



Legislation Text

File #: 20-03, **Version:** 1

Discussion of possible relocation of the South San Francisco Farmers' Market to the downtown area. (*Sheri Boles, Community Programs Manager*)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council consider the relocation of the South San Francisco Farmers' Market from the back parking lot of the Joseph A. Fernekes Building at Orange Memorial Park to the downtown area, City Hall back parking lot, as a one-year pilot program, operating from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., on Saturday, May 2, and running 26 consecutive Saturdays, ending on Saturday, October 24, 2020.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

Since 2009 to present the South San Francisco Farmers' Market (Farmers' Market) operates annually in the back parking lot of the Joseph A. Fernekes Building at Orange Memorial Park on 26 consecutive Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning the first week in May to the last week in October. It is managed by a contractor, Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association (PCFMA), under the auspices of the City Manager's Office.

To stimulate attendance, in 2010 it was moved to the South San Francisco BART Station; however, due to lower attendance, in 2011 it returned to Orange Memorial Park. Attendance at the Farmers' Market remains steady but stagnant at approximately 150 visitors weekly with about 12 vendors participating. In an effort to boost the vibrancy of the Farmers' Market and increase foot traffic, staff featured weekly special events, including a Bike Rodeo and Electric Vehicle Showcase; promotions, including a free tastings booth and giveaways; as well as guest booths, including City departments and non-profit organizations. However, despite these added features, attendance remains lackluster.

OUTREACH

Farmers' Market Visitors and Vendors

In 2019 staff visited the Farmers' Market regularly to informally poll both visitors and vendors, asking for their feedback about the current location and the possibility of relocating it to the downtown area. Following are the results:

Visitors - Current Location

- Convenient for residents who live in the area
- Accessible to drivers due to ample and free parking
- Too small; needs more vendors
- Needs more food and beverage options
- Suggests having food trucks

Visitors - New Location in Downtown Area

- Supports the move as current location is becoming stale
- Favors the relocation due to access to food and beverages
- Concerns about parking

Vendors - Current Location

- Sorely needs a change
- Don't like their current location

Vendors - New Location in Downtown Area

- Eagerly anticipating a relocation, especially if it draws more visitors
- Supports it and plan to continue to participate

Downtown Merchants

Staff conducted an intensive outreach campaign to downtown area businesses by first emailing them and following up with a personal visit. Staff visited 169 businesses in the downtown area. Out of the 169 businesses, only two merchants expressed disfavor with the proposed relocation of the Farmers' Market due to limited to no parking.

Community At Large

An article in the City newsletter about the proposed relocation of the Farmers' Market to the downtown area is planned for March, 2020. Additionally, flyers announcing the proposed relocation are scheduled for release now through the duration of the Farmers' Market season, distributed Citywide at public-facing counters, information kiosks, high pedestrian-trafficked public venues, Homeowner Associations, neighborhood groups, and service clubs/non-profit organizations. Regular postings to the City's social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor, are also planned in addition to a direct mailer to residents.

TOP THREE OPTIONS

Staff worked with City departments, including Economic and Community Development, Police Department, Fire Department, and Public Works; a City consultant, Pacific Coast Farmers' Market; and the South San Francisco Chamber of Commerce on several prospective locations in the downtown area; based on discussions, research, and analysis keeping into consideration accessibility, traffic patterns, public transportation, and parking options, the choices were narrowed to three locations:

- **Option A: City Hall Back Parking Lot**
 - Parking area off of Miller Avenue between Maple and Walnut Avenues
- **Option B: Maple Avenue #1**
 - On Maple Avenue between Grand Avenue and 3rd Lane
- **Option C: Maple Avenue #2**
 - On Maple Avenue between Grand Avenue and 4th Lane

Based on meetings with the above stakeholders, as well as feedback from downtown merchants, the back parking lot of City Hall off of Miller Avenue between Maple and Walnut Avenues is deemed the most feasible

based on the following:

- Contained area is safer for visitors and merchants
- Involves no street closures
 - Option B: Closure of Maple will require Police Department escort for residents who live in the multi-dwelling complexes; it will also impact three businesses (South City Suds, Razors & Scissors Salon, and Iris Flowers & Gift Shop)
 - Option C: Closure of Maple will require the closure of 4th Lane as it's a one-way street; it will require Police Department escort of vehicles to reverse back on 4th Lane
- Close to Miller Parking Garage
- Close to All Soul's Church
 - On Saturdays, the church has an 8 a.m. mass, so parishioners can visit the market following it
- Close to Rotary Plaza Residents/built-in audience
- Close to Pinefino Residents/built-in audience
- Close to Old Historic Downtown Area /built-in audience
- No close supermarket that carries fresh, seasonal, and organic produce

The Chamber of Commerce fully supports this location.

FISCAL IMPACT

To be determined based on Council direction.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The proposed relocation of the South San Francisco Farmers' Market to the downtown area aligns with the City's strategic priority of maintaining a Quality of Life for residents, businesses, and visitors as well as Economic Vitality by bolstering foot traffic to the downtown area.

CONCLUSION

Staff seeks City Council's direction on the proposed relocation of the South San Francisco Farmers' Market to the downtown area.