



PRESS RELEASE

The Downtown District Prepares for a Second Season of Al Fresco

Belleville, Ontario, May 18, 2021 - Al Fresco, meaning 'done or eaten in the open air', is back for year two this June, July and August in the Downtown District. The hugely successful summer event, piloted last summer, is designed so that visitors to the downtown core can enjoy the summer sunshine, support and encourage downtown businesses and connect with the community while staying safe as we navigate COVID-19.

Starting in June (pending a lockdown end) downtown sidewalks and select parking spaces will be transformed once again into seating and safe gathering space. The beautifully painted parklets by local artists Maria Moreno, Jan Coombs, Elizabeth Coxwell Eby and Renee Hiltz of the Belleville Art Association will once again be in place. These parklets, stationed in front of Chilangos Mexican Restaurant, Gourmet Diem and Caper's, will allow restaurants to extend their patios and visitors to enjoy downtown safely. To support the excitement and activities, and calm vehicular traffic, Front Street will be reduced to one-lane between Bridge Street and Victoria Street, tentatively starting June 3.

Eight tête-à-têtes - Adirondack-inspired chairs joined together by a table - will also line the street, offering shade, a place to rest and a place to enjoy takeout with a friend.

Thanks to the sponsorship of **McDougall Insurance and Financial, Complete Bookkeeping and Taxes, Councillor Tyler Allsopp of Doug's Bicycle, The Salon, The Richmond Retirement Residence** and **Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario**, each tête-à-tête will be transformed into a piece of art by a local artist. During the month of June, visitors will be able to watch the artists work as each tête-à-tête is completed in the open air.

Last year's event featured Prismatica, a large scale light installation by Canadian company Creos. The event saw record pedestrian counts and revenue numbers in the downtown core, while providing enough space for everyone to feel safe. This year, Al Fresco will feature five

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unique interactive LED installations designed to provide fun for all ages. Watch for more information about these in the coming weeks.

Al Fresco was made possible with financial support from the City of Belleville, Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board, and the Belleville Downtown District BIA members.

“Al Fresco 2020 was a tremendous success for the Downtown District. This year, we’re introducing even more,” says Kathryn Brown, BIA Chair and Owner of Kate’s Kitchen Shop. “More colour, more arts & culture, more patios, more places to enjoy visiting the District - all while respecting the pandemic protocols. It’s happening and we hope you’ll be a part of it!”

Come do it Al Fresco in the Belleville Downtown District this summer.

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