



## The Solano Avenue Association

A 501 (c) (6)

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For City Officials: as the Solano Stroll discussion continues, here are some points and some additional facts that we would like to make. Thank you for reading me.

### Concerns:

The offset: Solano Avenue is seventy percent Albany. Albany's estimate of services is \$100,00.00; Berkeley: \$200,000.00? This does not make sense.

The Stroll is being singled-out with the use of exotic, boutique safety devises, where other events in the Bay Area are not subjected to the expense and gross inconvenience of this premium safety solution.

Is the City of Berkeley using this as an overtime opportunity, while simultaneously driving away public events.

In the Stroll's case, the event will become too expensive to produce because of devises designed to keep the public safe. I guess the public will be even safer with no Stroll.

Why does the cost to the city seem to double every few years? Where are we heading with this, a million-dollar event? Why aren't we trying to REDUCE expenses and impact, instead of using these public events as an overtime opportunity for City employees?

### Why the Solano Avenue Stroll?

#### It's FREE to attend.

**Promotes diversity and inclusivity:** The event celebrates the cultural and social diversity of the region, offering something for everyone, regardless of background or interests.

**Expertly produced:** A well-organized event, free from disruptions or issues for the community or stakeholders.

**Showcases local businesses:** Solano Avenue's unique shops and restaurants are front and center, supporting the local economy.

**Highlights Solano Avenue as a key Albany/Berkeley destination:** A go-to spot for locals and visitors alike.

**A platform for entertainers:** School bands and local performers have a chance to showcase their talents.

**Encourages business growth and community wellness:** A great opportunity for new businesses to thrive along Solano Avenue. Public events like the Stroll are a big draw for people looking to settle in a community.

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**Offers a venue for over 200 local non-profits:** A place for non-profits to educate, fundraise, and engage with the public.

**Supports local artists and entrepreneurs:** Most vendors are small, non-corporate businesses, giving entrepreneurs a chance to shine.

**A family tradition:** The Stroll is more than an event; it's a rite of passage for many. It's where children come for the first time on their own, and families come together to enjoy the community spirit. It's a place where smiles are shared, and goodwill flourishes.

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**Some facts:**

- **The Stroll provides critical year-round support for Solano Avenue:** The Solano Avenue Association (SAA) provides full-time services to Solano Avenue, with the Stroll funding our year-round events and promotions.
- The SAA Believes that there is a large, measurable positive impact to the local economy and stimulates business growth. **The Stroll is not an “expense”, it is an INVESTMENT.**
- **The Solano Avenue Association is a 501(c)(6):** As a 501(c)(6), most donations and grants are typically directed to 501(c)(3) organizations, limiting the funding opportunities available to the SAA.
- **Small but mighty team:** The SAA has one full-time staff member, the Executive Director, and an 11-person Board of Directors made up of volunteers from both businesses and the community at large.
- **We never stop trying to raise money.** So “raising more money” is not a solution to increasing costs.
- **The Solano Avenue Stroll does not promote the producers;** no one knows that the Solano Avenue Association throws the party, they think it is the Cities of Albany and Berkeley. You are not doing us a favor by hosting the Stroll. The SAA is doing YOU the favor.

Lastly, if the event ever skipped a year or went missing, **a public event is hard to “bring back”**. For a host of reasons.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Solano Avenue Association Board of Directors.