



Carolina Peters <carolina.peters@lacity.org>

Fwd: Sidewalk Vending Policy - CF 13-1493

1 message

Melinda Novoa <melinda.novoa@lacity.org>
 To: Carolina Peters <carolina.peters@lacity.org>
 Cc: Staci Roberts <staci.roberts@lacity.org>

Fri, Apr 13, 2018 at 7:19 AM

Please upload the letter to CF 13-1493. Thanks!

Melinda Novoa
 Council and Public Services Division
 Office of the City Clerk
 213-978-0420



----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Joann Lo** <joann@foodchainworkers.org>
 Date: Thu, Apr 12, 2018 at 9:01 PM
 Subject: Sidewalk Vending Policy - CF 13-1493

To: councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.Krekorian@lacity.org, councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org, david.ryu@lacity.org, paul.koretz@lacity.org, councilmember.martinez@lacity.org, Councilmember.Rodriguez@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, councilmember.price@lacity.org, councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, councilmember.bonin@lacity.org, councilmember.englander@lacity.org, councilmember.ofarrell@lacity.org, councilmember.huizar@lacity.org, councilmember.buscaino@lacity.org
 Cc: Carla DePaz <CDePaz@elacc.org>, Clerk.CPS@lacity.org, CityClerk@lacity.org

Dear Honorable Members:

Please see attached and below our letter urging the City Council to consider and adopt the recommendations of the LA Street Vendor Campaign, as outlined in the coalition's January 11, 2018 letter.

Thank you,
 Joann Lo
 Co-Director
 Food Chain Workers Alliance

April 12, 2018

Honorable Members of the City Council
 Los Angeles City Hall
 200 N. Spring Street
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Sidewalk Vending Policy - CF 13-1493

Dear Honorable Members:

The Food Chain Workers Alliance (FCWA) writes in support of a comprehensive and inclusive Sidewalk Vending Program (Program) for Los Angeles. This Program should create opportunities for vendors to formalize their business and work without fear of criminalization, while promoting safety and accessibility in our public space. Street vendors play a key role in providing jobs and income for thousands of immigrants and people of color, especially women, in the City of Los Angeles.

Unfortunately, the current proposal includes several policy elements that, if adopted, could prevent legal vending in wide swaths of the city in such a way that could cripple the entire Program. We urge the Council to consider and adopt the recommendations of the LA Street Vendor Campaign, as outlined in the coalition's January 11, 2018 letter. In particular, the FCWA urges the Council to consider the following:

1. Do not give private property owners authority to disallow (veto) vending on the public right-of-way near their property.

We strongly oppose giving private property owners veto power over a vendor's ability to work on the public sidewalk. Protecting certain favored businesses from perceived competition clearly exceeds the appropriate scope of this Program. As the *LA Times* Editorial Board notes, giving business owners veto power over what happens on the sidewalk would be "an unprecedented giveaway, allowing a private business to govern a public space. Doing so would invite extortion, as property owners could demand 'rent' from vendors for their permission to sell on the sidewalk."*

This policy would also reinforce a hierarchy that values street vending less than other types of small businesses. It would elevate property ownership over micro-entrepreneurship and delegitimize street vending as something not deserving of the same protections and opportunities afforded other businesses. This is not the message our public policy should send.

There is no need to pit one type of small business directly against another. Reasonable rules for vending location will already prevent vendors from obstructing the entrance to a brick and mortar business and will require vendors to help keep the sidewalks clean. The Council could consider other procedures to resolve conflicts between businesses without discriminatory bans and unjust exclusions.

Giving certain private property owners absolute power to prohibit vending opportunities is a potentially fatal blow to this Program. We urge you to avoid including such a provision.

2. Do not allow Special Sidewalk Vending Districts to result in unjust exclusion of vendors.

Certain individual areas may exhibit unique dynamics that make the standard rules for vending unworkable. In these circumstances, it is appropriate to build in flexibility to adjust rules. But this should not create a backdoor tool to "opt-out" of the City's program altogether or impose onerous restrictions based on anti-vending sentiment. Instead, the creation of Special Sidewalk vending Districts should: (A) never result in the complete prohibition of vending in a community; (B) include appropriate size limitations for districts; (C) enable vendors and other stakeholders to initiate districts to expand vending opportunities; and (D) require City Council approval based on health and safety findings.

3. Promote public safety without arbitrary restrictions on opportunity.

The Sidewalk Vending Program should include reasonable rules on where and when vending may occur in order to ensure accessible public sidewalks and safe business operations. However, the current proposal goes too far and instead threatens to eliminate vending from wide swaths of the city that could safely accommodate it.

The Sidewalk Vending Program should not impose a limit of two stationary vendors per block face. Such an arbitrary restriction – applied uniformly to the City’s largest and smallest blocks alike - ignores the diversity of our built environment. Instead, the Council should allow more vending on the City’s larger boulevards and should allow vendor applicants to petition for additional locations on blocks where it will not negatively impact public safety.

The Sidewalk Vending Program should include reasonable rules on sidewalk placement to ensure safe passage and protect customers from unsafe proximity to vehicle travel. However, these rules should be thoughtfully crafted according to the realities of vending and pedestrian activity -- not copied directly from an old ordinance regulating news racks (LAMC section 42.00(f)(6)), as currently proposed.

The Sidewalk Vending Program should also relax the hours of operation in non-residential areas. Many vendors work outside the hours of 7:00am to 9:00pm to accommodate other pressures on their schedules, such as childcare and supplemental employment, and to cater to consumer preferences. Stationary vendors operating away from residential neighborhoods should have same limitations on hours of operation as brick and mortar businesses in that area.

We appreciate the Council’s thoughtful consideration of all the important elements of a fair and workable Sidewalk Vending Program. However, we are very concerned with the number of onerous restrictions that are currently proposed. The cumulative effective of imposing a property owner veto, special district “opt-out,” two-per-block cap, and restrictive hours of operation will be a massive eroding of opportunities for vendors to come into compliance. The success of this Program depends on it being accessible to low-income vendors. To achieve that success, we ask the Council to remove these unnecessary barriers.

Sincerely,
Joann Lo
Co-Director
Food Chain Workers Alliance

*“Legalize Street Vending.” Editorial. Los Angeles Times, November 25, 2017.

 **2018 04 12 FCWA letter in support of LA street vendors.pdf**
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