



**SAN RAFAEL CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

**Department: Economic Development**

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Economic Development Director**

**City Manager Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOPIC: ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

**SUBJECT: INFORMATIONAL REPORT ON BUSINESS RECOVERY IN SAN RAFAEL**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Accept report and provide feedback on COVID-19 economic recovery planning.

**BACKGROUND:**

Over the last year, Marin County has been under COVID-19 public health orders, while also moving through the reopening tiers based on the state’s [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#).

In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the County of Marin developed a reopening initiative called [Marin Recovers](#). This initiative brought together local government, business, and industry stakeholders to develop reopening protocols that included cleaning and social distancing requirements, along with COVID-19 modified workplace guidance for workers and customers.

In addition to managing the public health and safety challenges of COVID-19, city staff presented an [informational report](#) to the City Council describing the financial impacts of COVID-19 on city services. The report discussed projected revenue losses for fiscal year 2020-2021, along with a COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan (CERP) that communicated budget and fiscal impacts, service impacts, and economic recovery efforts.

A synopsis of the early phases of the economic recovery efforts included:

- **San Rafael COVID-19 Disaster Relief Grants:** This grant program was achieved by partnering with the San Rafael Chamber Education Foundation, the City of San Rafael, the County of Marin, and the Downtown Business Improvement District, along with donations from local businesses totaling \$250,000 in grant funding. The Disaster Relief Grant Funds were dispersed to a diverse mix of businesses throughout San Rafael including childcare, restaurants, personal services, health and wellness, retail, automotive, professional, and industrial industries. Over 67 disaster relief grants were given in the early months of the pandemic.

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**FOR CITY CLERK ONLY**

**File**

**Council Meeting:**

**Disposition:**

- **Marin Recovers Support:** The City of San Rafael worked with the County of Marin and local industry groups to develop [reopening protocols](#) to help local businesses understand and implement the COVID-19 public health requirements. City staff also helped create the online public health poster program where businesses could easily download COVID-19 public health signage for their windows in English and Spanish. Mayor Kate and city staff continue to meet with the Marin Recovers working group as we move through the recovery.
- **Promoting COVID-19 Business Resources & Relief Programs:** Knowing what federal, state, and local business relief programs were available was a priority. The City created and maintained a COVID-19 business relief web presence on the City's website. The information communicated available business support programs including the Economic Injury Distress Loans (EIDL), Cares Act - Payroll Protection Plan (PPP), California business grant/loan programs, and the state's Great Plates food delivery program. The City also maintained funding support for the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to provide free technical assistance for San Rafael businesses. The City's code enforcement manager also provided businesses with supportive compliance visits to make sure businesses could meet mandatory COVID-19 public health requirements.
- **Vulnerable population support:** City staff supported the County's Canal Emergency Response Team by helping to provide testing support, Public Health Service Announcements (PSAs), business partnerships and outreach, supportive code compliance visits, [Canal WiFi](#) access project, and disbursement of the CDBG-CV (Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus) funds for rental assistance and business loans and grants programs. CDBG-CV funds could have been used for other programming purposes. However, it was important to the City and City Council to prioritize these funds for rental and business assistance. In addition, city staff and City Council supported a collaborative partnership with the Canal Alliance and formed the [Canal Policy Working Group \(CPWG\)](#) to support residents and businesses in the Canal who were experiencing a disproportionate affect from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Curbside Pick-up & Drop-off/Downtown Parklets & Outdoor Dining:** The City departments of Public Works, Parking Services, Police, Fire, Community Development, and Economic Development expedited downtown curbside customer pick-up and drop-off locations to help businesses pivot to a new way of providing goods and services. City staff reviewed and adapted outdoor dining and parklet processes to help restaurants meet new public health order requirements. Criteria for city approval of a temporary or semi-permanent outdoor dining space sought to maintain 70% of on-street metered parking on any given block. If 70% was not possible, the City would still consider allowing a permit if 70% could be maintained in a 3-block radius, and at least one parking garage or lot is within one block of the business. See attachment for illustration.
- **Marketing & Program Support:** Creating opportunities for street closures to help local businesses meet public health requirements and social distancing mandates was important for the financial viability of some of our local businesses. Public health orders encouraged outdoor commerce for increased safety during the pandemic. In response, the City, in partnership with the Downtown Business Improvement District and the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce, created a new program called [Dining Under the Lights](#) (DUTL). This program closes Fourth Street on Thursday and Friday evenings to vehicular traffic and allows businesses to conduct commerce outside. DUTL had over 40 businesses

participate in the first program, and now over 48 businesses have signed on for the current program. In addition, the City's economic development team promoted Shop San Rafael marketing campaigns on social media, free weekend parking in downtown garages, and launched the [Life in San Rafael](#) website and social media campaign to encourage residents to support San Rafael businesses. The City also created a business [GIS mapping](#) feature which highlighted which San Rafael businesses were open and what COVID-19 safety features they offered, for example: curbside pick-up and drop-off, meals to-go, or modified business hours.

