



Meeting Agenda

Downtown Action Organization
Board of Directors

Date:
February 18, 2026, 9:15am

Location:
coLAB
427 Mendocino Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Pauline Block will call the meeting to order at 9:30am.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON AGENDA ITEMS

Any public requests for future agenda items or comments not related to the agenda are allowed and limited to two minutes each. Comments from the public will be allowed on all agenda items at the time each item is called and limited to two minutes each.

3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS

Board members should declare if they have any personal conflicts of interest or need to abstain from participation in any items on the agenda.

4.0 ACTION: CONSENT ITEMS

Attachment 1

4.1 January 2026 Meeting Minutes

Note that due to the bookkeeping transition, January financials are not yet available and will be distributed for reference at a later date.

5.0 INTRODUCTION: BLOCK BY BLOCK TEAM

Introduction from Ryder Wooten, Operations Manager for Block By Block, Downtown's Clean & Safe program

6.0 REPORT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Attachment 2

Attachment 3

- Report on Clean & Safe program
- Report on 2026 Workplan
- General updates on ongoing items

6.0 REPORT: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Attachment 4

- Board Attendance Report
- Report on previous Executive Committee meeting and upcoming agenda topics

7.0 REPORTS: ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- 7.1 Branding & Website
- 7.2 Ross Street Activation



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8.0 ACTION: RECOMMENDATION TO ALLOCATE PROJECT MAINTENANCE FUNDS TO 4th STREET PLANTER PROJECT

Board to review and take action on recommendation to allocate \$15,000 for the Design & Improvement Committee to: reduce the number of planters on 4th Street, repaint the remaining planters and replant with native plants, as well as incorporate mosaics into up to two empty tree wells.

9.0 ACTION: RECOMMENDATION ON MEMO FROM COURTHOUSE SQUARE IMPROVEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Attachment 5

Board to take action on recommendation from Executive Committee to review and approve the memo provided by the Courthouse Square Improvement Advisory Committee, with submittal contingent upon formal written approval from the Asawa Family and notification to fountain rebuild donors.

10.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Board members to share any future items they wish to be considered.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT

Chair to adjourn meeting.

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www.downtownsantarosa.org/districtnews

**DAO Board Meeting - January 21, 2026
Hotel E
37 Old Courthouse Square, Santa Rosa, CA 95404**

Board Present: Beau Anderson, Leeanna Ausiello-Kane, Pauline Block, Zach Berkowitz, Britt Cooper, Chris Denny, Hugh Futrell, Nicole Gaddis, Caitlin Kurasek, Ken Lafranchi, Danielle Nelson, Gabe Osburn, Argo Thompson, Don Tomasi

Absent: Britt Cooper

Executive Director: Cadance Hinkle Allinson

MINUTES

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Pauline Block called the meeting to order at 9:15am.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (limited to two minutes each)

There were no public comments at this time.

3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST OR ABSTENTIONS

There were no conflicts of interest or abstentions.

4.0 ACTION: CONSENT ITEMS

Nicole Gaddis made a motion to approve consent items 4.1, December 17 Meeting Minutes, and 4.2, Financial Statements ending December 31, 2025. Leanna Kane seconded the motion and with no further discussion the motion was unanimously approved.

5.0 REPORT: QUARTERLY FINANCIALS

Treasurer Danielle Nelson shared information on the final quarter of 2025. She noted that income was below projected and as a result, there were some expense savings. She noted about \$90,000 moved into 2026 and shared appreciation for the funding provided by Sonoma Clean Power for the service vehicle.

6.0 REPORT: 2025 REFLECTION

Cadance Hinkle Allinson shared some details on the recent transitions of the organization.

Block By Block has been present in the District, getting acquainted, making recommendations and interviewing staff. They will not be keeping any current staff. She noted that anyone who wanted to make a contribution to a gift for Danielle, in recognition for her seven years of service, would be welcome to do so.

Jessica Jones reached out because the City is working on an initiative to streamline the Conditional Use Permit process, with the goal of making it more predictable and less costly for applicants and business owners. The City is looking for feedback, so she will include details in the DAO's next newsletter and will also send the information to the DAO Board directly.

She noted that the City also reached out to ask whether there was interest in supporting signage inside Santa Rosa plaza to direct people to either District.

She shared details about the organization's history and highlights for 2025 and answered questions about the street level service data presented.

7.0 ACTION: ANNUAL REPORT & STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Cadance Hinkle Allinson asked for feedback on the Annual Report and Statement of Activities. She noted that, with the board's approval, the Statement of Activities would be updated based on the discussion in Item 11.0 before distributing to the community by the end of the month.

