

For Immediate Release

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## **Ventura City Council moves toward making Main Street Moves a more permanent attraction in Downtown Ventura**

**Ventura, CA** – The Ventura City Council voted 7-0 at its meeting on November 8 to make Main Street Moves long-term with a full closure of five blocks in Downtown Ventura, retaining the existing curb, gutter, and sidewalk configuration through a flexible design approach.

Discussions included maintaining a pedestrian-friendly area in keeping Main Street closed to traffic from San Buenaventura Mission to Fir Street, with an additional focus on potentially keeping California Street closed to traffic.

“During the pandemic, the City reimagined the use of public spaces and joined with Downtown Ventura Partners to launch Main Street Moves, which helped many local businesses not only survive but thrive,” said Mayor Sofia Rubalcava. “Thousands of people have expressed strong support for keeping streets closed and maintaining outdoor dining and shopping areas. It’s exciting to hear that kind of positive public response as we look at design, cost, and logistics for supporting a semi-permanent downtown street closure for Main Street Moves.”

The design approach includes the installation of bollards at the intersections and furnishings that are removeable, allowing the modification of the closure as needed with the evolution of downtown and the needs of the space. The design would open back up the existing sidewalks, use the existing angled parking spaces for businesses to use for outdoor seating and dining in the form of parklets, and keep the existing travel lanes free and clear to accommodate delivery trucks, service vehicles, and emergency vehicles.

The City Council also voted to have City staff work with consultants to study traffic impacts, environmental impacts, obtain a bid for removable bollards, and design standards for the parklets, all which will guide the process to the full closure. Additionally, an appointed ad hoc committee will be created to focus on improvements and cohesive design to the Mission Park and Figueroa Plaza.

To encourage participation for both restaurants and retailers, staff will create a fee and lease structure for use of the public right of way space to support the activation of the street and have critical mass of participants.

In December 2021, the continuation or issuance of a new interim special use permit for Main Street Moves will be brought to City Council while staff finalizes the full closure program with the necessary studies. Main Street Moves currently operates under a Special Use Permit and Temporary Emergency Ordinance, which are set to expire on January 7, 2022.

Visit [www.cityofventura.ca.gov/OutdoorDiningProgram](http://www.cityofventura.ca.gov/OutdoorDiningProgram) to learn more about Main Street Moves and view reports, and survey results.

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