



PRESS RELEASE

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FUTURE OF OUTDOOR DINING & ACTIVATION DEFINED IN PROPOSED CURBSIDE SAN DIEGO PILOT

Recommendations propose specific pilot sites and include broad support from community, entertainment, mobility and environmental groups

SAN DIEGO – May 21, 2020 – Restaurants and retail in Downtown’s diverse neighborhoods could see a boost to their recovery upon reopening with the implementation of the recently proposed Curbside San Diego initiative.

The recommendations for the initiative – submitted by letter to the City of San Diego on May 20, 2020 – encourage creative and flexible use of the public right-of-way and private spaces to allow for sustainable business activity, physical distancing and greater walkability within designated zones in Downtown San Diego.

With more than 35,000 residents and a workforce of essential and returning employees as we begin to safely and gradually reopen businesses in Downtown’s neighborhoods, Curbside San Diego will provide enhanced dining and active public space that maintains appropriate physical distancing, drives economic recovery in commercial zones, and supports jobs hard hit by COVID-19. The letter includes specific recommendations for initial sites in each of Downtown’s neighborhoods including location, programming, what the impacts would be to the public right of way in terms of lane closures, and what times the spaces could be activated.

“We know the impacts of COVID-19 to our businesses and neighborhoods mean we must think creatively about what the future of economic prosperity and cultural vitality will look like for Downtown.” said Betsy Brennan, President & CEO of the Downtown San Diego Partnership. “We’re confident Curbside San Diego will help create the kind of community spaces necessary for this next phase of Downtown’s recovery and hope to see pilot areas implemented by June.”

The initiative is meant to be responsive to the unique needs of each neighborhood and is supported by the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, California Restaurant Association, San Diego Lodging Association, Gaslamp Quarter Association, East Village Association, Cortez Hill Active Residents Group, City Center Business Improvement District, Columbia Community Foundation and Little Italy Association.

“The Little Italy Association has long wanted to use India Street to expand the pedestrian experience. This street, which is currently a public space dedicated to cars, will be transformed into a walkers’ promenade where our businesses and restaurants can expand their goods, tables and chairs up to the

curb and, in some places, into the street,” said Marco Li Mandri, Chief Executive Administrator of the Little Italy Association. “We’re excited for this new dining and shopping experience to serve as a model for how business districts can mitigate the loss of table space due to rules on physical distancing indoors and help survive the impact of this pandemic.”

Its contributions to greater mobility and accessibility for pedestrian and bicycle traffic has also earned the support of the San Diego Bicycle Coalition, Circulate San Diego and the Climate Action Campaign.

“This crisis requires that we think differently about the public's streets,” said Colin Parent, Executive Director and General Counsel of Circulate San Diego. “This initiative will allow San Diego's most urban neighborhoods to use the public right of way to ensure that communities, pedestrians, and business can thrive.”

In the letter, the coalition of Downtown stakeholders pledge to support the city in implementation of the initiative and encourage equity in assisting commercial areas outside of Downtown to implement similar spaces.

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*The **Downtown San Diego Partnership** is a member-based, nonprofit organization focused on representing Downtown San Diego as the leading economic, cultural, and government center of the region to more than 11,000 property owners and 400 business members. It also serves as the managing organization for several special districts that provide essential public services in the 275 blocks of Downtown. For more information, visit downtownsandiego.org.*