

# GREATER DOWNTOWN SAN JOSÉ ECONOMIC RECOVERY TASK FORCE

SUPPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER RAUL PERALEZ

## Arts & Special Events

**Brendan Rawson**, *San José Jazz*  
**Wisa Uemura**, *San José Taiko*

## General Retail & Services

**April Gee**, *Petite Galleria*  
**Chris Patterson-Simmons**, *Neu2U/Urban Kiosk*

## At-Large

**Laura Chmielewski**, *Team San José*  
**Blage Zelalich**, *City of San José*

## Food & Beverage

**Fernanda Carreira**, *Adega / Pastelaria Adega*  
**Cache Bouren**, *Haberdasher SJ*

## Personal Care

**Meaghan Karabatsos**, *WESTCA Gym*  
**Takahiro Kitamura**, *State of Grace Tattoo*

## Moderated By

**Councilmember Raul Peralez**, *District 3*

\*All task force members were present

## **MEETING MINUTES - MAY 20, 2020**

***AMENDED AND APPROVED BY TASK FORCE ON MAY 27, 2020***

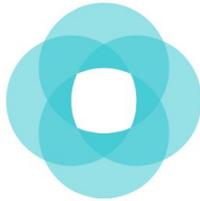
### **1. Welcome - Councilmember Raul Peralez (3 Minutes)**

- Welcome to the first Task Force meeting and thank you for joining.
- I am the Councilmember for Downtown San Jose and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Takahiro made a great point asking “Is this going to be worth my time?” and I think this is a really great question as to why we would want you all to invest your time and energy in this taskforce. Your time is extremely valuable and I recognize that. While there is nothing that I can promise will result from this task force, I am confident that if we didn’t come together and collaborate, we would continue to be at the whim of County Public Health, etc. and the status quo would persist. I absolutely believe that working together and collaborating to determine how we will recover and thrive will help to influence decisions being made at the county and state levels.

### **2. Introductions of Task Force Members & Committee Members**

Each Task Force member will introduce themselves and the committee members they are representing. (20 minutes)

- **Arts & Entertainment**
  - **Brendan**- I’m the Executive Director for San Jose Jazz



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- **Wisa-** I'm the Executive Director of San Jose Taiko
  - Food & Beverage
    - **Fernanda-** My husband and I own Adegas and Pasteleria Adegas
    - **Cache-** I own Haberdasher in SoFA district of downtown San Jose
  - General Retail
    - **April-** I own a little shop in Japantown called Petite Galleria. I represent a bunch of handmade arts and artisans who participate in my shop
    - **Chris-** I'm the owner of Neu2U Boutique Shop and Urban Kiosk. Our alternate is Alicia F who is the founder and director of San Jose Learning Center.
  - Personal Care
    - **Meaghan-** I am one of the co-owners of WestCA Gym
    - **Takahiro-** Everyone calls me Taki. In Personal Care we're representing gyms, tattoos shops and hair salons.
  - At-Large
    - **Lauren-** I'm a staff member at Team San Jose
    - **Blage-** I'm the Downtown Manager in the Office of Economic Development

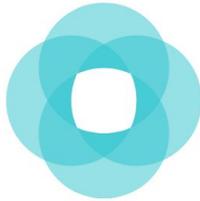
## D3 staff supporting this Task Force

- Christina Ramos
- David Tran
- Patricia Ceja
- Mindy Nguyen
- Martha Medina
- Bridget Brown
- Raquel Vegas

**CM Peralez-** I'm excited for the breadth of industry experience that we have represented in this Task Force. As Task Force representatives, you represent the different committees that you are working with to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns are voiced at this meeting body.

**CM Peralez-** Some ground rules to guide our Task Force.

- Please be respectful at all times - Some of us may have differing opinions which is okay but we ask that the dialogue is respectful.



