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San Jose Downtown Association Appoints Brian Kurtz as CEO

SAN JOSÉ, CA – Following a national search, the San Jose Downtown Association (SJDA) has proudly announced the appointment of Brian Kurtz as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective January 2026. Kurtz is a nationally recognized leader in downtown management and urban revitalization, bringing a proven track record of transformative impact and strategic innovation.

San José Mayor Matt Mahan highlighted the importance of strong downtown leadership.

“Brian is taking the helm of our Downtown Association just in time to put the final touches on planning for 2026 and most importantly – help execute it,” said San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan. “I’m looking forward to working with him and the board to continue to make our city center a safe, clean place that people from all over the region want to visit.”

Kurtz currently leads the Downtown Tulsa Partnership (DTP), where he has served as the founding President & CEO since 2021 after previously guiding the City of Tulsa’s Downtown Coordinating Council. Under his leadership, DTP has more than doubled its operating budget, strengthened its Clean & Safe programs, expanded economic development initiatives, and advanced major public-private infrastructure projects. The organization also secured its first City contract under his tenure, setting a new foundation for long-term downtown management in Tulsa.

“I’m honored to be joining an organization with as strong a legacy and impact as SJDA,” said Brian Kurtz. “The community’s passion and vision for Downtown San Jose was apparent from the very beginning, and I’m excited to contribute to this important work. There is much to do ahead, and I look forward to working alongside a dedicated board, team, and community partners to ensure Downtown is ready to shine for San Jose 2026 while we continue building the foundation for its long-term future.”

SJDA Board leadership expressed enthusiasm for the next chapter.

“Brian brings a depth of professional expertise and a proven record of building strong coalitions in support of vibrant downtowns,” said SJDA Board Chair, Emily Ruvalcaba. “As San José prepares for major events in 2026 and lays the groundwork for long-term economic recovery, his experience will be invaluable.”

Kurtz holds a Bachelor of Arts from Gannon University and a Master of Urban Planning from the University at Buffalo. He is professionally certified by the International Downtown Association

(IDA), where he also serves on the Board of Directors. His background spans more than 15 years of advancing downtown districts through strategic planning, place management, policy advocacy, and stakeholder engagement.

For more information about the San Jose Downtown Association, visit https://sjdowntown.com/.

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About San Jose Downtown Association (SJDA): The San Jose Downtown Association is a membership-based nonprofit organization created in 1986 to provide marketing, advocacy, public art, and clean and safe initiatives on behalf of 2,000+ member businesses and property owners in Downtown San Jose. SJDA's mission is to support the members' vision of a vibrant Downtown San Jose for everyone.

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