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May xx, 2020

The Honorable Kevin Faulconer
Mayor City of San Diego
202 C Street, 11th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

Open Air Dining San Diego: Request for an Expedited Permitting Process to Allow San Diego Businesses to Utilize Public Right of Way

Honorable Mayor Faulconer,

On May 20th the State approved the County of San Diego's request to allow the region to accelerate the reopening of the local economy. San Diego is moving further into Stage 2 of the California Resiliency Roadmap. Under the proposal, in-person dining at restaurants and retail shopping is allowed, as long as businesses enact social distancing measures and follow various restrictions to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Many restaurants, retail establishments and small businesses in San Diego are submitting plans to the County to reopen as a result of Governor Newsom's announcement allowing a transition from Phase II to Phase III reopening. We should comply with all regulations and facilitate a safe opening by expanding the use of the public right of way to accommodate mobility options such as bicycling, walking and utilizing more public space for shopping and dining.

It is critical that we remain flexible and innovative in these unprecedented times to facilitate the reopening of restaurants and businesses while also ensuring their ability to comply with social distancing requirements. To accommodate this, we have identified specific recommendations for the use of the innovative use of public right-of-way (PROW) and special event permits that would enable a swift and safe opening of restaurants that could be referred to as the "Open Air Dining San Diego" program.

We request the following 3 measures be implemented by the City of San Diego as part of the special event permit application:

- (1) An expedited process to allow non-profits to apply for special event permits would be exempted from CEQA
- (2) Fast-tracking of Public-Right of Way (PROW) permits for businesses setting up tables and chairs in these newly identified open streets thereby adding the permit holder and the City of San Diego as additionally insured.
- (3) Waive the need for Police & Fire Department fees or the SDPC associated with these special event permits

New Alcohol and Beverage control regulations allow for businesses licensed to serve alcohol to apply for

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a permit to expand their footprint into adjacent property including the public right of way. The application requires a diagram that could also be used by the City of San Diego in an expedited approval process for the applicable Special Event Permit.

Without an expedited process that does not entail CEQA review for non-profits to apply for these permits to utilize certain streets along business corridors, it will be extremely challenging for businesses to accommodate a significant number of patrons while also complying with social distancing guidelines. As stated by the Downtown San Diego Partnership, our commercial zones are suffering, and these zones provide thousands of jobs, important services, and social and entertainment outlets for our residents and visitors.

This is a matter of protecting public health, supporting our local businesses, and making use of our public streets to enable San Diego businesses to reopen both quickly and safely.

We look forward to working with you on the Open Streets San Diego initiative.

Sincerely,

Judi Tentor
Executive Director, BikeSD

Angela Landsburg
North Park Main Street

North Park Planning Association

North Park Community Association

(Add your Organizations Signature Block here)