

Downtown is  
Calling

Good  
Times  
Await



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In keeping with recommended protocols for dealing with the COVID-19 virus aka Coronavirus, RDP luncheons and most meetings are canceled until further notice.



February 2021

# Bulletin

Riverside Downtown Business Improvement District

## Riverside Convention Center COVID Response

### Getting back to business

The Riverside Convention Center has made your safety our business. As part of a comprehensive reopening strategy, we have initiated detailed health and safety programs under the guidance of Riverside County Department of Public Health and State of California Public Health. Enforced daily policies now include social distancing, mandatory properly worn face masks as well as more stringent hygiene and disinfecting procedures.

We are proud to announce we are the recipient of GBAC (Global Biorisk Advisory Council) Star Facility accreditation. The center now boasts five GBAC certified Technicians and that number will grow; all with an emphasis on SARS-CoV2/COVID 19. CVB'S partner, the Hyatt Place Downtown Riverside has accompanied us in earning their certification. Riverside Marriott along with our other partner hotels are either in the process or are considering adoption of the program.

### About GBAC, a Division of ISSA

Composed of international leaders in the field of microbial-pathogenic threat analysis, mitigation, response, and recovery, the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC), a Division of ISSA, provides training, guidance, accreditation, certification, crisis management assistance, and leadership to government, commercial and private entities looking to mitigate, quickly address, and/or recover from biological threats and real-time crises. The organization's services include biorisk management program assessment and training, Forensic Restoration® response and remediation, the GBAC STAR™ facility accreditation program, training and certification of individuals, and consulting for building owners and



facility managers.

For more information, visit [www.gbac.org](http://www.gbac.org).

### About ISSA

With more than 9,300 members—including distributors, manufacturers, manufacturer representatives, wholesalers, building service contractors, in-house service providers, residential cleaners, and associated service members—ISSA is the world's leading trade association for the cleaning industry. The association is committed to changing the way the world views cleaning by providing its members with the business tools they need to promote cleaning as an investment in human health, the environment, and an improved bottom line. Headquartered in Northbrook, Ill., USA, the association has regional offices in Mainz, Germany; Whitby, Canada; Parramatta, Australia; Seoul, South Korea; and Shanghai, China. For more information about ISSA, visit [www.issa.com](http://www.issa.com) or call 800-225-4772 (North America) or 847-982-0800.

Overall, we have and will continue to work diligently with our clients and partners in accordance with the National COVID-19 Safe Workplace

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## COVID RESPONSE from page 1

Principals, the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Our continuing efforts will assure proper airflow and ventilation, extensive venue disinfectant cleaning and hygiene, temperature checks, physical distancing, sanitizing stations and contactless

transactions well into the future. We look forward to seeing you soon.

*Submitted by the Riverside Convention Center and  
Riverside Convention and Visitors Bureau*



# Riverside Dickens Festival News

Celebrating the life and works of author Charles Dickens and his impact on society, the Riverside Dickens Festival is the brainchild of a small group of people who wanted to promote the cultural arts. Many vendors sell Victorian-era clothing for guests who feel inspired to dress up from the comfort of their own home. The festival presents an in-depth view of the Dickensian era utilizing lectures, musicians, fashion shows, online tutorials and much more.

This year the Riverside Dickens Festival will be a virtual festival on February 20th and 21st, 2021. The theme for

this festival is "The Great Exhibition of 2021". Modelled after the Crystal Palace exhibition of 1851, the festival hopes to spotlight innovation, technology, and international trade as the original event did. Special events include Charlotte and Anne Bronte 'live' as well as fashion shows featuring Victorian and Steampunk clothing. The festival is free although donations are welcome.

*For more information on the event, check  
[www.dickensfest.com](http://www.dickensfest.com) or Facebook/dickensfest.*



## Arts Corner: Art Works

Downtown Riverside is home to a number of vibrant arts and cultural organizations that help make Riverside the City of Arts and Innovation. One of the most unique of these organizations is Art Works.

