

Live & Local is back

Boosting downtown's vibrant music scene

With more than 30 live music venues in downtown, spreading the word about the music scene markets the region as a cultural hub and supports local businesses and artists.

Perhaps, the most visible piece of this effort is the new liveandlocalsj.com.

The re-vamped site includes an easy-to-find, easy-to-search calendar of downtown's music scene, a blog detailing the hottest shows of the week and featuring local artists. It is also search-engine friendly and includes room to promote sponsored events.

Launched in March, the new site should be the go-to source for the South Bay's densest collection of live music venues.

The look and feel of the site reflects downtown's homegrown, diverse music scene, with different shows focused on rock, hip-hop, opera, bossa nova and jazz.

"I think it is a well-needed resource for artists and musicians to promote what we are working on," said **Amy Dabalos**, a local jazz singer who has also done booking for The Continental Lounge, Local Color and elsewhere. "A centralized hub of information is what we've

Live & Local SJ Music Search

Find live music all over downtown. From jazz to rock, from hip hop to the blues, downtown San Jose has music you are looking for.

DATE: SEARCH: VIEW AS: Photo

Upcoming Events

Previous Events



Irish Seisun

March 28 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Recurring Event [View All](#)

A weekly gathering of Irish musicians bring life to your Tuesday night.



Control with DJ's Carlos C. Rogcon and Otrebor (new wave/indie)

March 30 @ 8:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Dance until 2 a.m. to 80's new wave, club classics, indie rock from 90's and 00's. Free before 10 p.m. 21+

Next Events

Open Mic Night!

March 28 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm



Aki Kumar's Pro Blues Jam with special guests

March 28 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Recurring Event [View All](#)

Hosted, by dynamic frontman & harp player Aki Kumar, with special featured guests weekly. Kumar is a rising star among the next generation of SF Bay Area blues artists and a master of the amplified Chicago blues

The rebooted LiveAndLocalSJ.com website relies on local bands, venues and event producers to help build downtown's reputation as a place to go for live music.

really needed."

Driven in part by the passion and dedication of local musicians and fans, including SJDA promotions manager **Amy Anderson** and **Tomek Mackowiak**, the next phase will include social media contests, interviews with local artists and more.

The future of the site – and other plans for contests for fans and bands, features on local artists and shows and a regular email

highlighting the top upcoming shows – depends on the scene to work.

"We'd love it if local bands, venues, promoters, music sponsors and others get in touch with us about new ways to tell the story of live music in downtown San Jose," said SJDA communications manager **Leslie Griffy**, who helped the redesign efforts. "This project has room for musicians, writers, photographers and fans."

Reach out to liveandlocal@sjdowntown.com

Funding mechanism set for St. James Park

The City Council established the St. James Park Management District fund to give the beleaguered park its "best chance at transforming into a lively urban oasis," according to Mayor **Sam Liccardo** and Council-member **Raul Peralez**.

"Creating this district puts money from the neighborhood to work in the neighborhood," Peralez said.

The funds will be collected from residential development within the Management District boundaries and will pay for St. James Park operations, maintenance and activation. The park will add a full-time groundskeeper and part-time recreation leader and security/docent services.

City staff estimates the St. James Park District revenues can amount to \$10.4 million over the next five years.

In establishing the fund, the mayor reminded staff that the park requires a new management model, and city staff should "move towards a more formal foundation or conservancy."

Earlier in March in a separate vote, the City Council eliminated design competition finalist New York-based Imelk fr-ee and approved \$1 million for CMG Landscape Architecture of San Francisco to create a full redesign of St. James Park.

"Now the hard work begins making the dreams of St. James Park come true," said **Scott Knies**, SJDA Executive Director.

The City Council agreed with a proposal from Liccardo and Peralez to:

- ◆ Invest \$1 million at the outset rather than a staff-proposed \$2.5 million;
- ◆ Prioritize building a Levitt Pavilion outdoor music venue on the site, which is partially funded by the Levitt Foundation;
- ◆ Consider with the St. James Park Advisory Committee closing Second Street through the park to vehicle traffic; and
- ◆ Devise a funding and phasing approach that also considers a pending environmental review of the final plan.

