

Downtown San Rafael BID 2016 Work Plan

Mission: The Mission of the Business Improvement District is to promote the common interests of downtown business owners for the purpose of maintaining and developing a downtown that is a welcoming place to shop, dine, work and live.

Downtown San Rafael in the 21st Century: What is it? And what will it become as our economy evolves and brick and mortar retailing becomes more about the experience than access to product? Is it a destination for arts and entertainment? How does our downtown retain its role as the central public gathering place for our community? Is it relevant to the next generation residents? How do we communicate our strengths, our history, our value to our residents and visitors passing through?

In essence, these are the questions the Downtown Business Improvement District wrestles with in our effort to promote a vibrant downtown. Our mission, to promote the common interests of our business owners, by and large, can be distilled to one singular goal: Bring more people downtown.

Distill this idea further and one lands right into the heart of our efforts: Make it attractive, easily accessible and, above all, a desirable place to spend time. How does the BID contribute to this goal?

As we head into 2016, it is clear that our success depends largely on leveraging our limited capacity in addressing the *most pertinent issues* that work toward these goals.

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Marketing and Promotions

Purpose: Promote downtown through strategic marketing and special events.

- Host a downtown branding/visioning project to tap into Bay Area creativity, with goal of generating a vision and branding for downtown that is authentic, fresh and adopted through a democratic community-based effort.
- Continue to promote downtown and BID member businesses through social media/online marketing and local media.
- Continue collaboration and cross promotion of downtown arts organizations – “core” assets.
- Improve functionality of BID website and establish it as premier resource for community on downtown businesses and events.
- Produce one signature event in 2016 that celebrates and promotes our downtown.
- Support events produced independently by BID members and outside producers through grants, promotion and marketing.

Economic Development

Purpose: Support economic vitality of downtown by advocating on issues, ordinances and policies that affect downtown businesses.

- **Parking:** Host quarterly meetings to address issues affecting patron and employee parking and work with City to ensure BID member interests are represented in parking policy recommendations generated by outcome of 2015/16 parking study (in progress.)
- **Safety:** Continue to support City efforts on issues of crime, code enforcement and mitigation of nuisance behavior that negatively impact business in downtown
- Support **the Downtown Streets Team** and explore opportunities to expand their role in downtown, through services such as enhanced sidewalk cleaning, graffiti removal and ambassador roles.
- Support City's **retail recruitment strategy** through promotion of downtown and serve as a resource for prospective tenants.

Design

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Purpose: To promote a clean, welcoming environment.

- Lead effort to pursue a private/public partnership in beautification of streetscape, towards goal of a demonstration block or area by end of 2016.
- Support implementation of City's pilot parklet/outside dining program, participating in design review process of proposed projects.

Organization

Purpose: To ensure organizational foundation is strong and financial management prudent and to promote BID to stakeholders and the community.

- Legal compliance: Review by-laws, hold annual election and annual member meeting.
- Build engagement with members through routine communications and monthly mixers.
- Explore supplemental funding opportunities for 2016/17, including feasibility of restructuring of BID organization.