"Art Works began over a decade ago when Sue Moreland, the founder of Jefferson Transitional Programs, went to the Riverside Department of Mental Health (now Riverside University Health System – Behavioral Health) with a dream of establishing a program in Riverside specifically for people with a mental health diagnosis who want to experience the healing power of art in their lives," said Ron Hoffman, Recovery Services Administrator I for Art Works.

The program is now operated by Recovery International, a mental health recovery nonprofit based in Arizona.

Hoffman went on to describe the program as "peer run," meaning all staff as well as participants are diagnosed with a mental illness.

"Peer Support Specialists employed by the program receive specialized training to use their own lived experience with mental illness to support others in navigating their journeys," he said. "Choice and empowerment are foundations of recovery and Art Works offers both."

Participants can select from a wide range of classes based on the artistic medium to which they feel the most connected. Watercolor, acrylic painting, quilling, cartooning, weaving, jewelry making, book club, flower arranging, poetry and more are included. All classes and supplies are free to participants.



Hoffman discussed how several years ago, Art Works produced a play called "Scrambled Eggs." The piece provided insight into mental health recovery by the sharing of individual stories of hope and inspiration. These stories showed how it was possible to live healthy productive lives despite living with a mental illness.

"By sharing those stories, the stigma against mental illness was reduced and as a result people gave themselves permission to reach out for help when they needed it, no longer fearing rejection or name calling by people who don't understand," said Hoffman.

Hoffman explained that the quest to reduce stigma is ongoing. On Friday evenings prior to the pandemic, Art Works would host "After Works," classes that are open to the community, also at no charge. The goal was to allow shoulder-to-shoulder creative interaction between community members and program participants, providing a clear view of how recovery is possible and that people live successful lives despite mental health challenges.

"Breaking down stigma and judgment benefits everyone because the more comfortable we become talking about mental illness, the more likely we are to support others who are facing challenges and to reach out for help without shame when we need it," said Hoffman.

For more information, find Art Works Gallery on Facebook.

*Contributed by Patrick Brien, Executive Director -  
Riverside Arts Council*



# COUNCIL CORNER

## Ward One Council Update

Contributed by Councilwoman Erin Edwards


As of January 25th, the **State of California lifted the regional stay-at-home orders** and Riverside County returned to the Purple Tier in the Governor's Blueprint for a Safer Economy. According to the California Department of Public Health, services and activities, such as **outdoor dining and personal services, may resume immediately with required modifications**, and the curfew prohibiting non-essential activity between 10 pm to 5 am has been lifted. This great news is a testament to our community's efforts over the last few months. Even better news: more relief is on the way with **COVID-19 vaccines** arriving to Riverside. The City has recently opened a vaccine site, partnering with Curative, in the Riverside Convention Center parking lot.

As we work collectively to address Downtown safety, I encourage you to tune into the February 23rd City Council meeting to hear Police Chief Larry Gonzalez give an **update about the Riverside Police Department's strategic plan and policies**. I am proud to share that the agreement between the City and Riverside University Health System for **two nurses to join the PSET team passed** on January 26th. Further, my office is pleased to be a part of the **Downtown Partnership's Security Task Force**; we are eager to work together to find solutions.

My office worked hard during the month of January to support and listen to Downtown businesses. I voted in favor of **allowing Riverside Public Utility commercial**

**customers to apply their utility deposit towards their bill**; applications to this program will be accepted through March 31st, 2021. I am happy to report that **in Ward 1 alone, 124 businesses and 52 non-profits were awarded over of \$1.7 million in CARES Act funding**.

Downtown welcomes new businesses **Slater's 50/50** and **The Roots** early this year. **The Mark** plans to open in summer 2021, and it is quickly gaining attention from commercial and residential tenants alike. Furthermore, staff will be **moving furniture and books into the new Main Library** this month. Vacating the former library location is especially important as it is officially the new home to The Cheech! City Council voted to approve the Management Agreement between the City and the Riverside Art Museum on January 19th. **The Cheech will open near the end of 2021.**

Finally, tune into the City Council meeting on February 23rd to hear the continued conversation about the **proposed City properties for sale**. Please check my social media channels for the link to my **virtual office hours** this month, which will take place on February 4th at 7:30 pm. If you have any questions in the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out through e-mail ([EEwards@riversideca.gov](mailto:EEwards@riversideca.gov)) or by phone at 951-783-7811. 



