

Economic Recovery Task Force December Update

Review of Festival Weekends: In their December 1 meeting, the Economic Recovery Task Force reviewed highlights of recent Festival Weekends held Oct. 16-18 and Nov. 13-15 and the associated road closures. Reports from merchants were highly positive. The Chamber of Commerce's welcome banners made the event more readily identifiable to passersby and the City has now created a parking map for visitors. Both improvements mean payoffs in sales for local businesses. In December, the Festival Weekend will take place December 4-6 and will include road closures.

Upcoming Holiday Activities: A review of Winter Park's holiday calendar included December traditions for residents and guests of all ages. The City and Chamber created an exciting menu of events thoughtfully planned with safety in mind, including Winter on the Avenue on December 4, the 68th Annual Ye Old Town Christmas Parade on December 5, and a West Meadow Holiday Market on December 11.

The Chamber was committed to finding a safe way to host the parade this year. To that end, it created 170 12' x 12' socially distant areas on the sidewalks along the parade route to allow for secure viewing spaces. The free reservations were made online on a first-come, first-served basis and were quickly booked.

Performances by the Bach Festival Society, Orlando Philharmonic and Rollins College Music Department are also among the season's highlights. Follow [THIS LINK](#) for a detailed summary of holiday events offered in December.

Next Steps: Since August, the Task Force has succeeded in vetting economic mitigation strategies proposed by Balmoral Group economists, including those that have succeeded in cities similar to Winter Park. It has worked in harmony with City staff to determine best steps which suit the needs of our unique community and presented the best of their findings to the Commission.

Chamber President and CEO Betsy Gardner Eckbert led the Task Force discussion and asked the group to reflect on additional pursuits they as members representing all business sectors might consider, strategies offering short-term results and others that will yield long-term aid to all industries. In January, they will learn about and discuss opportunities to strengthen our economic infrastructure in a workshop meeting.