

Contact: Rick Jensen
(408) 279-1775, Ext. 318

Dec. 9, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SJDA plans fresh downtown summer programming in 2012

Music in the Park concludes 23-year run

SAN JOSE – The San Jose Downtown Association (SJDA) announced plans to modify its summer programming and end the 23-year run of Music in the Park free summer concerts at its public board meeting this morning.

“We’re starting to work on new events that will attract more people to our city center, involve our member businesses more and help sustain our organization during difficult economic times,” said Art Bernstein, president of the 25-year-old business association.

The Downtown Association will continue producing or supporting popular summer events including Starlight Cinemas outdoor movies, the Downtown Farmers’ Market at San Pedro Square, South First Fridays Street MRKT and Dine Downtown restaurant week. In addition, SJDA intends to create new programming catering to professionals, residents and families, such as:

- **HER city:** An after-work event series that engages women in downtown social activities built around food, beverages, networking and beauty and spa services;
- **FUNday SUNDAY:** A weekend series for families that leverages San Jose’s perfect weather and rich cultural diversity, combining music, dance and interactive activities;
- **Sounds of Summer:** A targeted marketing and promotion effort aimed to take downtown’s emerging status as a live music destination to new levels;
- **Powered by SJDA:** Partnering with other groups and producers, SJDA will apply its marketing / promotional / production expertise to new and existing marquee events to help them grow.

“As part of our normal review process, we decided earlier this year that this would be Music in the Park’s last season,” Bernstein said.

SJDA revenues and economic impact to surrounding businesses from the music series decreased this year, while expenses to produce the shows and concerns of businesses increased. At public meetings in June and August, business owners and residents suggested that SJDA “end it or mend it.” SJDA made the decision to focus on new programs rather than attempt to re-make Music in the Park after several board and committee meetings this fall while preserving event concepts that still contribute to downtown’s live music scene.

The association had previously stopped producing the San Jose America Festival, San Pedro Square Brew Ha Ha, Music in the Other Park and SoFA Street Festival after those events ran their course of adding vibrancy to the downtown scene.

Music in the Park started in 1989 as an eight-week, Friday lunchtime series in Plaza de Cesar Chavez. The series moved to Thursday evenings in 1990, eventually growing to 13 concerts. In all, SJDA produced 214 free shows featuring international headliners such as Tower of Power and Smash Mouth and long-time local favorites like Pete Escovedo and Greg Kihn.

The series was supported by loyal sponsors and attended by devoted fans that reflected the region’s diverse population and socioeconomic makeup. The series peaked in 2010 when 83,500 people attended the concerts, 37 percent of them coming from outside the city and creating \$2.4 million in economic impact.

SJDA and the city have begun talks to identify the city’s commitment to the new programs. The city and Redevelopment Agency have contributed in the past to SJDA’s events, including Music in the Park, through grants and contracts.

-End-

San Jose Downtown Association has been a non-profit group of business and property owners working to improve the vitality and livability of downtown San Jose for 25 years.