



May 19, 2020

Mayor Kevin McKeown
Councilmember Gleam Davis
Councilmember Sue Himmelrich
Councilmember Ana Maria Jara
Councilmember Greg Morena

Councilmember Terry O'Day
Councilmember Ted Winterer
Interim City Manager Lane Dilg
Planning Director David Martin
Hunter Hall, Main St. Business Improvement Assoc.

Re: Main Street Economic Recovery

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers, Interim City Manager, and Planning Director:

Main Street is more than a thoroughfare; it is the heart and soul of Ocean Park. This proud and funky route now faces a grave threat to its future, which in turn imperils the City's post-pandemic economic success. The City government, local merchants, and residents through the Ocean Park Association must act quickly, dramatically, and in partnership to address this situation.

The City has already taken admirable steps to reduce regulatory and operational red tape to help existing businesses reopen safely and new ones take root. Without more creative and innovative steps, however, many Main Street merchants will fail, storefronts will remain empty and boarded up, and crime and graffiti will soon follow. We cannot let this happen.

OPA enjoys a fruitful, long-standing partnership with the Main Street Business Improvement Association. In its "Main Street Master Plan" letter dated 5/9/20, the BID proposes a number of scenarios for revitalizing Main Street and its merchants, particularly in light of recent ABC relief on serving of alcohol in public spaces. We believe any solutions must address restaurateurs' needs for additional outdoor seating to buttress their business models, diners' concerns about health and safety, and residents' interest in protecting and enhancing the community.

We appreciate the BID's proposals, but don't endorse any particular one of them at this time. What we DO support wholeheartedly is an expedited process to discuss and evaluate these and other proposals with input from key constituencies such as OPA. Our Board of Directors, on behalf of our members, will dedicate itself to timely and constructive discussion on the use of valuable outdoor spaces such as streets, parking lots, parklets and sidewalks to address two related issues:



Ocean Park Association

1. How to help make merchants successful and thereby preserve and enhance Main Street as an economic engine for the south side and a significant sales tax generator for the City, with understanding that restaurants and cafes will drive the initial recovery.
2. How to maintain the viability of Main Street as a safe, fun and vibrant gathering place for neighbors and visitors, particularly as ongoing health concerns demand new solutions for seating and serving, while properly managing cherished public spaces.

At this difficult time, we stand ready to work closely with the City and Ocean Park's merchants on an urgent, innovative and flexible process to revitalize this important neighborhood and the City as a whole.

Thank you for your service and support to the Ocean Park community.

Marc Morgenstern
President, on behalf of the Ocean Park Association