- **MCCMC (Marin County Council of Mayors & Councilmembers) Economic Recovery Committee:** Mayor Kate and San Anselmo Mayor Colbert have been chairing the MCCMC Recovery Committee meetings. These county-wide recovery meetings started in April 2020 and enable cities and towns to share information related to the recovery. It also gave jurisdictions the opportunity to learn and share best practices. In the coming months, there will be two symposiums one focused on outdoor parklets and the second on creative ways to fill empty commercial spaces.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Marin County continues to move through the State's reopening stages and County vaccination rates are making great progress. As the next phases of the pandemic and recovery unfold, the City of San Rafael continues to monitor and adjust ongoing programs to help San Rafael businesses.

Most recently, city staff helped support a business survey effort conducted by the business collaborative Keep Marin Working (KMW) to get an assessment of San Rafael businesses. In late February and early March, the KMW group surveyed businesses throughout the County on the impacts of COVID-19. The results illustrated major financial struggles for businesses throughout the County. Of the 1,191 businesses surveyed, 78% percent had seen declines in revenue causing concern for their financial viability. Over 58% reported using personal savings, credit cards, and borrowing from family members to be able to continue business operations.

Almost 70% of respondents stated their business decreased by 10% or more, with more than 35% stating revenues were down more than 50%. When asked what their businesses needed to survive, surprisingly 25% of businesses responded they could maintain operations for six months if they received a grant of \$5,000 or less, while 21% felt that \$20,000-\$50,000 would be necessary to survive. Based on these survey results, the KMW group is recommending the County of Marin consider another county-wide business grant relief program to help sustain local businesses as the pandemic continues to persist.

In addition to participating in the KMW efforts, the City of San Rafael has ongoing economic recovery objectives broken out in the following timeframes:

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Short-term Objective: Help business stay afloat	January – June 2021 (underway)
<p><i>Strategies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connect with local businesses on a personal level and get input.</li> <li>2. Communicate to residents ways to shop and support San Rafael businesses.</li> <li>3. Ensure information on available loans/grants (SBDC, CDBG, PPP/CARES) is easily accessible on the city website.</li> <li>4. Help support KMW survey efforts by sharing and promoting the survey to San Rafael businesses.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Tactics:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mayor Kate’s Walkabout &amp; Business Survey, to date 263 business visitations</li> <li>2. <i>Shop San Rafael</i> marketing campaigns and <i>Life in San Rafael</i> business features.</li> <li>3. Create business resources webpage on City’s website, to have all relevant information in one easy-to-navigate place.</li> <li>4. Shared and promoted KMA survey with all San Rafael business license holders.</li> </ol>

As we move through the summer, fall and winter months, our efforts will shift to our mid-term objectives of helping businesses transition through reopening stages and working on assessing and reducing storefront vacancies.

Mid-term Objectives: Help businesses transition through reopening stages, reduce storefront vacancies, strengthen San Rafael’s economic resilience.	June-December 2021
<p><i>Strategies:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connect with local businesses on a personal level, get input.</li> <li>2. Continue <i>Shop San Rafael</i> campaigns and business support programs.</li> <li>3. Reduce storefront vacancies on Fourth Street.</li> <li>4. Begin creating a Strategic Economic Development Plan for San Rafael.</li> <li>5. Monitor new federal government programs from the American Rescue Plan and the American Jobs Plan.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Tactics:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mayor Kate’s GEM (Going the Extra Mile) business visits.</li> <li>2. COVID-19 outdoor dining, DUTL Programming, Farmers Market and <i>Life in San Rafael</i> Business features.</li> <li>3. Connect with commercial real estate professionals to understand leasing trends and vacancies.</li> <li>4. Research options for Strategic Economic Development Plan and begin Plan.</li> <li>5. Support rollout of new federal stimulus funding and programming.</li> </ol>

In closing, economic recovery planning will be amended as needed due to the changing nature of the pandemic. Staff’s intention for this update item is to receive Council comments on recovery planning efforts.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is an information report, there are no fiscal impacts to accepting the report and providing feedback to staff.