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- Step Up and Step Back - We want everyone in the Task Force to be actively participating and we want to hear from everyone. This is necessary for the Task Force to move forward effectively.
  - Stay on Topic - To be mindful of everyone's time and to keep us on track in working towards our Task Force goals, we ask that everyone adhere to the agenda.
  - Be mindful of our time

### 3. Mission Statement:

*ACTION ITEM:* "To inclusively put forth solutions that will safely revitalize the Greater Downtown San José area by supporting the recovery of businesses and community organizations while fostering interest and confidence in public life in a COVID-19 impacted world." (5 minutes)

**CM Peralez-** The genesis of this Task Force came from stakeholders and community leaders wanting to convene a space for those doing business in the Greater Downtown San Jose community. They wanted to have an opportunity to discuss the impacts COVID-19 was having on their businesses and organizations. And to provide an opportunity to discuss solutions addressing those impacts and share ideas. Those stakeholders came together and helped draft a mission statement for this task force which has been discussed at all your respective committees.

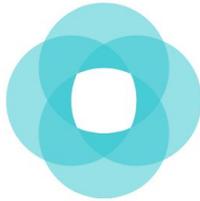
*"To inclusively put forth solutions that will safely revitalize the greater Downtown San José area by supporting the recovery of businesses and community organizations while fostering interest and confidence in public life in a COVID-19 impacted world."*

**CM Peralez-** We've collected feedback from all four committees but we would like to open it up for feedback in this meeting as well. The word "safely" was recently added to the mission based on feedback from you all .

[No Comments from TF.]

**CM Peralez-** Thank you all for your participation in helping form this mission statement. In any organization I think the mission statement is important in grounding the work we do and helping to guide us towards our common goals.

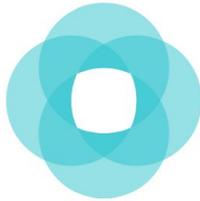
- As we know current conditions in regards to COVID-19 and Shelter in Place are changing literally every day. Even yesterday! To keep you all up to date, I will provide a Current Conditions update at each of our Task Force meetings.



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- Our recent update shows that Santa Clara County Public Health has been successful at trying to slow this pandemic.
  - As of yesterday (5/19) there were 15 new cases and 2 deaths, and our total is 2,483 cases and 137 deaths.
  - As we reopen County Health Officials are expecting a resurgence of cases and are preparing for that.
  - Lastly, we know we are getting updated information from our County Public Health and California Health, on what businesses can re-open, which includes the Governor's California Resilience Roadmap. However, it's important to note each of these can differ.
  - The May 22 Order allows several new categories of businesses and activities to reopen, subject to specific conditions and limitations. It also keeps key restrictions in place, requiring people to stay in their homes except when engaging in certain essential or allowed activities. The significant changes are:
    - Retail stores may reopen for sales, but only for curbside/outside pickup or by delivery. Customers are not allowed to enter these retail stores. These retail stores must also comply with several additional operating conditions, including:
      - They cannot move goods outside the store to display and sell.
      - They must limit the number of workers inside the facility as described in the Order.
      - They must have direct access to a sidewalk, street, outdoor walkway, parking lot, or alley for pickup.
    - The Order also allows businesses that support these retail businesses to resume operating, including those that manufacture goods sold at these stores and businesses that provide warehousing and distribution services.
    - Outdoor museums, historical sites, and publicly accessible gardens are allowed to reopen, but visitors are restricted to outdoor areas.
    - People will be allowed to participate in car parades, so long as they ride in cars only with members of their households and do not leave the cars during the parade or stop to gather at a fixed location. Bicycles and motorcycles are not allowed to join car parades.
    - All businesses must post signage required in the Social Distancing Protocol to educate customers about health and safety requirements. Sign templates are available on the County's website



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- The updated order requires that a face mask or covering be worn whenever you are at a business (even if it's an outdoor business). At all other times when you are out in public, you are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering in accordance with the Health Officer's Critical Guidance on Face Coverings. The only exceptions are for people for whom a face covering may not be safe (for example, children 6 and under, or anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove a face covering without assistance). You do not need to wear a face covering when you are exercising outdoors, but you are encouraged to have one with you.
- Consumer spending data:
  - Total Consumer spending since Mid March shows SJ has dropped by 33.4% - a greater drop than the USA average of 20.5%.
  - The impact on restaurants and hotels and entertainment has been even more severe: restaurants /hotels (-66.8%) and entertainment (-82.8%) against the USA average of 57.3% and 71.3% respectively.
  - Then the impact on small business has also been significant:
    - % change in hourly employees working in small businesses: SJ (-47%) USA (-44%).
    - Small business open: SJ (-46.1) USA (- 35.1)
    - Small business revenue decline (SJ -38%) USA (-32.3%)
  - Total job postings and job opportunities have decreased in SJ by 38.1% vs 36.8% nationally.

