COVID-19 BUSINESS ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN
Preparationg San Marcos businesses to reopen safely and get back to business.
The City of San Marcos created this strategic Economic Recovery Plan to address the economic challenges many local businesses are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan provides a comprehensive look at the strategy and actions the City has implemented to support our valued business community.
WHAT’S INCLUDED IN THE PLAN

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05 | Financial Assistance
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07 | Collaboration with Regional Partners
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At the City of San Marcos, the health and safety of our community is our top priority. Our local business owners and their employees are an essential part of our community. When our businesses thrive, San Marcos thrives.

The goal for this plan is to help San Marcos businesses reopen safely and get back to business effectively.

The plan outlines the programs, tools and resources available to local businesses. It highlights the actions the City and our partners across the region are taking to support our business community, and it outlines programs that have been implemented since the City declared a local emergency on March 16, 2020.

We are guided by the City’s mission to improve the quality of life of those who live, work or visit San Marcos by providing a safe family atmosphere that is rich and diverse in cultural and natural resources and promotes economic and educational opportunities.

We strive to make sure that the San Marcos Spirit of Service is evident in everything we do here at the City, and we hope that this plan will serve as a one-stop shop for businesses to access the support they need to move forward successfully as they embark on the road to recovery.
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Recognizing the significant negative impacts of the COVID-19 emergency situation on our local business community, particularly our small and independent local businesses, the City of San Marcos acted quickly to provide more than $2.94 million in assistance to 120 local businesses in the form of short-term loans through our COVID-19 Business Sustainability Program.

Fast facts
• $2,944,800 in loans funded through the City’s General Fund Reserves
• 120 businesses assisted
• March 24, 2020: Loan program approved by the City Council

“The COVID-19 emergency will undoubtedly have negative budgetary impacts on the City itself, and we will need to find ways to address them. At the same time, we fully recognize the need to maintain a diverse and fiscally sound business community.”
—Mayor Rebecca Jones

“...we fully recognize the need to maintain a diverse and fiscally sound business community.”
SUPPORT FOR COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL TENANTS

Temporary Eviction Moratorium
San Marcos is committed to helping residents and business owners stay in their homes and businesses.

On March 24, 2020, San Marcos City Council took action to protect residential and commercial tenants from the possibility of eviction by reason of financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and approved a temporary moratorium against such evictions which will expire on June 30.

Learn more at www.san-marcos.net/evictions.
COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL PARTNERS

Discover Our Recovery Business Safety Promise
The City is happy to support and assist with the San Marcos Chamber of Commerce’s Discover Our Recovery Business Safety Promise. The Chamber’s program is designed to help business owners communicate their commitment to following all public health orders and guidelines from the State of California, the County of San Diego, the City of San Marcos and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help protect their employees, customers and the community.

Business owners that make the Discover Our Recovery Business Safety Promise can display the decal in their windows to let customers know that the business has committed to take all the County’s recommended precautions to help provide a safe environment.

Learn more at www.san-marcos.net/sanmarcossafe.

Coordination with Utility Providers
San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) was one of the first utilities to voluntarily place a moratorium on utility bill
disconnections during this crisis. They will not charge late payment fees for business customers whose finances have been hit by the coronavirus situation, and do not charge them for residential customers. Call its Customer Contact Center at 1 (800) 411-7343 to make payment arrangements.

Collaboration with Innovate78

We also worked to develop content that showed the story of how our businesses were pivoting during COVID-19: innovate78.com/connect/blog
The City of San Marcos is committed to communicating effectively with our residents and businesses to help our community thrive. Timely, accurate and transparent communication is more important than ever as our community responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. Links to the City’s social media platforms can be found below:

**City of San Marcos on Social Media**
- [facebook.com/sanmarcospolicy](http://facebook.com/sanmarcospolicy)
- [twitter.com/sanmarcospolicy](http://twitter.com/sanmarcospolicy)
- [instagram.com/sanmarcospolicy/](http://instagram.com/sanmarcospolicy/)
- [linkedin.com/company/city-of-san-marcos-ca](http://linkedin.com/company/city-of-san-marcos-ca)
- [youtube.com/channel/UC95wmXlQpLibZWa1YMyy4tQ](http://youtube.com/channel/UC95wmXlQpLibZWa1YMyy4tQ)

**Fire Department on Social Media**
- [instagram.com/sanmarcosfiredept/](http://instagram.com/sanmarcosfiredept/)
- [twitter.com/@SMFD](http://twitter.com/@SMFD)

**COVID-19 Crisis Communications Plan**
The City’s Communications team created a comprehensive crisis communications plan to guide our response to COVID-19. Key public outreach campaigns and marketing initiatives that support the business sector are highlighted below.
COVID-19 Response Information Hub
The City built a dedicated COVID-19 Response webpage that’s frequently updated with the latest news and information relevant to residents, businesses and visitors.