**OPTIONS:**

1. Accept information recovery update and provide feedback to staff.
2. Take no action.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Accept informational recovery planning progress report.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. COVID-19 Outdoor Dining Criteria



# Downtown San Rafael

## *COVID On-Street Parking Spaces for Outdoor Dining*

[www.cityofsanrafael.org/covid-outdoor-dining](http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/covid-outdoor-dining)

### Types of On-Street Parking Spaces for Outdoor Dining

**Temporary:** metal barricades, planters only - may include tents or canopies. Tables directly on street surface

**Semi-permanent:** construction of wood, metal, etc. walls, platform or overhead structure (roof or trellis). Building permit only required for any constructed overhead roof or trellis.

**Permanent:** Parklet already approved and constructed prior to COVID as a part of the City's permanent parklet program.

### Criteria for City approval of a **Temporary** or **Semi-permanent** outdoor dining space

**70% of on-street metered parking on that block remains available for vehicles:** The City seeks to maintain 70% of a block's current on-street metered parking still available for vehicle parking, after any parking spaces are converted to outdoor dining areas. Approval will be granted to a restaurant/bar to utilize 1-2 parking spaces for outdoor dining if this condition is met.





**If above criteria is **not met**, approval for an outdoor dining area may still be granted if:**

1) >70% of on-street metered parking on a 3-block average (the block at question and one block in either direction) remains available for vehicle parking.

-and-

2) At least one public parking garage or lot is within 1 block of the block at question.

### Map Legend

-  Available parking
-  Temporary (barricades only)
-  Semi-permanent
-  Permanent parklet

**4th Street: Tamalpais to Lincoln**  
14 total spaces

*100% spaces remain available*



**4th Street: Lincoln to Cijos**  
22 total spaces

- George's (1)
- Lotus (2)
- Theresa & Johnny's (2)
- Caribbean Spices (2)

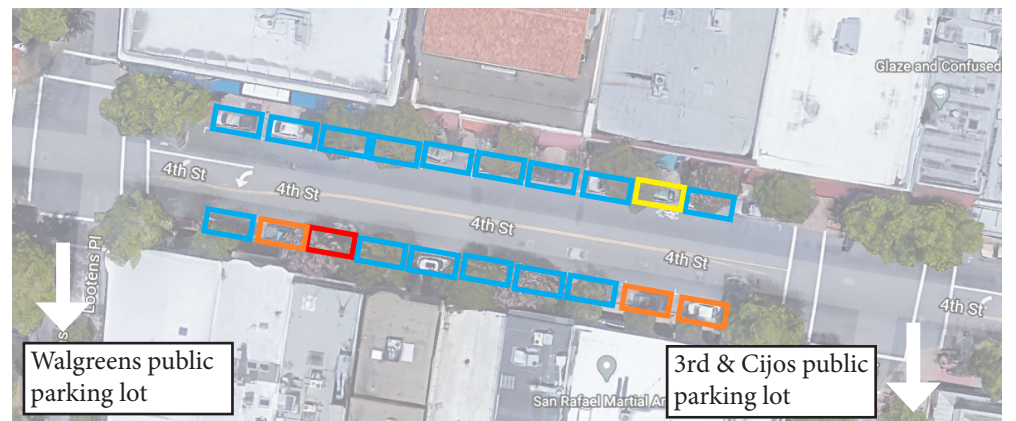
*68% spaces remain available*  
*78% available in 3-block average*



**4th Street: Cijos to Lootens**  
20 total spaces

- Double Rainbow (1)
- Bangkok Thai (2)
- Vin Antico (2)

*75% spaces remain available*



**4th Street: Lootens to A Street**  
20 total spaces

- Taj of Marin (2)

*90% spaces remain available*



**4th Street: A to B Street**  
13 total spaces

Stateroom (2)  
Aroma (1)

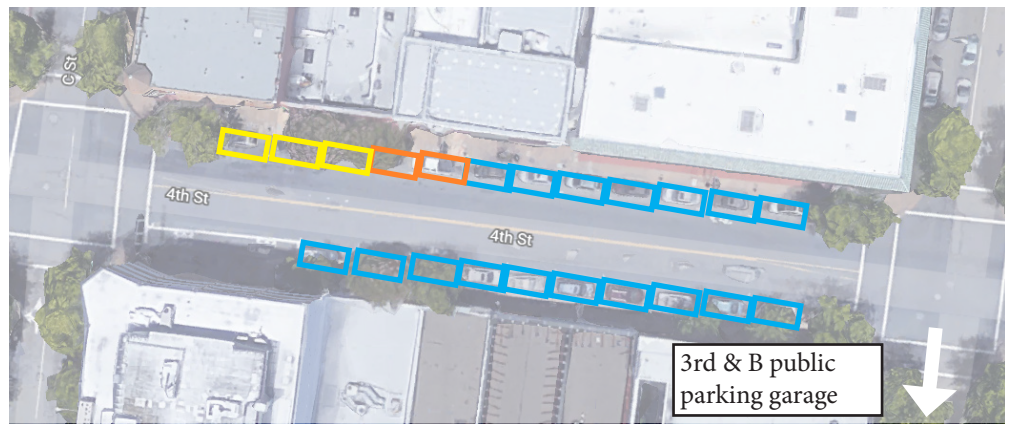
77% spaces remain available



**4th Street: B to C Street**  
22 total spaces

Amicis (1)  
Yet Wah (2)  
My Thai (2)