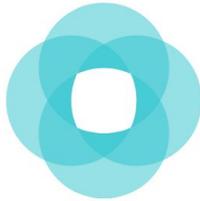
#### 4. Current Industry Conditions

*INFORMATIONAL:* Each committee representative will report out on their committees' feedback and commentary around the following two questions: a) What impacts has your respective organization/business experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic? And b) What are the major concerns that you have about the future? (30 minutes)

**CM Peralez-** At this time we would like to open the discussion to you all to hear your feedback on your current industries and what concerns you have.

- What impacts has your respective organization experienced due to the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What are the major concerns that you have about the future?

**Brendan-** For arts organizations in downtown, all of us were hit quite immediately by the SIP directives because of public gatherings.



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- We do work pretty broadly regionally to bring people to downtown as well as nationwide in terms of bringing people and resources to downtown for special events.
  - Overarching beyond all of that is the issue that our business models are based on selling tickets and having people come to venues.
  - Some of us have been adapting and doing some online performance work to stay connected to our communities. For example, SJ Jazz has done online live performances to stay connected with our community.
  - The challenge for us really is that our mission is about bringing people together so our businesses are really thinking hard about how we adapt to this new and shifting reality. A lot of us are in the moment making these changes but we're also giving some deep thought as to how to bring folks together.
  - Some questions we're considering are - How do we serve the diverse communities we work with through the work we do and our art form? How will this impact how we move forward and operate? What does it mean to be a music presenter in the future?

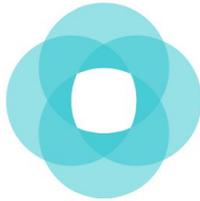
**Wisa-** To recap some of the concerns voiced at our first committee meeting.

- Accessibility is a big concern - with so many of our organizations serving people of color, the elderly, etc. we are struggling with how to connect with our communities who may not have access to the internet and technology.
- Because the arts bring people into downtown, we want to know how we can create ambiance for the streets and support our restaurants and other local businesses whether it be through the Al Fresco initiative or other strategies.
- We're also interested in creating messaging and marketing that is sensitive and appropriate.
- Our ask of government is to minimize obstacles and remove restrictions/bureaucracy that limit our ability to do outdoor events for example.

**CM Peralez-** We do not have to wait until we develop our first set of recommendations. We can bring your feedback in real time to the County to help inform decisions moving forward.

**Cache-** In Food and Beverage we would like to see the removal of legal roadblocks to allow for more opportunities and options for small business owners to make sales and reconnect with their communities such as:

- Serving alcohol and food not within our four walls



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- The time for asking permission has passed and we want to aggressively and assertively move forward with using public and private spaces to smartly mitigate COVID-19 risks while serving customers
  - Safely and reasonably lift alcohol restrictions. Because our business is so tightly regulated we would like to work with the County, etc. to remove those hoops
  - We need to move from the “can we do this” phase to the “we’re going to do this” phase

**Fernanda-** I think communication is key between the local government, local health officials, businesses and public to build some kind of confidence so that they feel safe to return to our businesses.

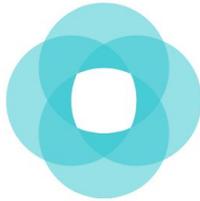
- Some kind of media help - social media, TV, newspapers - would be important to build that confidence among customers.
- It’s a plus for all of us to be able to come together and discuss things we otherwise might not think of on our own.

**CM Peralez-** Yes, unified communications and messaging will be key. We’ll be flipping the script with real deep thought to advise the County on how we can reopen our industries. Rather than waiting for the next order to be announced, let’s present to them how we can safely reopen. The County and State public health are not experts in the industries you work in and we can help to bring this collective knowledge together to inform these government decisions.

**April-** Business and retail is pretty slammed right now but we have some creative ideas and solutions for the future.

- Open air plans - if we can open up streets and be outdoors that could be helpful. Even drive-in movies or outdoor concerts could be an option.
- We’ll always have very vulnerable members of our population who cannot participate in these re-openings, such as the diabetic or the elderly so it’s important that we facilitate and localize resources for these vulnerable populations to participate in business activities. For example, we could localize an insta-cart so that these vulnerable individuals can safely engage in retail shopping.
- In all that we do it’s necessary public safety is prioritized.