Pauline clarified the budget included was approved at a previous meeting.

A motion was made by Argo Thompson to approve the Annual Report without any changes. The motion was seconded by Danielle Nelson. There was no further discussion and the motion was unanimously passed. Chris Denny was not present during the vote.

A motion was made by Danielle Nelson to approve the Statement of Activities, with appropriate changes made to reflect board discussion prior to distribution. The motion was seconded by Beau Anderson. There was no further discussion and the motion was unanimously approved. Chris Denny was not present during the vote.

8.0 ACTIVITY: BOARD BUILDING & BREAK

The board took a break and participated in a team building activity.

9.0 DISCUSSION & ACTION: 2026 PLANNING & WORKPLAN APPROVAL

The board reviewed the proposed mission and core objectives for the organization:

DAO Mission: To advance Downtown Santa Rosa as a vibrant, safe, and connected City Center that supports everyday life and serves as a dynamic destination to live, work, visit and explore.

DAO Objectives:

1. Maintain clean sidewalks and streets through regular and proactive street level services

2. Work closely with City electeds and staff to address larger issues facing the Downtown community and Santa Rosa community at large
3. Advocate for policies that support business attraction, growth and retention in the Downtown District
4. Enhance District identity through consistent online presence that supports Downtown businesses and property owners
5. Provide regular maintenance of previously funded projects
6. Create a community of business and property owners who utilize the District as an essential resource

Pauline clarified that the intent was to create overarching objectives that would be carried from year to year and allow the Workplan to reflect objectives for the fiscal year.

A brief discussion occurred about whether the DAO would be focusing on marketing the District as a tourist destination. It was clarified that was not the intent of the organization during its founding and that changes would need to be made to the management plan in order for additional funds to be allocated to marketing efforts. It is preferred to continue partnering with the DMOs and the Chamber on those activities.

The board reviewed the proposed Workplan items for the 2026 fiscal year:

District Management

1. Work with City staff to coordinate expenditures on Downtown projects including trash cans, planters, lighting and other improvements to Jeju Way, Courthouse Square
2. Empower Branding & Website Advisory Committee to enhance Downtown brand and identity and facilitate creation and launch of new Downtown website
3. Improve street level services and support for businesses through coordinating transition of street level service providers

Special Projects

1. Advisory Committee members to support Ross Street Activation through implementation of a Contract with City of Santa Rosa and expenditures of committed funds
2. Advisory Committee members to explore Courthouse Square enhancements and activations in coordination with City of Santa Rosa

District Improvements / Project Maintenance

1. Oversee installation of new 4th Street lighting
2. Develop a plan to reduce and replace street level planters
3. Develop street tree removal and replacement strategy

4. Work with City to identify permanent family friendly installations in Downtown Station Area

Board Policy, Culture & Governance

1. Identify mission and ongoing core objectives of organization
2. Review and update organization's Bylaws
3. Create ongoing strategy to obtain better engagement with business community and property owners

A discussion occurred about the board's willingness to let the Branding & Website Advisory Committee take on the work of rebranding in conjunction with the website redesign. There was a high level of comfort and support for the Advisory Committee to drive the project without additional feedback from the board, and no strong attachment to the existing branding.

Clarification was given on the items included in District Improvements being connected to previous board level discussions.

Natalie Balfour made a motion to approve the mission, core objectives and the workplan as stated. Danielle Nelson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion was passed unanimously. Chris Denny was not present for the vote.

10.0 ACTION: PROPOSED EDITS TO BYLAWS

The Chair reviewed the proposed changes to the DAO Bylaws which included:

- updating the organization's information
- transitioning the City of Santa Rosa seat to a liaison/non-voting role
- updating Nominating Committee details
- establishing term limits
- updating the attendance policy
- updating Executive Committee structure
- updating organization's signing policies

A discussion occurred about the absence policy and the recommendation was to change the language to reference board members missing "more than four meetings" so that Section 8.2 read, "Directors who fail to attend three (3) meetings during the first six months of the fiscal year or more than four (4) meetings during the entirety of the fiscal year, will be automatically removed from the board and not eligible to seek an additional term for a minimum period of two years.

A discussion occurred about whether board members could vote by proxy. Cadance will look into what mechanisms will be allowed for voting by proxy for future discussion.

Clarification was sought about whether the term limits applied to current board members and it was determined they would apply only to this joining after the Bylaws were approved.

Danielle Nelson made a motion to approve the Bylaw changes as presented, with the agreed upon language change for Section 8.2. The motion was seconded by Caitlin Kurasek. There was no further discussion and the Bylaw changes were unanimously approved.

