



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New permit for downtown businesses to use sidewalks, on-street parking

A new Outdoor Commercial Use Permit is being created to allow businesses in Vernon's downtown core to expand their retail and patio spaces outdoors. The new permit is expected to be in place early next month and is replacing the existing Sidewalk and Boulevard Area Use Permit.

What's different for the Outdoor Commercial Use Permit is an option for businesses to use one on-street parking space for business purposes, in addition to sidewalk and boulevard space. The approach was tested as a pilot program between 2020 and 2022 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on local businesses.

Businesses in the Primary and Secondary Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) will have an opportunity to bring their patios and sales areas outdoors through the new permit, which will have to be purchased annually. Once the permit is in place, a business may use the length of their frontage on the sidewalk or boulevard year-round, weather permitting. Between March 1 and October 31 of each year, they will also have an option to use one on-street parking space in front of their building.

Vernon City Council supported the proposed permit process and fees at its Regular Meeting of February 13, 2023. Administration will now bring forward necessary bylaw amendments for Council's review and approval to formally implement the new permit.

Businesses will be able to apply for permits starting in March 2023. The guidelines and application form will be provided on the City website in the coming weeks. The new permit application fee will be \$100 plus an annual rental fee to use City property of \$30/m² on the sidewalk and boulevard and \$360 for an on-street parking space.