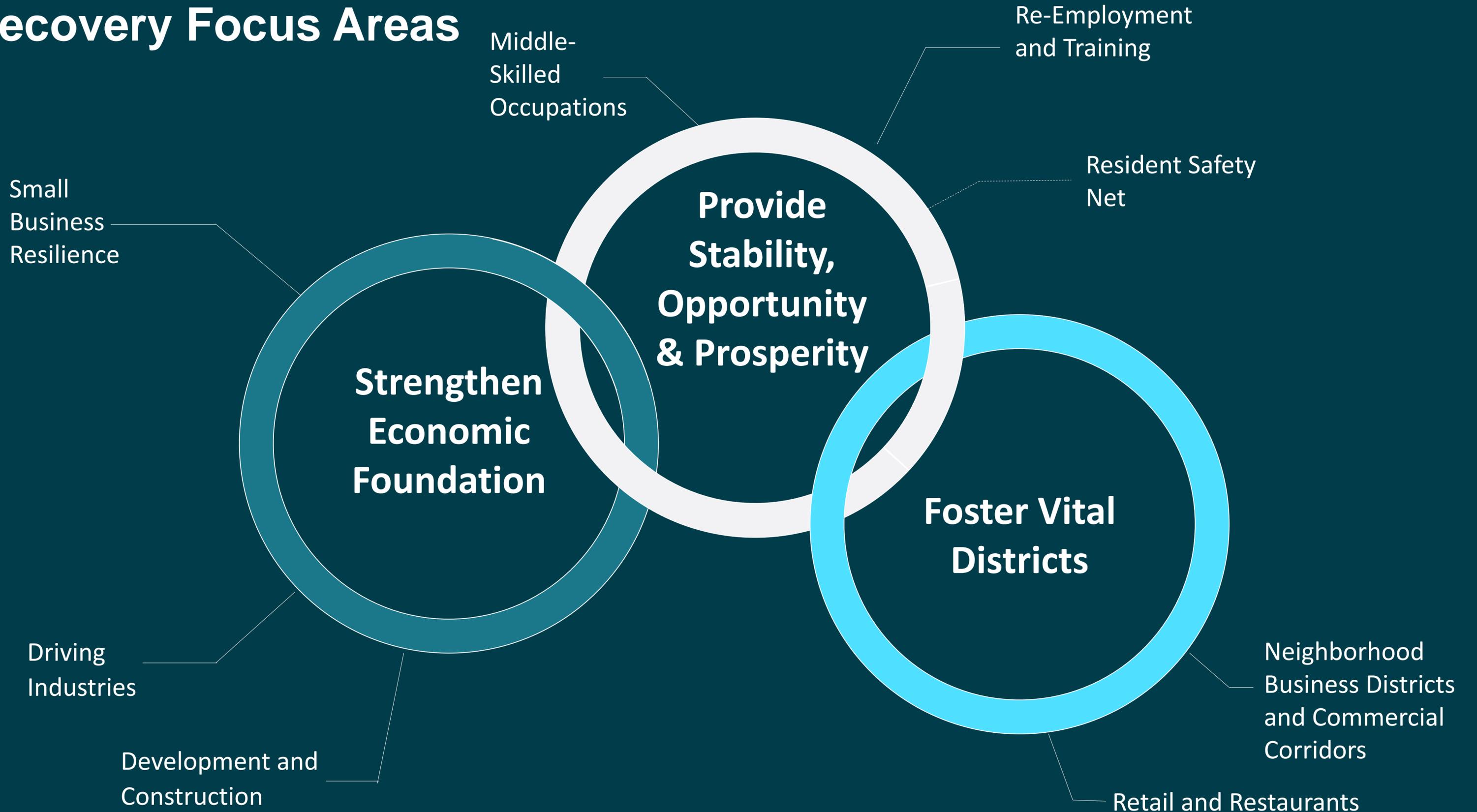


Analysis: Greater Downtown San Jose Economic Recovery Taskforce Recommendations Response

| June 30, 2020

| City of San Jose, Office of Economic Development

Recovery Focus Areas



| Principles for Stability, Opportunity, & Prosperity

- 1. Prioritize the most impacted, most vulnerable**
- 2. Take a data-based approach, disaggregated by race and place**
- 3. Engage and align with community, bolster partners**
- 4. Pursue external resources to scale impact**

RECOMMENDATION #1: *Develop a comprehensive Compliance Support strategy*

A comprehensive Compliance Strategy should include a three-month intensive “Compliance Ally” pilot program where City staff is made available to small businesses for one-time, on-site consultation (and if possible, sign-off authority) on social distancing compliance. It should also include city-led facilitation of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) made available for purchase to small businesses and local nonprofit organizations.

