA observed that there was a dramatic drop away of seasonal patios on Queen Street during the summer of 2024. So, we interviewed eight Queen street restaurants, pubs and cafes to find out why. For 2025, all but one of the cafes and restaurants interviewed indicated that they would consider having a seasonal patio if some of the financial barriers could be removed.

Historically, events have been used to create vibrancy on Queen street. This is very expensive to run and usually requires the street to be closed to car traffic.

With events having a questionable financial impact for businesses, its the intention of the BIA for 2025, to create fewer Queen street events during summer.



What do Queen Street Restaurants & Cafes Want?

Jersey barriers for seasonal patios is a bylaw enforced requirement for having a seasonal patio on Queen Street (for a fixed period from summer to October). The jersey barrier rental cost is the number one barrier preventing businesses from having a seasonal patio.

RECOMMENDATION: Reduce or remove the cost of renting jersey barriers.

The cost and process of acquiring a seasonal space on the road is considered time consuming and unnecessary.

RECOMMENDATION: Reduce the cost of the application process and shift to a simplified renewal format.

What do Queen Street Restaurants & Cafes Want?

The recent changes to the height of roadside car parking and gutters was a major cost barrier to Queen Street cafes, pubs and restaurants who owned a seasonal patio. The majority of businesses interviewed owned a seasonal patio. Only one business paid to modify and use it for summer 2024.

RECOMMENDATION: Thank you for the Spruce the Bruce Grants made available in 2024 for making modifications to seasonal patios. This same funding should be made available in 2025.

NOTE: From a timing perspective, the consensus from a number of hospitality business owners was that they would be considering whether to invest in a seasonal patio in January 2025.

In Conclusion

Kincardine has the unique advantage of having its downtown centre as a lakeside destination and not a highway. The successful establishment of yearly seasonal patios not only strengthens this advantage but has the potential to further distinguish Kincardine as the must-see place to visit in Bruce County.

The significant impact of seasonality on Kincardine's business community is a major barrier to its success and growth. Seasonal patios supported by marketing initiatives from the BIA and Kincardine Tourism would help increase foot traffic during summer and the shoulder season periods.

Visitors to Kincardine and the local community spend more time on Queen Street with the very popular seasonal patios. This provides opportunities for surrounding businesses while attracting future business investment.

The recommendations in this report represent a negligible cost to the MOK with the potential to have a significant impact on Lakeside Downtown Kincardine and the broader business community.

