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CORONAVIRUS SAN JOSE

San Jose leaders to vote on plan allowing businesses to operate outdoors

 by **Nadia Lopez**

May 19, 2020



Mayor Sam Liccardo is pictured in this file photo. Photo by Katie Lauer.

In an effort to kickstart the economy once shelter-in-place restrictions are lifted, San Jose lawmakers on Tuesday will vote on a proposal to help reopen some small businesses by allowing them to operate outside.

San Jose Al Fresco, the proposal authored by Mayor Sam Liccardo and Councilmember Dev Davis, would allow businesses such as restaurants, salons, cafes, gyms, yoga studios and other retailers to take advantage of the city's sunny weather by setting up shop outside in public spaces such as parking lots, parks, alleys, plazas and streets, once Santa Clara County's stay-at-home order is eased.

With nearly 60 percent of coronavirus layoffs coming from the food and hospitality industry, they said, San Jose should follow in the footsteps of other cities such as New York and Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, to use public space for outdoor use. The move would allow for sufficient social distancing among workers and the public, they added.

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operations at half capacity or less. In anticipation of the struggles that they will face in attempting to resume operations safely, let's clear the roadblocks now."

If the measure is approved, the city will explore using federal reimbursement or funding to help small businesses cover application fees and costs.

Required face coverings

As several Bay Area counties began easing shelter-in-place orders, some San Jose leaders want to begin enforcing face coverings, a move the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 — especially with asymptomatic transmission of people who contract the virus.

On Monday, Santa Clara County public health leaders loosened local health orders to allow certain retailers to reopen for curbside pick-up. But, they cautioned, face coverings will be required inside all businesses.

The City Council will discuss the proposal authored by Councilmember Sergio Jimenez and Vice Mayor Chappie Jones, which would require most people to wear a mask every time they step outside.

San Jose's proposal exempts masks for people exercising, children 6 years old or younger, or anyone who is otherwise unable to wear a face covering without assistance, as well as those advised by medical professionals not to wear one.

"Considering the city of San Jose is the most populous city in the region with a population of over 1 million and 66% of the county's confirmed COVID-19 cases, adherence to this proposed mandate could have significant influence in further flattening the curve and reducing the spread of COVID-19," they wrote.

San Francisco, Contra Costa, Alameda, Marin, San Mateo and Sonoma counties have issued similar mandates, as well as the cities of Palo Alto, Cupertino and Milpitas.

Digital inclusion strategy

San Jose leaders have devised a plan to provide every student with broadband access and digital tools, calling on private technology companies to help bridge the digital divide as the coronavirus pandemic threatens to broaden that gap.

After approving an update to the digital inclusion strategy two weeks ago, San Jose leaders will discuss a partnership with the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) to distribute donated funds and resources among the city's neediest students as they transition to online learning.

San Jose has received nearly \$63,000 in donations to bring internet and Wi-Fi access across the city as well as 139 devices and 200 cellphones from companies such as AT&T, IBM and Revivn.

The city will also begin hosting "device drives" in partnership with nonprofit the Tech Exchange to refurbish donated computers and distribute them to students in need. The first two events are planned for Willow Glen on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Bank of America at 1245 Lincoln Ave. and in Evergreen on May 27, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Evergreen Valley High School.

The city will explore additional funding opportunities, officials said, including other public-private partnerships with telecommunication companies.

ARO temporary reduction of rent

As part of a plan to reduce the financial burden on tenants in light of the coronavirus

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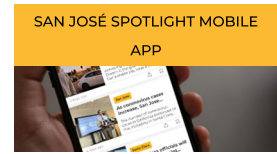
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"In order to encourage landlords to enter into temporary reduced rent agreements with their tenants during this difficult economic time...the reduced rent agreements should not impact rent increases the following year in 2021," Housing Director Jacky Morales-Ferrand said.

If a tenant's rent before the pandemic was \$2,000 a month and the landlord temporarily reduced the rent to \$1,500, for example, future rent increases allowed by the city's rent control laws will be 5 percent of the original rent, or \$100, when the contract is renewed. That means the tenant's rent will be \$2,100 in 2021.

If approved, the change will be in effect for one year after the city's moratorium on rental increases expires in December.

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hoapres
May 19, 2020 at 3:51PM

Tough Luck.

If I need to open up my business inside then that is exactly what I am going to do. If San Jose gives me a hard time then I become an instant hero on Fox news.

People are fed up with this nonsense.

A sit down restaurant eating outside by the dumpster. Right.

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