

Communication from Public

Name: Eddie Navarrette
Date Submitted: 10/15/2024 09:44 AM
Council File No: 20-1074-S7
Comments for Public Posting: See attached letter of support



Independent Hospitality Coalition

Via Email

October 15th, 2024

Planning and Land Use Management

Councilmember John S. Lee, Chair

Councilmember Heather Hutt

Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky

Councilmember Imelda Padilla

Councilmember Kevin De Leon

Re: Support, CF 20-1074-S7

Dear Committee Chair John Lee and Committee Members,

The Independent Hospitality Coalition (IHC) is an organization of Los Angeles hospitality operators, advocates, and workers whose purpose is to provide representation for our growing workforce and essential businesses, creating awareness of our role in the economic fabric of society. We are writing to express our strong support for **CF 20-1074-S7**, which instructs city departments to report on strategies to streamline the permitting process for commonly used covered outdoor dining areas. This motion also calls for identifying problematic codes related to covered outdoor dining and crafting recommendations to simplify and expedite the process. By addressing these issues, the city can help ensure that restaurants—key drivers of our local economy—can continue to thrive, while also enhancing the dining experience for residents and visitors alike.

February 1st 2024 the City of Los Angeles launched the permanent Al Fresco Program. The program was a collaboration between all relative development departments addressing compliance with regulations for permanent as well as revocable (temporary) outdoor dining. Since the launch, many of our small businesses have struggled with the application process and compliance with restrictive building code assignments. This has discouraged participation and overwhelmed any business able to submit an application because of how difficult or over regulated the departments have made it.

We hope that through this very important motion, we can achieve the goals of what this program had originally intended to do in being a resource to our struggling restaurant community, and not a burden. We have displayed below several reasons why improving our Al Fresco program is vital to our great city.

1. Boosts Economic Recovery

Streamlining the outdoor dining process provides a critical boost to restaurants, allowing them to recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic more efficiently. Expanding capacity outdoors without excessive costs supports the survival and growth of small, locally-owned restaurants, which are vital to Los Angeles' diverse economic fabric.

2. Enhances Public Spaces and Community Engagement

Outdoor dining activates public spaces and brings life to our streets. It encourages foot traffic, supports local businesses, and strengthens neighborhood connections, making the city a more vibrant, engaging place for residents and visitors.

3. Improves Public Health and Safety

Outdoor dining provides safer options for dining with increased ventilation and open-air spaces, which continue to be important post-pandemic. Encouraging more outdoor dining spaces can help reduce the risks associated with indoor crowding and improve overall health safety for diners and workers.

4. Supports Sustainability and Urban Planning Goals

Promoting outdoor dining fits with the city's broader goals of reducing traffic and encouraging walkability. By utilizing public spaces effectively, the city can encourage sustainable practices and foster a healthier, more pedestrian-friendly urban environment.

5. Helps Address Permitting Inefficiencies

The current permitting process is cumbersome and costly, deterring many small businesses from participating in the Al Fresco program. By simplifying and streamlining these procedures, the city can remove barriers for small business owners, fostering a more supportive environment for local entrepreneurs and innovators.

6. Elevates Los Angeles as a Premier Dining Destination

With its favorable climate, Los Angeles has the opportunity to become a leader in outdoor dining. By making it easier for restaurants to offer outdoor seating, the city can

enhance its reputation as a top-tier dining and tourism destination, attracting more visitors and stimulating the local economy.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We hope to engage in further discussions to find a solution that ensures the safety and viability of our local businesses while maintaining inclusivity for all members of our community.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly at Eddie Navarrette 213 545 2620.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eddie Navarrette', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eddie Navarrette
IHC Executive Director
eddie@fedesignandconsulting.com

About IHC

The Independent Hospitality Coalition (IHC) is a coalition of California hospitality workers whose purpose is to provide representation for our growing workforce and essential businesses, creating awareness of our role in the economic fabric of society. Our mission is to have a seat at the table to help shape policy and legitimize our crucial impact on communities and cities throughout California. More information can be found here:

<https://www.independenthospitality.org/>