"We'd like to continue moving forward with our process and with the expectation that we will have a Levitt Pavilion in St. James Park in the near future," said **Rick Holden**, co-chair of Friends of Levitt Pavilion San Jose.

The council heeded concerns by San Jose resident **Jean Dresden** and Knies about the phasing approach. CMG's winning "re-imagining" of St. James Park is estimated at \$41 million.

"I am concerned about the limited dollar figure (for design), which

might lead to something that's not properly right-sized to match the resources we could attract for a full-scale park," said Dresden, who is on the park's steering committee. "Let's not get stuck with half a park, half a design and half way.

"That's what happened when we had a senior center only. We never finished the second half and that's how we developed a problem in St. James Park. Let's not do that again."

Peralez said he wants to get started and build momentum with an initial park design that includes Levitt Pavilion. "I agree that we need to focus on the park as a whole and not one side of it or the other," he added.

Fourteen firms responded to a request from the city to engage in a competition to create a new vision to bring the historic park to being "the jewel of downtown," as resident **Jack Sardegna** described it. A jury selected four firms, agreed on CMG and then denied on March 8 an appeal for reconsideration by Imelk fr-ee.

CMG's plans re-create the Victorian gardens that first appeared at the park, protect the monuments and canopy of trees of today's park and blend in new features such as playground, dog park, picnic area, fountain and music venue.

BART comments on record

SJDA has requested a more thoughtful mitigation plan that protects businesses — especially those along Santa Clara Street — when construction crews dig BART subways beneath downtown San Jose when the second phase of BART's extension into Silicon Valley gets under way.

"The mitigation efforts outlined in the Draft SEIR/SEIS (Supplemental Environmental Impact Report) are insufficient," said **Scott Knies**, executive director.

SJDA suggested 20 mitigation improvements in its comment letter to Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), such as:

- ◆ Direct engagement and integration with existing social, email and other communication modes downtown;
- ◆ Creative wayfinding to address "diminished pedestrian and vehicular access;"
- ◆ Emergency communications procedures;
- ◆ Transparent complaint resolution procedures;
- ◆ Financial relief package application recruitment and management.

VTA expects the 6-mile, four-station construction project between Berryessa and the City of Santa Clara to take eight years.

SJDA has advocated for the west station option, which

would place the downtown station between Market and Third streets rather than closer to City Hall and San Jose State University. The west station option is also preferred by SPUR and BART itself.

The X-factor is whether VTA and BART can agree on a single bore tunnel that would stack tracks in a deeper station but have much less construction impacts than a twin-bore design. Technical and risk assessment studies are under way to determine the efficacy of single-bore vs. twin-bore. A decision is due this summer.

SJDA is measuring the short-term impacts during construction with the long-term benefits of a major transportation improvement.

"We need to continue our support of BART because it will ultimately be good for downtown," said SJDA Board Member **Henry Cord**.

SJDA's Advocacy/Historic District Committee will handle BART matters as they evolve. Email SJDA@sjdowntown.com if you'd like to be a part of the BART conversation.

SJDA's seven-page EIR response can be found at sjdowntown.com/sjda-news-sjda-sounding-off-on-bart-environmental-report.

A summary of how others commented on the Supplemental EIR can be found at sjdowntown.com/sjdanews.

western side on all nine floors in 1927.

The building has served as headquarters of Bank of the West, First National Bank and lumber company Pacific States Industries over past decades.

DivcoWest also co-owns 50 West San Fernando.

Ritchie Commercial represented both buyer and seller in this latest transaction.

SJDA Meeting April 14

Open to public: District 3 City Councilmember **Raul Peralez** and **Erin Salazar** of Exhibition District/Local Color will speak at SJDA's April 14 meeting inside Local Color, 27 S. First St., starting at 8 a.m. RSVP to sjdasvp@sjdowntown.com.

