

Entry 1 - Downtown Kelowna Association

Downtown Kelowna Winter Street Market

Saturday December 4, 2021

Special Events

The Pandemic & ongoing restrictions had left the business community in Downtown Kelowna in need of promotion and an event to boost business and spirits. The Downtown Kelowna Association had lost a significant part of its direct engagement with the community having primarily engaged them through digital means. The need identified was two fold, to bring the community back to Downtown Kelowna with a loved event and return the DKA's image as an integral part of Downtown, the community and Okanagan as a whole.

Reignite Downtown Kelowna as the place to shop, play, and visit while asserting the Association as a vital ingredient to the continued success of our Downtown businesses. Goals included: • to have at least 1000 people attend on the day of the event – based on past attendance numbers and at-the-time covid restrictions • to have 25 vendors selling local items to attract visitors to the market and keep them downtown as long as possible. Our main objective was to return an event to Downtown that had been cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions and accompanying policies.

- Main audience: Kelowna/West Kelowna residents; all ages, focus on families since Santa would be present along with other mascots (Loose Moose & Rocky Raccoon) o Our main target was people already living or in the Okanagan area as they would be familiar with the WSM from previous years. • Other audience: Okanagan residents or those passing through

In previous years, the DKA had planned and executed the event internally. The workload was extremely large and overly stressful on the small team. We engaged Impact Events to assist with implementation taking on the roles of logistics, vendor engagement and booking, entertainment coordination, sponsorship and coordinating volunteers. The DKA created all marketing assets and managed promotion of Winter Street Market. Our Downtown on Call team took on management of security. The challenge faced was the unpredictability and ever changing Covid restrictions and public health orders. Those included vaccine passports, capacity limits and questions around liquor licensing. The November floods created challenges for vendors obtaining product to sell. Some vendors pulled out of the event leaving holes for both Impact Events and the DKA scrambling to fill. Budget for the event was \$40,000

Estimated attendance: 10,000+ Vendors reported sales and profits well exceeding their expectations. Downtown businesses informed us they saw an increase in traffic and sales on the day of Winter Street Market.

The Winter Street Market was 1 of only 2 large, community events in Kelowna for 2021. Squeezed in between changes in Public Health Orders, it brought back a sense of community and sense of place for residents of Kelowna. The excitement in the air was palpable as visitors moved along the vendor tents, laced up their skates at the StuartPark ice rink, and watched with anticipation as the annual Light Up ceremony got underway. With an attendance of over 10,000, it was an all-inclusive event full of smiling faces that brought back a sense of normalcy not seen or felt in almost two years. A lot of love was put into this event by the DKA and it showed. Feedback from Mayor and City Council, Downtown businesses, and attendees solidified Winter Street Market's success; we look forward to bringing it back for 2022.