



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Mayor Matt Mahan  
Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei  
Councilmember Omar Torres  
Councilmember Dev Davis  
Councilmember Bien Doan

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** May 19, 2023

APPROVED

Date: 05/23/2023

*Matt Mahan* *Omar Torres*  
*Rosemary Kamei* *Dev Davis*  
*Bien Doan*

**SUBJECT: Item 8.1, Update on the Future of San Pedro Street.**

## RECOMMENDATION

Approve staff recommendation with the following amendments:

1. Direct the City Manager's Office to explore phasing the construction elements of the permanent closure of San Pedro Street.
2. Direct the Intergovernmental Relations Team to explore securing public sector grant funding.
3. Direct the City Manager's Office to explore securing philanthropic grants for closing and artistically enhancing San Pedro Street in coordination with the San Jose Downtown Association, the businesses on San Pedro Street, and other partner organizations.
4. Direct the City Manager to investigate the utilization of funds for enhancing the visual appeal and safety of the pedestrian walkway and emergency vehicle access lane between San Pedro Street and St. John Street. This may include considering options such as installing additional light fixtures above the street or implementing a mural or creative lighting project on the pedestrian walkway / emergency vehicle access lane.
5. Direct city staff to develop interim standards that would allow businesses fronting San Pedro Street to use 20 feet worth of outdoor activation fronting their business.
  1. City staff shall create standards to allow the use of the 2 feet fronting the sidewalk as an aesthetic edge to the emergency vehicle access lane or for other business usage as long as water can freely move along the gutter and utilities can be freely accessed.
  2. City staff shall ensure that businesses add as a condition of their permit not to obstruct the 20-foot emergency vehicle access lane.

3. This direction shall be allowed during the interim phase of San Pedro Street and in the permanent phase of San Pedro Street.
6. Direct city staff to create a construction plan for San Pedro Street that takes place during off-peak months and is coordinated with the San Pedro Street businesses.
7. Direct the Department of Transportation to study creating two exits out of the Market Street Garage and not into San Pedro Street itself.
8. Direct the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs to explore using parklet grants and other funding sources for San Pedro Street upgrades especially for ADA access to the businesses.

## **BACKGROUND**

San Pedro Street, with its rich history and vibrant atmosphere, is a thriving destination for both locals and visitors alike. By closing the street to cars and opening it up for pedestrians, we have created a dynamic and inviting environment that encourages people to dine, drink, and enjoy San Jose's 300+ days of sunshine.

With San Jose permitting outdoor dining and drinking establishments to spill onto the sidewalk and 2' onto the street, we are creating a lively and attractive setting. Our actions will lead to greater economic activity, benefiting local merchants and contributing to the overall growth and prosperity of Silicon Valley's downtown.

We should explore painting the street to make it friendlier to foot traffic and consider enhancements to the street lighting, especially between the San Pedro Square arch and the parking garage. Exploring the idea of painting San Pedro Street with a vibrant mural or incorporating a projective or AI-generated light feature would bring uniqueness to the area. Either option—or perhaps incorporating both options—would inject color, creativity, and a sense of cultural identity into the urban landscape, making San Pedro Street a unique San Jose destination.

Permanently converting San Pedro Street into a vibrant pedestrian space injects ongoing new life into this section of downtown. However, the costs to construct this total to approximately \$10 million. Actions to fully implement the Pedestrian Mall Act should be completed in an expeditious manner. However, we need to better understand how we can phase the construction of San Pedro Street over time and secure grants from other entities to fund its construction. It is our belief that we need partners in this endeavor, and we will need to disperse the costs of construction over several years. For example, the City of San Diego has built removable bollards prior to making their pedestrian-only Gaslamp Promenade level with their sidewalk.

With carefully curated design elements we can create an even more inviting atmosphere that showcases the unique character and identity of one of San Jose's most exciting neighborhoods.