11.0 ACTION: 2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Pauline shared the following people were being nominated to serve as Executive Committee members.

Chair: Pauline Block
Vice Chair: Chris Denny
Treasurer: Amanda Kurt
Secretary: Beau Anderson

A discussion ensued about Executive Committee terms and it was determined that could be reevaluated in the future if needed.

There were no nominations made from the floor.

A motion was made by Nicole Gaddis to approve the recommended slate of directors. The motion was seconded by Argo Thompson. There were no further nominations or further discussion. The motion was unanimously approved.

12.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Karen Wise shared that the Museum is opening a Santa Rosa exhibit.

Ken Lafranchi recommended having a presentation about the USL project.

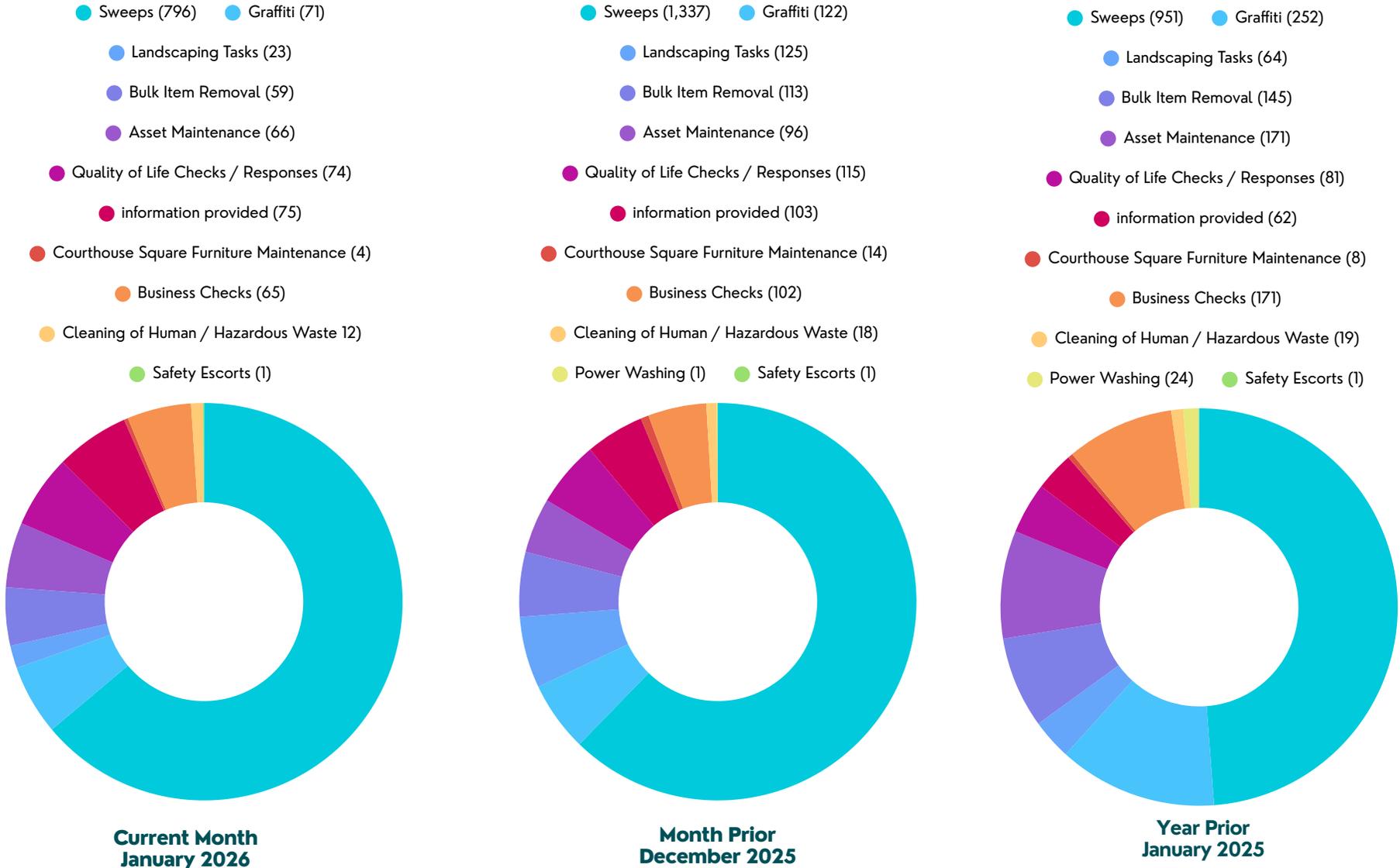
13.0 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Pauline Block adjourned the meeting at 11:00am.

