



SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Department: Community & Economic Development

Prepared by: Stacey Laumann, Senior
Management Analyst II
Alex Holm, Police Lieutenant

City Manager Approval: _____

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TOPIC: WEST END BLOCK PARTY 2024 TEMPORARY STREET CLOSURE

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF STREETS IN SAN RAFAEL FOR THE WEST END BLOCK PARTY 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt resolution authorizing the temporary closure of streets in San Rafael for the West End Block Party 2024.

BACKGROUND:

The West End Block Party, a special event series located on Fourth Street between F and G Streets, was held on periodic evenings in 2022 and 2023. The Pint Size Lounge served as the event host and provided live event programming and management. The Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) facilitated the event application, provided insurance, marketing, and day-of event support. The City of San Rafael sponsored the event with street closures and other support.

In response to community concerns regarding the event in 2022, City staff worked closely with the event organizers and neighbors in 2023 to develop event operating standards for events that summer. A 2023 survey, receiving over 800 responses, resulted in event modifications related to noise, event frequency and hours, sufficient restroom facilities and litter. The West End Block Party 2023 was permitted by the City Council and authorized the temporary closure of 4th Street from F to G Street, and provided live entertainment on eight Friday nights, from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm.

ANALYSIS:

The BID, in collaboration with Pint Size Lounge, the event producer, has submitted a special event permit application to hold the West End Block Party event on eight Fridays between August and October 2024. Proposed event dates are August 16 & 23, September 6, 13, 20, & 27 and October 4 & 11, 2024. The event hours are 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. The event requires the closure of 4th Street between F and G Streets on each event date from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm to allow for set up and break down.

FOR CITY CLERK ONLY

Council Meeting:

Disposition:

Event operations are proposed to replicate the event format employed in 2023 and anticipate approximately 150 attendees per event. Live music with amplification will be featured at each event. Beer and wine will be served. Efforts to keep sound levels in check will include the taking and recording of decibel readings periodically from proximate locations downtown. For 2024, The Pint Size Lounge is considering adding family-friendly activities, a merchant marketplace, and food trucks.

Special Event Permits

The potential event impacts will be addressed in special event permit conditions of approval, which include an assigned Police Officer to the event to increase responsiveness to concerns as they arise. This is a standard City requirement for special events that serve alcohol and/or have noise impacts. Other permit conditions include limits on noise, litter management, and restroom requirements. These conditions were implemented in last year's event.

In addition, the City Community and Economic Development Director anticipates approving a request for an exception to the City's Noise Ordinance (SRMC Chapter 8.13) to permit amplified music associated with the West End Block Party, also consistent with last year's event.

Staff anticipates approving the special event permit and noise ordinance exception following the approval of this item.

Temporary Road Closure

California Vehicle Code section 21101(e) authorizes the City Council to adopt a resolution temporarily closing a portion of any street for celebrations, parades, local special events, and other purposes when, in the opinion of local authorities having jurisdiction or a public officer or employee that the local authority designates by resolution, the closing is necessary for the safety and protection of persons who are to use that portion of the street during the temporary closing.

Based on review of the special event permit application and conditions of approval that would be incorporated into the permit, the Police Chief and the City's Traffic Engineer are recommending approval of the road closure of Fourth Street from F Street to G Street to facilitate the West End Block Party event dates.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There are costs associated with the special event permit which will be determined by relevant City departments and negotiated with the applicant. Staffing and internal City costs needed to support the event, up to \$15,000, would be absorbed by the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Community & Economic Development budget. There is no fiscal impact associated with the street closure.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

On May 21, 2024, the City emailed a notice of the West End Block Party permit application to interested parties as identified through correspondence on the matter from prior years. On June 28, 2024, a public notice was also mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the proposed event location pursuant to San Rafael Municipal Code Section 8.13.060 to permit amplified music associated with the West End Block Party. Attachment 2 includes the correspondence received by the City by July 10, 2024.

OPTIONS:

The City Council has the following options to consider on this matter:

1. Adopt resolution as presented.
2. Adopt resolution with modifications.
3. Direct staff to return with more information.
4. Take no action.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt resolution authorizing the temporary closure of streets in San Rafael for the West End Block Party 2024.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Correspondence

RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION OF THE SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF STREETS IN SAN RAFAEL FOR THE WEST END BLOCK PARTY 2024

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of public health and safety to implement modified traffic plans and road closures for certain special events in San Rafael and nearby neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, after reviewing plans for the proposed West End Block Party 2024, City staff recommend that certain streets be closed to accommodate this special event for the safety and protection of persons who are to use that portion of the street during the temporary closing.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN RAFAEL HEREBY RESOLVES as follows:

1. Pursuant to the authority of Vehicle Code section 21101(e), the City Council hereby authorizes the temporary closure of streets in downtown San Rafael to accommodate the West End Block Party 2024 special event. These authorized road closures are necessary for the safety and protection of persons who are to use that portion of the street during the temporary closing.
2. City staff in consultation with the Police Department shall determine the specific time periods for the temporary closures and give timely notice to the public of those time periods by signage and/or other appropriate means.

I, Lindsay Lara, City Clerk of the City of San Rafael, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly and regularly introduced and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council held on the 15th day of July 2024 by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS:

Lindsay Lara, City Clerk

WEST END BLOCK PARTY 2024 TEMPORARY STREET CLOSURE

Correspondence prior to 7/10/2024

From: michael jobe [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 12:01:26 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

Can't wait for it to begin!!

Cheers, Michael Jobe

From: Bruce Forrester [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 1:07:23 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>; Micah Hinkle <micah.hinkle@cityofsanrafael.org>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

Hello Friends at City of San Rafael,

WE LOVE THE WEST END BLOCK PARTY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sincerely,

Bruce Forrester
owner [REDACTED] located in beautiful West End San Rafael

From: Susan [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 1:08:09 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

We are thrilled to hear there will be music again, plus family activities!!!
Thank you for this fun, community nurturing event!

