



CITY OF ESCONDIDO

# COVID-19 Emergency Business Recovery Strategy

2020

**Stronger Together!**

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# INTRODUCTION

Escondido businesses have been through the ringer these past few months with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) shutting down our local economy. The City empathizes with and feels your pain as finances have been pushed to the brink for local business owners, residents, and the City.

Many entrepreneurs, small businesses, and the City were able to successfully pivot business operations to weather the storm. The City recently implemented new rules to cut the red tape, increase flexibility, and allow businesses to re-open safely for retail shopping, dining, and other activities. The plan focused on recovery policies for businesses looking to re-open, relocate, or expand in Escondido.

Over the past few months, the City team worked tirelessly and in partnership with the San Diego North Economic Development Council, Innovate78, key industry stakeholders, and the community to develop a Business Recovery Strategy to serve as a roadmap for Escondido's economic recovery. These strategies are intended to work with the State and County Public Health Orders and allow flexibility as the Orders become less restrictive.

We are here to help this resilient community get back on its feet - we are stronger together!

# SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES AND THE WORKFORCE



## JUMPSTART SMALL BUSINESSES PROGRAM

*For the workforce and small businesses!*

If you are looking to take your idea and build a small business around it, the “Jumpstart Small Businesses” program is for you! Professionals will walk you through the basics of establishing a legal business entity, obtaining a fictitious business name, how to apply for a business license and more.

If you are a small business looking to expand operations and need additional tools including access to capital, social media, marketing support, or could benefit from business coaching, this program is for you too! You will be able to pick and choose what areas meet your need and will have access to personalized coaching.

The City is partnering with the San Diego and Imperial Small Business Development Center, San Diego North Economic Development Council, and Innovate78 to launch “Jumpstart Small Businesses” in July. This effort will include offering online business classes, tools, and coaching available in English and Spanish for local residents and business owners who want to transform or expand their business idea into a thriving small business. You are invited to contact Amber Tarrac, Deputy Director of Economic Development, at [Business@escondido.org](mailto:Business@escondido.org) or 760-839-4587 for more information on this program or if you would like to participate.

## BUSINESS OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

*Your personal City Concierge!*

Navigating local, state, and federal regulations and resources to operate a business can be challenging. The community and businesses have access to a personal “City Concierge” to assist with everything related to Economic Development. We are here to assist you! If you have business or workforce questions, or if you need assistance finding suitable commercial/industrial real estate locations, the City has established a “Business Ombudsman Program”.

We are collecting new ideas on an ongoing basis so if you have suggestions on how we may better support the business community, we welcome your feedback. You have a direct line to the City Manager’s office and are invited to contact Amber Tarrac, Deputy Director of Economic Development, at [Business@escondido.org](mailto:Business@escondido.org) or 760-839-4587 with your questions.

# EXPANDING BUSINESS OPERATIONS

To support business expansion, increase flexibility, and enhance business recovery efforts, the City implemented the following strategies effective through August 18.

Need more information or interested in implementing any of the following strategies to support your business? Please contact the Planning Division at 760-839-4671. These measures may be extended beyond August 18 on a case by case basis – if you are interested in the extension of these options, please contact Mike Strong, Director of Community Development, at [mstrong@escondido.org](mailto:mstrong@escondido.org) or 760-839-4556.

## 1. Carry-Out Zones

- You can reserve up to four (4) parking spaces in a private lot for customer carry-out or pick-up.
- You can temporarily use up to two (2) spaces in the public right-of-way immediately adjacent to your business for customer carry-out or pick-up.



## 2. Parklets

- You can convert on-street parking spaces adjacent to your business to a "parklet" to use this expanded area for outdoor dining, display, and additional seating. Parklets require liability insurance and a Temporary Use Permit. If you are interested in setting up a parklet, please contact the Planning Division at 760-839-4671 to start this process.



## 3. Outdoor Sales Events on Private Property

- You can host outdoor sales events on private property in non-parking areas with no time limit, permit, or fees required while the ordinance is in effect. If you would like to do an outdoor sales event in a commercial parking area, please contact the Planning Division at 760-839-4671 to obtain a Temporary Use Permit.

## 4. Relaxed rules on Alcohol Sales

- This measure brought the City rules and regulations into alignment with the Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) Notice of Regulatory Relief to allow dining establishments the flexibility for off-sale and the delivery of beer and wine.

## 5. Accessory Retail Use in Industrial Areas

- Businesses in industrial building zones can now increase the amount of space used for retail sales from 15 percent to 50 percent of the building area.

## 6. Temporary Sign Limits

- You can have two (2) temporary banners, one 72 SF and the other 32 SF, for each street frontage or building face fronting a street or parking lot.
- You can have A-frame signs on private property adjacent to the business entrance which may include COVID-19 safety measures in place, social distancing information, and more.
- You can have wayfinding/directory ground-mounted signs adjacent to pick-up/carry-out zones.

## 7. Permit Time Limit Extension Program

- The Program “froze” the permit time limits for a period of one year to give property owners, applicants, and contractors additional time to complete their work due to various delay factors beyond their control.



# ESCONDIDO RECOVERY EFFORTS

The City has been actively supporting businesses and residents to get back on their feet as they move forward in regaining momentum. The following is a summary of the City's economic recovery measures from March 12 through May 25 to assist the community:

- The City's Economic Development Department created an Economic Recovery Matrix to identify and track efforts that the City has undertaken since March 12 to support businesses and residents. The matrix includes measures that have already been implemented, as well as measures that are in progress, under consideration, and those determined not feasible. This matrix is intended to be a 'living document' with additional measures and strategies incorporated as they arise.

