

Solano Avenue Business
Improvement District Advisory Board

MINUTES

Solano Avenue Business Improvement District Advisory Board

Tuesday, September 15, 2020 | 11 am

Via Teleconference Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 881 2970 5586

One tap mobile

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CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 11:02am.

ROLL CALL - Members present: Kate Campbell King, Todd Andrew, Peggy Smith
Members absent/excused: none. City Staff: Eleanor Hollander, OED/City of Berkeley
(secretary), Members of the Public: Jen Hansen Romero (Solano Ave Assn).

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – The minutes of the June 25, 2020 meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Andrew and seconded by Ms. Smith. Motion Carries. Abstain: none.

SECRETARY REPORT – The secretary covered the annual renewal process for the BID, and reviewed the outdoor commerce program available to all Berkeley businesses.

MOTION: To approve BBDN (Berkeley Business District Network) letter (agree to sign) regarding clean-up of I-80 off ramp(s) at the University and Gilman exits. M/S: King/Smith. All Ayes: Carries. The logo for the Solano BID (to be developed) will be added to letter.

MOTION: Funding holiday decorations for the 2020-21 season. A quote for \$7,170 total has been received by the SAA. A motion was made to approve the decorations for the 20-21 season in the proportion and same manner agreed to in April of 2020 for a total of \$2,835 to be paid by the Solano BID. M/S: Andrew/Smith, All Ayes, motion carries.

DISCUSSION ITEMS – The budget for 2021 and the annual report for 2020 was discussed. The amount budgeted for tree well clean up and associated landscaping was increased to \$12,000. There was a long discussion regarding working with the SAA as a service provider for landscaping and other marketing projects. There was a wide ranging discussion regarding the fee schedule for BID dues that are articulated in the annual report and budget document for 2021. Ultimately, the fees proposed remained the same.

- There was a motion to spend \$7,500 on marketing projects with the SSA and BID Members before the Solano BID meets again.

- There was a motion to increase the budget for tree wells to \$12,000. Both updates were made in the annual report and budget (attached).

MOTION: m/s Campbell/Smith, approved all AYES. To approve the updated annual report for 2020 and budget for 2021. Ayes: Campbell Smith, Nay: Andrew. Motion Carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT- The SSA remarked that coming weekend would have been the Solano Stroll (canceled due to the global pandemic); a moment of reflection was held.

Motion to Adjourn M/S: Andrew/Smith, All Ayes. Meeting Adjourned at 12:40pm.

The text of the approved Annual Report and Budget 2020-21 follows below:

Solano BID Revenue, as of 9/13/2020					\$53,841.00
Less fiscal agent fee to Telegraph PBMC (5%)					(\$1,250.00)
(\$2,000.00)					
Outdoor Commerce operations through the end of calendar year 2020					(\$10,000.00)
Outdoor Commerce program start up and design					(\$25,000.00)
+ Installation + Removal + Storage nov 20 to jan 21					(\$5,710.00)
Unallocated as of 9/13/2020 (carryover)					\$9,881.00
BUDGET FOR THE SOLANO BID FOR 2021 (Calendar Year)					
Estimated new revenue					\$22,000.00
Carryover from 2020 (estimated)					\$9,881.00
Total available for expenditure in 2021					\$31,881.00
<i>PROPOSED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021 (Calendar Year)</i>					
Landscaping installation/tree well porous pavement					\$12,000.00
Watering and Maintenance for hanging flower baskets					\$5,000.00
Installation, removal and storage of holiday decor 2021-22 season					\$5,000.00
Other marketing expenditure	\$9,000.00				
Total projected expenditure					\$31,000.00

Report for the Solano Avenue Business Improvement District for 2020 and Budget for 2021

Background

The first version of the Solano Business Improvement District (BID) operated from 2002-2007 with administration of the BID headed by the Solano Avenue Association. In January, 2012, the

Council appointed the Solano BID Advisory Board to administer the Solano Avenue BID, to fund physical improvements to the street and dedicate marketing and promotion efforts towards the businesses on the portion of Solano Avenue that lies in Berkeley. This Annual report and budget updates the 8th full year of operational programs and progress on the revived Solano BID.

Landscape program

In 2013, the Solano BID financed a tree watering program for young street trees along upper Solano Avenue. In 2016, per the City of Berkeley arborist, the trees were mature enough to not require additional water services. In early 2016, the board voted to enhance Solano's landscape by installing a program of 41 hanging planter baskets on light poles distributed throughout the district; utilizing the Downtown Berkeley Association's (DBA) services. The DBA watered and maintained the baskets through the end of calendar year 2018, but has declined to continue this contract. In 2019 and 2020, rainwater alone supported the baskets, and the Solano BID started a conversation with The Downtown Streets Team (DST) to supplement other efforts to clean, weed, and level the tree wells through the district, and to develop an ongoing watering and maintenance system for the hanging flower baskets. This work was challenging to get started because of the need to identify a storage place for DST's tools, and the impacts of COVID-19 since March 2020, but now a storage location has been identified and this program should provide support for 2021 and beyond.

