



Memo

To: Economic Development Subcommittee: Chair Okrepkie, Member Alvarez, Member Fleming
From: Downtown Action Organization
Date: March 27, 2025
Re: Pedestrianization Concept

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The Downtown Action Organization appreciates and applauds the City's efforts to focus on the revitalization of Downtown Santa Rosa and encourage more residents and tourists to visit and enjoy our Downtown area. These efforts are much needed, and we take pride in being active partners in this effort.

Regarding the "Pedestrianization" concept being explored by Planning & Economic Development staff, and presented to the community at large through a City survey, there are four primary concerns the DAO believes the City needs to address to move forward with a successful permanent closure of the area:

1. The majority of businesses within the closure area should support the concept and be prepared to activate outside of current business operations.
2. Infrastructure improvements must be made to create and maintain a friendly, vibrant, safe space that include but are not limited to: new pedestrian level lighting, enhanced landscaping, improved trash collection facilities, removal of parking infrastructure (including meters and parking stops), installation of safety bollards/barricades, and other capital improvements to make the area into a welcoming space that keeps pedestrians safe and protected from vehicular traffic.
3. Enhanced programming, though art, music, recreation, events, etc., must be supported by the City in Courthouse Square, as the primary pedestrian area of the Downtown, as well as the potential closure areas.
4. Traffic circulation and impacts must be fully understood and detailed to the community.

Without these items in place, the proposed "pedestrianization" plan will not yield the desired effect of enhancing and improving the economic vibrancy of the Downtown.

The DAO has heard feedback from many businesses within the closure area and it is imperative at this point that Economic Development staff conduct outreach to discuss plans and collect feedback from these businesses.

We look forward to continuing to engage on the topic as staff work to identify the most appropriate path forward and encourage you to connect with us and utilize the DAO as a resource and partner.

Cadance Hinkle Allinson
Executive Director

cc: Daryl Dunston, Assistant City Manager
Gabe Osburn, Director of Planning & Economic Development
Scott Adair, Deputy Director – Economic Development