

DOWNTOWN FRESNO PARTNERSHIP

Marketing & Business Development Committee

June 14, 2023
1P.M. – 2P.M

Downtown Fresno Partnership
845 Fulton Street

MINUTES

Location: Downtown Fresno Partnership, 845 Fulton Street
This meeting will also be accessible via video at the following:

[Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 816 7933 0792

Password: 996964

Present: Lupe Perez, Michael Behlen, Beth Wilkinson, Phillip Kliewer

Staff: Elliott Balch, Gloria Valdovinos, Brian Kelly,

- I. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 1:04pm

- II. Recent & Ongoing Events
 - a. State of Downtown Recap
 - b. Market on Kern – Market on Kern is going well, there is an increased effort in having there be a stronger community aspect at the market, this includes inviting the library and local businesses like Hashtag Balance to host events during market time.
 - c. Arthop - Balch mentioned a list of items he will soon be discussing with the City Manager that include unsponsored events and how to find ways to patrol them, that include organic events like Art Hop and Sunday Cruise Nights
 - d. SipHop – SipHop will be put on hold for now, it was previously planned by the Downtown Fresno Foundation, but the foundation is now focusing on more charitable actions, DFP might pick it up later as it is a business promotional activity once the trolleys become available. Perez stated trolleys are coming, she suggested also using BRT. Balch believes the trolleys will help the student population to come Downtown.

- III. Coming Events
 - a. Vamos –Vamos is an event DFP is working with Fresno Street Eats on, it is happening on June 23rd and Downtown businesses are being invited to set up a booth. Perez mentioned that on the same day, Tioga is having a fundraiser for Bitwise employees and the City is having a summer get together for employees. Behlen chimed in and stated there is an event happening at Fulton Street Coffee (Cameras and Coffee) happening Saturday June 17th.

---Balch brought up the great work that has been happening on social media, the Instagram page has 29,000+ followers and the staff is really focusing on showcasing new businesses and businesses in downtown that does not have social media or a good following. Kliewer suggested using Tik Tok as a social media platform, Valdovinos commented that it is something they plan on doing eventually but currently do not have the time for, but as the trolleys are available and we try to get the college demographic into Downtown we will revisit it.

- b. Fulton Street Party
- c. El Grito – Balch mentioned he had a conversation with Jose from Univision discussing their relationship with Downtown last month, Jose is willing to make a Grito event happen the night of September 15th, there has been no update made on this. Perez stated that they are doing a Grito event at either City Hall or Eaton Plaza, where they did it last year, it included a flag raising although she admits it was not as big as it should have been. The Mexican Consulate took the lead on it and reserved the area, it was done during the lunch hour and Univision is not involved. Perez stated the MC consider themselves to be the only people able to do the Grito, Perez will look into the details and will let DFP know. Balch suggested creating a restaurant night or the next Vamos event on that date, Perez noted Mariposa will be under construction by that point but Kern can be used.
- d. Christmas Parade/Tree Lighting –

IV. Economic & Business Development Update

- a. City Façade Grant partnership with Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation - Façade applications closed on 6/13/23 and DFP helped 16 businesses put in their applications. The goal was to help as many neighboring businesses as possible to apply so there would be a greater impact in façade improvements. Perez stated the federal gov. Is taking back any AARPA money that has not been spent so there is uncertainty on whether there would be more grants like this in the future.
- b. Bulk parking buy – The survey that was sent out did not get a great response, but Valdovinos will be contacting a few businesses that had made inquiries to Perez about parking passes but did not fill out the survey.
- c. City Youth Ambassadors RFP - DFP submitted their proposal to manage worksites under the YJCP Program where one can apply for up to \$300,000 for 6 months, this listed 17 part time positions at 29 hours a week, Perez stated she would remove herself from the discussion, but Balch decided to table it and come back to it in the end. Balch stated that they don't know if there will be funding after the 6 months but there is no guarantee.

V. Supporting Development

- a. Infrastructure Funding – Balch sent a proposal to Kresge to fund a position that would be about development coming through the Downtown Foundation but funding us to have a function that is about supporting inclusive and sustainable development as it is not funded by the PBID. The position would be an Inclusive and Sustainable Manager position that would help facilitate financing of development, assistance with coordinated retail leasing, community engagement and being engaged in conversation about infrastructure. Balch mentioned Downtown San Jose Association has a non-profit corporation that owns the San Pedro Square (food court) that is own by a subsidiary of DTSJ. He also mentioned this was probably made possible by new market tax credits and that is something we need to see more of here. Balch stated that the senate and assembly cut the \$250 million originally proposed down to \$50 million so we are trying to get that restored back as it is a huge cut, Balch stated it will be tough as both houses agreed on the \$50 million but the efforts will continue.

- b. Development Financing - Balch stated the treasury is going through a recertification of CDFI's and this should hopefully empower more lenders.
- c. Coordinated Retail Leasing Strategy – This is coming out of conversation that Sevak has had about Master Planning, what's missing is that we have various small businesses in their storefronts, but we have plenty of larger spaces that are vacant. There is a need for anchor tenants in Downtown and Balch has met with a national consultant on retail who helped with a plan about this, and what needs to be done is to assemble several opportunities, and hire a national broker for whichever brands want to move in a pack and get people signed up to come together so no one brand is the only one coming. Kliewer asked where these businesses would go, Balch answered both existing and future spaces, current spaces like Fallas (This was recently purchased). Perez mentioned there is a current problem with retail right now where other cities are dealing with grab and dash crimes and so companies are reconsidering going into certain areas and are changing their model as this is causing them concern. Kliewer stated this will fix itself organically once there is more housing in Downtown. Perez mentioned a reason why they have had a problem attracting retail is that in the downtown area there is not a lot of housing and that is what these companies look for. Balch hopes that the approach of getting multiple businesses in at once will help. Balch shared with the committee market research data that shows 1.5 million visits by 557,300 unique visitors to Fulton Street from May 2022- May 2023. Noting that 59.9% of Fulton came directly from home or Chukchansi Park and 52.4% of visitors to Fulton next went home or to Chukchansi Park and the median distance was 6 miles. Kliewer asked about a schedule for development as he thinks this is something that could help get these businesses in. Balch stated that he is unsure if we get notified when projects are getting started but that we should be added to the list of the Development Review Committee at the City, he will investigate it.

Kliewer asked about the South stadium project and Perez stated there has not been movement and they have not gotten an RFP out. The infrastructure is very aged, so it causes some obstacles.

- d. Inclusive Development Scenarios
- e. DFF vs DFP

VI. Marketing and Communications

- a. Campaign Update – Engagement Data
- b. RFP
- c. Database project

Balch also shared that DFP received a few RFP responses as they are looking for a new office to better suit the company's needs.

VII. Adjourn: Next Meeting – August 2, 2023