

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: November 1, 2021
Reviewed by: NA

SUBJECT: Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

REPORT BY: Jeff Bond, Community Development Director
Anne Hersch, Planning Manager
Justin Fried, Transportation and Sustainability Manager
Michelle Plouse, Community Development Analyst

SUMMARY

This report provides an update regarding the current status of in-street outdoor dining, and also poses the question of whether a longer term post-pandemic in-street outdoor dining program is of interest to the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Council provide initial direction to staff regarding the interest in a longer term in-street outdoor dining program.

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has had and continues to have a significant impact on Albany businesses. Since the permitting of outdoor dining in the Alameda County Public Health Order released on June 18, 2020, in-street outdoor dining has been an important support for a number of Albany restaurants along Solano Avenue. [San Pablo Avenue is a California State Highway and is in the jurisdiction of Caltrans. Thus, the City of Albany is not able to process encroachment permits for in-street seating on San Pablo Avenue.] Below is a detailed timeline of public review detailing City efforts from June 1, 2020 to the present.

Timeline of Public Review to Date

- [**June 1, 2020 City Council Review**](#) – work with Economic Development Committee (EDC) and Transportation Commission (TC) bodies to come up with prototypes for street treatments and report back to City Council.
- **June 4, 2020 Economic Development Committee Review (discussion only)** – support staff action to issue encroachment permits, the Committee provided a recommendation to City Council to recommend fee waivers.

- [June 18, 2020 Public Health Order](#) – Alameda County Public Health Order allows outdoor dining throughout the County effective June 19, 2020.
- [June 25, 2020 Transportation Commission Review](#) – support Economic Development Committee recommendation, approve permits for the duration of the County Health Order, give staff flexibility on spaces per business and requirements for removal when not in use, post advisory signs and monitor speeds.
- [July 2, 2020 Economic Development Committee Review](#) – report to Economic Development Committee on status.
- [July 6, 2020 City Council Review](#) – reviewed recommendations from both Economic Development Committee and Transportation Commission, and adopted Resolution No. 2020-73, authorizing a fee waiver for outdoor dining installation encroachment permits. The Council also directed staff to provide flexibility on the number of parking spaces per establishment and not requiring the removal of equipment when businesses are closed.
- [December 21, 2020 City Council Review](#) – the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2020-129 authorizing staff to review encroachment permits for semi-permanent structures on Solano Avenue during the Alameda County Public Health COVID-19 Shelter in Place Order
- [March 1, 2021 City Council Review](#) – City Council took action on the following resolutions:
 - No. 2021-18: Location
 - No. 2021-19: Size
 - No. 2021-20: Storage/Removal
 - No. 2021-21: Acceptable Materials
 - No. 2021-22: Insurance
 - No. 2021-23: Revocation
- [September 23, 2021 Transportation Commission Review](#) – the Commission received public comment and provided comments to staff regarding considerations for extending the in-street outdoor dining program. The Commissioners were interested in collecting additional information on business impacts of the program and developing more-detailed safety and access design elements. The Commission is also generally supportive of continuing the outdoor dining program for at least a year to give businesses more time certainty on the current program (see Attachments 4 and 5 for draft minutes and public correspondence from the Commission discussion).

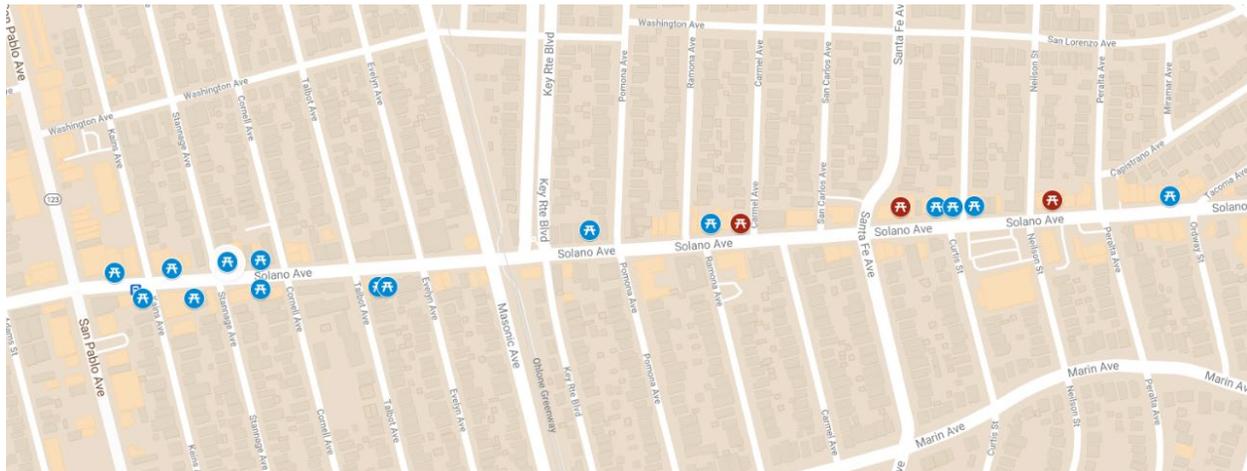
Staff developed conditions of approval specific to the temporary use of parking space applications received for business uses (Attachment 1). Since each business request is unique based on individual business capacity, staff has sought coordination with the business as well as conducting site visits to understand field conditions.

In February 2021, slower speed caution signage was installed upon the reinstatement of outdoor dining to help reinforce safe driving behavior adjacent to the in-street dining installations.

DISCUSSION

In June 2020 with the release of the Public Health Order allowing outdoor dining, eleven (11) encroachment permit applications were submitted for outdoor seating in public parking spaces on Solano Avenue. Through the summer of 2020 the program expanded to a peak of 18 permits and is currently at 15 outdoor dining permit holders (Attachment 2). The installations have been spread across much of Solano Avenue, with a cluster on both sides of the street west of Cornell Avenue and a series on the north side of Solano Avenue east of Key Route Boulevard.

Permit Locations -



Blue icons are current permits; Red icons are former permits

The installations range from 1-3 vehicle parking spaces (with the majority using 2 spaces) and/or utilizing sidewalk areas at corners. With approximately 279 on-street parking spaces on Solano Avenue, the installations are utilizing 12% of the vehicle parking capacity. In exchange, the spaces are providing approximately 75 tables. According to a survey of current permit holders by city staff, these tables are serving approximately 80% of the dine-in customers for six of the restaurants, 60% for one other, and approximately 25% of the dine-in customers for an eighth respondent who indicated that the number was higher in preceding months.

One installation is unique in being shared and not along the restaurants' frontage (iSlice and Crepe Suzette). The others are more closely aligned with the business frontage. A visual survey of the current installations is included as Attachment 3, along with existing parklet and sidewalk seating installations.

All eight respondents to the survey of current permit holders expressed an interest in continuing the in-street dining and in upgrading their current installations.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this agenda item is to further determine Council interest regarding a post-pandemic permanent in-street outdoor dining program on Solano Avenue. Should the Council wish to pursue a more permanent in-street outdoor dining program, the development of a permanent program should consider the balance between competing demands for public space, and lead to the development of requirements and review procedures for existing and future installations. In addition, development of a permanent program may also benefit from a process that involves various forms of outreach to stakeholders and interested members of the community, data collection and analysis, comparisons with other cities, and review by applicable commissions and committees including but potentially not limited to the City's Economic Development Committee, Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Transportation Commission. Once this process is completed, a presentation and recommendation can be provided to the City Council.

Tentative Timeline

Should the Council wish to develop a longer term program for in-street outdoor dining, a potential timeline to conduct the suggested engagement is as follows:

- Survey (residents and businesses)- November/December 2021
- Transportation Commission- January 2022
- Economic Development Committee- January/February 2022
- Planning & Zoning Commission (aesthetics only)-February/March 2022
- Provide summary findings to the City Council April 2022

Other Cities

Cities across the state are considering making in-street outdoor dining programs permanent. Berkeley and San Francisco have approved such programs, and Alameda and San Diego have developed proposals. These programs are designed to be permanent, with the exception of the Alameda program, which is in place for the next two years. *Note: while not a Bay Area city, San Diego is included as the program seems progressive and includes several elements that may be of interest locally.*

All four programs have the following requirements in common:

- Insurance is required and must cover the City
- Ramps, platforms, and seating must be ADA compliant
- Installations cannot obstruct gutters
- Trash cans must be provided and serviced
- Movable furniture must be stored while not in use
- Permit holder is responsible for maintenance

	Alameda	Berkeley	San Francisco	San Diego
Permit Fee	\$500 annually, will increase over time	~\$6000 annually (equal to the value of parking)	Fees waived until 2023 Permit fee of \$1000-2000 per space and annual fee of \$750-1500 per space	Variable based on project scope
Insurance	\$1 million/occurrence and \$2 million aggregate	\$1 million	\$1 million/occurrence and \$2 million aggregate	\$1 million
Public accessibility	Open to public during non-business hours	No requirement	Open to public during non-business hours and must provide a public bench	No requirement
Required travel path	8 feet	6 feet	8 feet	6 ft
Width	6 feet for parallel parking, 15 feet for diagonal	No requirement	7 feet for parallel parking, 14 feet for diagonal	Set back at least 2 feet from travel lanes
Frontage	Same as the business	No requirement	2 parking spaces	No requirement
Utilities	Cannot cover	Cannot interfere with access	Must provide access	Cannot cover

Each program requires protection from oncoming traffic and a railing or fence to prevent diners from crossing into the roadway. The specifics and level of detail vary significantly. Alameda and Berkeley have relatively simple requirements as outlined in available materials. San Francisco has a detailed manual with specific requirements for issues including the construction of barricades, structural integrity, and materials. San Diego also has a draft manual with specific design requirements and safety regulations.

Questions for Albany

In-street outdoor dining utilizes space that was previously designated for vehicle parking. When the initial installations were first permitted, outdoor dining was the only option besides takeout. Indoor dining at reduced capacity is now permitted, but some remaining uncertainty around the pandemic still clouds the future of what is permitted and what restaurant patrons prefer. At the same time, many non-restaurant businesses had limited operations when outdoor dining was first permitted but are now open. In one sense, this is a decision about balancing competing uses for the city-owned right-of-way to support the business district. The

other component of this is the potential for in-street dining to support an active public realm, reinforce the business district as a destination, and provide spillover benefits for other retailers and Albany residents.

Questions for the City Council:

- Does the City Council wish to extend the permitting of in-street dining beyond the duration of indoor dining capacity restrictions, and if so, on what time horizon?
- Do Councilmembers have questions to be included in the residents/businesses survey?

The survey of programs being developed in other cities highlights a number of program elements and policy alternatives that would need to be considered for a potential Albany program. Staff is seeking initial direction from the City Council regarding these elements.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of an outdoor dining program was not identified as an action in the City's Climate Action Plan. It should be noted that the Climate Action Plan does call for a study of the feasibility and emissions reduction impact of implementing a citywide parking management strategy. This action is prioritized for the mid-term timeframe (2024-2029). Thus, a decision on use of the right-of-way for outdoor dining may need to be reconsidered and/or there may be a potential variation in scope to the parking management study when undertaken.

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

Goal 4/Objective 3 of the City Council Strategic Plan calls for "Maintain an Attractive Atmosphere in Business Districts." The first workplan item under this objective is to update ordinance on encroachments in public right of way.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed planning process will not have any financial impact on the City's adopted general fund budget for fiscal year 2021-22.

Attachments

1. Sample Conditions of Approval
2. Permit Holder List
3. Current Installations
4. Transportation Commission Draft Minutes 9-23-2021
5. Public Correspondence Received by Transportation Commission

City of Albany



Temporary Encroachment Permit for Outdoor Seating

Property Address: _____
Applicant: _____
Business Name: _____
Encroachment Permit # _____
Date Issued: _____
Expiration Date: _____

1. **Plan Approval.** This approval is for _____ (tenant), date received _____.
2. **Revocation.** The City reserves the right to revoke this encroachment permit at any time if any of the terms of such permit or the conditions of approval for said permit are violated, or for other good cause deemed necessary to maintain or improve the public right of way or to preserve and protect the health and welfare of the public.
3. **Restoration of On-Street Parking.** On-street parking shall be restored and barricades removed on days when the business operation is closed.
4. **On-Street Use.** Each business is limited to two (2) on-street parking spaces for outdoor seating occupancy.
5. **Termination Date.** This encroachment permit shall terminate October 15, 2020 or until State or County Health orders are modified to allow indoor dining without restrictions, whichever comes first. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the City reserves the right and at its sole discretion to terminate or modify the terms of this permit at any time with or without cause.
6. **Responsibilities.** Applicant shall be responsible for installation and/or relocation of barriers, furniture, planters, fixtures, railings, and traffic cones. Final decision on the location is subject to review and approval in the field by City staff. Modifications to the sidewalk beyond temporary markings approved by City

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staff must be installed by a licensed contractor subject to issuance of a permit and inspections from the Community Development Department. The sidewalk must be restored to its existing condition at the time of termination of the encroachment permit.

7. **Compliance.** Improvements shall conform to all applicable accessibility and California Alcoholic Beverage Control standards. In addition, use of the outdoor seating area shall comply with the City of Albany Smoking Pollution Control regulations.
8. **Special Events.** The issuance of an encroachment permit does not represent control of the encroachment area during special events involving street closures. If requested by the City, all improvements shall be removed 24-hours before special events involving street closures.
9. **Removal.** All non-fixed planters, furniture, and fixtures are to be removed after business hours.
10. **Path of Travel.** A sidewalk walkway of at least six feet wide must be maintained at all times.
11. **Accessibility.** The applicant is responsible for compliance with State and Federal accessibility regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
12. **Signage Prohibition.** No signage or advertising is allowed in the public right of way.
13. **Furniture.** Furniture and fixtures utilized in outdoor dining areas shall be of good quality, durable materials, and construction, and shall be properly maintained.
14. **Amplification Prohibited.** No sound amplification device, musical instrument or sound reproduction device shall be operated or used in outdoor dining areas.
15. **Cleanliness.** Outdoor seating areas shall be maintained in a clean condition at all times. The business operator is responsible for removal of trash in private receptacles.
16. **Heating, Plumbing, and Electrical Connections.** No heaters, plumbing fixtures, or electrical connections are allowed at any time. Permitted lighting is limited to small table top solar or battery lanterns.
17. **Street Sweeping & Maintenance of City Right of Way.** The applicant must removed all structures and fixtures in order to allow the City and utility companies and their contractors access for maintenance, repair, and construction of public infrastructure.

