

13-0658

MOTION

PUBLIC WORKS

The Historic Core of Downtown Los Angeles is undergoing tremendous revitalization, bringing millions of dollars of new housing, commercial, retail use and jobs to the area. It is one of the most densely populated areas in the city and has a high concentration of pedestrians and bicyclists utilizing its mixed-use environment.

Sidewalk dining and sidewalk décor, such as planters, enhance the pedestrian experience, adding life and vitality to the street. These elements also increase neighborhood pride, improve public safety by putting more eyes on the street, and help to support the continued evolution of a thriving urban center in one of L.A.'s most diverse and eclectic neighborhoods.

The Los Angeles Municipal Code requires a revocable permit to allow the lawful placement of sidewalk dining and sidewalk planters. Guidelines for preserving appropriate disabled access are regulated through the legal permit process, and a waiver of damages agreement with proof of liability insurance is required.

However, due to the existing process, which is time consuming and costly, many businesses, especially independent Historic Core Mom & Pop businesses and entrepreneurs, find the nature of the process and cost of the fees too burdensome. Currently, it can take almost a year and thousands of dollars in fees to get a simple sidewalk planter permitted. This cumbersome process has led to a preponderance of illegal, unregulated and uninsured placement of sidewalk dining furniture and planters. The current process also provides no distinction in fees between sidewalk dining and sidewalk beautification (i.e. planters, benches, or other aesthetic improvements).

The City of Los Angeles should encourage the legal activation of public spaces with sidewalk dining and the enhancement of street-front presence with the placement of well-maintained planters and other street furniture in the Historic Core by creating a pilot program to allow for an expedited temporary permit for sidewalk dining and/or sidewalk beautification. This should include a full review of current fees and processes.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Bureau of Street Services and Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works, report within 30 days with recommendations for a pilot program that would allow a temporary permit process that would expedite the legal placement of sidewalk dining and storefront furniture, including but not limited to planters, railings and other street furniture within the Historic Core area (between First Street and Seventh Street, and Broadway and Los Angeles Street in Downtown Los Angeles).

I FURTHER MOVE that they Bureau of Engineering review the current fee structure and timeline for both sidewalk dining and sidewalk furniture and identify ways that both can be reduced.

Related CF's: 13-0477
11-0924
08-3167

PRESENTED BY

JOSE HUIZAR
Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY

MAY 28 2013

ORIGINAL