

**For Immediate Release**

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**Main Street Moves towards long-term installation**

**Ventura, Calif.** – After much support from the public and the downtown business community, the City Council unanimously approved extending Main Street Moves to 2024 during its meeting on April 11, 2022. Staff will continue to collect data and collaborate with downtown stakeholders on the long-term installation of the program.

Main Street Moves closes five blocks of Downtown Ventura, from the San Buenaventura Mission to Fir Street and a portion of California Street. The program, launched in May 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, creates a pedestrian-friendly area along Main Street, retaining the existing curb, gutter, and sidewalk configuration through a flexible design approach.

“We want to build a program with the most consensus and greatest benefit to the downtown district,” said Economic Development Manager Meredith Hart. “After working with the businesses, most want to move forward with a full closure model, and almost all are willing to participate in a flexible closure model, which would involve parklets.”

The City and Downtown Ventura Partners are working with property owners, restaurants, and retailers in the impacted downtown area to continue to gather feedback on participation within the different operating models. The proposed models have ranged from the current full street closure to the previous full open street model.

A long-term full street closure model for Main Street and the re-opening of California Street with the allowance of parklets will be analyzed through an environmental impact review, a traffic study, and bids for the design and installation of removable bollards. City Council determined to re-open California Street to improve ADA parking and access. If implemented, the project will need to adhere to the Pedestrian Mall Law of 1960. Establishing a long-term program will also require creating a licensing agreement with property owners for the use of the public right-of-way areas.

In response to an increased demand for parking in the downtown area, parking hours will be adjusted on weekends to allow for more use with paid parking rates increasing to \$1.00 per hour. In addition, parking hours on Friday and Saturday will be extended to 11:00 p.m. Parking hours on Sunday through Thursday will remain from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. These changes will go into effect May 9, 2022. In addition to paid parking spots, the City maintains designated ADA parking spaces at each intersection, surface lots, and parking structure, with approximately 2,000 free parking spaces throughout downtown.

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

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