Downtown Santa Rosa Monthly Street Level Services Report



Data reflects services conducted within the District in January 2025, the last month of the contract with NexStreet, and shows past month and same month year prior for comparison.



Data collected via Jia, NexStreet’s technology solution that tracks employees in the field, manages tasks, collects data around cleaning, maintenance and outreach tasks and helps predict trends in the District.

2026 Downtown Action Organization Workplan - Adopted January 21, 2026			
ACTION	FUNDING ALLOCATED	STATUS	NOTES
1. District Management			
1. Work with City staff to coordinate expenditures on Downtown projects which could include trash cans, planters, lighting and other improvements to Jeju Way, Courthouse Square		in process	Following plan developed from QKA, working to identify funding sources and methods of execution
2. Empower Branding & Website Advisory Committee to enhance downtown brand and identity and facilitate creation and launch of new Downtown website	\$20,000	in process	Full amount committed to include photography access, branding/design work and website development. Committee meeting weekly to review.
3. Improve street level services and support for businesses through coordinating transition of street level service providers		in process	Transition to Block By Block occurred on Feb 1. New phone number distributed to businesses.
2. Special Projects			
1. Advisory Committee members to support Ross Street Activation through implementation of a Contract with City of Santa Rosa and expenditures of committed funds		in process	Committee meeting twice a month - presenting work to board at March meeting
2. Advisory Committee members to explore Courthouse Square enhancements and activations in coordination with City of Santa Rosa		in process	Committee recommendation going to board at February meeting
3. District Improvements			
1. Oversee installation of new 4th Street lighting		not yet started	Determine whether part of larger lighting strategy
2. Develop a plan to reduce and replace street level planters		in process	Executive Committee reviewed Committee rec and increased the allocation to \$15,000 to cover the project. Board to review on February 18.
3. Develop street tree removal and replacement strategy		not yet started	
4. Work with City to identify permanent family friendly installations in Downtown Station Area	n/a	in process	Exploration of Luckey Climber at Julliard with connectivity to Courthouse Square area is priority
4. Board Policy, Culture & Governance			
1. Identify mission and ongoing core objectives of organization	n/a	Complete	Will be placed on website once finalized.
2. Review and update organization's Bylaws	n/a	Complete	Next steps are sharing with Council for formal approval.
3. Create ongoing strategy to obtain better engagement with business community and property owners	n/a	not yet started	Ongoing board discussions to determine how to get business community engaged. New new business packet to be created (samples from Downtown Tempe)

2026 DAO Board of Directors Attendance Report

Name	Absences (of 1)	Status
Beau Anderson	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Leeanna Ausiello-Kane	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Natalie Balfour	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Zach Berkowitz	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Pauline Block	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Britt Cooper	1	Attendance in Good Standing
Chris Denny	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Nicole Gaddis	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Caitlin Kurasek	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Amanda Kurt	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Ken LaFranchi	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Danielle Nelson	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Gabe Osburn	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Argo Thompson	0	Attendance in Good Standing
Don Tomasi	0	Attendance in Good Standing

To: DAO Exec Committee
From: DAO Advisory Committee on Courthouse Square Improvements
Date: February 11, 2026
Re: Memo to City Staff

The DAO Advisory Committee on Courthouse Square Improvements recommends that the DAO Board approve and send the following memo to City staff.

To: City of Santa Rosa, Planning and Economic Development Department
From: Downtown Action Organization
Date:
Re: Exploration of stage concept in Courthouse Square

The DAO requests that the City Planning and Economic Development Department explore the concept of incorporating the Ruth Asawa panels onto a public stage on Courthouse Square.

Having learned that the Asawa family is supportive of any project featuring the panels that brings the community together, we feel this is important to explore due to the potential positive impacts it could have for the City.

Since the Square was reunified in 2017, it has become a hub for local events that drive people to the Downtown core, create an engaging experience for tourists and drive economic development. A large majority of these events bring in temporary stages for performances. A permanent stage would go beyond merely replacing a temporary stage and become a powerful amenity to the Downtown core.

Many cities have downtown stages that provide a location for consistent activation and community collaboration, entertainment and cultural activity. Exploring the potential of this concept in Santa Rosa is an important step toward economic development goals and downtown revitalization.

Attached is a site plan that shows where the Ruth Asawa stage might be located on the Square and images of other strong stage facilities provided purely for illustrative purposes.

The DAO remains a resource and is prepared to assist the process in any way that is most helpful to expedite this exploration. We look forward to continuing the discussion.