## Ward Two Council Update

Contributed by Councilman Andy Melendrez

**Ward 2 Development & Local Impact:** As we look for ways to strengthen our economy, provide better quality of life, and build on local assets, we look to our partners and community members to help us create the appropriate atmosphere. We have two great development projects approved by the City Council in Ward 2 and listed below with their local impact.

- **Wakeland Entrada Housing Development:** 65 Affordable Housing Units with a total investment of approximately \$27 Million and 80+ jobs. This development is scheduled to begin in the last quarter of 2021.
- **Canyon Springs Healthcare Campus:** Three separate buildings for Independent Living/Skilled Nursing, Hospital/Medical and Senior Housing. The approximate total investment of this development project is \$1.5 Billion. When fully built out, the campus will have approximately 375,000 square feet of medical office space, two parking structures and a hospital. This current phase is anticipated to generate 2,000 construction jobs, over 150 full time healthcare related jobs, attract critically needed additional healthcare professionals, and provide

much needed healthcare services to the immediate community.

**Residents of Eastside Active in Leadership (R.E.A.L.):** This is a local neighborhood group that was instrumental in assisting City staff in the outreach done for the Transformative Climate Communities Grant. One of the resident-led projects is the safety and walkability around neighborhood schools and community centers. As a result of the R.E.A.L. groups community outreach we will be installing traffic circles in those key locations with high traffic incidents. Keep an eye out around the Longfellow Elementary School as these traffic circles should be completed in the first quarter of 2021.

**Park Avenue Revitalization Project:** Last year through the Eastside Art Alliance we piloted a new project with the Riverside Art Museum to apply for a grant that continues our efforts to reduce graffiti and vandalism in our neighborhoods. Arcis Party joined us in the effort to


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### WARD TWO from page 3

combat vandalism and we developed five amazing murals alongside local artists and residents on the wall that faces University and Park Avenue. This project kicked off the Park Avenue Revitalization and now we are moving into the paving section of the project. Nathan Mustafa with the City's Traffic and Engineering Department assisted our local residents in applying for the Active Transportation

Grant that will allow us to repave Park Avenue between University Avenue and Fourteenth Street, install a bike lane, install parklets for local patrons of businesses, and enhance the lighting along that entire area. This community led initiative will begin construction during the fall of 2021 and should be finalized mid-2022. 

## Business Spotlight: Saku Ramen

We opened our doors on December 11, 2020. We are open 24 hours and offer Carryout, Take-out, and Delivery.

At Saku Ramen we pay immense attention to detail in everything from butchering proteins to concocting complex broths. We take pride in the beauty of achieving great flavors with mortar and pestle-ground spices and creating full Japanese menu offerings completely from scratch.

Ramen is a beauty of a soup that is so simple, and still so complex. Our chef, a self-described mad scientist, loves exploring the chemistry of brewing broths, and patiently



influencing the dimensions of flavors with a myriad of fine ingredients and a close attention to detail.

We care about giving back to our community and that's why we serve nothing but the best ramen. Stop by and say hi to us. We love introducing people to our delicious food.

Federico Sanchez, General Manager  
Saku Ramen LLC

3643 Main Street Avenue, Riverside, CA 92501  
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## RDP SECURITY UPDATE

The RDP Ambassador program changed effective January 17, 2021. The evening and weekend shift patrolling City-owned parking garages was terminated. The day shift continues with an Ambassador patrolling the downtown area Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm in a GEM electric car. Ambassadors can be contacted at 951-312-7522.

In addition to the Ambassador day patrol, RDP hired Multi-Housing District Patrol, a downtown-based security company, to patrol the downtown entertainment district from 4 pm to midnight seven days a week. There is also an additional temporary patrol from Noon to 8 pm of the downtown area.

The dispatch number is 951-358-0390.