- **Staff agrees that compliance support would be helpful**
- **Recommendation more aligned with County and State expertise, rather than City staff expertise**
- **City focus is to provide financial assistance and continued communication to businesses**
- **Coronavirus Relief Funds allocated toward providing grants/loans for non-profit organizations and small businesses**
- **Would need referral to Council Priority Setting**

RECOMMENDATION #2: Recalibrate our Public Right-of-Ways to support local businesses by:

- A. Permitting the temporary conversion of existing parking or available spaces in front of storefronts to a “delivery/pick up zone” at no cost or low cost to the applicant,*
- B. Reducing or making free parking fees in metered zones in the Greater Downtown Meter Districts such as Japantown and the East Santa Clara corridor,*
- C. Waiving or reducing all fees for parklet applications in all Neighborhood Business Districts,*
- D. Considering allowing businesses to participate in Residential Parking Permit (RPP) programs for business employees with restrictions such as a limited number of permits and allowable hours,*
- E. Exploring a shift in parking availability to adjacent streets in situations where streets are closed down, with community input.*

- **Staff open to exploring all of these recommendations**
- **Prioritizing parklets along appropriate streets in commercial business districts under SJ Al Fresco initiative**
- **Would be looking for Council support regarding expansion of the Residential Parking Permit program**
- **Council approval needed to adjust on-street parking rates; Parking Fund has taken a considerable hit as a result of COVID19**
- **Integrate into staff’s existing workplan**

RECOMMENDATION #3: Implement an “AL FRESCO STREETFARE” pilot program

AL FRESCO STREETFARE will be a one block section of an urban street closed to provide additional space for food, beverage, and arts programming of nearby businesses. AL FRESCO STREETFARE should be developed in close coordination with San Jose Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) and San José's Al Fresco initiative.

The program should account for the following:

- A. Opportunities for adjacent businesses directly along the pilot footprint to participate*
- B. Pedestrian ingress and egress should not be obstructed in front of storefronts*
- C. Require that businesses utilize the public right of way to keep it blight-free.*
- D. Proper Social Distancing protocols and PPE usage*

- **Recommendation falls under the SJ Al Fresco work underway**
- **SJ Al Fresco for sidewalk and private property use, as well as parklets completed, now turning to the conversation around potential street closures**
- **Working with PRNS Placemaking Team on city-wide strategy and implementation, initial Placemaking Team focus was outside Downtown**
- **Must work within the parameters of activities allowed under County Health orders**
- **Concept of facilitating street closures already integrated into staff's existing workplan, initial funding allocation for SJ Al Fresco may not cover pilot as proposed**

RECOMMENDATION #4: Create a robust Greater Downtown marketing campaign

Create and launch a marketing campaign that restores consumer confidence by showing that businesses in the greater downtown are taking the necessary measures and social distancing precautions to keep customers and staff safe. The goal of this campaign would be to inform the public that businesses in the greater downtown area are open, to encourage and increase patronization of local businesses, and to educate the general public on how to safely enjoy public life. All efforts should leverage private and public resources and should be done in a manner that unifies the greater downtown area neighborhood business districts.

- **Effort underway that involves SJ Downtown Association, Team San Jose and other private partners**
- **Would encourage expansion of private sector partners involved in the effort**
- **Most appropriate role for the City is to support, guide and participate**
- **Integrate City's participation into staff's existing workplan**

RECOMMENDATION #5: Establish an Accessible, Multilingual Information Hub

An information hub would support small businesses in adapting to ongoing changes in public health and city regulations. The information hub should be multilingual and should not be limited to online access.

