A new way for local businesses to operate in new times

The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented economic impacts on all types of businesses.

Restaurants and retail stores allowed to reopen for dine-in services and in-store sales, with reduced occupancy and social distancing.

Goal: Help businesses get through the pandemic by giving them space to serve customers at a capacity that will allow them to survive.
Framework: Public Right-of-Way Use
Pilot Program Suggestions to City Council

Companion programs to support mobile food vendors and brick and mortar businesses

Open air commerce - allow restaurants and retail to access the right of way.

Pilot with a defined end date to explore new types of uses

Utilize public spaces that have seen decreases in vehicle traffic and parking
Why a Pilot Program

- **Support local economies.**
  - Ensuring that businesses can re-open safely and that people have job opportunities is key to our overall economic recovery.

- **Amplify & support public health guidance.**
  - Increase available outdoor space to more easily comply with core public health strategy or physical distancing to foster public health and improve health outcomes for everyone.

- **Act now and adapt over time. Action is needed now.**
  - Pilot with an end date of Oct 31, 2021 will allow for testing of concepts and community feedback.
Food Truck Pilot Program

- Ten (10) food trucks permitted in 2020
- Biggest hurdle = proper insurance endorsement
- Program recently extended to Oct 31, 2021
Food Truck Pilot Notes

- **Different locations during COVID** - neighborhood HOAs and apartment complexes scheduled food trucks

- **Community feedback** - not much feedback, a few complaints about trucks parked near condo buildings early-on, nothing recently

- **Businesses partnered with food trucks** for pop up events to bring more customers to both

- **Food Truck Fridays** - partnership with Food Truck Association is very popular and extended through October

- Overall positive from both industry and community
Outdoor Dining and Retail Pilot Program

- **Sidewalk Dining and Sales** - No applicants yet, but lots of activity

- **Parking Lot Dining and Retail** - One permit issued, a little bit of interest

- **Parklets** - Four permits issued, and lots of interest, city owned parklets built and distributed

- **Street or Alley Closure** - One permit issued, not much other interest

- Program extended a year to 10/31/21
Sidewalk Dining & Retail

- No permits have been issued
- Substantially more sidewalk uses during COVID
- Sidewalk tables are the most popular right now
- Allowed as long as they maintain 4’ of clear sidewalk space for pedestrians
Parking Lot Dining

- One permit has been issued (Daffodil Bowl)
- Reports 25% increase in restaurant business since outdoor patio opened
- Not a lot of interest from businesses in this option
Parklets

- 4 permitted so far, all for City owned parklets - a LOT of interest from others

- Feedback was that businesses don’t have the money or energy to build a parklet right now

- City built 4 parklets to lease to businesses - had 10 applicants

- Benefits we have heard - visible vibrancy of diners encourages more shopping and “feet on the street”
Temporary Street & Alley Closures

- One permit has been issued (Nights on Meeker by PMSA)
- Allows space for local businesses to serve more customers, with outdoor café space and retail pop-ups
- Not much interest from individual businesses - needs more set-up and activation than many can do right now
Free Sign Permits

- Administrative waiver of permit fees for wall-mounted sign permits
- Expired on 8/31/2020 and was renewed administratively for another 90 days, will now expire 11/30/2020
- So far 4 businesses have benefitted from this program - one downtown, one on River Rd and two in South Hill
Wrap up/lessons learned?

- Think outside the box and act quickly
- Keep the process simple for businesses and staff
- A streamlined process may not be enough for businesses to implement these options