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For Immediate Release

May 21, 2024

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**Board Supports Shop San Joaquin to Help
Local Businesses and Consumers**

Stockton, CA – At its meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors authorized fund transfers to support local businesses with a shop local initiative, “Shop San Joaquin.” Based on a recommendation from the Employment and Economic Development Department (EEDD), the Board reallocated nearly \$1.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars to fund the Shop San Joaquin program with BluDot Technologies. Up to \$1 million in consumer rewards will be available to San Joaquin County shoppers using the Open Rewards platform. By shopping at eligible establishments in San Joaquin County, users can earn rewards that can be redeemed at eligible local business, or the same local business. The grant is part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and must be used to respond to the negative impacts of the public health emergency (COVID-19) including aid to impacted industries.

“The Board of Supervisors knows that small businesses are the backbone of our local economy,” commented Board Chairman Miguel Villapudua. “With additional federal funding, we want to continue to support and promote those mom-and-pop vendors in our local area, who provide quality services and jobs to residents. This cooperative approach not only keeps the economic benefits local but also serves as a powerful incentive for consumers to shop locally and support eligible businesses still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“Shop San Joaquin: A Rewards Program for SJC Shoppers” which will be powered by BluDot on its Open Rewards platform. The rewards program will start with an attractive 100% reward rate and a maximum reward cap of \$50 per transaction. Consumers can earn rewards up to \$200 per calendar year, subject to the availability of program funds. Eligible businesses include those that have less than 500 employees, are not chain establishments, and were established as of January 1, 2020. The identified eligible businesses have no requirements, no need to sign-up, train staff, or adjust their daily business routine. It is anticipated that the program will launch at the end of June 2024.

“Small businesses depend on local shoppers,” added Timm Quinn, CEO of the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce. “With this investment of federal dollars into our local economy, the Board is encouraging local shoppers to build habits that will benefit our community. Small businesses and the Chamber of Commerce appreciate the Board’s support of the local economy to benefit business owners and consumers.”

Additional information on how businesses and consumers can participate will be provided as the program launch date nears. For more information on EEDD, please visit: <https://www.sjworknet.org/>

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