Short-Term Completed - Business and/or Resident Economic Recovery Topic	Department Leads	Department Contact(s)	Requires Council Approval	Date	Comments
<a href="#">Created the Escondido COVID-19 News Page</a>	Communications Communications Communications Fire	Joanna Axelrod Teresa Collins Michael Thorne Jeff Murdock		3/13/20	
<a href="#">Support Local Food and Drink Directory and Interactive Map</a>	GIS Economic Development Communications Communications	Dante Lee Amber Tarrac Michael Thorne Teresa Collins		3/18/20	
<a href="#">Continuous news updates for businesses and the workforce on Business News</a>	Economic Development	Amber Tarrac		3/19/20 (ongoing)	
Ceased issuing tickets for street sweeping	Public Works	Joe Goulart		3/20/20	
Restaurant, commercial, industrial and other environmental inspections on hold	Environmental Programs Environmental Programs Economic Development	Alicia Appel Marcus Leso Amber Tarrac		3/20/20	
Business outreach - Top 100 Sales Revenue Business Impact Survey	Finance Finance Economic Development OCM"	Joan Ryan Christina Holmes Amber Tarrac Megan Cramer		3/31/20	
<a href="#">Business outreach - Social Distancing Reminder Guide for Retail and Service</a>	Economic Development Communications Communications	Amber Tarrac Michael Thorne Teresa Collins		"3/31/20 "	
Acquisition of hand sanitizer from two local Escondido businesses	Public Works Economic Development	Joe Goulart Amber Tarrac		4/2/20	
<a href="#">Residential and Commercial Eviction Moratorium</a>	City Attorney	Mike McGuinness	X	4/8/20	Approved on 4/8/20
<a href="#">City Utilities Water Pipe Business Reopening Outreach</a>	Utilities Department Economic Development	Chris McKinney Amber Tarrac		5/13/2020	

**Live Document!**



- The City launched an on-line resource "[Support Local Food and Drink](https://www.escondido.org/support-local-food-drink.aspx)" on March 18 that provided the community with information on local farms, breweries, wineries, and restaurants offering food and beverages to-go, curbside pickup, and/or delivery. This included a list of the establishments open for business as well as an interactive map. See [escondido.org/support-local-food-drink.aspx](https://www.escondido.org/support-local-food-drink.aspx)
- The San Diego North Economic Development Council, the North County Chambers of Commerce, and North County City Economic Developers began convening joint weekly meetings on March 19, to discuss updates and information on federal, state, and local economic recovery programs.
- The City ceased issuing tickets for street sweeping in residential and commercial areas on March 20, after the Stay at Home Order was issued.



- The Escondido Chamber of Commerce invited City Economic Development staff and the Small Business Development Center to discuss local, state, and federal programs, gather feedback, and share business best practices with their membership on April 3 and April 9.
- San Diego County Vice-Chairman Desmond and the San Diego North Economic Development Council convened a North County Economic Recovery Workgroup on April 15 and April 28, that included City Economic Development staff and key local industry stakeholders from Escondido to discuss stakeholder business perspectives, requests, and operational needs.
- The City Manager appointed a multidisciplinary City Re-Opening Workgroup on April 21 to develop recommendations for re-opening City facilities in a phased approach including operational practices that ensure the health and safety of employees and customers. To that end, City Hall opened to the public on June 15, incorporating updated County Public Health Department protocols to protect customer and staff safety.
- Economic Development staff collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Business Association from April 27 through May 5 to gather feedback from industry stakeholders regarding the proposed Business Recovery Strategy recommendations.

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# ESCONDIDO EATS



- The City partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to launch the on-line community resource "[Escondido Eats](https://www.escondidochamber.org/escondido-eats-2/)" on May 1, available for all local food and drink establishments to share meal and beverage promotions, discounts and specials on a centralized calendar. See [escondidochamber.org/escondido-eats-2/](https://www.escondidochamber.org/escondido-eats-2/)
- Economic Development staff worked closely with the City's Engineering, Planning, Attorney, Police and Fire Departments, Innovate78, and the San Diego North Economic Development Council to develop a comprehensive Business Recovery Strategy that included recommendations for regulatory and non-regulatory relief to allow local businesses to meet the requirements set forth by the State and County Public Health Orders. The strategy was adopted by the City Council on May 13.
- The City Council subsequently adopted an Urgency Ordinance on May 20, which enacted the aforementioned regulatory relief measures to support local businesses.
- On May 28, the City was awarded a SANDAG Shared Streets Pilot Program grant in the amount of \$8,636. This grant will fund signage for the temporary closure of a portion of Grand Avenue in order for businesses to increase dining and retail capacity while ensuring social distancing.





## KEY NEXT STEPS

- Broadly publicize the new Business Recovery Strategy measures and tools.
- Open City Hall to the public on June 15.
- Proceed with the temporary closure of a portion of Grand Avenue to allow for expanded dining and retail options in June.
- Implement the new Cityworks software platform on July 1, which promises to significantly improve City operational efficiency and business processes thereby supporting City staff, businesses, the workforce, and the community.
- Launch “Jumpstart Small Businesses” in July.

*If you have ideas to support Escondido's economic recovery or have questions about the recovery strategy, you are invited to submit them to [Business@escondido.org](mailto:Business@escondido.org).*