77% spaces remain available



**4th Street: C to D Street**  
22 total spaces

100% spaces remain available



**4th Street: D to E Street**  
15 total spaces

Cafe del Soul (1)

93% spaces remain available





**4th Street: E to Shaver Street**  
*11 total spaces*

Shiro Kuma (2)

*82% spaces remain available*



**4th Street: Shaver to F Street**  
*22 total spaces*

The Kitchen Table (2)

*91% spaces remain available*



**4th Street: F to G Street**  
*11 total spaces*

Johnny Doughnuts (1)  
Pint Size (1)  
Whipper Snapper (1)

*72% spaces remain available*  
*86% available in 3-block average*



**4th Street: El Camino to 4th**  
*16 total spaces*

Pond Farm (2)

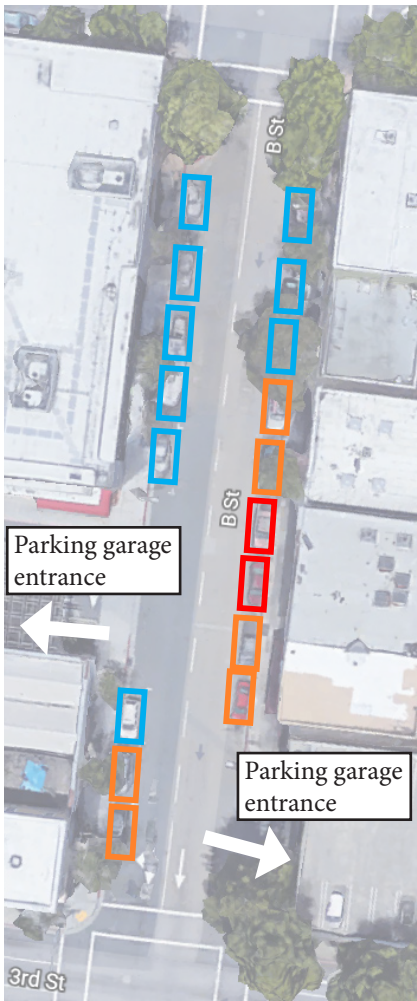
*88% spaces remain available*



**B Street: 4th to 3rd Street**  
*17 total spaces*

- Libation (4)
- Pupusaria (2)
- Revel & Roost (2)

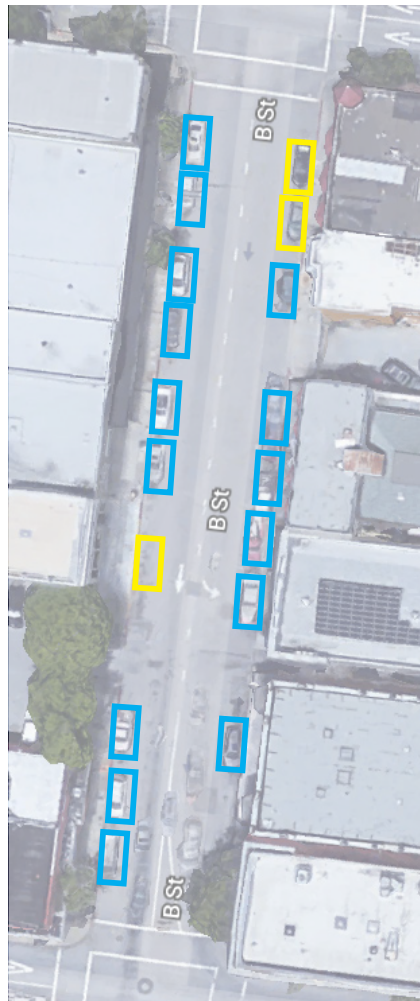
*53% spaces remain available*  
*82% available in 3-block average*



**B Street: 4th to 3rd Street**  
*18 total spaces*

- California Gold (2)
- Uchiwa Ramen (1) - not currently set up

*83% spaces remain available*



**Lincoln: 4th to 3rd Street**  
*15 total spaces*

- Gala Mexican (2)
- Los Moles (2)

*73% spaces remain available*



**C Street: 5th to 4th Street**  
*12 total spaces*

Tam Commons (2)  
La Vier (1)

*75% spaces remain available*

