



Dennis Evansky

Shoppers and diners are slowly returning to the Park Street shops and restaurants that opened last Friday.

Dining, Shopping Enter New Era

Sun Staff Reports

On May 19, the City Council approved a multi-pronged Commercial Streets Program to streamline the permit approval process for expanding dining and retail to parklets and sidewalks. Last Friday many Alameda businesses and restaurants began reopening.

Businesses are taking advantage of the program's repurposing of the roadway along core parts of Park and Webster streets. This will greatly increase the area available for outdoor dining and retail. City staff have worked with the Downtown Alameda Business Association (DABA) and the West Alameda Business Association (WABA) to develop this new program to support the health of our businesses and the community.

The program allows businesses along Park and Webster streets to set up outdoor dining and retail along the sidewalks without applying for permits or submitting plans. In addition, the business can apply for permission to install parklets using a streamlined and expedited permit process, to use parking spaces for outdoor dining, retail, or other commercial uses.

Businesses within all other commercial districts may also apply for a streamlined and expedited permit to use the sidewalk for outdoor dining and/or retail along the sidewalk, as well as for a parklet permit to use a parking space for outdoor dining,

retail, or other commercial uses.

The city is working with DABA and WABA to reconfigure core areas of Park and Webster streets. This includes expanding the sidewalk by converting the existing parking lane into space for outdoor dining and retail. The city and the business associations hope to create enough space to allow for both a wide and safe passage for people walking and shopping and for businesses to move some of their operations outdoors. The city plans to move parking lanes into the nearest travel lane. This will narrow segments of Park and Webster streets to one lane in each direction.

The city plans to complete this project along Park Street from Santa Clara to Encinal Avenues in early- to mid-July. A second section, of Park Street and a section of Webster Street will be completed in mid- to late-July.

Use of Private Parking & Outdoor Space

As of Tuesday, June 23, pending approval of a Citywide Use Permit by the Planning Board on June 22, all businesses Citywide will be allowed to use their privately owned outdoor (un-enclosed open air) space and parking lots for outdoor dining, retail and commercial uses, with some restrictions, such as maintaining all ADA parking spaces and access. No additional

plans or permits are required. The draft parameters for this usage are posted here, and the approved use permit conditions will be posted June 23.

Park & Webster Streets Repurposing

This reconfiguration will be monitored and evaluated, and then modified, as needed, and is expected to remain through early November. All bus stops will remain in place. A community survey will be posted on the Commercial Streets page shortly to gather input on these changes.

Curbside Pick-up Parking: Businesses that would like to have existing on-street parking converted to curbside pick-up or short-term parking can make this request by completing the form on the Commercial Streets web page. The City will review requests as they are submitted and make these changes, as feasible.

As shopping and outdoor dining increases in Alameda, the City encourages everyone to continue to be vigilant and following the County Health Orders for wearing masks and maintaining at least six feet of physical distancing.

Visit the City of Alameda Facebook page for more information and to access the permit forms and guidance. The page also has more information for Alameda businesses planning to re-open.

award was well deserved.

"Brian has incredible instincts about how to teach material and how to support children," said Terry Eichel, a Kindergarten and first-grade teacher at Maya Lin. "He is especially talented in helping children feel noticed, accepted, and able to grow from their mistakes."

Dodson was also hailed by AUSD officials. "I'd like to congratulate Mr. Dodson for winning this honor and thank him for his service to the Maya Lin community of students, families, and staff," said AUSD Board President Mia Bonta. "He is such an exemplar of the creativity, innovative spirit, and resilience of our AUSD educators, and we are so proud to have Mr. Dodson leading the way in the coming years."

In addition to teaching second and third grade — students at Maya

Lin School stay with the same teacher for two years — Dodson has taken numerous leadership positions at his school. He is a member of the Leadership/Alignment and Social Justice Equity committees; serves as the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support lead for the school; and volunteers as the staff representative to the Maya Lin PTA.

Dodson says being able to "creatively problem solve and collaborate with my colleagues to make sure I'm meeting the needs of my students," is what he is most passionate about teaching. He also loves teaching because no day is ever like the one before. "Every day when I come to school there is a new challenge or a new puzzle to try to solve."

