

MY DOWNTOWN
It's happening!



**Discover the details
on Bernard Avenue**

Celebrating Heritage

In the late 19th century, Bernard Lequime built a general store which still stands at 229 Bernard Avenue. As more businesses sprang up alongside, Bernard Avenue became a commercial and cultural hub. Today it is the premier waterfront location, lined with heritage brick buildings, from which downtown radiates.

Photographs of Kelowna's heritage downtown have been wrapped on the bike boxes, utility boxes and garbage cans along Bernard Avenue. Stop on the southeast corner of Bernard Avenue and Pandosy Street and compare the present street to the photo wrap of the same view in the 1940s.



Main Street Revitalization



Originating from the need to upgrade aging underground utilities and the roadway, construction began in 2012. The \$14-million investment has helped rejuvenate downtown and set the stage for more activity to attract residents and visitors alike.

It was prudent to address the outdated and inconsistent streetscape at the same time. The result is a more vibrant “people place” where

people spend more time and updated infrastructure will withstand the pressure of seasonal tourism demands.

Today, wider sidewalks, expanded outdoor retail and cafes and new trees, lighting and street furniture make Bernard Avenue a place to shop, dine and enjoy.

A Sense of Place

Three themes are featured along Bernard Avenue with unique design elements in each phase. The new streetscape evokes a distinct sense of place and the natural beauty of the area.

The themes are derived from Kelowna's local natural and cultural heritage with tributes to the First Nation people of this area. Place-making draws on a community's assets, inspiration and potential to create vibrant public spaces that promote discovery and enjoyment. It enhances the community's attachment to public spaces.

RICHTER TO ELLIS STREETS

At the east end of Bernard Avenue the theme emphasizes the hillsides and grasslands of the valley with pinecones, Okanagan sunflowers and other local flora.

ELLIS TO PANDOSY STREETS

The theme highlights the cultural history of our community represented by apple and cherry tree fruits and orchard insects, like bees.

PANDOSY TO ABBOTT STREETS

The west end of Bernard Avenue emphasizes the lake and our aquatic environment reflected by Kokanee salmon, shoreline plants and Ogopogo, the Syilx sacred spirit of the lake.



The Land is Our Culture



A “landscape inspired” design theme emerged from the community consultation process and, while the execution is contemporary rather than historical in form, street features are rooted in Kelowna’s heritage.

Materials were chosen in keeping with the natural elements and history of the Okanagan, with benches and pavers made of natural Basalt stone – a volcanic rock found throughout the Okanagan Valley.

The light poles, like the Downtown library building, draw their inspiration from the heavy timbers used in the Kettle Valley Railway trestles.

The First Nation culture of this area is connected to the natural landscape. That connection is reflected along the street by using the Syilx language on inlaid polished pavers describing local flora and fauna and on the artist designed “The Land is our Culture” Gateway banners.

Walk the Walk



The generous seven-metre-wide sidewalk includes textural and visual cues to create three distinct “zones” with specific purposes.



- The middle zone is a two-metre-wide, unobstructed corridor for pedestrian movement.
- A furnishing zone for benches, trees and lights is located between the middle zone and the road.
- A merchants' display zone lies between the middle zone and the buildings.

Look Down

The sidewalks are the centerpiece of Bernard Avenue and feature many of the themed design details.

Three unique designs are sandblasted into 290 of the concrete panels near the intersections. Fifty polished, engraved basalt stone pavers feature local flora and fauna with the species name shown in English and in Syilx.

Gobo images – derived from ‘goes before optics’ – are patterned templates placed in front of a lens to control the shape of the light and project an image onto the sidewalk at night.



Aiding Accessibility



Traffic bollards are slim metal or concrete permanent cones located along a street to help guide pedestrian movement.

The aluminum bollards on Bernard Avenue are inset with a corten steel plate that will acquire a natural rust patina over time. The plates feature three unique cut out designs consistent with the theme in each area: hillsides and grasslands, Kelowna's cultural history and the aquatic environment.

