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KATHLEEN DOOLEY, COMMISSIONER  
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MANNY YEKUTIEL, COMMISSIONER

**July 13, 2020**

**Resolution No. 002-2020-SBC**

**Ensuring Small Business Success with Shared Spaces**

**Resolution**

WHEREAS, the global pandemic, ignited by COVID-19, has led to an economic crisis of an unprecedented magnitude;

WHEREAS, the City of San Francisco and the State of California are under a State of Emergency requiring a shelter in place that has severely impaired small businesses;

WHEREAS, according to the San Francisco City Controller and the Mayor's Budget Office, nearly 14,000 businesses that typically generate monthly revenues of \$3 billion a month and employ 166,000 workers are fully or partially impacted; and

WHEREAS, the City is focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, while also actively and creatively planning for economic recovery;

WHEREAS, social distancing requirements will continue to apply at least until there is a vaccine for COVID-19;

WHEREAS, given the recent increase in COVID-19 cases in San Francisco, indoor dining and other small business activities have been paused indefinitely, leaving the use of public outdoor space as one of the few options left to save small businesses from permanent closure;

WHEREAS, the Shared Spaces program launched on June 12, 2020 and allows some local businesses to apply to temporarily use public spaces to operate outside in a safe, socially distanced way;

WHEREAS, the goal of the Shared Spaces program is to support neighborhoods by providing additional public space to operate local business activities;

WHEREAS, the Shared Spaces program is intended to have low barriers for participation and no permit fees;

WHEREAS, the Shared Spaces program has been in effect for approximately one month;

WHEREAS, the Small Business Commission discussed a number of challenges and barriers to participation in the Shared Spaces program at a specially scheduled meeting on July 2, 2020;

WHEREAS, that discussion identified more challenging than anticipated applications for street closure; higher than anticipated costs related to street closure requirements, including for additional staffing and physical barriers; administrative and cost challenges related to requesting the use of platforms and wind barriers for outside dining; higher than anticipated costs related to insurance requirements; that the Shared Spaces program did not collaborate closely with neighborhoods more vulnerable to gentrification before launch; that program guidance was not issued in languages other than English at the time of their release; that participation in the Shared Spaces program has not been observed City-wide; that due to unanticipated costs some businesses cannot afford to participate; that sidewalk space has been utilized when parking spaces and/or street closures would be a better solution; that designers, architects, artists, and activists have expressed interest in donating their services to help small businesses participate in Shared Spaces but do not know how to connect with them; and that fitness studios wishing to utilize park space must pay a fee per class, unlike all other businesses; therefore be it,

RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission urges the Mayor's Office, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, the Municipal Transit Agency, the Planning Department, the Fire Department, Public Works, and Recreation and Parks to work together to ensure that equitable City-wide participation in the Shared Spaces program is prioritized in the administration of the Shared Spaces program; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the City encourage street closures and the use of parking spaces over the use of sidewalk space; and be it,

RESOLVED, that street closures be encouraged by City agencies through simplifying prerequisites; and be it,

RESOLVED, that street closure applications should be approved, without delay, once these prerequisites are met; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the evaluation of street closure applications be evaluated outside of the traditional Interdepartmental Staff Committee On Traffic and Transportation process, and instead be evaluated by a team led by the Shared Spaces program manager; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the City tangibly support Shared Spaces street closures through providing insurance for street closures, providing tables and chairs for merchants' customers use within those street closures, providing required signage, providing metal barricades already owned by the City, and providing delineator cones and poles; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the City should establish a program for bulk purchases of PPE, including masks, for businesses participating in Shared Spaces, and that grants and loans be made available for more vulnerable small businesses,

RESOLVED, that existing Shared Spaces staffing requirements for street closure entrances should be evaluated for long term sustainability, reduced or eliminated wherever possible, and that staffing be provided through the Department of Emergency Management when needed; and be it,

RESOLVED, that City agencies ensure the Shared Spaces program equitably benefits small businesses across the City by proactively selecting streets in commercial corridors that would be eligible for closure, with a focus on Cultural Districts and areas with a high volume of legacy businesses; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the application process for the Shared Spaces program must be simplified, particularly where coordinating with multiple City agencies; and be it,

RESOLVED, that City agencies ensure all Shared Spaces program applicants receive high quality and individualized customer service assistance as they navigate the requirements of the program, with the goal of shepherding every applicant through the program as quickly and efficiently as possible; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the Shared Spaces program be promoted to all small businesses across the City neighborhoods, and in languages other than English, to ensure an equitable opportunity to participate in the program; and be it,

RESOLVED, that non-English speaking monolingual business owners interested in the Shared Spaces program receive specialized assistance in navigating the program requirements and application; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the City coordinate with local neighborhood organizations to provide Shared Spaces mini-grants and loans specifically targeted to disadvantaged communities, and be it,

RESOLVED, that the City should connect designers, architects, planners, artists, activists, and others interested in donating their services to beautify the City, to businesses in need through sponsoring design and art contests, listing their offerings on the Shared Spaces website, displaying their work on the web and in print; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the Shared Spaces program will remain in effect for at least three years, or for the duration of the economic crisis so that businesses, artists, and communities are incentivized to invest in, and beautify the City for all; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the City reduce the administrative challenges and costs prohibitive to employing the use of platforms and wind barriers that help insure the viability of outside dining without compromising airflow and the safety of workers and diners; and be it

RESOLVED, that the City, where reasonable and safe, delay construction, tree trimming, tree removal, and other public works projects that may otherwise inhibit a commercial corridor or business's participation in the Shared Spaces program; and be it,

RESOLVED, that the Shared Spaces program be modified to include businesses interested in hosting outdoor fitness classes in public park spaces, at no cost to the business.

I hereby certify that the Small Business Commission ADOPTED the foregoing Resolution on July 13, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Regina Dick-Endrizzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi  
Director, Office of Small Business

Ayes – Commissioners Dooley, Huie, Laguana, Ortiz-Cartagena, Yekutiel, and Zouzounis  
Nays – None  
Absent – Commissioner Adams