



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 20-2033

MEETING DATE: 11/16/2020

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Oliver Chi, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Ursula Luna-Reynosa, Director of Community Development

Subject:

Consider an Interim Extension of the Temporary Closure of the Second and Third Blocks of Main Street to Vehicular Traffic Through February 28, 2021, to Allow Restaurants and Select Retail to Serve Patrons in the Public Right-of-Way

Statement of Issue:

On July 6, 2020, and August 3, 2020, respectively, the City Council authorized the City Manager to temporarily close the second and third blocks of Main Street to vehicular traffic to allow downtown businesses the opportunity to operate outdoors to meet physical distancing requirements in a safe manner during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City Council authorized the closure of these two blocks of Main Street until December 31, 2020.

During the past few weeks, staff has met with the Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) to discuss the current situation as it relates to the second and third block closure of Main Street. Given the ongoing COVID-19 emergency and the continuing need for safe physical distancing, the BID has asked that the street closures currently in effect be maintained through Labor Day in 2021 (Attachment 1). The BID conducted a survey of downtown merchants and found overwhelming support for continuing the closure of the second block of Main Street. Survey results were mixed regarding the third block closure. Attachment 2 contains the BIDs survey findings.

With the pending change in the make-up of the City Council come this December, staff is recommending at this time that the second and third blocks of Main Street remain closed to vehicular traffic through February 28, 2021. If approved, such a decision would allow merchants with the certainty that they can continue operating as is for the next few months, while also allowing time for the new City Council to transition into their roles and be part of the longer-term decision making process regarding the Main Street closure.

Financial Impact:

Not applicable.

Recommended Action:

Authorize the City Manager to continue the temporary closure of the second and third blocks of Main Street to vehicular traffic to accommodate outdoor dining and retail in the public right-of-way until February 28, 2021.

Alternative Action(s):

Do not authorize an extension of the temporary street closure, and direct that Main Street reopen to vehicular traffic effective January 1, 2021.

Environmental Status:

The project is exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15304(e) because the proposed project consists of a minor temporary use having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment. The proposed project would not have a negative effect on biologically sensitive resources, and there is no evidence of any unusual environmental circumstances that might give rise to a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.

Strategic Plan Goal:

Non-Applicable - Administrative Item

Attachment(s):

1. Letter from Downtown BID
2. Main Street Closure Survey Findings