



July 29, 2020

DOWNTOWN MAINSTREET

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Dear La Crosse City Councilpersons,

First, we want to thank you and Mayor for the support that the city has been giving to our Downtown businesses. Many were able to apply for and gain support from the small business grants that were provided to support them during this pandemic.

In addition, many departments have been helpful with efforts to create curbside pick-up, expand retail to the sidewalks, reduce fees and create new employee parking options. This cooperation has been extraordinary. It is deeply appreciated.

This week we ask for your support on the new Outdoor Dining program. This program will make available opportunities for our restaurants and cafes to expand onto the sidewalks, parking spaces, into parking lots and adjacent outdoor spaces. This idea is not new, it is happening across the nation and was used effectively during the 1918 pandemic. It is proven that it is safer to eat outdoors and we need to provide the opportunity for our small businesses to expand their seating capacity into the outdoors and gain customer support. Confidence is not high right now for indoor dining, we hope that by starting this program in August we will be able to create more outdoor dining over the next 2-3 months.

We want to thank the planning department for their lead and collaboration on this program. We hope that you will put trust in them to guide this program and work with other departments to implement the program quickly and effectively, with flexibility, so that we can start to make a difference now. Downtown Mainstreet is committed to helping guide our businesses and work directly with the city to help implement this important program.

Our small businesses are facing incredible challenges and our restaurants are being hit very hard right now. It is our hope that this program could make a significant difference to their future. We hope that we have your support.

Robin Moses
Executive Director
Downtown Mainstreet, Inc.