**Chris-** We have to really try to focus on doing business in a different way and how we can be considerate of our customers without discriminating. It’s difficult to have to be in the



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mindset of deciding who we will do business with. We have to be creative and know that we can be supportive of the ideas we come up with. It's having masks, signage, show covers. To be outside is one thing - I'm all for that - but it has to be across the board as a consensus or else it's going to fail.

**Meaghan-** Our group consists of fitness facilities (gyms, boxing, jiu jitsu), tattoo shops, hair salons, nail salons - there's a really wide range of services but the general consensus with shelter in place is that everyone's ability to make income and revenue pretty much stopped.

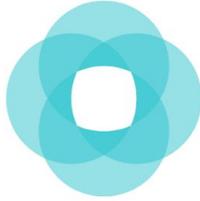
- There is not much that our businesses can do online and what we are able to do online simply isn't the same
- While it's great that we can potentially open up and do things outside, it's not necessarily helpful for businesses in our industry. It's not possible to limit personal care businesses to conducting business outdoors.
- Everyone would like better guidelines and communication about what we need to do to open up safely because to operate we will have to open our doors. There is a lot of physical touch involved in our industry that needs to be taken into consideration when making guidelines, protocols, etc.
- We would like to see marketing campaigns and efforts from the city to help consumers feel safe about how our businesses are operating.

**Takahiro-** We're all in this together in the sense that we're all working together but each type of business within the personal care industry is very specific. What hair salons need for safety protocols differs from tattoo shops, etc.

- I believe tattoo shops are ready to operate safely and full disclosure tattoo artists are beginning to operate out of their homes, etc.
- I love the idea of al fresco dining - I think that's great but we want to consider how that affects our businesses (parking for customers, storefront access, etc.).
- We'd like to push the idea of free parking - in Willow Glen everyone is able to park for free - we need to push to make meters free through the rest of the year in the greater downtown area..

**CM Peralez-** Thank you. I really appreciate the dialogue. It's important that our industries are having these conversations cross-sector because a policy or initiative that may benefit one industry could hurt another.

## 5. Task Force Scope & Framework



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*INFORMATIONAL:* The Task Force will consider approval of the task force scope and framework for the following five weeks of concurrent meetings. (5 minutes)

- [Document](#)

**CM Peralez-** Thank you and hearing all of this is why it is important that this task force is convened and that we move efficiently to put out solutions that will help people.

- In order to accomplish that, we have proposed a scope and framework designed to keep us focused and organized. To review, our scope is:

To create policy recommendations for the long-term recovery of the downtown economy that will:

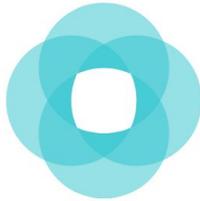
- Triage the immediate business impacts from COVID-19
- Reduce barriers for businesses and organizations to safely maintain a sustainable consumer base and
- Foster once again a vibrant public life in Downtown San Jose through creative uses of public and private spaces

We are also looking to engage in a strong collaboration between the relevant local government departments and explore on how to continue on-going cross-sector projects focused on the long-term success of Downtown

The Structure of this Task Force has been set up into a two phase process and eight industries have been identified. These include:

- Arts & Special Events
- Food & Beverage
- General Retail & Services
- Personal Care
- Hospitality & Hotels
- Performance & Entertainment Venues
- Large Employers & Property Owners
- Faith Based & Community Spaces

The first four committees will begin meeting immediately. Among the four committees, there will be two representatives from each “committee” to sit on an overall task force which will meet concurrently with the committees.



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Your committees have reviewed this and we will continue to take input and refine it through your committees and this task force process.

