



**Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau**  
217 Healdsburg Avenue, Healdsburg, CA 95448  
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P: (707) 433-6935 F: (707) 433-7562

January 29, 2021

Dear Mayor Mitchell and City Council Members,

The Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce (HCC) represents over 550 businesses and several thousand employees in the City of Healdsburg. This has been an incredibly difficult year for our businesses due to the national pandemic, fires and general uncertainty within our geopolitical environment. Our economy depends on a healthy business climate that serves residents and tourists alike.

HCC recommends supporting the continuation of “open” streets (with exception as noted below) and parklets in downtown Healdsburg. This is a significant means to economic recovery for our community as well as setting in motion a vision for the downtown corridor.

The Healdsburg Chamber supports the efforts of our member businesses recouping revenues and complying with state and local guidelines regarding outdoor dining. Ultimately, we believe parklets play a key role in our economic recovery and long-term prosperity.

### **Open Streets**

- During the winter, street closures would be counterproductive due to potential inclement weather
- Open streets should be engaging and beneficial to a wide range of businesses
- A comprehensive “open streets” plan that includes lighting, music, art and other matters that would be necessary to activate the “open” street should be developed, and
- Keeping Plaza Street between Healdsburg Avenue and Center Street open to traffic provides necessary parking for business in the general vicinity, as such we recommend
  - That Plaza Street between Healdsburg Ave. and Center Street **not** be closed
  - The current “open” portion of Plaza Street between Center and East Streets should remain open and continued focus should be devoted to this area to make it engaging
  - Resources should be dedicated to enhancing and perfecting the parklet program, discussed below

### **Parklets**

- **Parklets and better utilization of outdoor space is more widely viewed as a critical component to many cities locally and across the globe, Healdsburg is not an exception**
- Many businesses have invested a significant amount of dollars on the construction of parklets, only to be confronted with an inability to utilize them fully due to wildfires and state mandated closures, as well as inclement weather, and
- Our business community needs some certainty with regard to this program that is set to expire December 31, 2021. This will afford businesses the opportunity to determine the best use of their resources. As such we recommend:
  - An extension of the parklet program through December 31, 2023
  - Any and all fees imposed by the City with concern to parklet program should be waived through the end of 2022 as part of economic recovery



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- A comprehensive permanent parklet program should be undertaken with various stakeholders including city staff, chamber of commerce and citizen groups such as Vision 2040

We request you take immediate action on these time sensitive matters in order to provide some certainty to our business community.

We will gladly participate in continued planning and future discussions on these matters. We look forward to our continued partnership with the City.

Sincerely,

William K. Seppi, Board Chair  
Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce

Tallia Hart, CEO  
Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce