

CPA MEMBER profile

By Stuart Evans



ABOUT SUNNY KELOWNA

The City of Kelowna has experienced a boom over the last six years as have many other cities within BC. Kelowna, however, receives a large number of seasonal visitors due to our favourable climate, pristine beach parks on Okanagan Lake and award winning wineries!

The name Kelowna is derived from the native term "Grizzly Bear" although sightings are rare.

Kelowna is the largest city in the BC Interior and sits in the middle of the southern interior of the province approximately mid way between Vancouver and Calgary. Kelowna is the 22nd largest metropolitan area in Canada with a population of 116,000 and is home to the second largest airport in BC as well as the second largest ski resort.

Located mid-way on Okanagan Lake, which stretches 132 kms in length from Penticton to Vernon, Kelowna enjoys, on average, 2000 hours of sunshine each year.

There are three major town centres: Downtown, South Pandozy and Rutland. With an average summer temperature of 27 degrees Celsius and an average winter temperature of -4 degrees Celsius, Kelowna is a natural choice for visiting - small town charm with amenities usually only found in larger centres.

THE PARKING OPERATION

As members of the Canadian Parking Association for more than 15 years, the city parking operation has been through a major transformation trying to keep up with the changing times. Several programs have been implemented over the past six years, including on and off street pay and display meters, an enforcement system which amalgamates city by-law services and contracted parking management, and very recently a license place recognition system to streamline the parking operation.

With 3600 pay parking stalls, Kelowna is considered a mid size operation. The downtown is the only area with pay parking. The Library Plaza parkade with 460 stalls and the newer Chapman parkade with 480 stalls are operated with pay-on-exit systems. We also have 15 surface lots and 1200 on-street stalls in the downtown core with 60 pay and display meters installed both on and off street.

In November 2008, the City of Kelowna underwent a reorganization of the city structure which saw parking operations move from Works & Utilities, Transportation Demand Management to Real Estate and Building Services under the direction of the Community Services division. The new structure ensures a comprehensive approach to planning, design and construction, and operations.

ABOUT THE STAFF

Kelowna has two full time Meter Technicians and a full time Parking Coordinator who together, deal with parking. The two Meter Techs are responsible for meter revenue collection, parking equipment maintenance, as well as setup and removal of parking equipment to name just a few tasks. Their day to day routine keeps them on their toes and the parking operation runs smoothly due to the knowledge and commitment of these individuals.

The City Parking Coordinator, Stuart Evans, is responsible for just about everything parking. From 84 surface parking lots, to pay parking, to residential parking, dealing with violations issues, handicap parking requirements, overseeing the City's parking management plans, evaluating new technology and keeping the city up to date on the world of parking.

The Parking Coordinator is responsible for administering all contract requirements for downtown parking enforcement and works closely with the city by-law department for all other parking issues.

ENFORCEMENT

Kelowna has two separate parking enforcement areas. City by-law enforcement personnel monitor non-pay parking areas and the city uses the services of a contracted private parking operator for parking management and enforcement in all pay parking facilities.

GOING FORWARD

Kelowna is always looking for ways to better serve the community and will continue to do so as we go forward.

A rewriting of the Parking Management Plan for Downtown and the creation of a new parking management plan for the South Pandosy town centre is underway. Both plans will be complete by the end of 2009 and implementation of recommendations will begin in 2010. These plans will assist the city in bringing an up-to-date parking management model forward to the citizens of Kelowna and will bring parking operations into the 21st century.

The P&D meter program will be expanded to replace single head meters that were installed in 1995, a second LPR system will add to the success of the first unit and aid in the streamlining of the enforcement operation. We will be expanding our parking management to eventually encompass the three town centres and we will continue to enjoy our sunny south Okanagan way of life as Kelowna strives to be the best mid size city in Canada!

Come visit sometime, our door is always open. ■