In late 2019, early 2020 funds were approved and RFP and selection process was conducted for a public realm plan study on Solano. The BID was supportive of the process and was deeply committed to involving both local merchants and local residents in the effort to re-imagine Solano Avenue in a way that brings more vitality to the Avenue in concert with the efforts of the City of Albany with the intention of strengthening the Solano Avenue 'brand' overall. Sadly, the funding for this project was repurposed for the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The future of this project still remains unclear and the project is "on hold" for now.

Marketing and promotion of Solano

Marketing and promotion of Solano Avenue constitutes the second priority of the Solano BID. To promote the avenue during the holiday season, a holiday light display program was established by the Solano BID. In 2016 and 2017 the BID contracted with a vendor, the Christmas Light Pros of SF, to deploy decorative unlit multi-colored garlands. In 2018 and 2019, the board approved funding for a new vendor which, under direction of the Solano Avenue Association (SAA), covered more poles and provided greater decoration coordination opportunities with neighboring Albany, all at a lower cost than previous seasons. The intention for the holiday season in 2020-21 is to use the same vendor and reimburse the SAA after the lights are installed. This partnership underscores the leverage that the SAA organization has been able to provide to support BID efforts for the Berkeley portion of Solano Avenue.

In June of 2020, the Solano BID Advisory Board voted to support to merchants on Solano during the global pandemic. The BID Advisory Board considered whether a group application for a limited engagement of street closure dedicated to outdoor commerce would be helpful to Solano Avenue Merchants. Provided that the outdoor commerce installation provided for adequate access for delivery/food pick up and safe outdoor dining, personal service, fitness and

retail installations. Consequently the group voted to allocate up to \$35,000 total to support efforts related to outdoor commerce/street closure in the public ROW. The \$35,000 is to be roughly allocated as such: \$25,000 for program start up and design, \$10,000 for operations through the end of calendar year 2020. The effort is currently in the initial planning and design phases.

In the remainder of 2020, the Advisory Board may again decide to participate in the development of virtual or otherwise safe holiday campaigns and activities (i.e. supporting the Solano Avenue Association in socially distant gatherings or events 'Online Santa on Solano' event or similar). The details of the overall 2020 (and the future 2021) event and marketing program will be developed over the remainder of the year, with a possible coordinated launch party for the new Touchstone Oaks bouldering gym at the top of the Avenue once it is safe to gather again and construction is complete.

Expanded landscaping improvements (including porous pavement in tree wells) have yet to be determined by the board. It is presumed that provided a successful demonstration of landscaping maintenance this fall/winter season (2020-21), a multi-year contract could be extended accordingly.

Solano BID Administration

The Solano BID has one existing contract; a fiscal agent contract with the Telegraph Property and Business Management Corporation (Telegraph PBMC), who charges a 5% fee on their total contract size annually.

FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE SOLANO BID, SEPTEMBER 2020

Solano BID Revenue, as of 9/13/2020	\$53,841.00
Less fiscal agent fee to Telegraph PBMC (5%)	(\$1,250.00)
Less funds allocated for Solano Ave Assn 2019-20 Holiday Events (Sept 2019 allocation)	(\$2,000.00)
Less funds allocated for Outdoor Commerce Installations/Business Support (June 2020 allocation)	
Outdoor Commerce operations through 12/ 2020	(\$10,000.00)
Outdoor Commerce program start up and design	(\$25,000.00)
Less funds allocated for decorative holiday garlands (anticipated Sept 2020 allocation) + Installation + Removal + Storage Nov '20 to Jan '21	(\$5,710.00)
<i>Unallocated as of 9/13/2020</i>	<i>\$9,881.00</i>

BUDGET FOR THE SOLANO BID FOR 2021 (Calendar Year)

Estimated new revenue	=	\$22,000.00
<u>Carryover from 2020 (estimated)</u>	=	<u>\$9,881.00</u>
Total available for expenditure in 2021	=	\$31,881.00

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES FOR 2021 (Calendar Year)

Landscaping installation/tree well porous pavement	=	\$12,000.00
Watering and Maintenance for hanging flower baskets	=	\$5,000.00
Installation, removal and storage of holiday decor 2021-22 season	=	\$5,000.00
<u>Other marketing expenditure (branding/business support etc.)</u>	=	<u>\$9,000.00</u>
Total projected expenditure	=	\$31,000.00