- 42,000 page views

COVID-19 Social Media Outreach and Education Campaign
The City leveraged our Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube channels to share up-to-the-minute information and respond to questions and concerns from residents and business owners.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

- 155+ Social Media Posts
- 19.6k Engagements (likes, comments, shares)
- 330k Impressions
- 5.4k Link Clicks

Open for Business Digital Marketing Campaign
An “Open for Business” campaign was launched to share information and promote local restaurants, breweries, wineries and grocery stores that are open and serving customers. The goal is to increase awareness of open businesses and inspire connection between our business community, workers and residents. The campaign includes the following elements:

**OPEN FOR BUSINESS WEBPAGE**

- 201,000 page views
EMAIL BLASTS TO RESIDENTS SIGNED UP FOR THE CITY’S NEWS ALERTS
• Sent to 4,400 email subscribers
• Sign up for City news alerts by visiting san-marcos.net/alerts

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES BY ORDERING TAKE-OUT

BY THE NUMBERS

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Economic Development Week Campaign
The City created an Economic Development Week social media campaign to highlight local businesses and economic statistics.
• 43+ social media posts
• 64k impressions
• 2.4k engagements (likes, comments, shares)
• 213 link clicks

Economic Development Article Series and Business News
We also frequently highlight business that are in the news or part of a larger trend in the community. Recent example:

Women-Owned Businesses Make Their Mark in San Marcos article focusing on San
Marcos’ unique community of female entrepreneurs received 390 page views and was featured in the San Diego Union-Tribune.

**San Marcos City App and Virtual City Hall**

Residents and businesses are encouraged to connect with the City via the San Marcos City App, the City’s website, and via phone and email. Public counters at City Hall and Public Works are now open, but we are keeping as many services as possible available virtually.

- 8+ social media posts
- 15k impressions
- 378 engagements (likes, comments, shares)
- 135 link clicks

**Senior Resources Newsletter Series Highlighting Special Business Hours**

The City continues to create an ongoing series of newsletters for our senior population with information about health and safety, along with businesses and programs with special hours and services for seniors.

- 9+ social media posts
- 14.3k impressions
- 435 engagements (likes, comments, shares)
- 172 link clicks
BUSINESS-FRIENDLY POLICIES

The City of San Marcos is here to support businesses through COVID-19 as they gradually reopen under State and County orders.

With new social distancing requirements, many businesses want to move some activities outdoors. In response, the City has temporarily changed our rules regarding outdoor uses and is now allowing restaurants, retail and other activities in parking lots, as well as sidewalk patios in some cases. This can be done with a fast, easy, no-cost permit process.

We’ve also changed our regulations to allow some signage without permits and an array of additional changes to help businesses and community organizations.

Temporary modifications to the San Marcos Municipal Code

DRIVE-THRU OR DESIGNATED CURBSIDE PICKUP
Temporary Outdoor Business Permit Required. Businesses will be allowed to designate their customer parking spaces for curbside pickup. This will be permitted in commercial centers and other locations provided that businesses work with neighbors and property management companies to minimize conflicts. ADA stalls and fire lanes may not be used for this purpose.

SIGNAGE
No permit required for on-site temporary banner signs of prescribed sizes. No new permanent signage or off-site signage is permitted. Business owners must coordinate with property management regarding site specific sign restrictions.
OUTDOOR DINING
Outdoor dining will be permitted in various locations provided that ADA access, ingress/egress requirements and other health and safety requirements can be met and that existing occupancy is not exceeded.

Public right of way or private sidewalks | Special Event Permits and other permits may be required (Right of Way, Encroachment, Traffic Control). This applies only in University District/ North City and along non-arterial roads only. This may include street closures with appropriate plans and permits.

Private parking lots | Temporary Outdoor Business Permit Required. Applicable to certain location types with required timeframes to be determined (i.e., sites with shared uses such as breweries in industrial areas may have staggered hours to avoid conflicts). Individual approvals required. Other permits may be required in some cases (Special Event Permit, Right of Way, Encroachment, Traffic Control).

TO-GO AND ON-SITE OUTDOOR CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL
Allows for consistency with the Alcohol and Beverage Control (ABC) Notices that provide that bona fide eating places (i.e. restaurants) selling beer, wine and pre-mixed drinks or cocktails for consumption on the premises pursuant to an ABC license, may sell alcohol for off premise consumption in conjunction with meals prepared for pickup or delivery. These businesses may also allow on-site outdoor alcohol consumption with appropriate permits as outlined above (see “outdoor dining”). This modification is effective only for the duration of the ABC notices.

PERSONAL SERVICES (INSTRUCTIONAL/ FITNESS)
Temporary Outdoor Business Permit Required. When public health orders permit such uses, would allow for instructional/fitness facilities to deviate from their Conditional Use Permit or Director’s Permit conditions and allow for outdoor activities on site in a parking lot or other open area. Allows for indoor activities provided safe reopening and any other safety requirements are followed.
RETAIL BUSINESSES
Temporary Outdoor Business Permit Required. Allows for all retail businesses to open with interior sales under safe reopening plans. Allow for curbside pickup if desired by business. Also allows businesses to designate their customer parking spaces for curbside pickup. The number of spaces would be decided by business owner in terms of what works for their business, provided it does not exceed the number spaces allocated for their suite. Allows for outdoor sales in parking lot if desired by business.