The bollards on Bernard Avenue are also specifically intended to aid visually-impaired individuals.

Two bollards are located at each corner of the intersection, situated behind the warning strip and aligned with the outside edge of the crosswalk. Each bollard is topped with a Braille plate with the name of the facing street and the cardinal direction. The bases of the custom-designed bollards are rectangular in shape so visually impaired pedestrians are able to place the heel of their foot against the base and align themselves with the crosswalk.

Gateway to Downtown



With the dramatic change in street configuration at Bernard Avenue and Richter Street, a gateway treatment welcomes visitors and marks the transition from residential to commercial.

The feature is eight uniquely programmed light poles with double-sided banners designed by Westbank First Nation artist Janine Lott, and metal plates inscribed with the word “welcome” in English and Syilx languages.

The theme of the banners is “The Land is Our Culture” and celebrates the Syilx/Okanagan people and their connection to the land. In a traditional First Nations practice, Lott mentored junior artist Jordan Coble in the process of creating the banners.



Explore Public Art



Public art is an integral part of the new streetscape to help create a distinctive and unique character.

“The Working Man” (1989) near St. Paul Street and “Treescapes” (1991) near Water Street were created by sculptor Denis Kleine.



“Dancing Pedestrians” (2002) by Jock Hildebrand was created to celebrate human movement and interaction at a historic downtown intersection. It was the first public art partnership between the City and the private sector.

“Illuminature” (2013) are a series of 46 back-lit, steel fabricated plates with eight distinct designs created by Crystal Przybille.

Tactile Street

A wayfinding design technique known as Urban Braille was utilized to add visual and tactile cues to the streetscape on Bernard Avenue specifically aimed at individuals with visual impairments.

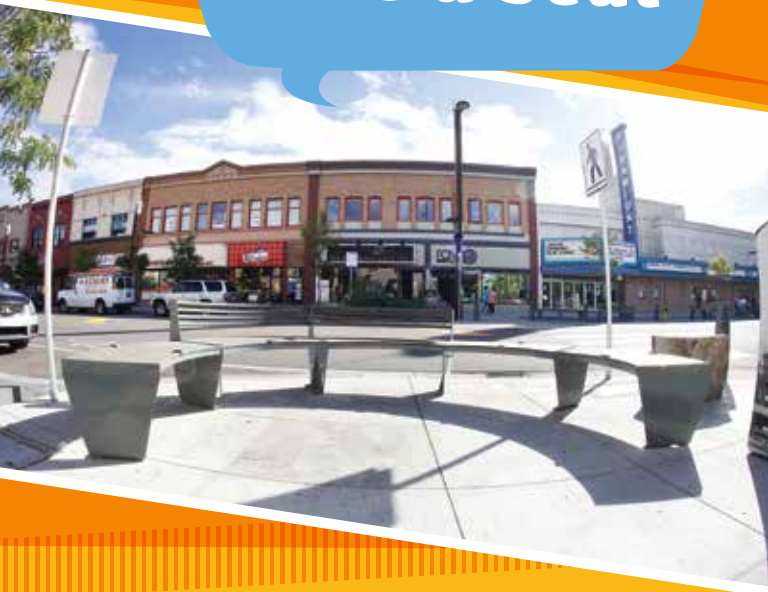
A wide, unobstructed pedestrian zone in the center of the sidewalk allows ample room for people with guide dogs. By relegating potential obstructions like bike racks, trees and patios to the furnishings and frontage zones, visually-impaired people can walk along the sidewalk with confidence.

An inlay of basalt pavers between the pedestrian and furnishing zones runs continuously along each block, providing a “shoreline” with a contrasting colour and surface finish that pedestrians can use to ensure they are within the correct zone.