## 6. Election of Task Force Co-Chairs

*ACTION ITEM:* The Task Force will elect two members to be co-chairs to facilitate all future meetings moving forward. The District 3 team will remain in a supportive role. (15 minutes)

**CM Peralez-** The Task Force is meant to be community based and we would like for you as participants to be able to drive this. Although we'll be providing a lot of support about how to drive these changes at the city level, etc. we want these discussions to be led by the 2 Co-Chairs elected. My office will be providing administrative support (taking notes, setting up zoom meetings, etc.). The Co-Chairs will be moderating meetings moving forward and collaborating with our office to form the outcomes we would like to see moving forward. With that, let's open it up for nominations

### Nominations

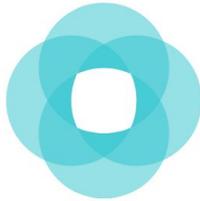
- Takahiro - I would like to nominate Cache.
- Cache - I accept the nomination.
- Fernanda - I second nominating Cache. I would like to nominate Brendan.
- Brendan - I accept the nomination.
- Brendan - I would like to nominate Fernanda.
- Fernanda - I do not accept this nomination at this time.
- Takahiro - I would also like to nominate Meaghan
- Meaghan - I am willing to serve as a Co-Chair but I have a newborn and am not sure that I'll be best suited to do so at this time.

**CM Peralez-** We will accept these 3 nominations. We can take a vote on who will serve as the Co-Chairs and who will serve as the Alternate unless anyone prefers to serve as an Alternate.

**Chris-** I would like to participate as an Alternate

**CM Peralez-** We will send the 4 nominations for you to vote

**Cache-** I would like to suggest that there be 4 chairs (2 co-chairs and 2 alternates) to provide for equal representation.



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**Brendan-** I think Taki and Wisa would also be good options to participate in these roles.

**Chris-** I would like to vote for Wisa

**Brendan-** I second Wisa's nomination

**Wisa-** I accept the nomination

## 7. Public Comment

Members of the public may address the task force on any issue for a prescribed duration of time at the discretion of the meeting facilitator. *(10 minutes)*

**Frank N.-** It's great that parking is free now. Can we do some sort of no fee permit and convert the space in front of our business as curbside pick up space? This would be helpful for retail pick-up and food/beverage businesses doing to-go orders. How are we addressing this?

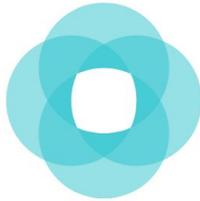
**Takahiro-** Doesn't necessarily benefit all industries and isn't applicable to all businesses in Japantown

**Cache-** If we are able to make curbside pick up available to retail then we should. We should find a way to make it an option and utilize the existing space.

**Fernanda-** I would love to see this happen. It would benefit my business. Also important to address how these curbside pickup zones will interact with existing loading zones and bus stops.

**Alicia F.-** I like Taki's point regarding free parking and Frank's point regarding curbside pick up. I think it could be done carefully and creatively so that no businesses are negatively impacted. Free business consulting could also be beneficial if the city could expand SVA's current services. Especially in the Personal Care industry for example, it really varies from business to business and individual consulting could be very useful.

**Miyuki O.-** As we consider Al Fresco dining there's some confusion regarding whether this is the only option for restaurants or is a combination of indoor/outdoor dining possible?



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**CM Peralez-** The state and county have discussed that as we allow for indoor dining, we can augment capacity with outdoor dining. So it would be a combination of both. Council approved for City staff to begin that work in allowing for Al Fresco dining. This committee can be used to gather feedback on these types of initiatives specifically Al Fresco since Blage is leading work on this.

**Blage-** To clarify, businesses at this moment are allowed to apply for outdoor sidewalk seating through Public Works. The costs for these permits have been cut down. The discussion we're really having about Al Fresco is what barriers exist to implement this program. We're looking to reduce costs, waive fees, etc. There's no program that has been proposed yet but rather Council has directed staff to move forward and work on a program.

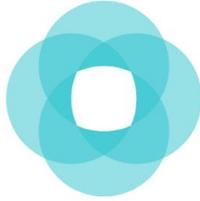
**Pam Y.-** I'm advocating for non-metered parking. Even beyond curbside pickup, customers will need to park for longer periods of time since they'll have to stand in line and wait their turn to enter businesses with limited capacity

**Gary S.-** We would love to have free parking since free parking is so limited in Little Italy. For outdoor seating it was our understanding that it wasn't allowed right now. Where can we apply to do so? Also if we are required to wear face masks in public, how is this going to work with eating at restaurants?

**Blage-** I'll follow up with you offline about how to apply for those permits.

**CM Peralez-** Yes, it's permissible upon approval. When you make parking free or remove restrictions you have to think that people (nearby residents) may start to use the parking as day-long parking and remove parking for customers so you risk potentially losing parking.