Please note that both the Ambassador Patrol and the Multi-housing District Patrol cannot enter private property or business premises. Their focus is on public areas including sidewalks. If you feel threatened, please call the police or 911 if it's an emergency. However, patrols can stand by outside until the police arrive or until the person causing the disturbance leaves the premises.

We are also requesting your assistance. RDP will be sending out a short survey on your survey issues and concerns. Please complete and return as your input is vital. 

## RDP Welcomes New Businesses to Downtown


Blue Ribbon Real Estate • Dominique Roy, Mft (counseling) • James Rubio (antiques)

Maki Bomb, LLC • Mi Cafecito Coffee • Saku Ramen • Sameh Morsi (electronics)

Shine Craft Vessels (retail) • The Mar. M Agency LLC (communications)

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# BUSINESS BUZZ

## 5 Small Business Listings to Boost Your Online Presence

*by Jamie Johnson, Contributing Writer*

Free local business directories are an easy and free way to boost your business's online presence. Here are five small business listings you should claim.

### **Online business listings are great ways to attract local customers to your business.**

Taking advantage of free small business listings is one of the best ways to get in front of new potential customers. Of course, it's impossible to be everywhere at once, so here are the five small business listings you should pay attention to.

#### **Google My Business**

If you only claim one small business listing outlined in this article, it should be Google My Business. Your Google My Business listing allows you to connect with potential customers across Google Search and Maps. It's also one of the best ways to improve your local SEO.

This listing highlights important details, like your business hours, location and the services you offer. You can update this information if your hours change or you have a special promotion going on.

The biggest advantage of claiming your Google My Business listing is that it increases trust with potential customers. According to Google, businesses with a complete listing are seen as more credible and customers are 38% more likely to visit their store.

#### **Yelp for Business**

If you've ever dreaded the thought of receiving a Yelp review, then you're not alone. The site gets a bad rap but your Yelp for Business listing can help you get in front of more potential customers and present your business in the best light possible.

That's because Yelp users tend to be the customers that are the most highly motivated to buy. An estimated 45% of customers will check Yelp reviews before visiting a new business, and 35% of those individuals will visit that business within 24 hours of checking its reviews.

After you claim your business listing, you'll want to make sure not only that your profile is complete but that it stands out to potential customers. Highlight the products or services your business offers and specify what differentiates you from your competitors.

Yelp listings are a crucial part of establishing your business, so be sure to encourage your customers to leave you a review. Most businesses see a 9% increase in revenue for every new star they earn on Yelp.

Your Facebook Business page is a great place to share information about your business and encourage customers to leave reviews.

#### **Angie's List Business**

Angie's List is another great way to get the word out about your small business and manage your online reputation. This free listing site caters to professionals that offer health care and home contracting services.

One of the great things about Angie's List is that the site filters out spammy, low-quality reviews. This means the reviews that do show up gain added credibility with potential customers.

Angie's List will not only put your business in front of more customers but will also help facilitate new transactions. You can use the site's messaging center to communicate with potential customers about job requests.

#### **Facebook Business**

If you want to take advantage of your free Facebook listing, then you'll need to set up your Facebook Business page. Once you have a Facebook Business page, your business can start showing up in relevant searches.

If you check in at your business, you can also get listed on Facebook Places, which helps new users discover businesses in their area. You can get featured on Facebook Places even if you don't have a business page, but it works best when you use the two features in tandem.

Your Facebook Business page is a great place to share information about your business and encourage customers to leave reviews. It's also a great way to drive traffic back to your website.

#### **Foursquare for Business**

Foursquare for Business is an established business directory that millions of people visit to discover new local businesses. Claiming your listing here is another great way to connect with new potential customers.

Claiming your listing is easy and gives you the ability to target local customers. Plus, you can highlight any special offers or discounts you have going on. However, you will have to pay a one-time fee of \$20 to manage your listing so it's not entirely free.

Foursquare users can also share feedback and photos from their visits to your business, which is a great way to encourage customer engagement. And utilizing Foursquare's analytics will help you improve your performance over time.

