



Nov. 26, 2021

His Worship Gord Milsom & Council
City of West Kelowna
2760 Cameron Road
West Kelowna, BC
V1Z 2T6

Dear Mayor & Council,

The Greater Westside Board of Trade Commerce writes to you regarding a matter that is significantly impacting our local businesses and non-profits.

Specifically, despite recently experiencing a 65% reduction in active COVID-19 cases in the Interior Health Authority, (to cases per 100,000 population) there remains an inconsistent approach to COVID-19 capacity limits across the BC Interior Health Authority. We continue with 50 per cent capacity limits for indoor sporting events and theatres despite no capacity limits in other parts of the province. We would question how someone attending a West Kelowna Warriors game or holiday event at one of our wineries, is more at risk than someone pursuing those identical activities in Vancouver or Victoria when everyone but be double vaccinated to attend. There is also the reality that someone from West Kelowna can attend a venue in these cities with no capacity limits and return home.

Business owners and non-profits have pivoted to provide a safe environment for their patrons and staff, while experiencing the financial challenges Covid-19 have created since spring 2020. A patchwork of protocols across the province only exacerbates the situation, creating confusion and holding back economic recovery.

Interior Health and the provincial government have provided no indication as to when capacity limits within the Interior may be adjusted, and at a minimum, Interior Health needs to provide a target so businesses know what level of cases or vaccination rates must be reached before capacity limits shift.

As elected representatives for West Kelowna, our Board of Trade urges you to become directly involved in this matter. We would ask that you write Interior Health, Health Minister Adrian Dix and MLA Ben Stewart and request the following:

- An explanation as to why 50 per cent capacity limits remain in the Interior while other regions of B.C. have no capacity limits;
- A clear and reasonable target and timeline as to when capacity limits can be lifted;
- An explanation as to why all communities within Interior Health must comply with the same regulations when the region is vast and vaccination rates vary from community to community;
- More transparent and regular communication about regulations with civic leaders, business owners, non-profits, residents and the media.

We would ask that you consider our request at your upcoming Council meeting as businesses and non-profits require action as soon as possible. Our community and businesses have shared if these restrictions continue, staff layoffs are pending due to low business volumes.

If there's any further information that we can provide, please contact us. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'HR' with a stylized flourish.

Heather Robinson
Executive Director

Cc. Ben Stewart, Kelowna West MLA
Adrian Dix, Health Minister
Susan Brown, Interior Health Authority