- **Input on how to improve and expand the City's public communication tools is welcomed**
- **Business resource and County Health order information can be found in multiple languages at sjeconomy.com**
- **Business assistance email (covid19sjbusiness@sanjoseca.gov) and phone (1-877-880-1222) have been operational and responding to business owner concerns since the beginning of Shelter in Place**
- **City-wide goal to have more robust translation of all website information and other communication mechanisms**
- **Already integrated into the City's workplan**

RECOMMENDATION #6: Include as high-priority legislative advocacy the following:

A. That County, State and Federal agencies reduce, waive and/or defer fees and taxes for small businesses during this transitional time to reopening the economy

B. County of Santa Clara

i. Improved County/City Coordination related to reopening the economy.

ii. Advocate to the County that:

1. Personal Care businesses such as hair salons, nail salons, gyms and tattoo parlors are permitted to begin operating immediately with the condition of implementing social distancing protocols.

2. Special events may begin operating immediately

iii. Encourage first hour of the business day be open to the elderly or immunocompromised only.

iv. Request that compliance status should be stated on the storefront window certificates.

v. Ask that the county allow Type 48 establishments to pair up with third party permitted eating establishments .

C. State of California

i. Lobby ABC to implement additional regulatory reliefs

D. Federal

i. Advocate for policies that provide assistance to both commercial property owners and commercial property renters

- **City has and continues to provide input to the County on reopening strategies and tactics**
- **Recommend a sit-down with taskforce members to discuss desired City action in more detail and to determine the appropriate next steps (e.g. integrate into existing workplan and/or City Council Priority Setting)**

RECOMMENDATION #7: Craft a specific Greater Downtown Economic Recovery and Stimulus Plan

This plan should:

- A. Prioritize job recovery in those sectors identified as most negatively impacted by Shelter-in-Place.*
- B. Examine stimulus recommendations including business and event permit moratoriums, small business facade improvement and outdoor activation grants, low cost loans for building retrofits such as installation of touchless restrooms.*
- C. Evaluate immediately either the reduction, waiving or deferment of fees and taxes for small and local businesses during this transitional time in reopening the economy*
- D. Focus on strategies that immediately and directly increase City of San José revenues such as Sales tax and TOT (Transient Occupancy Tax) revenues.*

- **Currently focused on business response and early recovery citywide, especially areas most impacted and most vulnerable**
- **Small business loan and grants programs will include Downtown**
- **Storefront Activation grant program funded in FY 2020-2021 in the amount of \$200,000**
- **Departments associated with permits and fees in B & C of this recommendation are funded through cost recovery measures**
- **Recommendation D already a part of OED's workplan**
- **A Greater Downtown-specific economic recovery plan would need referral to Council Priority Setting**

RECOMMENDATION #8: Conduct a review of public safety policies and fees for public events and gatherings

A. Conduct a review which examines strategies to ensure public safety and clearly outlines what measures and precautions are required of the event producer. This review should effectively and meaningfully engage the downtown business and resident community.

B. Explore ways to reduce associated event costs such as establishing "permit free zone(s)" for approved events of limited size and renting nontraditional public spaces (i.e. South Hall) for event use at an affordable price.

- **Recurring 3-4 year conversation with local event producers – consistent review of City service costs and policies for outdoor events**
- **Scope, strategy and location for each event is different, extremely difficult to come up with a one-size-fits-all model**
- **Assessment of special event costs through the Easy Urbanism and Placemaking interdepartmental working group found that compared to other cities, San Jose is on the lower end of the spectrum for City service costs and provides more support than other cities**
- **Departments associated with permits and fees in this recommendation are funded through cost recovery measures**
- **Recommend a sit-down with taskforce members to discuss desired City action in more detail and to determine the appropriate next steps (e.g. integrate into existing workplan and/or City Council Priority Setting)**

RECOMMENDATION #9: Create more opportunities for retail businesses by:

- A. Allowing the selling of Retail Goods in the public right of way associated with existing brick and mortar businesses in Downtown and the surrounding Neighborhood Business Districts. This should include the allowance of shade structures.*
- B. Evaluating our Sign Code to allow for more creative, ground floor retail signage that does not obstruct pedestrian access*
- C. Modifying our Zoning Code to permit “Outdoor Marketplaces” as an allowable use in private outdoor spaces.*

- **Recently updated the SJ Municipal Code with respect to Downtown ground floor retail to expand the types of uses allowed, more narrowly define where traditional retail uses should be concentrated and reduce permitting requirements for certain uses**
- **Recommend a sit-down with taskforce members to discuss desired City action in more detail and to determine the appropriate next steps (e.g. integrate into existing workplan and/or City Council Priority Setting)**