Recommendations

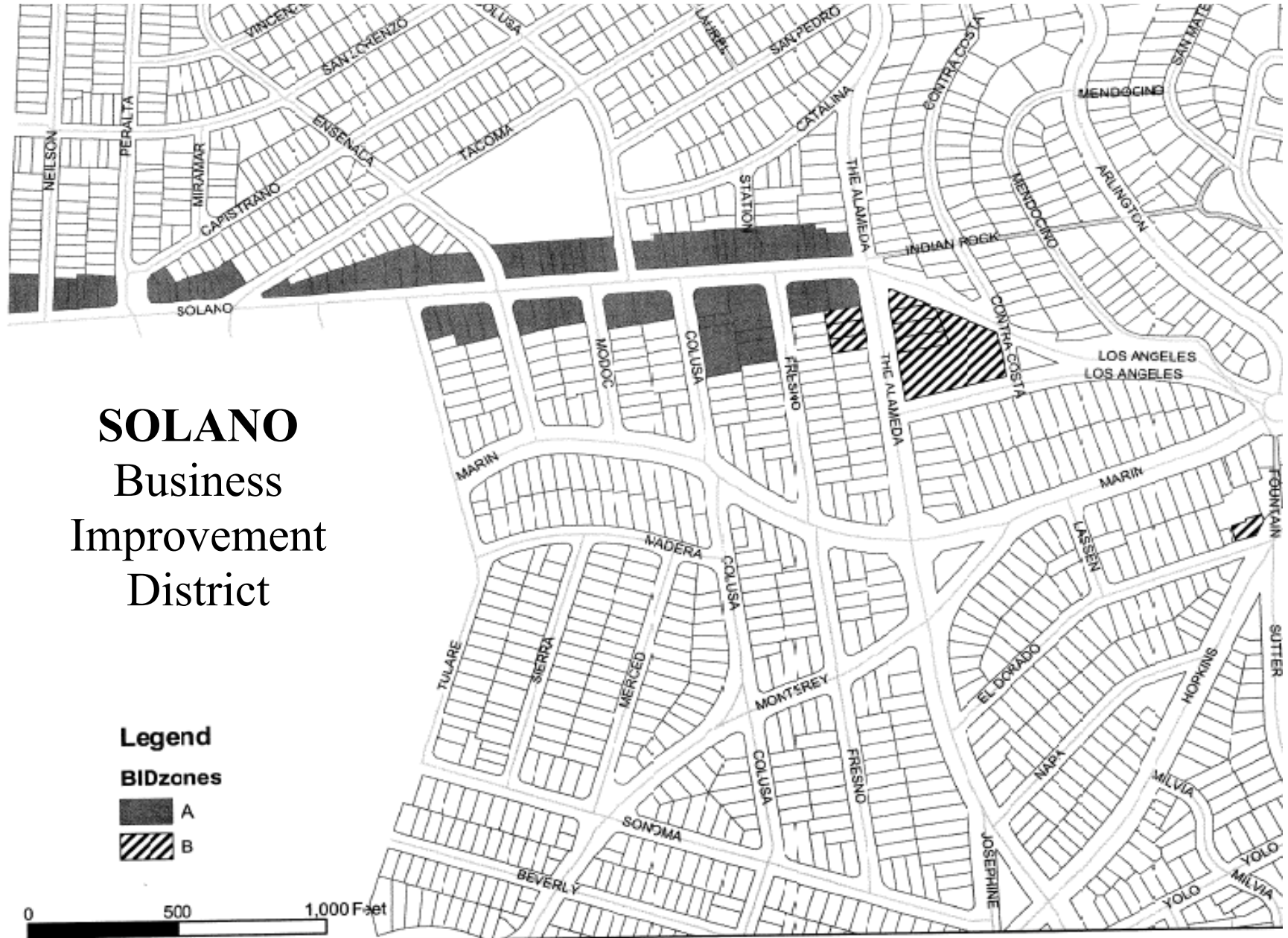
The Advisory Board recommends that the Council approve the Annual Report and Budget for 2021.

The Advisory Board recommends that the Council make no changes in the boundaries of the Solano Business Improvement District or in the two Benefit Zones, A & B.

The recommended improvements and activities for 2021 are those stated in the Report. The cost for providing them is stated in the Budget for 2021.

The method and basis for the assessment is as stated in Exhibit A2.

The estimate for surplus revenues to be carried over from 2020 is as stated in the Budget for 2021.



Berkeley Solano Avenue Business Improvement District Annual Assessment Formula

Type of Business		Annual Assessments	
		Zone A	Zone B
a. <i>Retailers and Restaurants</i>	1-5 employees	\$200	\$125
	6-9 employees	\$300	\$175
	10+ employees	\$400	\$225
b. <i>Service Businesses</i>		\$175	\$100
c. <i>Professional Services</i>		\$100	\$65
d. <i>Financial Institutions</i>		\$500	\$500