At the Convention Center

April 9-10 - Spring Style Show (16,000) springstyleshow.net

April 21-23 - Silicon Valley Comic Con - **Steve Wozniak** and friends, including **John Cusack**, **Pam Grier**, **Robert Englund**, and **Buzz Aldrin** (19,350) svcomiccon.com

April 28-30 - CA State PTA (2,750) capta.org/programs-events/convention

(estimated attendance)

From the Archives

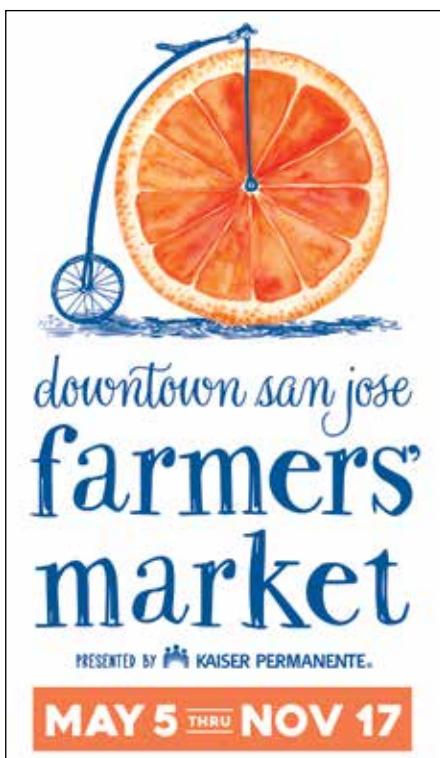
10 years ago – April 2007 – A "working group" co-chaired by the Chief of Police **Rob Davis** and Councilmember **Forrest Williams** initiated a set of proposals designed to change downtown's late-night culture. Among the suggestions was an idea to extend hours to 3 a.m. to allow for a more even flow of patrons instead of exiting all at once.

15 years ago – April 2002 – The city's transportation and redevelopment agencies joined forces to build several peripheral parking facilities "for budget-conscious parkers." Three lots on the northside of downtown opened in 2002 were located at First and Julian streets, 81 spaces; First and Bassett streets, 160 spaces; and 45 spaces were added to the previous 73-space lot at San Pedro and Bassett streets.

20 years ago – April 1997 – Accepting \$500,000 from the San Jose Sharks Foundation, the Redevelopment Agency decided to build a new merry-go-round for Arena Green that would include several custom-made carousel animals relating to the Guadalupe River Park environment.

25 years ago – April 1992 – Ex-49ers teammates **Ronnie Lott**, **Keena Turner** and **Eric Wright** co-owned two downtown ventures: Sports City Café in the Pavilion and the new Club Jazz on Market Street.

SJDA News



Market returns: Shop for fresh produce each Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on San Pedro Street. Details at sjdowntown.com.

SoFA surprises: A number of surprises are in store at the SoFA Street Fair, spring edition on April 23, which expands to three full blocks.

"We have more musical genres represented than ever before. There is truly something for everyone," said **Fil Maresca**, SoFA Street Fair founder and producer.

Close to 100 bands on more than 15 stages are planned for the seven-hour festival along South First Street between San Carlos and Reed streets that includes indoor and outdoor venues. Each venue has a different curator to book and manage the music.

Some highlights include:

- ◆ MACLA: Hip Hop by **BAMN Squad**
 - ◆ SoFA Market: All '90s acoustic tributes, by **Chris Reed** and **Socorra**
 - ◆ Parque de los Pobladores: Celebrating the soon-to-open Urban Rooms public art project and stage with rock
 - ◆ San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles: Classical
 - ◆ Upoar Brewery: Local blues by Fountain Blues Foundation
 - ◆ Heroes Martial Arts: San Jose's School of Rock students and alumni
 - ◆ Forager: The best of Content Magazine.
- Check facebook.com/sofastreetfair.

Downtown News

Kimpton announces new downtown hotel: Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants announced March 8 that a new 173-room hotel would be part of Museum Place, a mixed-use development by Insight Realty Co. on Park Avenue.

Museum Place also includes 300 residential units, 250,000 square feet of office, retail, restaurants and 54,000-square-foot expansion for The Tech Museum. An existing pedestrian promenade that connects Park Avenue to the San Jose Convention Center and VTA Light Rail station on San Carlos Street will also be improved as part of the ambitious project.

