



Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce

175 E High St. PO Box 121

Stayton, OR 97383

(503) 769-3464

www.staytonsublimitychamber.org

January 29, 2020

Dear Mayor Porter & Stayton City Councilors,

The Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce, consists of over 200 area business members and represents the best interest of our members and the business community at large. As a result, we feel compelled to add our testimony for consideration on Resolution 1016, *Temporary Policy to Allow Eating & Drinking Establishments to Use the Street Right of Way*.

This week the Chamber ratified our support for the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce, *Main Street Matters* campaign, affirming that Covid-19 restrictions on businesses in the State of Oregon have not been equitably applied or enforced, and the remedies being offered by the State are wholly inadequate in response to the business closures and or restrictions, especially for those in our restaurant and hospitality industry. As a result, we want to thank this Council and the City of Stayton for considering a resolution to help ease the burden on these local businesses.

The Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce believes that the City of Stayton and this council should offer **every means of support possible** to help our local businesses to operate to the fullest extent, removing obstacles and barriers that would hinder their ability to do so. The Chamber supports Resolution 1016, with the following changes, questions, or recommendations.

- Removing line item g. in regard to sidewalks and replacing with "Sidewalks may be used by downtown eating establishments, as dining space, with consent of the City, if sufficient space is still therefore available for pedestrian foot traffic." (or similar language)
- We would encourage the City to offer temporary use of City barricades for the purpose of right of way dining, at no charge to the business establishment, to alleviate addition operational costs to already struggling businesses.

- We would inquire whether the Stayton Fire Department has been included in these discussions considering their responsibility to ensure compliance of all tents, heaters, etc.? And have they affirmed their commitment to the one-day (24 hour) turnaround time agreed upon by the City in section 9 of the resolution?
- We would also ask that City to consider, should they be approached, the temporary closure of any side-street adjacent to an eating establishment, the for the purpose of downtown dining, specifically for weekends and holidays to meet the needs of our community for dining options, as well as further address and aid the ability of our local eating establishments to survive and profit during difficult circumstances.
- We hope that this council understands the importance of supporting our local businesses and preserving local commerce at this time. We believe that our small businesses have been extremely responsible to our community by adhering to the Covid-19 guidance and safety standards. Accessibility to dining options increases overall commerce and helps keep local dollars local.

The Stayton Sublimity Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Stayton Area Rotary have provided over \$96,000 in financial relief in the form of Covid-19 grants to businesses throughout our region, however the guidelines and restrictions continue to change, making it nearly impossible for our local restaurants to continue to pivot. The associated costs to these businesses have been astronomical. The Chamber is committed to continue to find ways to assist our local business community and we ask you, the City and City Council to do everything within your scope of power to do so as well. You were elected by and for the people, and small business is indeed the backbone of our community.

We urge this Council to support Resolution 1016, with consideration to the suggestions and concerns we proposed. We ask that the City offer as much flexibility as possible, assisting businesses to help expedite this process as quickly as possible. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Carméle Bielenberg, CEO
I srael Aguirre, 2021 Board Chair
David Giglio, 2021 Chair Elect
Jennifer Tiger, 2021 Secretary

Debbie Voepel, 2021 Treasurer
Cory Dent, Director
Beth Morey, Director
Alan Kirby, Director