HOME OCCUPATION
Temporary Outdoor Business Permit Required. Allows for on-site customers, employees, and stock-in-trade on site at home occupations.

GROUP ASSEMBLY
Temporary Outdoor Business Permit Required. When public health orders permit such uses, would allow for assemblies in various locations provided that ADA access, ingress/egress requirements and other health and safety requirements can be met. Requires
individual plan approval. Other permits may be required (Special Event Permit, Right of Way, Encroachment, Traffic Control).

**RETAIL EXPANSION IN INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS**
No permit required. Allows for an expansion of retail uses from 10% up to 50% of building square footage within buildings or on sites zoned as Industrial. Retail sales must be for the sale of a product(s) produced on site.

*These provisions apply throughout the Stay at Home order. They are only applicable as allowed under the State or County public health orders in effect at the time.*

**Apply for a Temporary Outdoor Business Permit**
Businesses can apply for a Temporary Outdoor Business Permit [here](#).

**Learn more**
For more information, send an email to [tempbusinesspermit@san-marcos.net](mailto:tempbusinesspermit@san-marcos.net) or contact Economic Development Director Tess Sangster at (760) 744-1050, ext. 3120 or [tsangster@san-marcos.net](mailto:tsangster@san-marcos.net).
CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Staff continues to review development projects currently underway within the City and projects that are scheduled to commence in the future, they include:

UNIVERSITY DISTRICT/NORTH CITY
The City continues to work with the North City development team on the 200-acre mixed use University District Specific Plan. The core of the urban east side has been developed
including garage and infrastructure work, new academic facility, residential and various commercial and office uses. Plans for future development on the east of the University District Specific Plan continue to evolve. In addition, plans for mass grading of the University District west of Twin Oaks Valley Road are under City review. Clearing has commenced with mass grading to follow which will initiate extension of Discovery Street providing a connection between the University District and the City’s primary commercial core along San Marcos Boulevard.

**MARCOS**
The Marcos project is envisioned as a multi-faceted regional hub for the arts and interactive community events. It will incorporate makers’ spaces and parks, an amphitheater, restaurants, a potential hotel and other venues in an architecturally engaging human-scale environment. Staff is currently coordinating with the applicant to provide feedback and answer questions regarding initial high-level design and use concepts.

**KAISER PERMANENTE HOSPITAL**
The City is currently processing entitlements for Kaiser Permanente to construct a new 7 story, 428,500 square foot state-of-the-art hospital with approximately 206 beds. The facility would meet LEED Gold standards for green design or better. Entitlements are expected to be completed in the Summer of 2020.

**KARL STRAUSS BREWERY**
The City is in the process of reviewing post-entitlement approvals (building, grading and improvement plans) for the new Karl Strauss Brewery. The Karl Strauss project will bring an innovative new concept to the City of San Marcos. The brewery and tasting room will be designed around a garden/ courtyard and supported by three permanent food trucks (with designated spaces). The courtyard offers space for activation such as live entertainment.
City CIP Projects
The first phase of active construction for the two-year, $108 million San Marcos Creek Project started in late March 2020 amid the COVID-19 outbreak and Governor Gavin Newsom’s “stay at home” order. Given the importance of the project and its role in providing critical transportation infrastructure and relief from flooding, the City continued with construction as planned, keeping the construction team at work.

The project has a comprehensive outreach plan for all stages of construction. To keep businesses informed and to minimize impacts, the team provides direct outreach to businesses including targeted e-mail updates to address business-specific concerns. The team is also preparing signage and outreach materials to alert businesses, their employees and patrons of upcoming road closures and detours to help them navigate the area during construction.

The team also began integrating its information with Waze during the “stay at home” order. Waze is an emerging engagement tool for agencies with construction projects requiring road closures and detours. The Creek project team is using Waze to provide real-time traffic and construction updates to the community, right in the palm of their hand. Providing updates to delivery companies, businesses, residents and employees allows business to continue “as usual” during construction, providing a positive economic benefit to the City.
With recent announcements from the federal government and many states beginning to allow businesses to reopen, building owners and facility managers will be getting ready to reintroduce occupants to structures that may have been relatively vacant for an extended period. The National Fire Protection Association has developed a list of factors that should be confirmed by a qualified person before re-opening a building to ensure safety of all its occupants. Based on the assumption that the building was in compliance prior to being closed, the checklist provides some initial steps to help ensure that the occupancy is safe enough to reopen until a qualified professional can complete the regularly scheduled Inspection, Testing, and Maintenance.

Any alterations to the building that adhere to public health guidelines, such as the installation of physical barriers or automatic door openers, will need to be evaluated to ensure that they are properly designed and installed and do not negatively impact the fire protection and life safety systems currently in place.

The complete fire and safety checklist can be found here.
SAN MARCOS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Starting a business
- Demographic statistics
- Connecting to other business resources
- Permitting and development assistance
- Site selection assistance
- Business liaison services
- Pre-development meetings
- Internship placement
- Business expansion
- Workforce needs