The new Kimpton hotel will include about 8,000 square feet of meeting space, a full service restaurant, a fast-casual café, a sixth-floor bar and outdoor pool and fitness center.

"With professional sports, state-of-the-art entertainment and a burgeoning downtown, the Museum Place project is the perfect venue for us to introduce our brand of heartfelt hospitality to the Silicon Valley," said **Mike DeFrino**, CEO of Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants. Kimpton has hotels in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Diego and plans to open hotels in Palm Springs, Sacramento, Hollywood and West Hollywood later this year.

"Kimpton's expertise will add a true sense of place to this project," said **Dennis Randall**, managing director of Insight Realty Co. China New Era Group Corporation is a development partner.

Patrons "flood" restaurants in March: The San Jose Sharks and more than 25 bars and restaurants raised \$87,000 to help neighbors affected by recent flooding.

Restaurants organized by Britannia Arms' **Maggie Handyside** agreed to donate 25 percent of their proceeds from March 5 to flood relief. The Sharks donated \$58,000.

For Handyside, it all started with a Facebook message from Mayor **Sam Liccardo** requesting help to recover from February flooding. That's when Coyote Creek became a river raging through neighborhoods, homes, an elementary school and a community theater. Emergency workers evacuated more than 14,000 people from areas surrounding downtown. Officials estimate at least \$73 million in damages.

"I just thought if restaurants pulled together we could help things," Handyside said. "We really appreciate the community for the support that the restaurants get from them throughout the year. It was time to give back."

In subsequent weekends, SoFA Market and SP2 Communal Bar + Restaurant also held flood-relief fund-raisers.

Walgreens building changes hands: DivcoWest has acquired the building at 2 W. Santa Clara St., where Walgreens occupies the ground floor, for \$14.5 million.

The seller, Ostrich Inc., acquired the 9-story, 83,896-square-foot building for \$5 million in 2013 and invested in its rehabilitation. DivcoWest and its joint venture investors led by **Gary Dillabough** intend to complete the renovation.

Erected in 1910 as one of the first steel-frame examples of architecture in the state, the building expanded on its



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Business News

Double HQs: Okta, which secures connections between people and technology, opened in February a "Headquarters South" on the fourth floor of 300 Park Ave.

Okta, which proposed an initial public offering of its Class A common stock on March 13, also has a headquarters office in San Francisco. The idea behind the twin headquarters concept is to allow home office personnel to work where they live, ensuring the company can recruit and retain the best Silicon Valley talent. CEO **Todd McKinnon** estimates his talent pool expands by a third by giving his employees a choice.

About 60 percent of the company's more than 850 employees work in the headquarters.

Okta, an identity and access management leader, counts Experian, Flex, Dish Networks, LinkedIn and Adobe among its thousands of customers. The company also has offices in Seattle, Toronto, London, Amsterdam and Sydney. Check okta.com.

Third business a charm: **Jenny Wolfes**, owner of Studio 8 and The Gold Club, has opened her third downtown business — Fuz Bar and Grill in the former Bella Mia space. **Randy Toshio Urabe** rules the kitchen and the menu includes Japanese- and Asian-style small plates. The full bar includes "swirl" cocktails of mango, apple, watermelon and berry flavors. Check fuzlounge.com.



Nestor businesses expand into San Pedro Square Market.

Anchors sets sail: Longtime downtown San Jose restaurateurs **Carols** and **Nestor Zubizarretto** (Muchos! and City Fish) opened Anchors at San Pedro Square Market on March 8. "We've tried to get into the San Pedro Square Market for five years," Nestor said, "because all of the best people are here."

Chef Giovanni serves fresh seafood in house-made sauces. Signature dishes include oysters Rockefeller, fish and chips, calamari and clam chowder.

DOWNTOWN DIMENSION

Downtown Dimension is published monthly by the San Jose Downtown Association, a nonprofit organization established in 1986 to serve the Downtown business community. It is printed on recycled paper.

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