Tactile warning strips alert pedestrians at the end of the sidewalk before an intersection. To the majority of visually-impaired individuals, who have some degree of sight, the bright yellow, texture-patterned warning strips are particularly beneficial. For individuals completely without vision, the textured surface is easy to detect with a white cane or underfoot and audible signals indicate when it is safe to enter the crosswalk.



Take a Seat



Public seating is an important part in making Bernard Avenue a welcoming “people place”, allowing people of all ages and physical abilities to be part of this dynamic urban setting. There are many opportunities along the length of the street to sit, rest and enjoy the vibrancy of the downtown.

Chunks of basalt stone sheared off make organic looking benches that connect our urban environment to our natural surroundings.

Curved seating allows for larger gatherings of friends or for individuals to seek a more peaceful moment.

The bench seats and backs are made of a high density paper composite composed of 100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper. Aluminum components of the bench are 95 per cent recycled content and the entire bench is recyclable.

Planting bed borders have higher corners to allow for informal seating perches and café tables attached to the light poles are a convenient place to wait or gather.

Branching Out



The trees lining Bernard Avenue are called Skyline Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos inermis*).

It is an adaptive, fast growing deciduous tree that is cold hardy and low maintenance. Its canopy features fine leaves that filter light and is less of a barrier when looking outside from office or residential buildings. It is seedless, drought-tolerant and adaptable to city environments.



Bernard Blooms

Plantings provide shape and softness in the urban hardscape. Species are chosen for their hardiness in such an environment where they often contend with heat, salt and pollution as well as for their height, shape and bloom times. While many of these plants are drought tolerant, irrigation is provided in the beds to ensure the health and longevity of the plantings.

PERENNIALS FOUND ALONG BERNARD AVENUE INCLUDE:

- Echinacea
- Hyperion Day Lily
- Veronica Spicata
- Aster
- Allium bulbs
- Crocus bulbs

GRASSES INCLUDE:

- Panicum virgatum
Rostralbucsh
- Blue Oat Grass
- Deschampsia cespitosa
'Goldtau'



Let There be Light



Consistent with the “landscape inspired” design theme, the light poles draw inspiration from the heavy timbers used in the Kettle Valley Railway trestles, also used on the Downtown Library exterior, with an execution that is contemporary rather than historical in form.

The wood used on the top of the light poles, as well as the bike racks, is thermally modified for rot and warp resistance. The wood is heated to a high temperature (400° F or more) and oxygen is excluded to prevent it from burning. The heating process dries out moisture, collapses the wood cells and bakes out the sugars and resins so that it is no longer a food source for insects and bacteria. The result is a stable, beautiful lumber that is long-lasting, weather resistant, non-toxic, stable and maintenance free.

Cycle Friendly

During the revitalization Bernard Avenue was reconfigured from four traffic lanes to two driving lanes with a center turning lane. The changes are intended to make downtown a destination and less of a thoroughfare. The transition from angle to parallel parking lowered vehicle speeds. Reducing the number of lanes made “Main Street” more pedestrian and cyclist friendly with enhanced safety for all.

Shared lanes for motorists and cyclists are often preferred in town centres over formal bike lanes because, like the motorists, cyclists are looking for parking or visiting stores and often leaving and entering traffic. Using the same lane of travel makes cyclists more visible and predictable for drivers, keeping the road safer for all users.

A “sharrow” (shared roadway symbol) indicates where cyclists should be positioned when in a shared lane.



By the Numbers



- 3 landscape-inspired themes
- 6 gobo light projectors
- 7 metre-wide sidewalks
- 8 gateway poles
- 13 café tables attached to light poles
- \$14 million revitalization project, 2012-2014
- 20+ sidewalk patios
- 38+ bike racks
- 46 back-lit public art plates on 23 light poles
- 50 polished and engraved basalt stone pavers
- 55 basalt block benches
- 73 traffic bollards
- 90+ flower baskets in the summer
- 112 parking spots including 6 handicap stalls
- 140+ businesses and stores
- 290 sandblasted concrete panels



**Great cities have
great downtowns.**