*Source: [www.uschamber.com/co/grow/marketing/top-small-business-listings](http://www.uschamber.com/co/grow/marketing/top-small-business-listings)*



# SECURITY CORNER

## Features of Business Security Systems

*by Sean Peek, business.com Contributing Writer*

When evaluating a security system for your business, here's how to determine the critical features you will need.

The features you need in a business security system depend on your company, budget and the typical security risks you face. If you manage a warehouse that is full of merchandise, you need a vastly different security system than what a small brick-and-mortar store needs.

If you are considering installing a security system for your business, by understanding the different types of alarm systems, the available features and the benefits they provide, you can install an affordable, useful system that will benefit your business for years to come.

### **Top features of business security systems**

Business security systems protect your company's property, your employees, and inventory, and they can lower the cost of utilities. The exact features you should look for in a security system depend on your building's setup and your business's needs. However, many businesses look for these top features when shopping for a security system.

#### ***Fire/smoke and environmental hazard detection***

Sensors can detect the presence of carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and/or heightened temperature to trigger alarms. Similarly, low-temperature sensors can be installed in bathrooms, kitchens, break rooms and other areas where water pipes are present. Sensors can also be placed in flood-prone areas to detect water.

When these sensors detect any unusual readings, an alarm is sent to the security system monitoring service, police and/or fire departments, and company designated personnel, so these responders can act quickly and minimize (or even eliminate) potential damages.

If your commercial security system is connected with local law enforcement, one thing to be aware of is that you may have to register with your local police department. Usually, there is a small annual fee, along with a requirement to keep emergency contact information up to date. Many jurisdictions charge for false alarms – anywhere from \$50 to \$500 per incident.

#### ***Lighting/HVAC/office equipment monitoring***

Many systems monitor your heating and air conditioning, lighting and office equipment. If someone forgets to turn the lights off, for example, leaves the coffee maker on, or fails to reset the thermostat, the system sends a notification. You can then remotely turn the lights off, shut off the coffee maker or set the thermostat to the correct temperature.

For businesses that have expensive machinery, some systems can install customized sensors that sense overheating (or other dangerous conditions), and can then send alerts and shut off the machines.

#### ***Monitoring services***

Most business security systems provide some form of 24-hour monitoring. In the event a door or window is breached, some alarm systems make a loud noise or flash lights. In some situations, that might be sufficient to scare off intruders, but if you have valuable inventory or equipment and someone breaks into your building, or a fire alarm goes off, you want to instantly know about it and have a response in place.

That response depends on your contract with the monitoring service. The service might first notify you, the business owner. They might investigate the alarm via video monitoring, or they might send an employee to check on the situation. Another option is that depending on the type of alarm, the police or fire department is immediately notified.

#### ***Access logs***

Electronic access control not only eliminates the cumbersome use of keys to enter your office building (and other secure locations), it also tracks who has accessed the location and when. Data files can be viewed from any authorized, web-enabled computer. The access control system can be integrated with the alarm system to trigger alerts if someone is trying to gain unauthorized entrance.

#### ***Identity verification systems***

For businesses where confidentiality and security are paramount, identity verification systems allow only approved employees to enter a building or a specific area. This prevents unauthorized individuals from gaining access to areas they shouldn't be in.

In place of a physical key, a user's identity is ascertained and authorized in one of four ways:

- The employee swipes their identification card (or a smart card or key fob) using a card reader installed at the access point.
- Employees enter a personal identification number or password via a keypad installed at the major access points.
- The user's identity is verified via photo identification.
- The system uses biometric recognition of an individual's fingerprint or face.

#### ***Time and attendance integration***

Many access control systems are integrated into time and attendance software. This streamlines payroll accounting while also encouraging prompt and consistent attendance at work.

#### ***Conditional recording***

If you install video cameras with your system, recording may be continuous or can start when a specific condition is met. For example, your system can begin recording if it detects movement, a sensor detects that a door or window has been opened, or you may record during certain times of the day (or night). While continual recording requires



more storage, it may be necessary, especially if you have high-risk areas where security is paramount.

## **Types of security system for businesses**

Once you know which features you want in a commercial security system, the next decision is choosing which type of system best meets your business's needs.