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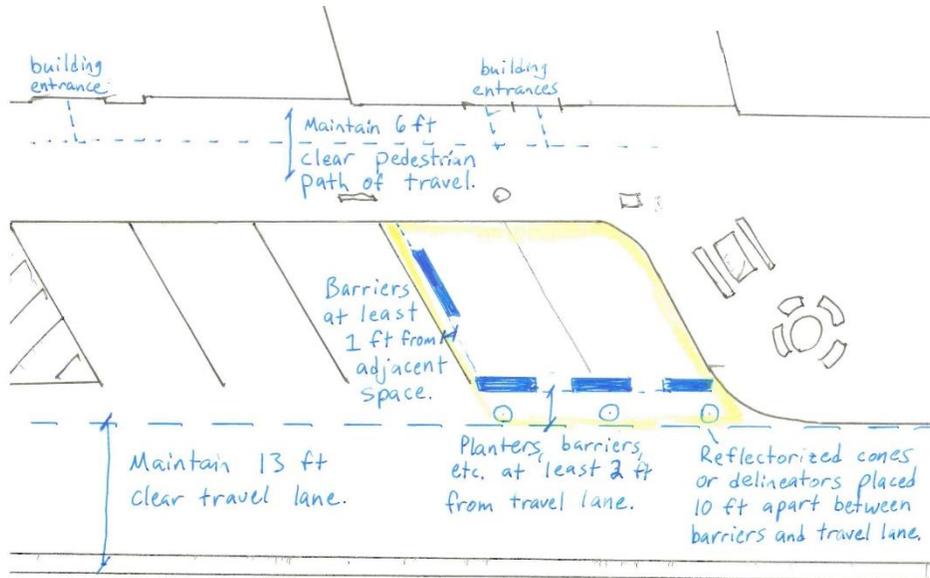
18. **Insurance Requirements.** The applicant shall, at its sole cost and expense, maintain a comprehensive liability insurance policy at all times during the duration of the permit. The applicant for the permit shall furnish the City with a certificate of insurance, duly authenticated, evidencing maintenance of the insurance required under the permit.
19. **Hold Harmless.** The applicant must indemnify, defend and hold harmless the City, its officials, officers, agents, and employees from any and all claims, causes of action, losses, injuries or damages arising directly or indirectly from the negligent acts, errors or omissions of the permit holder, its officers, agents, employees, or anyone rendering services on its behalf. This indemnity shall include all reasonable costs and attorney's fees incurred in defending any action covered by this section.
20. **Non-Transferable.** This Permit is non-transferable. If property ownership or operator of business changes, this permit terminates automatically. New owner or operator shall submit an application for a new encroachment permit.
21. **Termination.** The City reserves the right to terminate this permit without cause. In such event, City will provide Permittee with reasonable notice of intent to terminate this permit.
22. **Alameda County Health Officer Orders.** The applicant must be in full compliance with the requirements of Alameda County Public Health Department orders and regulations, as they may be amended from time to time.

Requirements for In-Street Installation In Parking Stalls

1. Cones, delineators, or other flexible materials with nighttime-visible retroreflective material shall be installed as a visible warning at the edge of the vehicle travel lane every 10 feet.
2. Temporary hard barriers such as planters, wood, K rails, etc., shall be a minimum of 2 feet from the travel lane and 1 foot from adjacent parking space.
3. No anchors shall be affixed to the pavement unless specifically authorized by the permit.

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Illustration – 2 parking spaces at end of block



Outdoor Dining Applicants

Business Name	Address	Application Filed	Date Issued	Status
Barney's	1591 Solano	Yes	8/5/2020	
Boss Burger	1181 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Bowl'd	1479 Solano	Yes	9/30/2020	Removed
Bua Luang	1166 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Café Rendez Vous	1111 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Chez Mansour	1369 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Crepe Suzette	1226 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Duo Grill	1491 Solano	Yes	6/26/2020	
Enoteca	1393 Solano	Yes	6/26/2020	Removed, Closed
Everest Café	1150 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
5 Tacos	1175 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Fonda	1501 Solano	Yes	7/2/2020	
iSlice	1230 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Kim's Café	1309 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	
Mr. Dewie's	1116 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	Parklet
Solano Junction	1499 Solano	Yes	3/9/2021	
Rivoli	1539 Solano	Yes	7/16/2020	Removed, Closed
Zaytoon	1133 Solano	Yes	6/23/2020	

Outdoor Dining Installations



1111 Solano – Café Rendez Vous



1150 Solano – Everest Cafe



OPEN
Online order at
bualuangALBANY.com
Take out
Delivery
Outdoor dining
510.527.8288

1166 Solano – Bua Luang



1175 Solano – 5 Tacos & Beers



1181 Solano – Boss Burger



1226 and 1230 Solano – Crepe Suzette and iSlice



1369 Solano – Chez Mansour



1491 Solano – Duo Grill



1499 Solano – Solano Junction



1501 Solano – Fonda



1309 Solano – Kim's Café & Sandwiches



1133 Solano – Zaytoon



1591 Solano – Barney's

Bus Stop Parklet Installations



1116 Solano – Mr. Dewie’s Cashew Creamery



1207 Solano – Hal's Office Coffee

Sidewalk Seating



1114 Solano – Souvenir Coffee



1127 Solano – Royal Ground Coffee



1158 Solano – Café Raj

Express

Eunice Gourmet
CAFE

90 MINUTE
PARKING
8AM - 6PM
EXCEPT
SUNDAYS & HOLIDAYS



1162 Solano – Eunice Gourmet



1182 Solano – Tay Tah Cafe



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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: del Rosario, Graham, Fong (arrived at 7:05 p.m.), McCroskey
Absent: Javandel
Staff Present: Jeff Bond, Community Development Director
Justin Fried, Transportation and Sustainability Manager
Michelle Plouse, Community Development Analyst

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeremiah Pinguelo suggested a four-way stop at the intersection of 10th and Monroe.

3. PRESENTATION

3-1. Monthly Police Data on Collisions and Citations

Fried presented data for June, July, and August 2021.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Jeremiah Pinguelo:

- Court-ordered community service hours can be fulfilled at the free Laundry Program, and a suggestion to update, repair, or install surveillance cameras on San Pablo.

Chair McCroskey advised that citations and/or sentences for driving under the influence are not within the Transportation Commission's purview. The City of Albany has chosen not to implement surveillance cameras.

4-1. Shared Mobility Data

Fried presented data for May through August 2021.

The Commission requested the following clarifications:

- An active member is one who utilizes a vehicle during a month.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Jeremiah Pinguelo and Amy Smolens:

- Inquiries as to the percentage of electric vehicles, carbon emissions from GIG vehicles, and GIG donating trips.



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- Electric vehicles are not practical for GIG because members pick up and drop off cars anywhere, and charging stations are not yet plentiful.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4-1. Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes of July 22, 2021

Recommendation: That the Transportation Commission approve the meeting minutes for the virtual meeting of July 22, 2021.

del Rosario/Graham: Moved to approve the consent calendar.

Ayes: del Rosario, Graham, Fong, McCroskey

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Javandel

5. DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

5-1. Transportation Commission Designee for Selection Committee for Local Road Safety Plan Consultant – Staff is seeking participation from a Commissioner in the consultant selection process for the Local Road Safety Plan.

Recommendation: That the Commission select a Commissioner to participate in the selection of a consultant for the development of a Local Road Safety Plan.

Fried noted that a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released in early October 2021 with review and selection of consultants planned for the November to January timeframe.

The Commission requested the following clarifications:

- Commissioners will review applications and participate in interviews; depending on the number of applicants, interviews could require half a day to a whole day.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Jeremiah Pinguelo:

- An inquiry regarding the responsibility of the selection committee.

Bond reported that the selection committee will recommend a consultant for the Local Road Safety Plan to the City Council.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Chair McCroskey volunteered to serve on the selection committee.
- Commissioner Graham volunteered to serve as an alternate.



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Fong/Graham: Moved to approve Chair McCroskey as the Transportation Commission's designee to the selection committee and Commissioner Graham as his alternate.

Ayes: del Rosario, Graham, Fong, McCroskey

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Javandel

5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining – Staff will present a review of Albany's current program and peer city approaches to in-street outdoor dining and identify key questions for a potential longer-term Albany program.

Recommendation: Provide comments to staff.

Fried and Plouse presented the staff report.

The Commission requested the following clarifications:

- In-street dining areas have to be accessible to people with disabilities.
- Fees may be based on whether in-street dining areas are considered privatized spaces. The dining areas are most likely reserved for restaurant patrons.
- The City needs access to curbs and gutters that are part of in-street dining areas. Times for routine maintenance can be coordinated with restaurants.
- The City's cost is primarily staff time.
- Staff is not aware of any block faces that have not been able to accommodate a restaurant's desire for in-street dining.
- Staff is not aware of the cost of insurance for restaurants or any serious vehicular, pedestrian, or bicycle accidents caused by installations.
- Staff has not denied an application for in-street dining.
- Restaurants along San Pablo have inquired about in-street dining, but San Pablo is a state highway.
- Restaurants in the City of Berkeley install in-street dining areas in metered parking spaces, and the City of Berkeley's permit fee is based on the loss of revenue from parking.
- Equipment and furnishings that are located in dining areas and that are easily moved are required to be removed from installations nightly.
- The installation of speed signage did not significantly affect vehicular traffic speeds.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Nick Peterson, Jeremiah Pinguelo, Nick Pilch, Karen Nierlich, Amy Smolens, Francesca Cavanaugh, Margo Weckler, Veronica Davidson:

- In-street dining is well utilized and seems to have slowed vehicular traffic; support for a reasonable permit fee and removing installations during the off season; and an inquiry regarding business complaints about the loss of parking.



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- An inquiry regarding power washing of sidewalks at the close of business; and a suggestion to install k-rails to separate installations from traffic.
- Support for continuing the in-street outdoor dining program and reevaluating it once COVID-19 transmission rates are low; permit fees need to be reasonable; and a majority of businesses have stated they are not concerned about the loss of parking.
- Concern about the loss of parking on Solano and a suggestion for staff to conduct a parking survey.
- In-street dining has benefited Albany restaurants; a May/June 2021 business recovery survey revealed that 17 restaurants want to continue the program; and some, if not all, restaurants are power washing sidewalks and the street.
- An installation blocks driveway access to the adjacent business; and a suggestion for staff to work with non-restaurant businesses to ensure outdoor dining is equitable for all businesses.
- Parking is available on side streets; and outdoor dining has positively impacted the vibrancy of Solano.
- City staff and businesses have addressed any issues; and hopefully, the program will continue.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Support for developing a permanent program; and outdoor dining has been a lifeline for businesses during the pandemic.
- This is a rare opportunity to repurpose the roadway for non-vehicular use; support for a one-year program with accommodations for loading zones and ADA parking and reassessment for a permanent solution at the end of one year; support for surveys of all types of businesses over the next year to determine the impacts on parking and business revenues; every business should have an opportunity to participate in the program, the City may be able to utilize federal funding for a grant program for outdoor dining; keeping the public right-of-way clean is important; common design and safety features for in-street dining would be appreciated; and the Commission should review the Upper Solano streetscape plan for additional locations for in-street dining.
- Design standards should allow installations to be unique; a review of hours of operation for businesses on Solano may be a good idea; continuing the program for a year will give the Commission time to consider permit fees and standards and businesses time to plan for expenses and fees; perhaps two businesses can share a single area; a suggestion for staff to survey businesses and customers in person; and the street sweeping schedule may need to be revised to accommodate parking on side streets.
- More information is needed to inform continuation of the program; support for businesses sharing spaces and making installations available to the public when businesses are closed; a request for estimates of City costs and staff time to include in a discussion of permit fees; parking management needs to be included



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in a long-term program; and a suggestion to conduct parking surveys when installations are being used.

- The Commission may want to draft metrics to determine the success of the program after a year.

5-3. Transportation Commission Work Plan – Receive report on City Council action on draft Transportation Commission Work Plan scheduled to occur on September 20, 2021, and refine work plan if directed by the City Council.

Recommendation: For information and possible action

Chair McCroskey reviewed the Council's comments and action regarding the Transportation Commission Work Plan.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Jeremiah Pinguelo:

- Appreciation for inclusion of reduced speed in school zones.

5-4. Intersection Red Curb Policy Implementation – Staff will provide an update on implementation of the intersection red curb policy to date and discussion of next priorities.

Recommendation: Provide comments to staff

Fried presented the staff report.

The Commission requested the following clarifications:

- Less than a quarter of existing red curbs have been installed at the request of the public.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Bryan Marten:

- An inquiry as to the process for a member of the public to request a red curb or to request verification of an existing red curb.

Fried indicated a member of the public may send him an email stating the concern and the intersection.

The Commission made the following comments:

- A suggestion to consider red curbs in streetscaping and paving projects, at intersections with low pedestrian volumes and no stop control, and where topography creates fast-moving vehicles or visibility issues.
- A preference to prioritize school routes first and pedestrian network gaps second.
- A request for future presentations to include a map.



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- A suggestion to prioritize school routes first and gaps along San Pablo, Solano, Marin, Pierce, and Buchanan second.
- A desire for a list of streets that are school, pedestrian, and fire response routes and to prioritize streets that are common to park access, school access, Dartmouth, and the pedestrian network along Portland, Santa Fe, Brighton, and Sonoma, .
- A suggestion to prioritize uncontrolled intersections.
- Hopefully, red zones can be hardened where necessary.

Chair McCroskey noted the Commission reached consensus to prioritize streets that meet more than one need.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

6-1. Solano/Kains Bus Stop Parklet and San Pablo/Solano Bus Stop Relocation Completed

Fried announced that the bus stop at Solano and San Pablo was relocated to the parklet outside Mr. Dewie's and the bus stop for the northbound 72 and 800 buses was relocated to the far side of Solano on July 15, 2021.