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East Bay Coalition for Public Education #FundCAEd

Masks Now Required in Public in California

Community and Police Hold Meeting

Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft

Masks required! On June 18, Gov. Gavin Newsom ordered Californians to wear face coverings in public — in indoor settings and outside when it isn't possible to maintain six feet of social distance. Multiple scientific studies worldwide have confirmed that wearing a mask significantly reduces the risk of transmitting COVID-19. This virus is spread by droplets you breathe out when you cough or sneeze, and even while talking. And you can have and spread COVID-19 without experiencing any symptoms. Your mask protects others and provides some protection for you, too. Wearing a mask is one of the most effective things we can do to slow the spread of COVID-19.

We have to do better. Alameda County saw a 23% increase in new cases last week, while some Bay Area counties saw lower increases or even declines. More businesses and activities will be allowed to reopen when we slow our case rate. Local business owners and their employees have suffered significant financial loss during the shelter-in-place closures. You will help them by following the Governor's order to wear a mask.

Businesses in Alameda County are gradually being allowed to reopen. An updated Shelter-in-Place order issued June 18 allows retail venues to reopen but limits the number of people who can be inside at one time. Restaurants can offer outdoor dining with tables spaced six feet apart. And dog parks can reopen, but humans should maintain six feet of distance from each other and bring water for themselves and their canine companions because water faucets and drinking fountains are still turned off. You can find more information about other recently reopened activities at www.acphd.org/2019-ncov. And be sure to wear your mask when you visit reopened sites!

We're listening to each other

After hearing from multiple young Alameda residents of color about their negative encounters

"Have you ever had a positive experience with the police?"

with, or fear of the police, I organized a facilitated forum attended by some of these youth in their teens and early 20s, as well as three Alameda Police Department (APD) officers and APD Chief Paul Rolleri. Youth mentor and Alameda Unified School District staff member Robbie Wilson and I also attended. Facilitators were Regina Jackson, CEO of East Oakland Youth Development Center and President of Oakland Police Commission and Rev. Jacqueline Thompson, Senior Pastor of Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland.

The conversation began with a question, "Have you ever had a positive experience with the police?" None of the youth raised their hand. When asked, "Do you think it's possible to build trust in the police?" four hands were raised, and all six youth shared experiences that led to their mistrust of police.

In the course of a two-hour discussion, many constructive suggestions emerged, including providing more training and mental health resources for officers who, as Rev. Thompson noted, are "stretched so thin today." Also having APD offer classes that aren't taught at police academy, such as ethnic studies and civil rights, and the importance of police knowing the history of race relations in the community where they work.

A Youth Advisory Commission would give young people a voice in community issues that impact them.

Other recommendations involved community policing. Ms. Wilson said, "Police need to get out of their cars more and get to know people in the community." A Police Athletic League is one way for police to get to know and gain trust of youth in the community because, as Ms. Jackson observed, "If you only encounter people at

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Watkins Arrest Reminds Alameda of Things Past

Rasheed Shabazz

The recent murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd have gained global attention and brought the issue of racist policing back to the forefront. The arrest of and use of force against Alameda resident Mali Watkins is not the first time Black people and other people of color have been profiled or by the Alameda Police Department (APD).

Nearly 30 years ago, Alameda police officers were involved in several racist and sexist controversies. In 1991, an audit found that some of these officers exchanged racist messages from the Mobile Digital Terminals "MDT" in their patrol cars. Officers texted statements about donning Blackface, dressing up as Ku Klux Klan members and shooting Black people. This racist "MDT incident" became public just months after the 1991 beating of taxi driver Rodney King by the Los Angeles Police Department.

Local civil rights groups pro-

tested at City Hall and demanded the names of the officers be released. Civil rights groups also demanded an independent investigation. Then State lawmaker Barbara Lee joined the local demand to fire APD Chief Robert Shiells. The Alameda branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) picketed weekly at APD headquarters. Among the group's demands were:

1. The removal of Shiells as chief of police
2. Dismissal of all officers involved in the "MDT" incident.
3. Support for an independent investigation of the incident.
4. Creation of a Citizen's Police Review Commission
5. A strong multi-cultural training program
6. An examination of the broader problem of institutional racism in Alameda

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Alameda Unified School District

Maya Lin School teacher Brian Dodson advocates for student rights at an education rally. The school district named him the 2020 AUSD Teacher of the Year on June 16. He has taught for AUSD for eight years.

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