**Cache-** I know that the process for applying for outdoor seating is easier than before, but right now it seems insulting to say "you can apply for it" when it should be how can we give businesses the ability to do it today by removing the barriers and bureaucracy. We should pass a blanket policy to be able to do it now so businesses can begin to generate revenue and get beyond these roadblocks.



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**Blage-** We are working to get the permit cost down to zero and are exploring options to better streamline the process under existing circumstances and under limitations from the County.

**Cache-** As long as we all agree that this is urgent and move forward immediately.

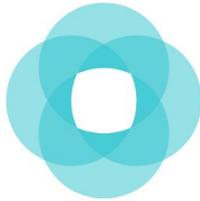
- The face mask thing - I think the deal has to be that they can take the face mask off but then have to put it right back as soon as possible. For example, staff can take their face mask on to take a drink of water but as soon as they're done they put the face mask back on.

**Juan Carlos A.-** Thank you to everyone for the great leadership in this task force.

- Policy and barriers - This is definitely the time for this group to reflect on these issues so that we can tackle them in all of our different industries.
- I'm seeking counsel and guidance as much as possible for the different roles I work in.
- In the Arts we're especially dependent on TOT dollars - what happens when those dollars are vulnerable and not guaranteed in these unpredictable times? Where does the arts funding come in then?
- Can we start looking at how the arts budget can be part of the city budget not only included in TOT?
- Creating an awareness of campaigns that our leaders and creatives do not take safety or social distancing lightly. We can be second responders in terms of prompting safety.

**Gumby M.-** I appreciate that this task force is primarily all small business representation especially since the Mayor's roundtable does not reflect that. For parking issues - I'm not necessarily against Al Fresco dining - I just want to make clear that we can't do something that helps one type of business but hurts another. When parking spots get shut down, delivery access is affected. Ubers and door dashers already do not follow the rules and we should consider how to address this

**Wisa-** I think there's no one size fits all solution for all of our industries and so there has to be room for specifications. I think it will be important to give our businesses the flexibility to work together with their neighbors.



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**Blage-** That is exactly what city staff are struggling with right now is to find something that works for and benefits everyone. And the reality is that it's unlikely we'll find something that works for everyone.

**Takahiro-** I like the conversations we're having and it's important we voice our disagreements. Cache - disagree with me anytime. The dialogue is good and ultimately what we're looking to do is find ways for us all to re-open and economically recover.

**Fernanda-** How far behind is SCC behind the state in terms of our SIP order?

**CM Peralez-** I don't have an exact answer or estimate for you but I can come back with a better answer next week.

**Chris-** I recall someone using a parking lot space for a pop-up or event, but I would suggest that whoever volunteered their parking lot (Gary Dillabough) should allow that lot to be used for free customer parking. I think that would be the best use of this space.

**April-** Through all of this we're going to have to agree that a rising tide raises all ships. For example, in our limited situation it might be beneficial to completely close down the streets to allow for safe social distancing. We have to reimagine and consider open plans. We should think of something comprehensive and welcoming that does the most good for the most people.

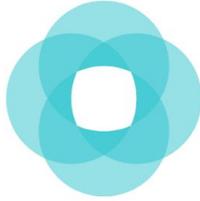
## 8. Adjournment

The next Greater Downtown San José Economic Recovery Task Force meeting will be on *Wednesday May 27, 2020 from 1:00pm to 2:30pm via Zoom.*

**CM Peralez-** Because not all of our greater downtown businesses can participate in this Task Force we want to gather information, feedback and insight through this survey my office has created with your feedback. Please complete this survey and also share with business owners you have contact with so we can compile this data.

**CM Peralez-** For Task Force Co-Chairs we have Brendan, Wisa, Meaghan, Cache, and Chris. We'll send an email out for a poll and a vote on that. I would like to ask you to all keep in mind that this Task Force may continue to grow over the coming weeks.





# GREATER DOWNTOWN SAN JOSÉ ECONOMIC RECOVERY TASK FORCE

SUPPORTED BY THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER RAUL PERALEZ

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For More Information about the Greater Downtown San José Economic Recovery Task Force,  
please visit [www.sjd3.com/dtsjrecovery](http://www.sjd3.com/dtsjrecovery)