



R-23

Mayor Robert Garcia
City of Long Beach

May 18, 2021

To: Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Robert Garcia
Vice Mayor Rex Richardson
Councilwoman Cindy Allen
Councilwoman Stacy Mungo
Councilmember Al Austin

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Manager to develop a plan to allow restaurant and other related service industry parklets and outdoor dining spaces to remain open beyond June 30, 2021 program expiration date. Such plan should include community outreach to residents, Business Improvement Districts and other stakeholders and create options for both extensions and permanent parklet structures.

DISCUSSION:

The economic impacts from the COVID-19 Pandemic have been devastating for our small businesses and their employees. As the nation slowly starts to recover, that recovery will take many years to recoup the losses to income and wages. A rare bright spot during the pandemic was the flourishing growth of outdoor dining spurred by Long Beach's Open Streets initiative. The Open Streets initiative included temporary emergency parklets, additional use of private property for outdoor activities, and closure of commercial corridors to create additional outdoor opportunities.

As one of the first large cities to implement city wide parklets for dining during the pandemic, Open Streets allowed many restaurants to keep their doors open to customers when county and statewide rules only permitted outdoor service. It was a much needed economic lifeline that likely saved businesses and jobs. As indoor dining has returned, many businesses have expressed interest in retaining their outdoor space to grow economically, hire more employees and maintain flexibility during uncertain times. Similarly, many residents have expressed interest in continuing the safer outdoor dining experience for the foreseeable future.

This matter has been reviewed by Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon on May 10, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This recommendation requests the City Manager to develop a plan to allow restaurant and other related service industry parklets and outdoor dining spaces to remain open beyond June 30, 2021 program expiration date. The requested action is anticipated to have a minimal impact on staff hours beyond the budgeted scope of duties and is expected to have a minimal impact existing City Council priorities. Once a plan is developed, staff will return back to City Council for any appropriation authorization needed along with information on the fiscal impact and implications of the project.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.