6-2. Cancellation of November and December Regular Meetings and Scheduling of a Special Meeting Date

Fried advised that the Transportation Commission's regular meeting dates in November and December will be canceled, and a special meeting will be scheduled for December 1, 2021.

Chair McCroskey related that Walk and Roll to School Day will be held on October 6, 2021. Construction of the pedestrian overcrossing at Gilman will begin soon and will be followed by construction of traffic circles. MTC, Caltrans, and ACTC are working to open the I-80 commuter parking lots at Buchanan for Transbay bus and carpool commuters in December 2021.

Commissioner del Rosario noted that BART fares are half price through September 30, 2021 and AC Transit has free fare Fridays in September.

The following PUBLIC COMMENTS were offered by Amy Smolens and Jeremiah Pinguelo:

- Albany Strollers and Rollers designed and funded the bike corral at the new bus parklet.



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- An inquiry regarding buses allowed to utilize the new bus parklet, and requests for a no-smoking sign at the parklet and for the Commission to discuss school zones soon.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Fried reported pavement management items are scheduled for the next meeting.

8. **NEXT MEETING** – Thursday, October 28, 2021, 7:00 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 1000 San Pablo Avenue or virtual meeting pursuant to state and county COVID-19 guidance.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

DRAFT

From: [amy.s](#)
To: [Justin Fried](#)
Cc: [Jeff Bond](#)
Subject: Business Survey Results for 9/23 Transportation Commission Item 5-2, in-street outdoor dining
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 12:15:44 PM
Attachments: [2021_BusinessRecoverySurveyO&A.pdf](#)
[2021_BusinessRecoverySurvey.pdf](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Hi Justin

I am gratified to see that the Transportation Commission will be considering the continuation of Outdoor Dining in its meeting this Thursday, 9/23. Since there are currently no attachments, I wanted to forward results of the Business Recovery Survey that Staff administered from May 27-June 20 of this year. Since many of the encroachment permit holders recently completed this survey, they may not be prompt in responding to a similar one.

Please provide these files to the Transportation Commission and attach them to the agenda item. Thank you!

ciao - Amy Smolens

Business Recovery Survey Results

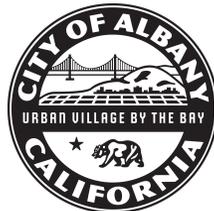
2021 - City of Albany



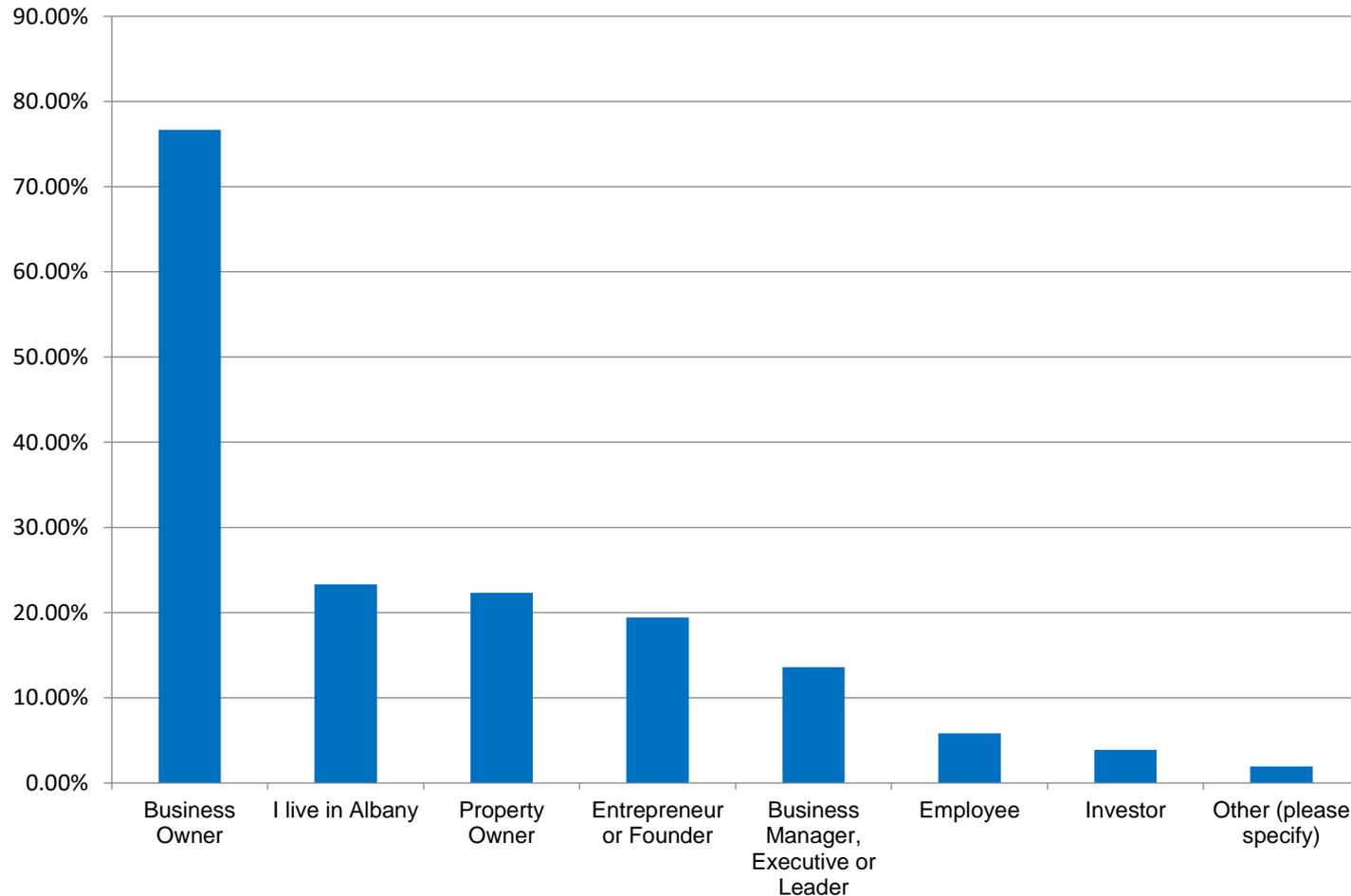
Introduction

The Albany Business Recovery Survey – 2021 was requested by the Economic Development Committee and administered by the City of Albany. The purpose of this survey is to find what our business community's most important short-term needs are. This will help the Economic Development Committee make more informed decisions when making recommendations to City Council on items intended to support local businesses.

- Survey was open between May 27 and June 20 of 2021.
- Survey was sent to those who have filed for a business license in Albany, totaling 1109 email addresses. 103 responded to the survey.
- Survey takers were asked 12 questions focusing on support, concerns, and business modifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place order.
- This survey is a follow-up from the original Albany Business Recovery Survey, distributed in May of 2020.



Which of the following titles apply to you in relation to your Albany business? (check all that apply)

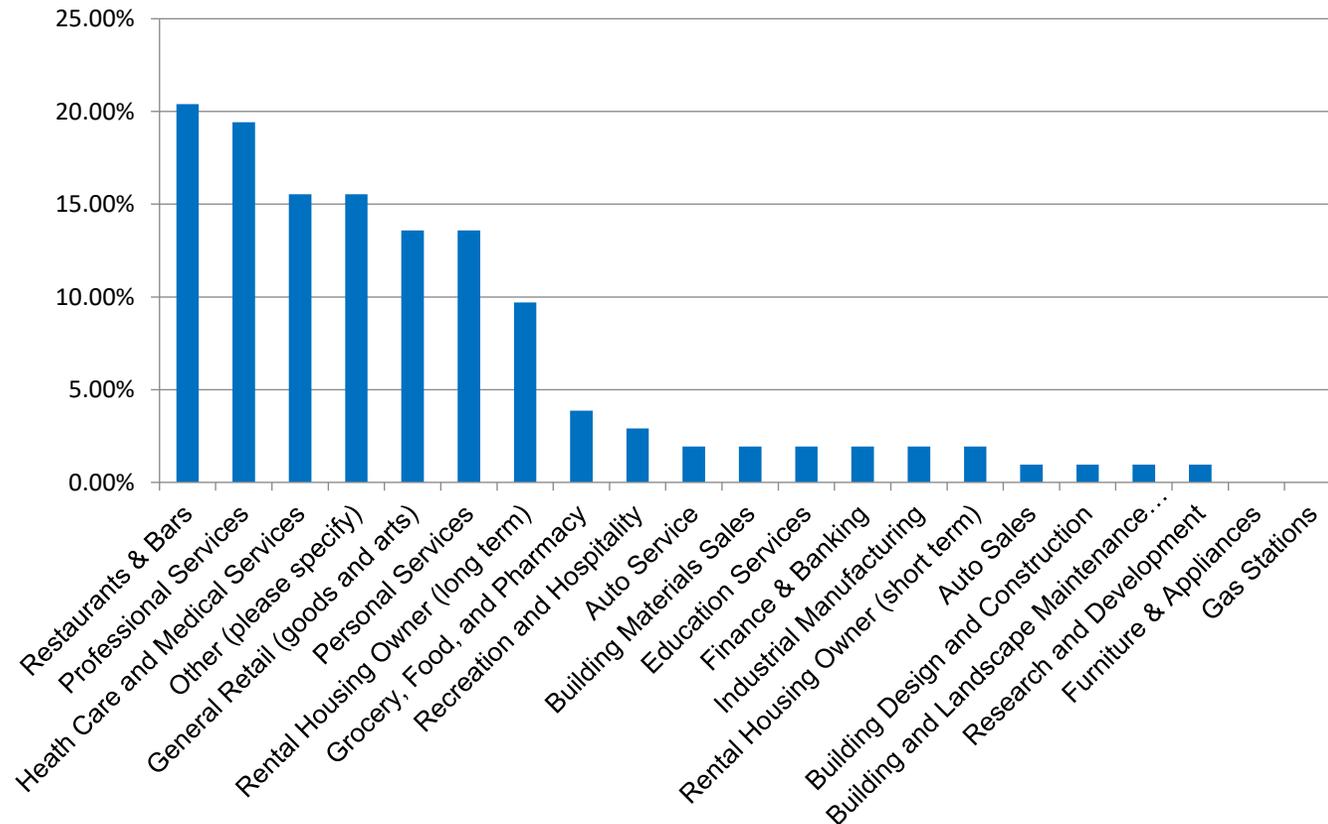


Most Common Responses:

1. Business Owner – 76.7%
2. I live in Albany – 23.3%
3. Property Owner – 22.33%
4. Entrepreneur or Founder – 19.42%

Which industry sector(s) do you identify with most? (check all that apply)

Restaurants & Bars as well as Professional Services showed the highest response rate. Other industries not listed include entertainment, publishing, design, real estate, religious organization, insurance, tax preparation, and accessibility, translation & interpretation.

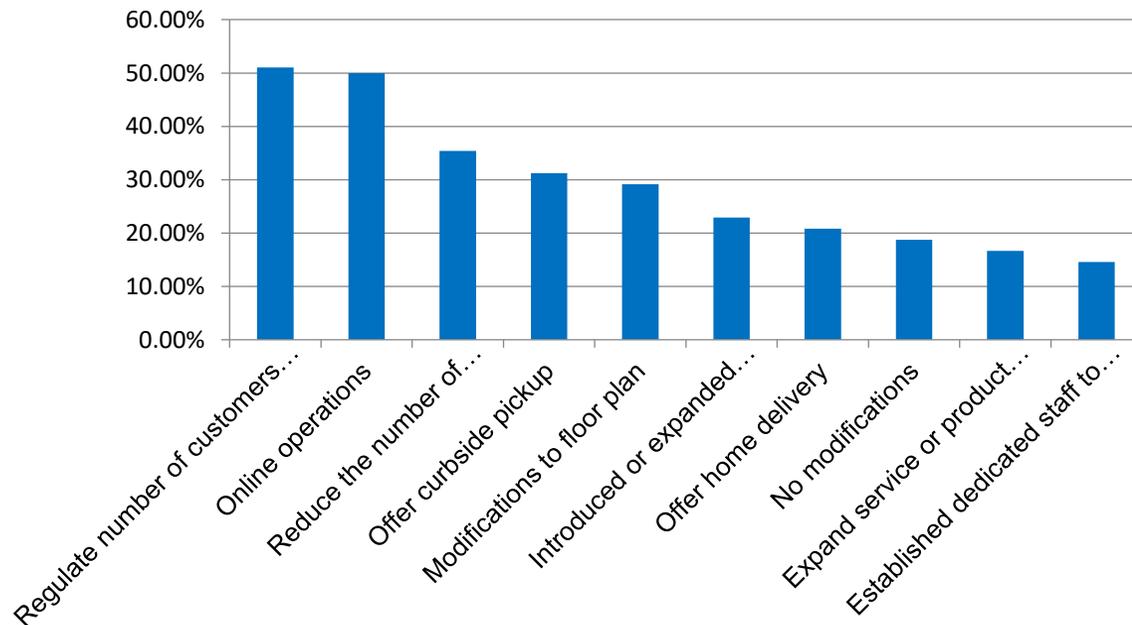


Most Common Responses:

1. Restaurants & Bars – 20.39%
2. Professional Services – 19.42%
3. Health Care and Medical Services – 15.53%
4. General Retail (goods and arts) – 13.59%
5. Personal Services - 13.59%
6. Rental Housing Owner (long term) - 9.71%

What modifications, if any, did you implement to your place of business during the COVID-19 pandemic? (check all that apply)

Reductions to those allowed on site, modifications to online operations, and adjustments to the space were the primary changes made.



