

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT relative to the status of the L.A. AI Fresco Program.

Recommendations for Council action:

1. INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) to:
  - a. Extend the L.A. AI Fresco Program, including the Street Dining Temporary Use Authorization Program, until at least six months after the end of the City's Safer L.A. Emergency Order.
  - b. Report with solutions or suggestions for implementing AI Fresco on streets with higher speed limits.
2. INSTRUCT the Bureau of Street Services to report relative to the enforcement and compliance of program requirements.
3. RECEIVE AND FILE the LADOT report dated October 5, 2020, relative to the status of the L.A. AI Fresco Program.

Fiscal Impact Statement: The LADOT reports that the L.A. AI Fresco Program installations will be funded through \$1.1 million that was originally allocated to the City's Open Streets Program. The sources of these repurposed funds are Metro grant funds, front-funded by Measure M local return funds, and City Measure M local return match funds. There is an unknown fiscal impact to the Special Parking Revenue Fund at each location where the L.A AI Fresco installation replaces one or more metered parking spaces. There also may be a negative impact to the General Fund due to reduced parking enforcement revenue related to the decrease in parking spaces.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

## SUMMARY

In a report to Council dated October 5, 2020, LADOT discusses the status of the L.A. AI Fresco Program. On May 29, 2020, the Mayor launched the L.A. AI Fresco Program to support businesses impacted by COVID-19 to assist them in staying open while safely practicing physical distancing for workers and patrons. The Mayor directed LADOT to launch a Street Dining Temporary Use Authorization program to authorize restaurants to use the public right-of-way for outdoor dining.

LADOT reports that the first phase of L.A. AI Fresco offered immediate authorization for restaurants to create temporary outdoor dining areas on sidewalks and on private property. Phase 2 of the Program, launched on June 26, 2020, expanded AI Fresco options to include curbside dining areas (parklets), lane closures, and full street closures. In Phase 2, LADOT set a goal of 55 percent of program resources supporting businesses located in communities with higher concentrations of Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC), ownership that identified as BIPOC, or businesses located in neighborhoods heavily impacted by COVID-19.

According to LADOT, local businesses have expressed overwhelming demand for L.A. Al Fresco. Nearly 2,000 restaurants have taken advantage of the program. LADOT reviewed over 350 on-street Al Fresco applications, installed 50 curbside dining areas, and implemented five lane closures. Thus far, LADOT provided these on-street dining options at no cost to the restaurants, but as the pandemic restrictions continue, the Department developed a new approach to reach as many restaurants as possible while preserving resources for where they are needed most. On June 26, 2020, LADOT installed its first curbside dining area to coincide with the launch of Al Fresco Phase 2. To date, LADOT installed 50 curbside dining areas and exhausted the Department's initial supply of heavyweight planters and shade parasols.

LADOT goes on to discuss approval criteria and requirements for street closures. Groups of restaurants or community organizations, such as Business Improvement Districts or Chambers of Commerce, can apply to close a lane or an entire street to create a larger on-street dining area in which multiple restaurants can operate. All street closures must provide space for City permitted street vendors and a group of City permitted street vendors can apply for their own closure. LADOT received over 150 closure applications, but the vast majority were submitted by individual restaurants, not by the eligible applicants mentioned above.

Finally, LADOT discusses program costs and sources of funding. To date, LADOT spent approximately \$376,263 in equipment costs to deliver on-street dining areas to restaurants across the City, including 50 curbside dining areas and five lane closures. The planters and shade parasols provided to curbside dining areas, critical to the safety and character of the space, account for the majority of the costs. Ongoing costs to maintain the existing installations through December 31, 2020 total an additional \$32,247.

At its meeting held October 19, 2020, the Transportation Committee discussed this matter with LADOT staff. Councilmember Bonin stated that the L.A. Al Fresco has been remarkably successful, and has also resulted in an unprecedented repurposing of public space for the benefit of workers, consumers, and local restaurants. The Committee Chair discussed continuation of the program, stating the business community prefers long term certainty. Department staff discussed CARE Act funding and whether a self-funding option needed for continuing the program into 2021.

LADOT staff went on to discuss installations in streets with higher speed limits, especially funding and engineering protection for diners and restaurant employees. It was further stated that the Department has contracted with CicLAvia to promote the program in disadvantaged communities. Committee members also discussed the importance of compliance with social distance orders. The Department representative stated that Bureau of Services conducts spot checks for social distance orders and will investigate reports of noncompliance.

The Transportation Committee recommended that Council receive and file the LADOT report. Committee further recommended that Council instruct LADOT to extend the L.A. Al Fresco Program until at least six months after the end of the City's Safer L.A. Emergency Order, and to report with recommendations for implementing Al Fresco on streets with higher speed limits. Finally, the Committee recommended that Council instruct the Bureau of Street Services to report relative to the enforcement and compliance of program requirements.

Respectfully Submitted,

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
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BONIN:	YES
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BUSCAINO:	YES
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KORETZ:	YES
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**-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-**