

DATE: May 27, 2020

AGENDA ITEM # 3



TO: Complete Streets Commission
FROM: Jaime Rodriguez, Interim Staff Liaison
SUBJECT: Downtown Los Altos – Street Closure Considerations

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive report and provide comments on street closure alternatives and consider forwarding a recommendation to the City Council for consideration of street closures.

INTRODUCTION

The City is considering the closure of Downtown Los Altos streets to help support the recovery for local businesses. The street closures would allow for restaurant and retail businesses to expand their dining and sales footprints into the street to help comply with anticipated amendments to the state and county COVID19 social distancing requirements. Downtown business input is still being collected, but the planning effort to identify that appropriate closure limits is being completed so that when easing of restrictions allow for dining and social gathering, a plan can be quickly implemented to support local business recovery.

Background

At the May 5, 2020 joint meeting of the City Council and the Complete Streets Commission, staff received direction to investigate possibilities within the Downtown business district to address the social distancing and economic impacts of the current and ongoing COVID19 state and county health directives.

Discussion/Analysis

City staff have met to conduct an initial meeting to discuss ideas and possibilities of street closures or sidewalk expansion options for local business use and to support social gathering space for the public. Additionally, on May 13, 2020 staff participated in a placemaking webinar by the Los Altos Property Owners Downtown (LAPOD) and Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces founder, regarding placemaking and possible opportunities within downtown Los Altos.

Based on these meetings, it was determined a steering committee consisting of members of the public, Los Altos Village Association (LAVA), the Los Altos Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Commerce, LAPOD, other community stakeholders and city staff should meet to discuss options and opportunities within the downtown. The committee will meet weekly with the goal of returning to Council in June with recommendations for implementation in the summer, as allowed by updated State and County COVID19 health orders. The first meeting was May 19th.



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Four possible street closure alternatives were identified by the committee, including:

- 1) **Parklets**
This option would convert select existing on-street parking spaces on State Street and Main Street to expanded sidewalks to allow for outdoor dining and gathering. This option preserves all existing travel lanes so there would be no vehicle traffic impacts.
- 2) **One Way Street Conversions**
This option would close the south side of Main Street between 1st Street and 4th Street for outdoor dining and public gathering space. Vehicle traffic on Main Street would be allowed in the westbound direction (San Antonio Rd towards Foothill Exp) only.

State Street would also be closed along the south side of the street to allow for outdoor dining and public gathering space. Vehicle traffic on State Street would travel in the eastbound direction (1st Street towards Main Street) only but be shifted to the north side of the street.
- 3) **Full Street Closures on State Street and Main Street**
This option closes the block segments of State Street and Main Street “between intersections”, but limited vehicle traffic would be allowed through intersections to allow for enhanced vehicular traffic flow and curb side pick-up and delivery operations for businesses.
- 4) **One Way Couplet on State Street and Main Street with Vehicle Traffic in Center of Street**
This option create one-way streets on State Street (westbound) and Main Street (eastbound) with vehicle traffic in the center of the street to equally expand outdoor space on both sides of each street.

The City is requesting that the Complete Streets Commission consider the four alternatives and provide input to the City and for the consideration of Downtown businesses. All options still require additional engineering to ensure safe vehicle-pedestrian-bicycle operations, but the drawings are adequate for public and commission review and input.

Following the selection of a preferred alternative, the City will finalize engineering and advance place making solutions to support safe public gathering.

Recommendation

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