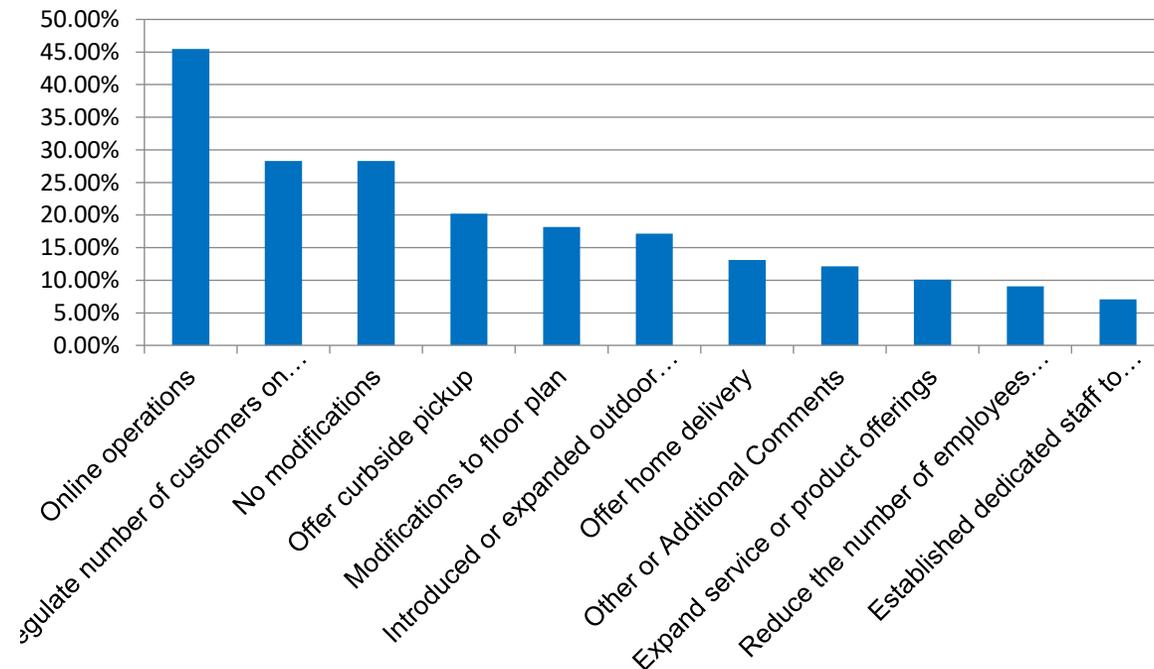
Most Common Responses:

1. Regulate number of customers on site - 51.04%
2. Online operations – 50%
3. Reduce the number of employees on site – 35.42%
4. Offer curbside pickup – 31.25%
5. Modifications to floor plan – 29.17%
6. Introduced or expanded outdoor operations, including outdoor seating - 22.92%
7. Offer home delivery - 20.83%
8. No modifications - 18.75%

Notable Additional Comments: Other modifications included in the comment section were the postponement of rent increase, use of PPE's, introduction of temperature and oxygen level checks, modification to ventilation system, use of disclosure agreements (apartment viewing), short-term rental transitioned to long-term rental, renovation and improvements to space, retraining of staff, and working with staff on unemployment applications.

If you have made modifications to your place of business, which, if any, do you plan to keep as COVID-19 pandemic limitations evolve? (check all that apply)

Primarily, those who have made modifications to online operations plan to keep them.

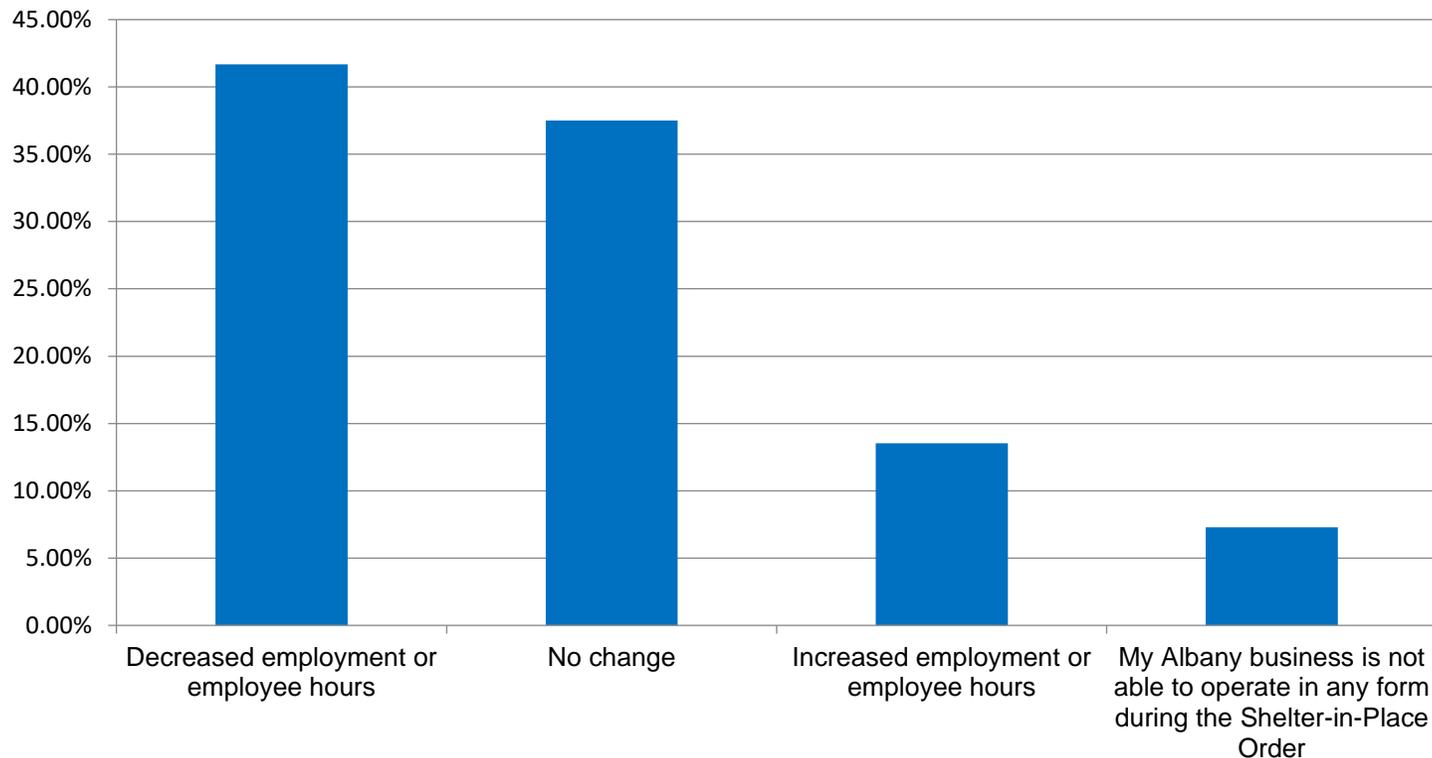


Percent that would like to keep modifications that have been implemented (most common responses):

1. Regulate number of customers on site – 57.14%
2. Online operations – 93.75%
3. Reduce number of employees on site – 26.47%
4. Offer curbside pickup – 66.67%
5. Modifications to floor plan – 64.29%
6. Introduced or expanded outdoor operations, including outdoor seating – 77.27%
7. Offer home delivery – 65.00%

Notable Additional Comments: Some survey takers plan to continue to maintain extra ventilation and air purification, continue with heightened sterilization and sanitation protocols, and continue to wear masks indoors. There were two comments that would like to continue outdoor dining with the opinion that Solano feels livelier outside, the Bay Area weather allows it to be a comfortable option for most of the year, and COVID-19 is and will likely continue to be a community concern for months, if not years.

How has your business changed the number of employees or employee hours of work for your Albany location since January 1st, 2021?



Most Common Responses:

1. Decreased employment or employee hours – 41.67%
2. No change - 37.5%
3. Increased employment or employee hours – 13.54%
4. My Albany business is not able to operate in any form during the Shelter-in-Place Order – 7.29%

Notable Additional Comments: A survey taker stated that they have increased employment since outdoor seating became available in order to provide better service to customers and more staff must be available to prepare food. Another survey taker commented that they have the same hours but fewer appointments in order to clean between clients.

Please indicate your level of concern regarding the following potential long-term impacts of COVID-19 and the Shelter in Place order on your business.

Loss in revenue and customer base were the biggest concerns.

Not Concerned – Most Common Responses:

1. Inability to access necessary personal protective equipment – 38.78%
2. Reduced parking availability due to alternative use of parking spaces - 36.9%
3. Repayment or deferment of rent – 36.73%
4. Change in types of employees I hire – 28%
5. Difficulty scheduling/retaining employees due to childcare needs – 28%

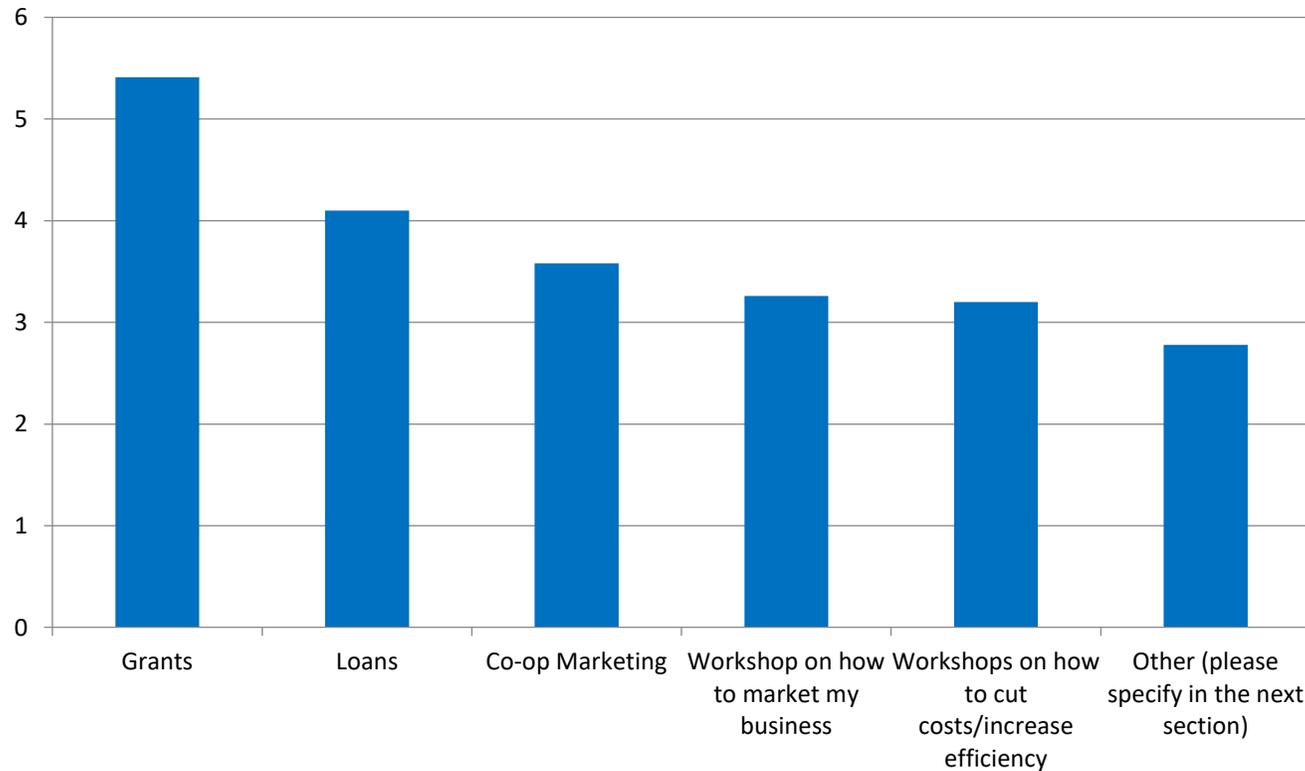
Very Concerned – Most Common Responses:

1. Continued loss of revenue – 35%
2. Reduced/changed customer base - 28.28%
3. Supply chain issues/availability of necessary supplies – 28.28%
4. Fewer in-person events/operations – 24.24%
5. Reduced number of employees – 21.78%
6. Repayment or deferment of rent - 20.41%

Notable Additional Comments: One comment supported alternative use of parking spaces, finding it beneficial that more people are walking to and from destinations which brings them new customers. However, another commenter was very concerned about the reduction in parking, finding that patrons would park in front of their place of business and going to other restaurants. Another survey taker stated that their supplies are more expensive, and I haven't felt comfortable raising prices, so they are making less per client than before. Lastly one survey taker said that they continue to operate on one third of their usual income.

What support would be most helpful for your business in the near-term? (Please rank in order of priority)

A majority of survey takers thought grants would be most beneficial.