Susan Zelinsky and Michael Jobe
[REDACTED]
The house with the rainbow stairs

From: J.D. Swartz [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 1:39:23 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

Thank you! I'm a big supporter of this!

J.D. Swartz

From: Jenny Kerr [REDACTED]
Sent on: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 2:06:02 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

Wonderful news!

From: Philbillie [REDACTED]
Sent on: Thursday, May 23, 2024 9:29:40 PM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

We are so happy to hear this event will happen once again.
The last few seasons on the block have been a joy and it's been a real blessing for the West End neighborhood.

Cheers,
Phillip Milner

From: Joe Adams [REDACTED]
Sent on: Thursday, May 23, 2024 10:19:02 PM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>; Micah Hinkle <Micahh@cityofSanRafael.Org>

Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice
Attachments: WEBP Traffic plan 2024.pdf (70.33 KB)

Hello Stacey and Micah,
I'd like to express my deep appreciation for the oversight, planning and assessment that was assuredly involved in this happening.

I do, however, have some comments I'd like to share:

I believe that the presently proposed number of concerts, is in part guided by the out of control, lacking proper permits, music series that was foisted on nearby residents at the direction of the BID and Adam Violente in the first two years of it's happening.

So yes relative to 40+ concerts in each of the first two years, 8 seems like a "win".

However, I believe if the goal posts had not been skewed by the previous scenario, we'd be looking at pre-covid times where historically one day of music was allowed at the annual West End Party.

My personal preference would be for 4 concerts. 6 would be pushing it and 8 is too many for me.

I'd like to add, that we loved the original charm of the victorian era windows we had on our house, but felt impelled to purchase double pained windows to help protect us from the noise. Somehow even with the new windows, the music seemed just as loud.

The sound engineer who promised the city council that he would keep the sound levels down—to the best of my knowledge, was absent.

I can only imagine you guys have been under pressure to appease Adam and his supporters, while also considering local people who have been distressed by the music, so again thanks for all your efforts.

In Health,
Joe

Joseph Adams
[REDACTED]

From: Ryan Koontz [REDACTED]
Sent on: Sunday, May 26, 2024 5:06:57 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: Re: West End Block Party 2024 - event overview & courtesy notice

Hi Stacey.

I am a 27 year homeowning resident of the city of San Rafael and 15 in Sun Valley. I am immensely supportive of these community music events. There is nothing close to it in our city the rest of the year. I'm sure you knew other nearby towns have far more frequent events.

I do feel for the people that live within West End and want a quiet evening, but that business district zoning is there for a purpose and community is one of those purposes! I support the 9 PM close but the music decibel restrictions I find overreaching. #turnitup.

Ryan

[REDACTED]

From: Angela Tucker [REDACTED]
Sent on: Monday, July 1, 2024 9:49:13 PM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: West End Block Party Noise Permit

Stacey,

I live mere feet from the speakers where this ridiculous "block party" takes place so I'd like to know the decibel levels they are proposing. I will, of course, call the police immediately when the volume surpasses acceptable standards.

Regards,

Angela Tucker

From: Susan Z [REDACTED]
Sent on: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 4:38:00 PM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
CC: Michael Jobe [REDACTED]
Subject: WEST END BLOCK PARTY - Please approve!

Hello Stacey.

I live at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from 4th St.
My family and I, Michael Jobe, Ruby & Rai, have enjoyed the concerts that began in our neighborhood, ever since the pandemic forced everyone outside to enjoy live music and encouraged us all to get to know our neighbors.

We were disappointed when a few loud voices were able to squash all the efforts of Adam Violante, (Pint Size Lounge). His vision not only helped save his, and his neighbor's business (Whipper Snapper), but it brought such joy to the people in the West End Village, and beyond. Please approve these 8 dates that the applicant has requested. And I'd like to go on record, asking that these evenings of music and fun, begin earlier in the summer next year.

Thank you for all you do for our lovely city.

Warmly,
Susan Zelinsky and Michael Jobe

From: Kristen Haviland [REDACTED]
Sent on: Saturday, July 6, 2024 5:46:08 AM
To: Stacey Laumann <stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: West End block party noise permit

Hi -
I am a resident of San Rafael's West End. I recently received your mailing regarding the upcoming noise permit for the West End block party. I wanted to send an email to let you know that our family is in favor of allowing the West End block party. We love the music and thoroughly enjoy having our community gather in our neighborhood. We're grateful for the wonderful San Rafael community and believe the West End block party is wonderful.
Many thanks,
Kristen Haviland
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent on: Sunday, July 7, 2024 5:45:54 PM
To: Stacey Laumann <Stacey.Laumann@cityofsanrafael.org>
Subject: West End Block Party

To City Of San Rafael,

My wife Toni and I have owned and operated the Rebound Bookstore at 1611 4th street for almost 20 years.

There is more at stake here than just a few businesses making some extra money.

Adam Violante has always conformed to the shifting requirements presented to him in order to make many interests happy.

The West End Village block parties have quickly evolved into a beloved neighborhood cultural and social tradition that everyone looks forward to in order to unwind and interact in a safe public cultural environment. The Friday evening events always end promptly at 9:00 pm.

There are few classical outdoor events anyplace in the Bay Area. This is a BIG untapped market. We have a classical music venue right in our 'hood who would organize one of these tryouts **Adam has agreed to discuss the option of trying at least one classical music "set" on one of the events to give it a try.** (I would work to develop this idea).

Toni Labori and Joel Eis, Owners, Rebound Bookstore