Here are seven common types of security systems for businesses:

### ***Wired alarm systems***

An alarm system comprises sensors at key points which, when triggered, send a signal that warns of a potential problem. The signal is often transmitted using a landline telephone system that phones the alarm company and/or police or fire department. This is called a "wired" or "hardwired" notification service. One problem with hardwired alarm systems is they don't work if the phone line doesn't work, such as when lines are down due to bad weather.

### ***Wireless alarm systems***

Wireless systems send an alarm or notification when an alarm condition is discovered over a broadband Wi-Fi network or cell phone network. Wireless alarm systems do not work if the cell network or Wi-Fi network is down.

If you opt for a wireless security system, verify with the provider that it uses a cellular connection, which is less likely to fail than an internet connection.

Another benefit of wireless alarm systems is that you can monitor your building via an app on your cell phone.

### ***Video monitoring systems***

Camera surveillance protects your assets, including your employees. Besides providing 24/7 observation of everything happening on your premises, recorded footage can identify intruders and be used as evidence in court proceedings.

Here are three options for monitoring your business via video surveillance:

#### ***Closed-circuit television***

Closed-circuit TV (CCTV) systems continuously transmit a signal to one or multiple monitors. For high-risk areas, a security guard watches the monitor(s) for suspicious or dangerous activity.

#### ***Wired video monitoring systems***

Video systems can be wired or wireless. Wired systems are more suitable for permanent and continuous surveillance situations. They do not require batteries to stay powered, nor do they need slow or unpredictable wireless connections for transmitting and storing video streams.

#### ***Wireless video monitoring systems***

Wireless cameras are useful when you may need to move cameras around or if you don't anticipate staying at a facility long enough to justify the cost of installing a wired system.

In terms of the cost, installation is less expensive with wireless systems, and, in many cases, the business owner can position the camera as needed without hiring a professional installer. However, a disadvantage is that wireless cameras require batteries to operate, and these

batteries need to be changed regularly. Further, if the system doesn't offer free cloud storage, you can spend quite a bit annually to store and access video footage.

### ***Intercom systems***

An intercom system is one simple way to safely identify and monitor visitors to your building. The one drawback, however, is that the system must be continually monitored, which could be impractical, depending on your budget and the staff you have available.

However, the intercom system could be an audio-only operation, or it could be combined with video to provide a time- and date-stamped visual record of people who have entered and left your building.

### ***Benefits of security systems for businesses***

Having a business security system allows you to monitor both internal and external activities, so you can protect your organization and lessen the impact of any negative incidents. From catching thieves in the act to observing your building in real time from any location, here are some of the top benefits of investing in a business security system:

#### ***Enables video recording***

Many security systems not only offer video monitoring, but they can record video. DVRs (digital video recorders) allow you to record and date images for future reference, which can be used to solve internal issues and track down external intruders. Video footage is stored on either digital video discs (DVDs), a computer hard drive or the cloud.

#### ***Provides remote access to video monitoring***

Most wireless cameras use the same internet protocol (IP) to transmit data that is used across private and public networks. This makes the digitized video remotely accessible through a computer, tablet or smartphone. In some cases, video monitoring equipment can be remotely operated using an internet connection.

Having remote access to video monitoring allows you to see what's happening on-site at any time, no matter where you are and take any necessary action.

#### ***Reduces theft***

Having a video security system in place can significantly reduce both internal and external theft. If you are concerned about employee theft, hidden cameras can catch thieves in the act. Retail businesses can also more easily identify shoplifters and prevent them from returning to the premises.

Even the mere presence of a camera can deter theft or unauthorized access. "Dummy" cameras that are not hooked into any monitoring system are frequently used for their ability to deter crimes.

#### ***Boosts safety and productivity***

Video systems also monitor employee behavior and detect inefficient or unsafe work habits, allowing you to better understand daily workflows and how to improve upon them. The "dummy camera" effect may even encourage workers to be on their best behavior, which can increase safety and productivity. Recorded footage can also be used in performance reviews or as a training aid to point out unsafe work practices.





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**Press deadline** is the 15th of  
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