



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

Report: AI Fresco On-Site Dining in Private Parking Areas

1. Council motion to provide direction regarding the AI Fresco program

COUNCIL ACTION

Item Type: Action Item

Approved for September 10, 2024 **calendar**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Glendale's AI Fresco dining program was established to allow restaurants to continue operation during the COVID-19 emergency orders. The program allowed for installations within private parking lots and limited locations in the public right-of-way. Staff has analyzed the existing locations within private parking lots to determine their ability to continue operation and parameters for a potentially expanded program. This report includes recommendations on how to continue to program, if desired by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council provide direction regarding the continuation of the AI Fresco in private parking areas program, contingent upon obtaining necessary approvals and meeting minimum requirements and whether the program should be expanded beyond the existing locations.

BACKGROUND

The AI Fresco dining program was introduced on May 25, 2021, as a response to the COVID-19 emergency orders. This initiative allowed restaurants and other businesses to continue operations amid restrictions on indoor dining by transforming parking spaces into outdoor dining areas. K-rail installations were used on streets like Brand Boulevard, Wilson Street, and Honolulu Avenue, and outdoor setups were also permitted in private and public parking lots outside the public right-of-way.

While the program within the public right-of-way was continued and is in the process of permanent installations, Council also provided direction to assess the current installations within private parking lots. As part of that assessment, staff evaluated potential impacts and necessary improvements that would be needed to ensure code compliancy or to mitigate potential negative impacts. This report considers the existing locations, as well as consideration of expanding the program.

When assessing the installations, staff considered elements such as design, ADA accessibility, impacts to parking, egress, and ability to mitigate sound. It should be noted that all installations are expected to abide by the same rules and regulations as indoor restaurant facilities or standard outdoor dining, which include noise, prohibition of smoking, and ensuring equitable access.

A total of eight locations were evaluated.

CONDITIONS/REQUIREMENTS

For an installation to be considered viable, it would need to meet the following criteria:

- **No Traffic Impacts:** The setup must not obstruct traffic flow or impede access to public streets.
- **No Community Parking Impacts:** The dining area should not displace or restrict public parking, including excessive overflow of parking into surrounding neighborhoods.
- **ADA Accessibility:** The outdoor dining area must be accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- **Safety Compliance:** Plans must be reviewed and approved by the Building and Safety and Fire Prevention departments.

Of the locations assessed, the following outlines the findings or improvements needed of each installation:

1. **Glen Arden (357 Arden Avenue):** Develop an outdoor dining plan in collaboration with Building and Safety and Fire Prevention departments to ensure safety and accessibility.
2. **Toasted Bun (1013 S. Brand):** Develop an outdoor dining plan that secures approval from Planning/City staff regarding accessibility and facade aesthetics.
3. **King's Kitchen (1235 S. Central Avenue):** Implement noise control measures after 10 pm and ensure compliance with accessibility and restroom requirements in the outdoor dining plan.
4. **We're Pouring (524 Glenoaks):** Develop an outdoor dining plan that ensures safe access to parking and secures facade approval.
5. **Dinah's Chicken (4106 San Fernando):** Develop an outdoor dining plan that guarantees safe pedestrian access to and from the dining area.
6. **San Fernando Bar (5230 San Fernando):** Develop an outdoor dining plan that meets accessibility requirements and secures facade aesthetics approval.
7. **Level Café (811 E. Colorado Street):** Develop an outdoor dining plan that addresses noise concerns and ensures safe access to parking, alongside facade approval.
8. **Elysee House (4441 San Fernando Road):** Develop an outdoor dining plan that meets accessibility requirements and secures facade aesthetics approval.

Staff also considered complaints received from the public regarding potential impacts. Of the eight locations to be considered for permanent approval, prior complaints or calls of service have since been addressed with no further challenges. It should be noted that an installation that is not within compliance, including noise, could be subject to their approval being revoked and citations issued until the subject installation is removed.

PERMIT CONSIDERATIONS

Permits will be considered for businesses that can justify their need and meet all outlined requirements. Businesses must demonstrate compliance with all conditions to ensure no adverse effects on traffic, parking, or community welfare. Each business will work with city staff to develop tailored plans that address these factors.

Staff is also requesting direction on whether City Council would allow for additional installations. Any future installations by other restaurants would be subject to the same criteria prior to approval.

NEXT STEPS

- **Assisting Compliance:** Staff will work with approved businesses to finalize their outdoor dining plans, ensuring compliance with all safety, accessibility, and aesthetic requirements.

- **Permit Issuance:** Issuance of permits/licenses will be contingent upon meeting all specified conditions.
- **Long-Term Solutions:** Staff will continue to explore and develop long-term solutions for outdoor dining and evaluate other potential locations based on the same criteria if Council directs staff to allow for additional installations.

STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)

The AI Fresco On-Site Dining in Private Parking Areas program will consist of either maintenance, or minor alteration or construction on private parking lots and as such is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structure) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land).

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE

N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Direct staff to proceed with the AI Fresco On-Site Dining Program in private parking areas at the existing locations, subject to obtaining necessary approvals outlined in this Report, and consider new applications following the same criteria.

Alternative 2: Direct staff to proceed with the AI Fresco On-Site Dining Program in private parking areas at the existing locations, subject to obtaining necessary approvals outlined in this Report, but not consider new applications for private AI Fresco dining.

Alternative 3: Terminate the program and require existing businesses to remove their installations within a time period defined by Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

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EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS