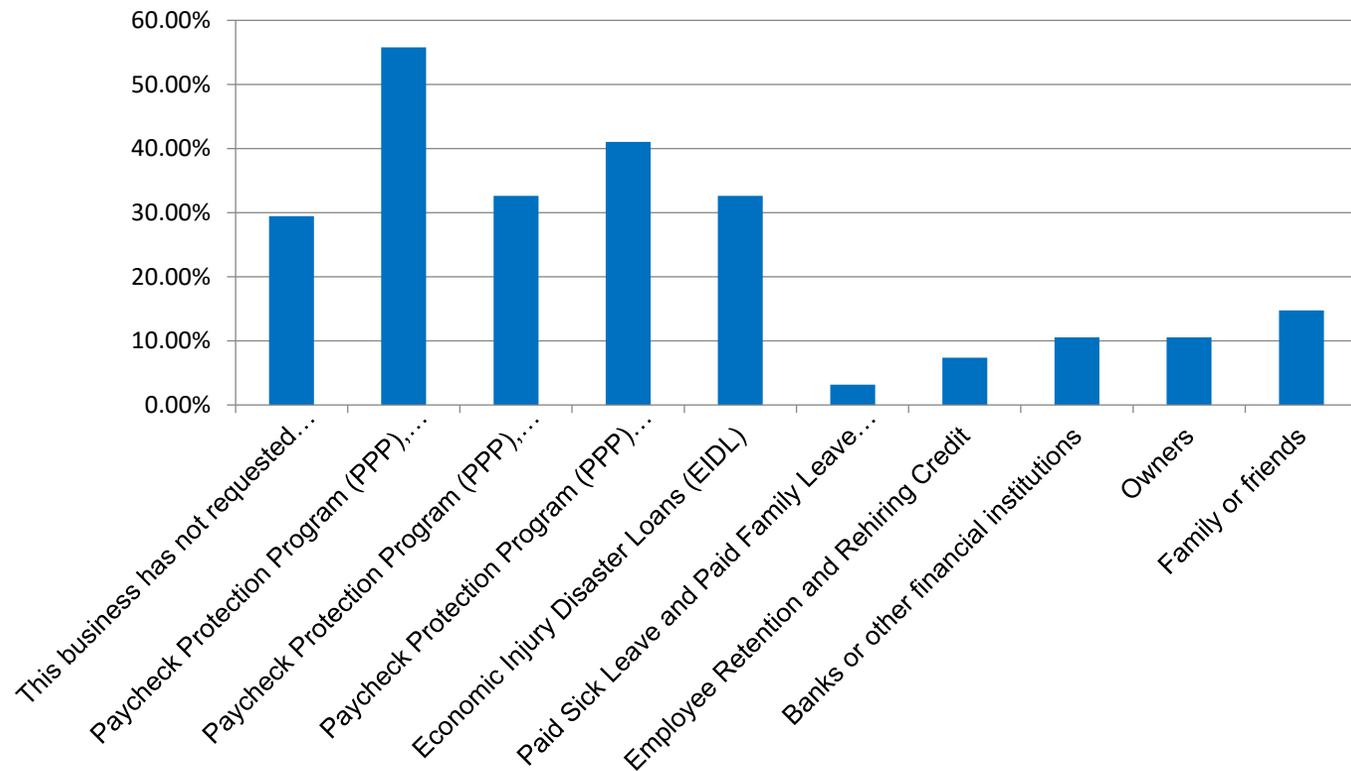
Most Common Responses – Percentage shows share of number 1 rankings:

1. Grants – 61.25%
2. Loans – 6.25%
3. Co-op Marketing – 5%
4. Workshop on how to market my business – 2.5%
5. Workshops on how to cut costs/increase efficiency – 8.75%
6. Other – 16.25%

Additional Information: For Restaurants & Bars, Health Care & Medical Services, General Retail, and Personal Services the percentage that ranked Grants at number 1 was higher than 61.25%.

Has this business REQUESTED financial assistance from any of the following sources? (check all that apply)

Many businesses applied to various Paycheck Protection Programs.



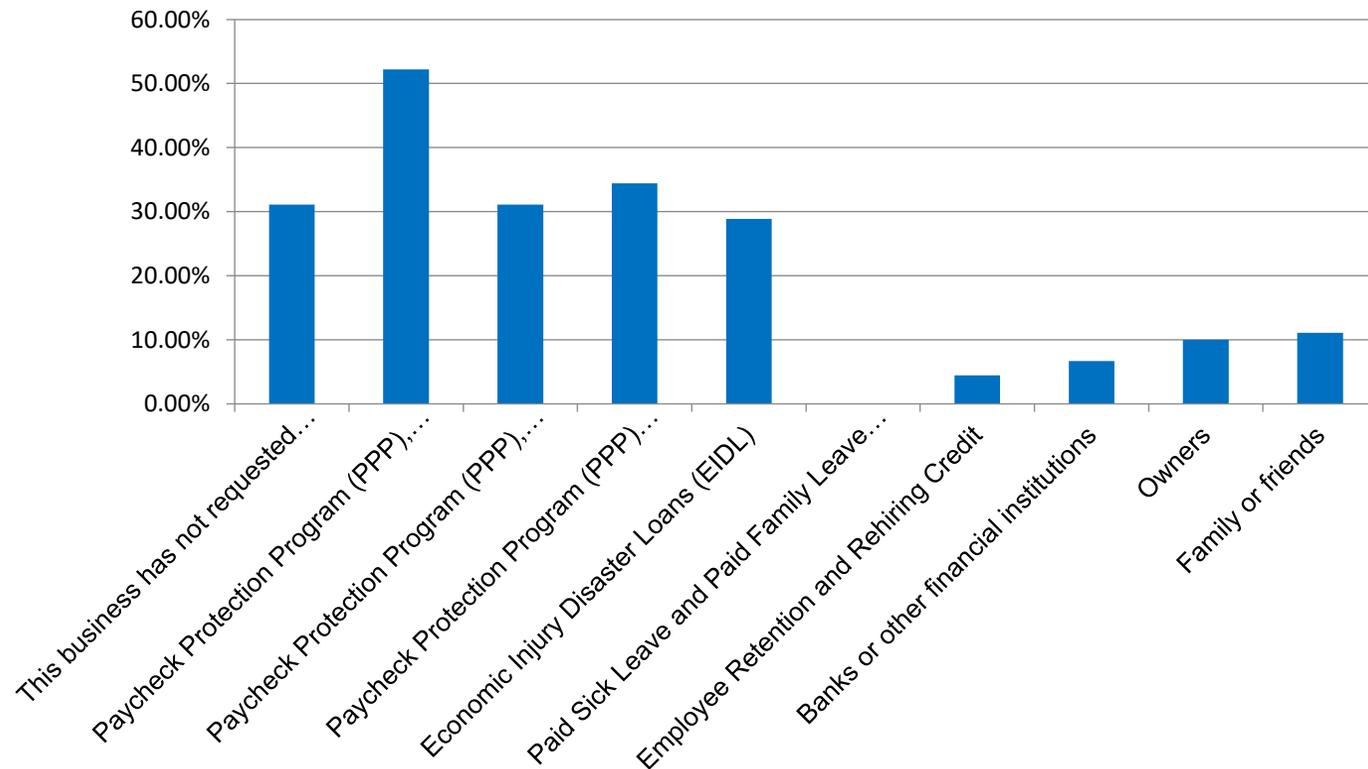
Most Common Responses

1. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), first time applicant – 55.79%
2. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan forgiveness – 41.05%
3. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), second time applicant – 32.63%
4. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) – 32.63%
5. This business has not requested financial assistance from any source – 29.47%
6. Family or friends – 14.74%

Additional Information : Other forms of financial assistance came from unemployment, the California Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant, the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, Working Solution Grant, the Albany Inside Out Grant, Facebook Small Business Grant Program, Comcast Rise Grant, a County grant, and a State grant.

Has this business RECEIVED financial assistance from any of the following sources? (check all that apply)

A majority of survey takers received their request for financial assistance. However, one survey taker pointed out that they only received \$1,000 in financial assistance.

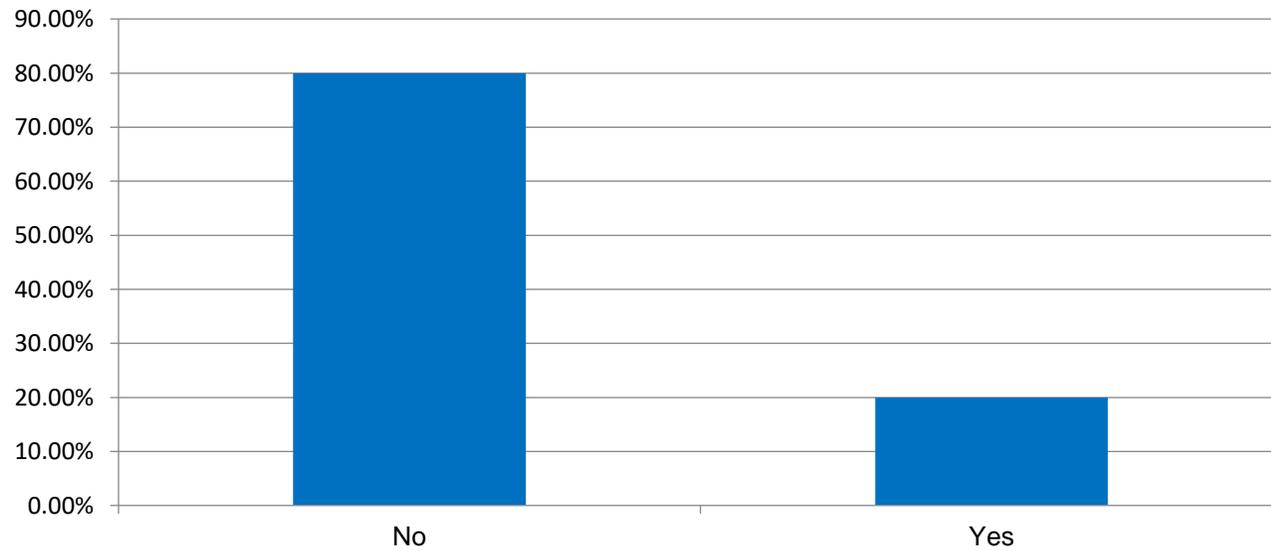


Percentage in each most common category that received their request.

1. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), first time applicant – 88.68%
2. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan forgiveness – 79.49%
3. Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), second time applicant – 90.32%
4. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) – 83.87%
5. Family or friends – 71.43%
6. Banks or other financial institutions – 60%

If you've requested financial aid and did not receive it. Were you given a reason why?

A majority of survey takers were not given a reason why they did not receive their request.



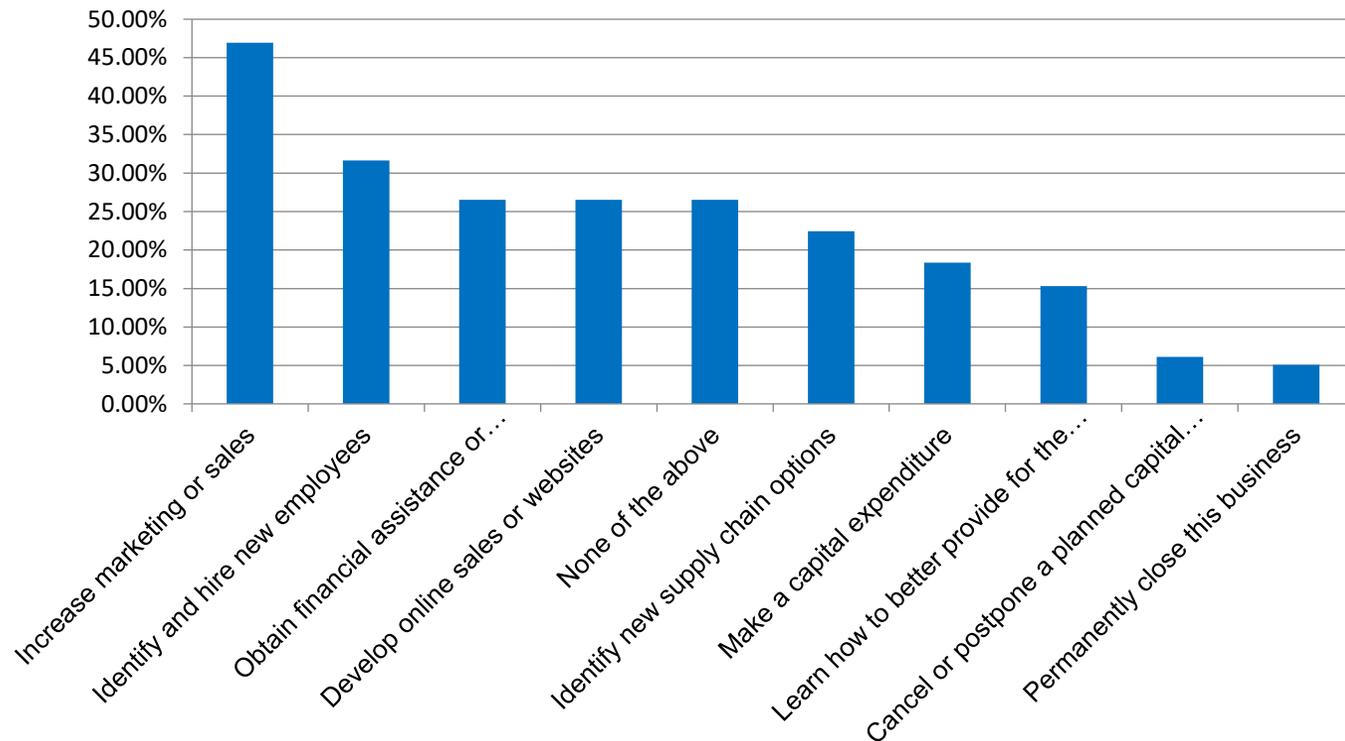
Answers

1. No – 80% - 44 survey takers
2. Yes – 20% - 11 survey takers

Notable Additional Comments: One survey taker did not receive financial aid the first time because they were a new business. Another stated that they did not have payroll documentation because they are self-employed. Lastly, one comment stated that the funds of a grant had either already been distributed or distributed elsewhere.

In the next 6 months, do you think this business will need to do any of the following? (select all that apply)

More employees need to be hired by Albany businesses.



Most Common Answers

1. Increase marketing or sales - 46.94%
2. Identify and hire new employees - 31.63%
3. Obtain financial assistance or additional capital - 26.53%
4. Develop online sales or websites - 26.53%
5. None of the above - 26.53%
6. Identify new supply chain options - 22.45%
7. Make a capital expenditure - 18.37%

Notable Additional Comments: Five survey takers had to permanently close their businesses. One survey taker commented that they will need to make some capital expenditures and postpone others based on cash flow, business trends, and supply chain shifts.

Please share your contact information if you would like to be contacted by members or staff from the City of Albany's Economic Development Committee.

32 survey takers provided contact information.

Most common titles of these survey takers

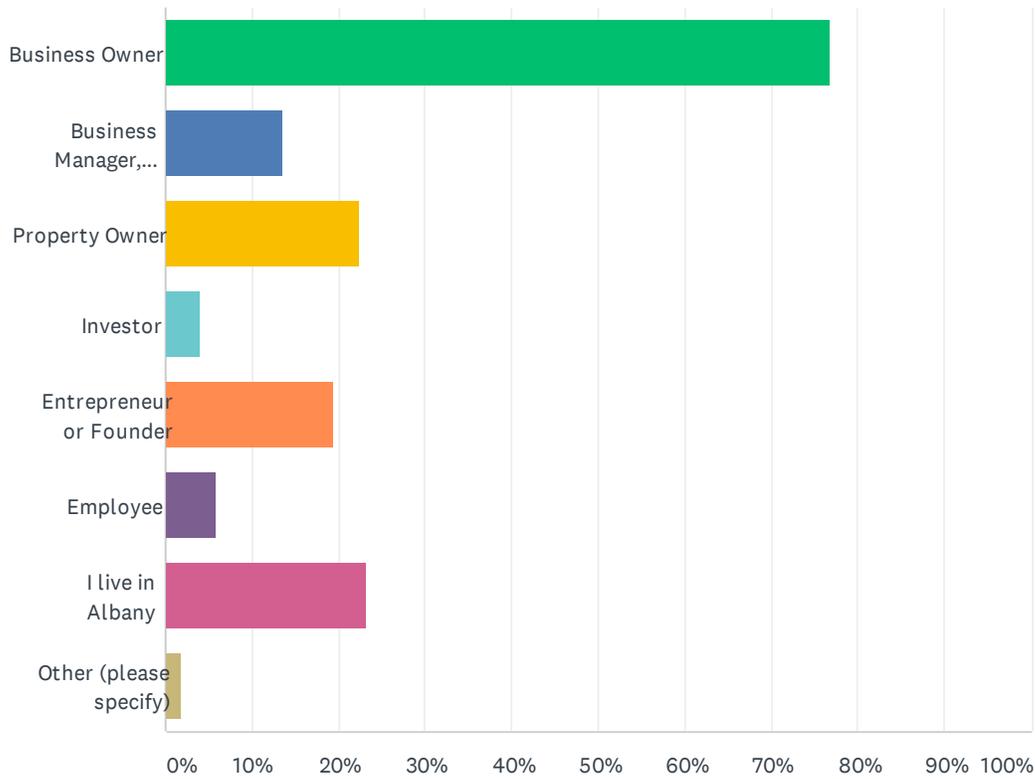
- 26 - Business Owner
- 6 - Property Owner
- 6 - Live in Albany
- 5 - Entrepreneur or Founder
- 5 – Business Manager, Executive, or Leader

Most common industry sector(s) of these survey takers

- 11 – Restaurants & Bars
- 7 – Professional Services
- 6 – Personal Services
- 6 – General Retail
- 4 – Health Care and Medical Services

Q1 Which of the following titles apply to you in relation to your Albany business? (check all that apply)

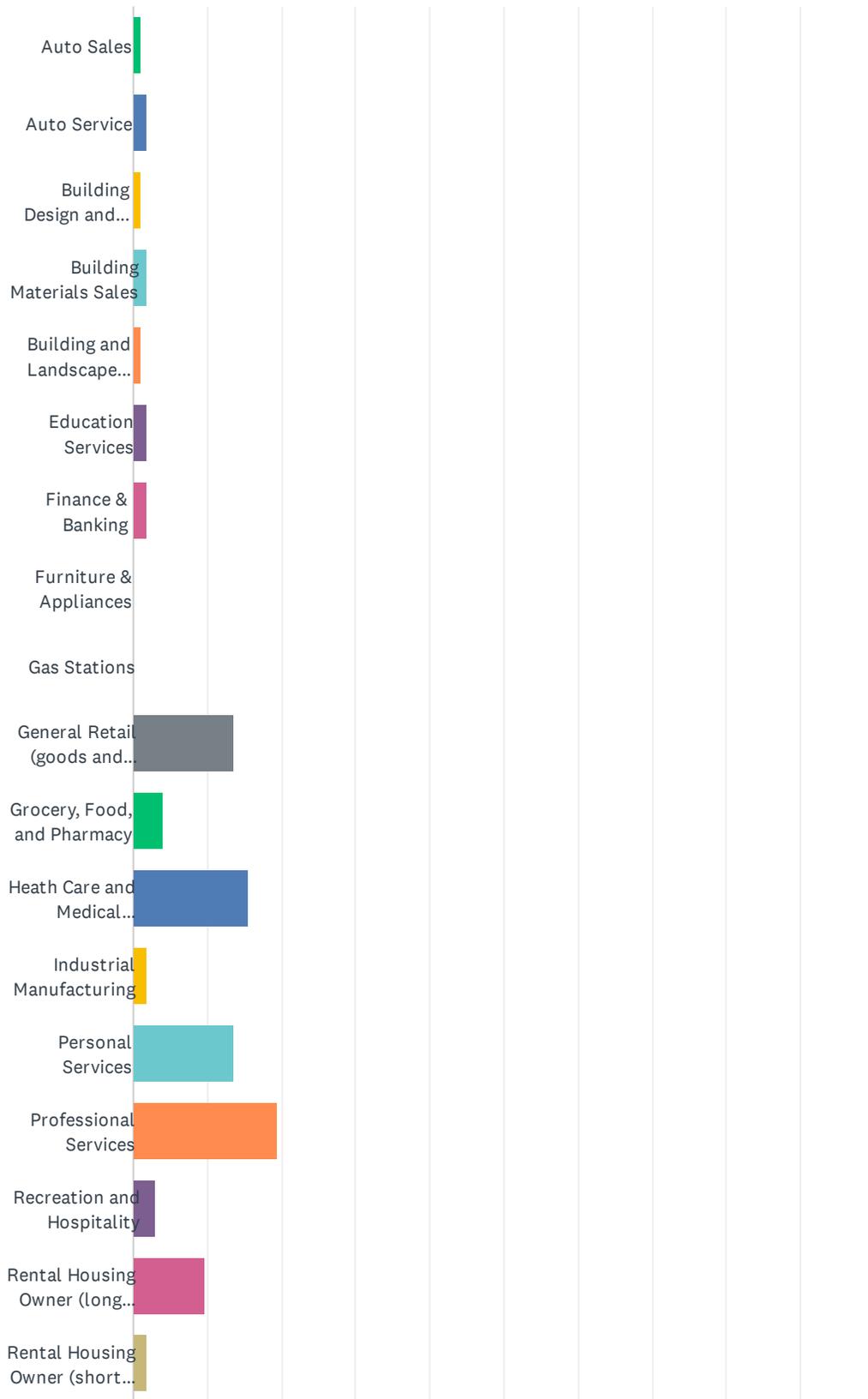
Answered: 103 Skipped: 0

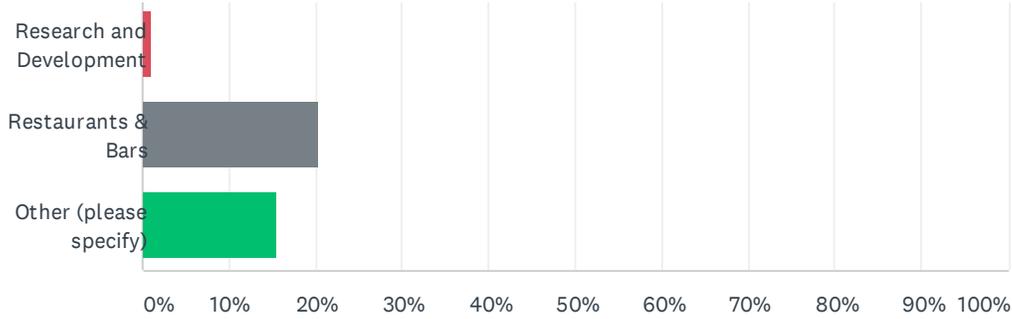


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Business Owner	76.70%	79
Business Manager, Executive or Leader	13.59%	14
Property Owner	22.33%	23
Investor	3.88%	4
Entrepreneur or Founder	19.42%	20
Employee	5.83%	6
I live in Albany	23.30%	24
Other (please specify)	1.94%	2
Total Respondents: 103		

Q2 With which industry sector(s) do you identify with most? (check all that apply)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0

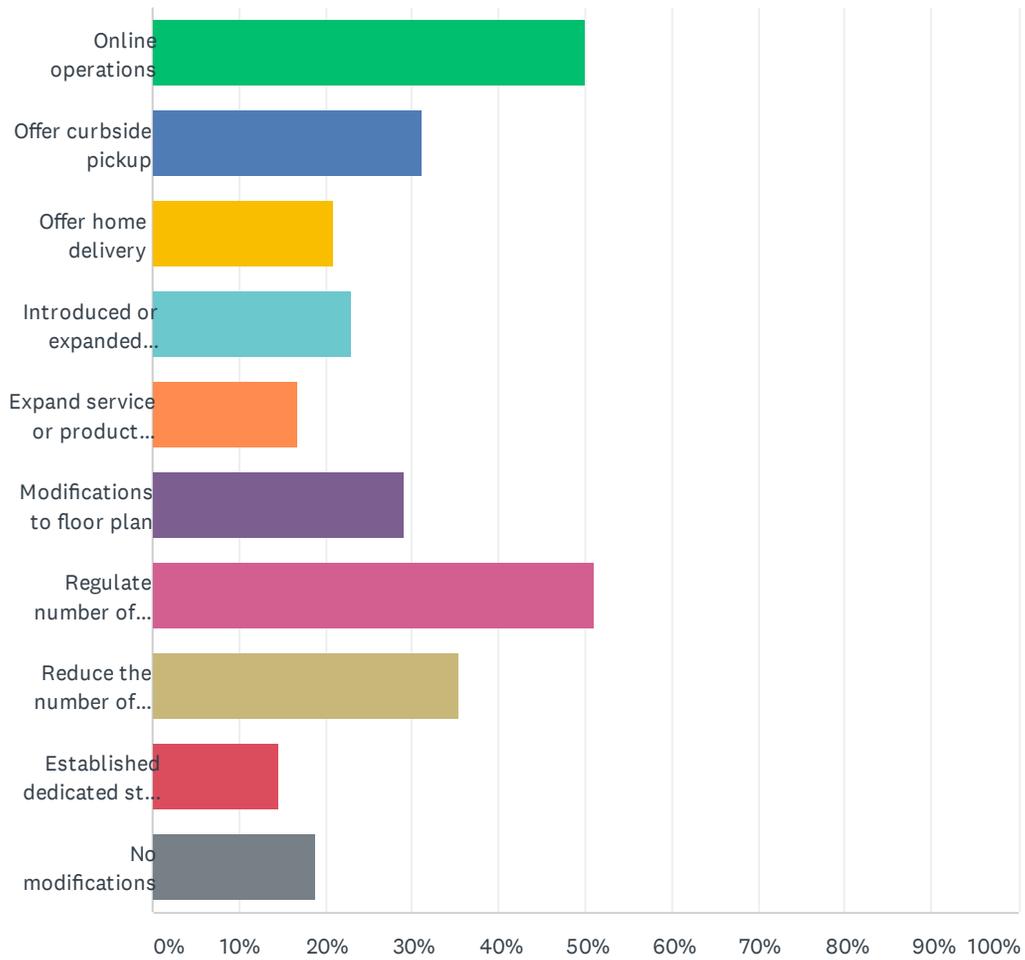




ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Auto Sales	0.97% 1
Auto Service	1.94% 2
Building Design and Construction	0.97% 1
Building Materials Sales	1.94% 2
Building and Landscape Maintenance Services	0.97% 1
Education Services	1.94% 2
Finance & Banking	1.94% 2
Furniture & Appliances	0.00% 0
Gas Stations	0.00% 0
General Retail (goods and arts)	13.59% 14
Grocery, Food, and Pharmacy	3.88% 4
Heath Care and Medical Services	15.53% 16
Industrial Manufacturing	1.94% 2
Personal Services	13.59% 14
Professional Services	19.42% 20
Recreation and Hospitality	2.91% 3
Rental Housing Owner (long term)	9.71% 10
Rental Housing Owner (short term)	1.94% 2
Research and Development	0.97% 1
Restaurants & Bars	20.39% 21
Other (please specify)	15.53% 16
Total Respondents: 103	

Q3 What modifications, if any, did you implement to your place of business during the COVID-19 pandemic? (Choose all that apply)

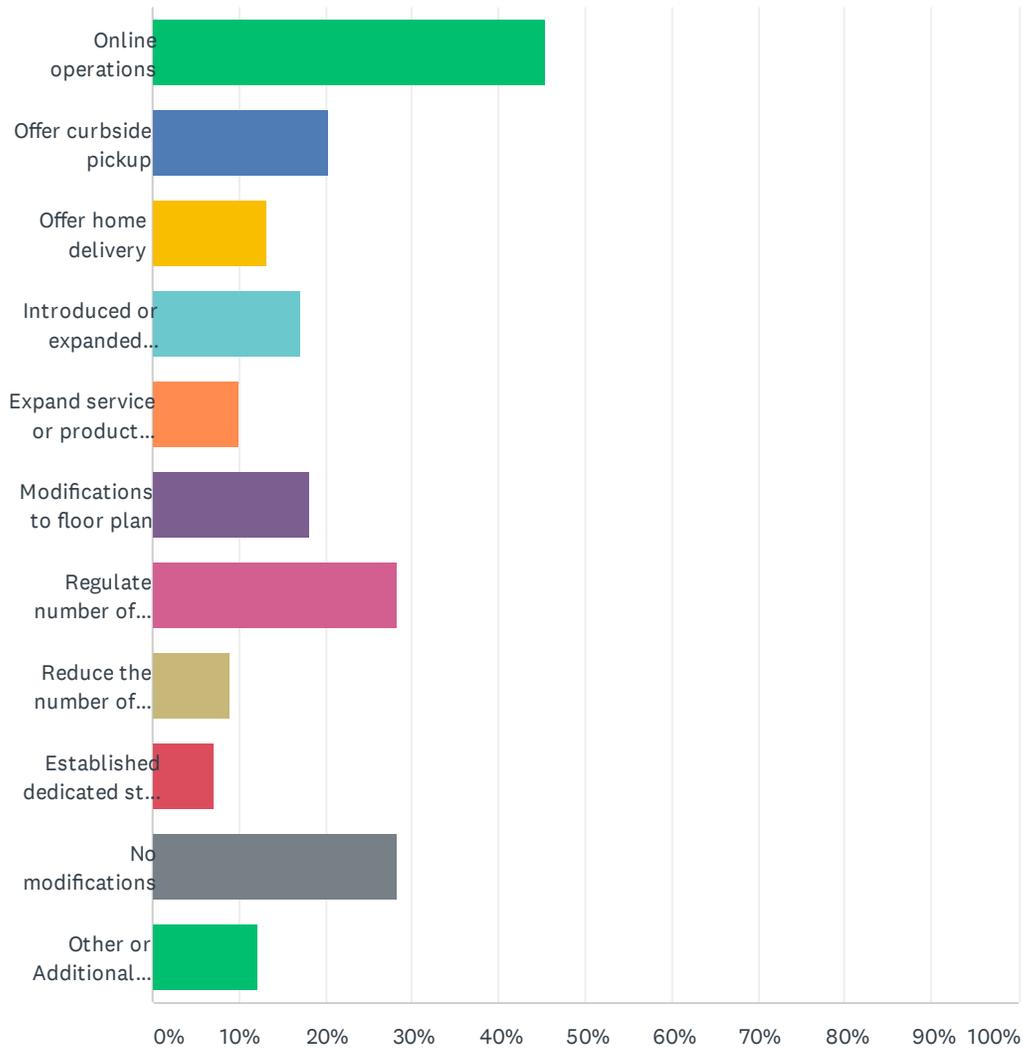
Answered: 96 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Online operations	50.00%	48
Offer curbside pickup	31.25%	30
Offer home delivery	20.83%	20
Introduced or expanded outdoor operations, including outdoor seating	22.92%	22
Expand service or product offerings	16.67%	16
Modifications to floor plan	29.17%	28
Regulate number of customers on site	51.04%	49
Reduce the number of employees on site	35.42%	34
Established dedicated staff to ensure social distancing	14.58%	14
No modifications	18.75%	18
Total Respondents: 96		

Q4 If you have made modifications to your place of business, which, if any, do you plan to keep as COVID-19 pandemic limitations evolve? (Choose all that apply)

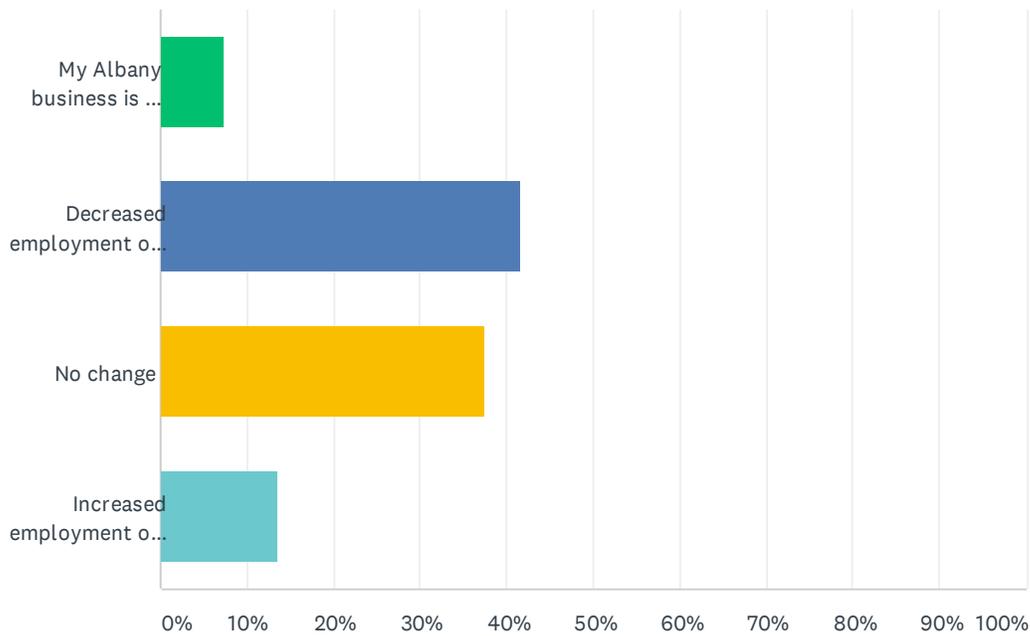
Answered: 99 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Online operations	45.45%	45
Offer curbside pickup	20.20%	20
Offer home delivery	13.13%	13
Introduced or expanded outdoor operations, including outdoor seating	17.17%	17
Expand service or product offerings	10.10%	10
Modifications to floor plan	18.18%	18
Regulate number of customers on site	28.28%	28
Reduce the number of employees on site	9.09%	9
Established dedicated staff to ensure social distancing	7.07%	7
No modifications	28.28%	28
Other or Additional Comments	12.12%	12
Total Respondents: 99		

Q5 How has your business changed the number of employees or employee hours of work for your Albany location since January 1st, 2021?

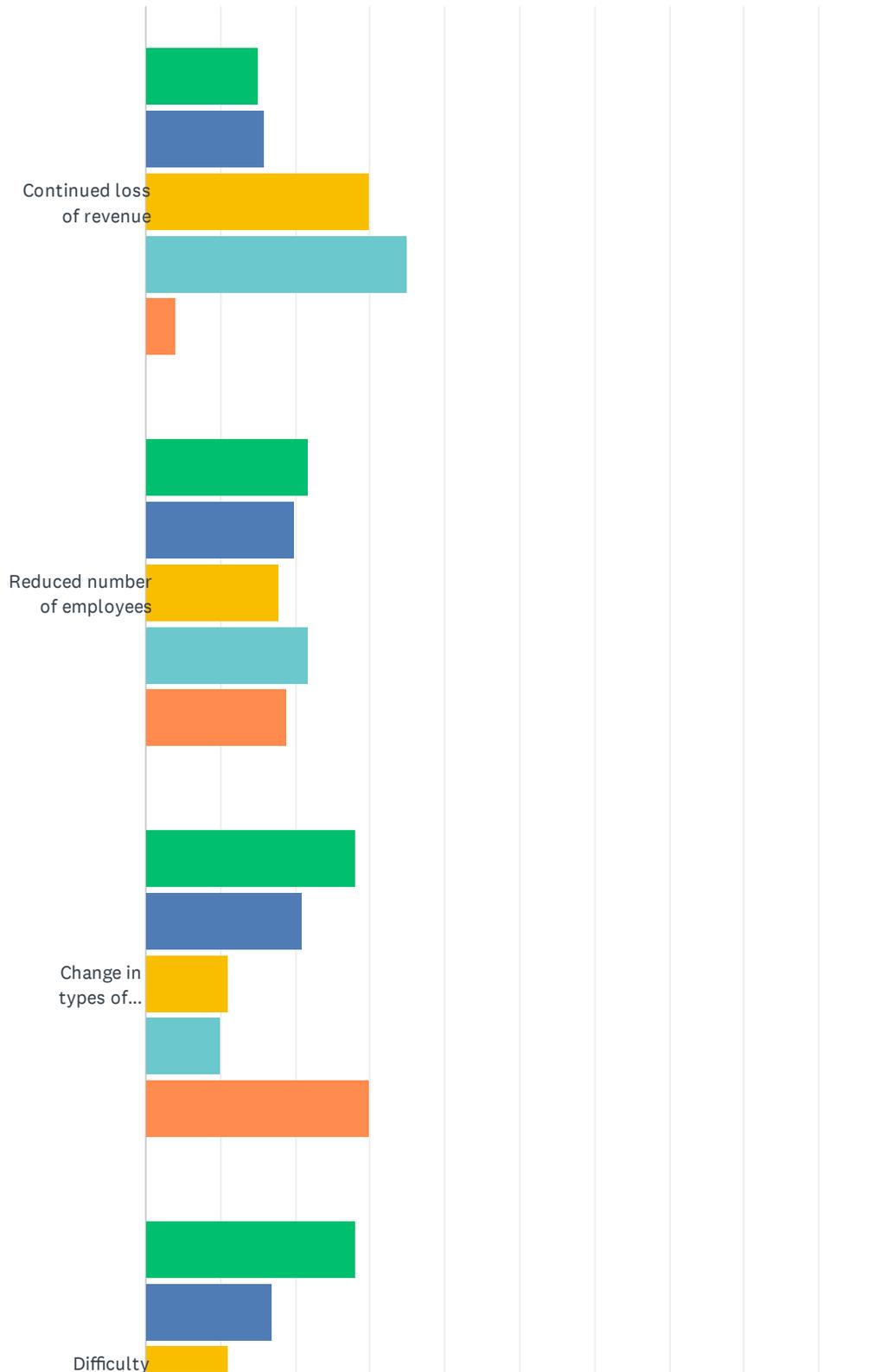
Answered: 96 Skipped: 7

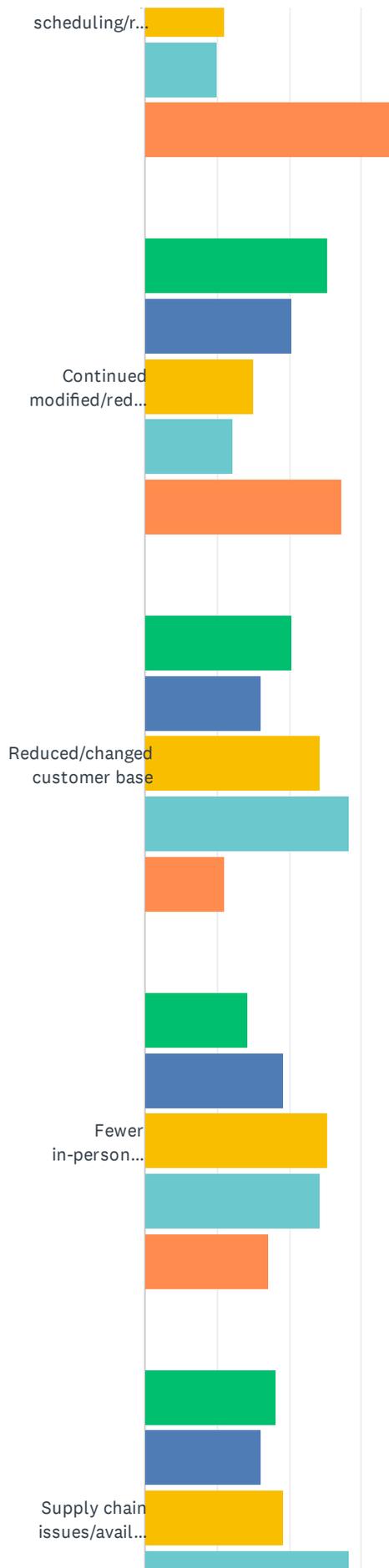


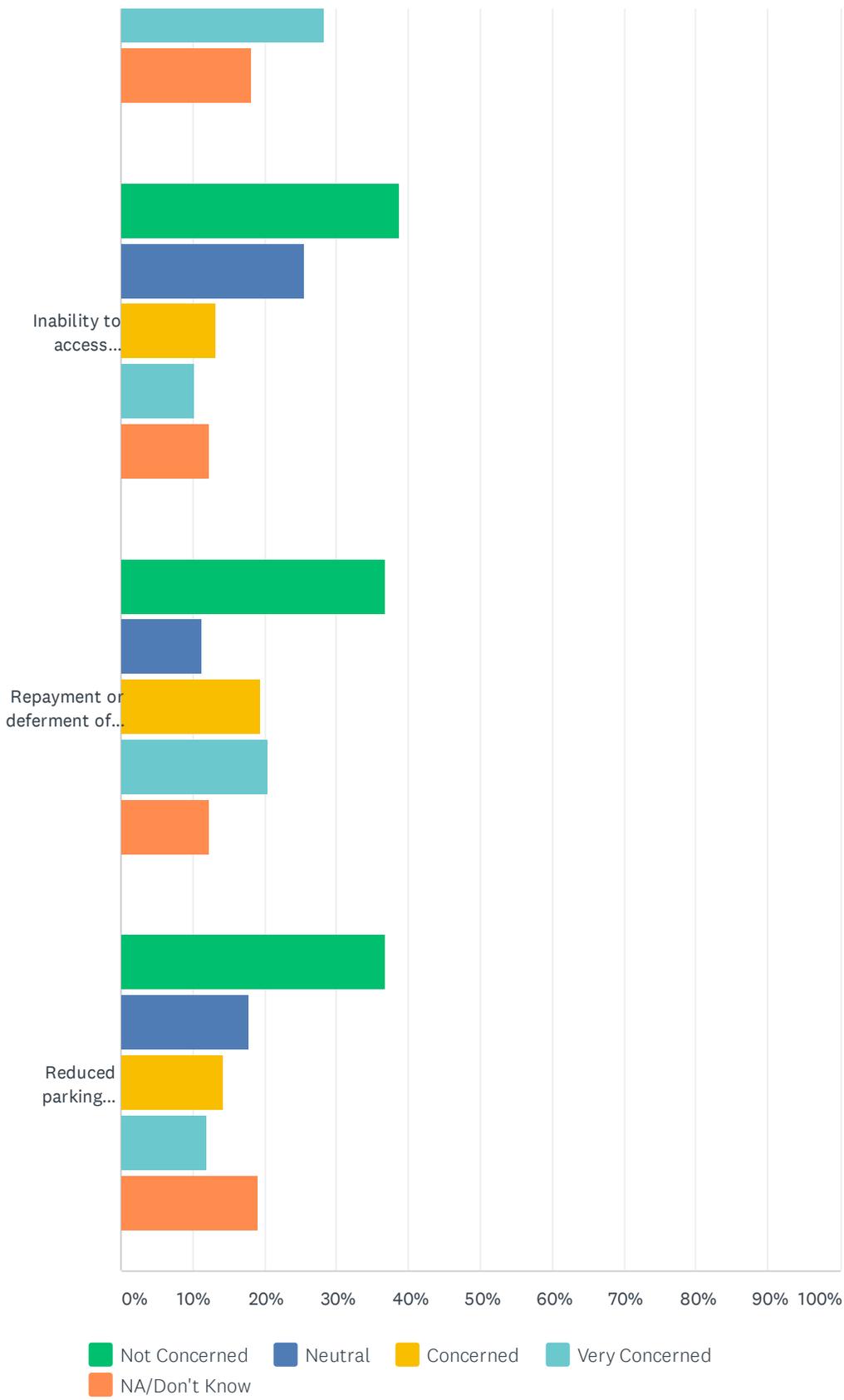
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
My Albany business is not able to operate in any form during the Shelter-in-Place Order	7.29%	7
Decreased employment or employee hours	41.67%	40
No change	37.50%	36
Increased employment or employee hours	13.54%	13
TOTAL		96

Q6 Please indicate your level of concern regarding the following potential long-term impacts of COVID-19 and the Shelter in Place order on your business. (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 103 Skipped: 0



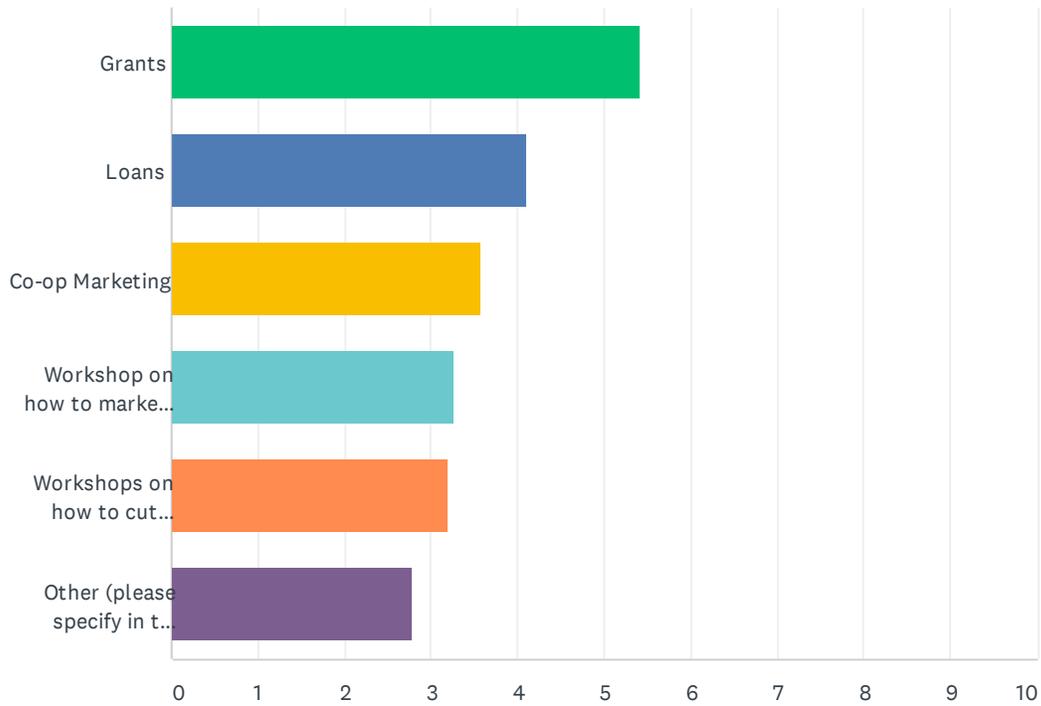




	NOT CONCERNED	NEUTRAL	CONCERNED	VERY CONCERNED	NA/DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Continued loss of revenue	15.00% 15	16.00% 16	30.00% 30	35.00% 35	4.00% 4	100	2.97
Reduced number of employees	21.78% 22	19.80% 20	17.82% 18	21.78% 22	18.81% 19	101	2.96
Change in types of employees I hire	28.00% 28	21.00% 21	11.00% 11	10.00% 10	30.00% 30	100	2.93
Difficulty scheduling/retaining employees due to childcare needs	28.00% 28	17.00% 17	11.00% 11	10.00% 10	34.00% 34	100	3.05
Continued modified/reduced service (e.g. continue focusing on take-out/delivery)	25.25% 25	20.20% 20	15.15% 15	12.12% 12	27.27% 27	99	2.96
Reduced/changed customer base	20.20% 20	16.16% 16	24.24% 24	28.28% 28	11.11% 11	99	2.94
Fewer in-person events/operations	14.14% 14	19.19% 19	25.25% 25	24.24% 24	17.17% 17	99	3.11
Supply chain issues/availability of necessary supplies	18.18% 18	16.16% 16	19.19% 19	28.28% 28	18.18% 18	99	3.12
Inability to access necessary personal protective equipment	38.78% 38	25.51% 25	13.27% 13	10.20% 10	12.24% 12	98	2.32
Repayment or deferment of rent	36.73% 36	11.22% 11	19.39% 19	20.41% 20	12.24% 12	98	2.60
Reduced parking availability due to alternative use of parking spaces	36.90% 31	17.86% 15	14.29% 12	11.90% 10	19.05% 16	84	2.58

Q7 What support would be most helpful for your business in the near-term? (Please rank in order of priority)

Answered: 87 Skipped: 16



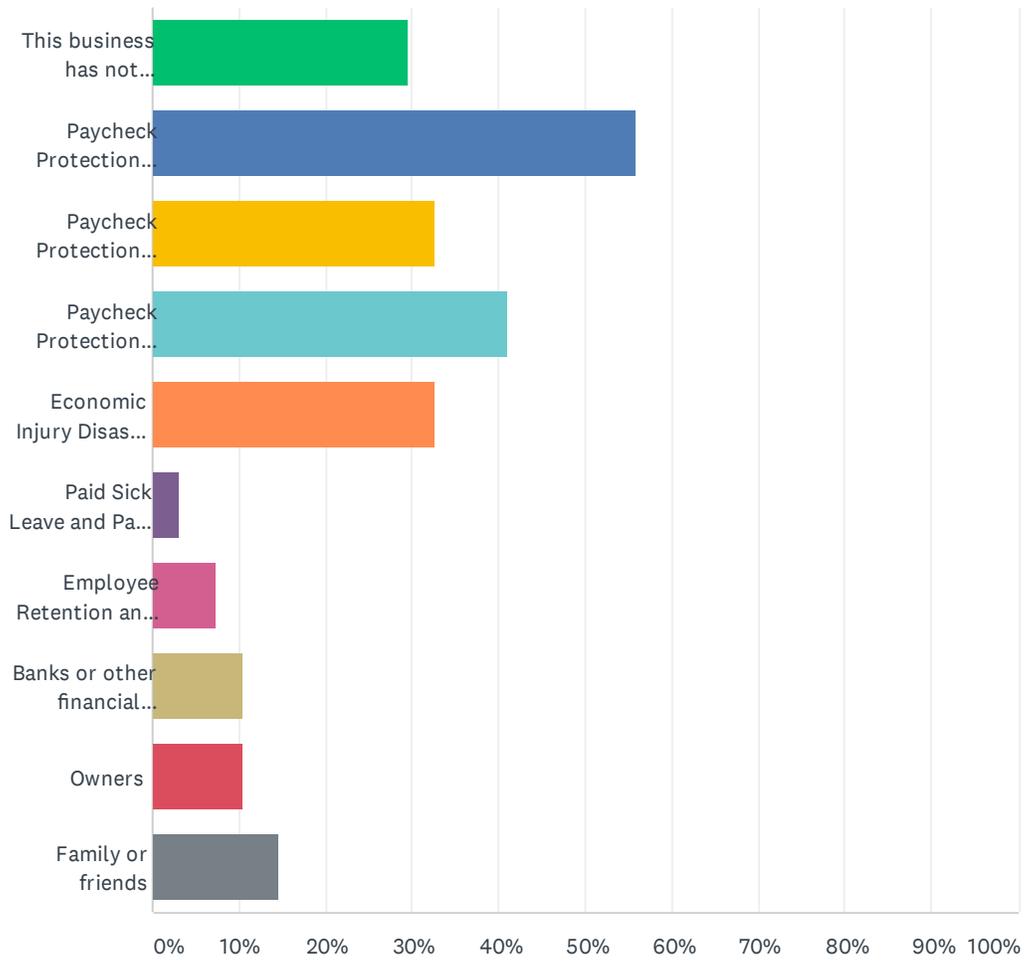
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Grants	74.24% 49	13.64% 9	4.55% 3	0.00% 0	1.52% 1	6.06% 4	66	5.41
Loans	8.47% 5	45.76% 27	18.64% 11	8.47% 5	11.86% 7	6.78% 4	59	4.10
Co-op Marketing	7.02% 4	22.81% 13	29.82% 17	10.53% 6	21.05% 12	8.77% 5	57	3.58
Workshop on how to market my business	3.70% 2	14.81% 8	14.81% 8	44.44% 24	14.81% 8	7.41% 4	54	3.26
Workshops on how to cut costs/increase efficiency	11.67% 7	5.00% 3	20.00% 12	23.33% 14	35.00% 21	5.00% 3	60	3.20
Other (please specify in the next section)	26.00% 13	2.00% 1	6.00% 3	8.00% 4	6.00% 3	52.00% 26	50	2.78

Q8 In the previous question, if you have chosen to rank "Other", please specify or provide additional comments.

Answered: 44 Skipped: 59

Q9 Has this business REQUESTED financial assistance from any of the following sources?

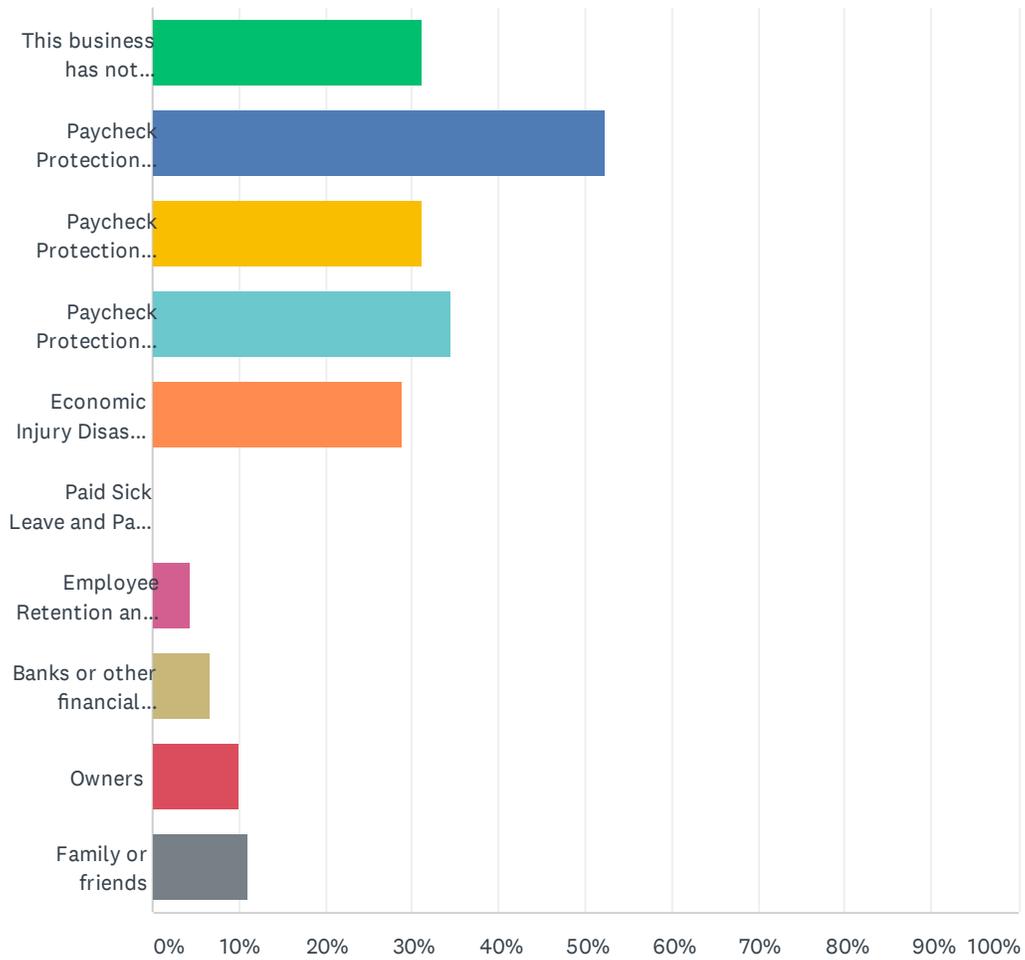
Answered: 95 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
This business has not requested financial assistance from any source.	29.47%	28
Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), first time applicant	55.79%	53
Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), second time applicant	32.63%	31
Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan forgiveness	41.05%	39
Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)	32.63%	31
Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family Leave Credit	3.16%	3
Employee Retention and Rehiring Credit	7.37%	7
Banks or other financial institutions	10.53%	10
Owners	10.53%	10
Family or friends	14.74%	14
Total Respondents: 95		

Q10 Has this business RECEIVED financial assistance from any of the following sources?

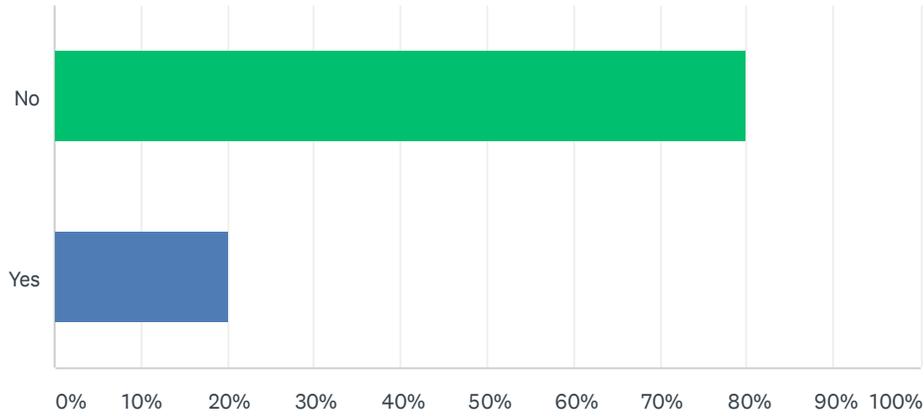
Answered: 90 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
This business has not requested financial assistance from any source.	31.11%	28
Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), first time applicant	52.22%	47
Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), second time applicant	31.11%	28
Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan forgiveness	34.44%	31
Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL)	28.89%	26
Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family Leave Credit	0.00%	0
Employee Retention and Rehiring Credit	4.44%	4
Banks or other financial institutions	6.67%	6
Owners	10.00%	9
Family or friends	11.11%	10
Total Respondents: 90		

Q11 If you've requested financial aid and did not receive it. Were you given a reason why?

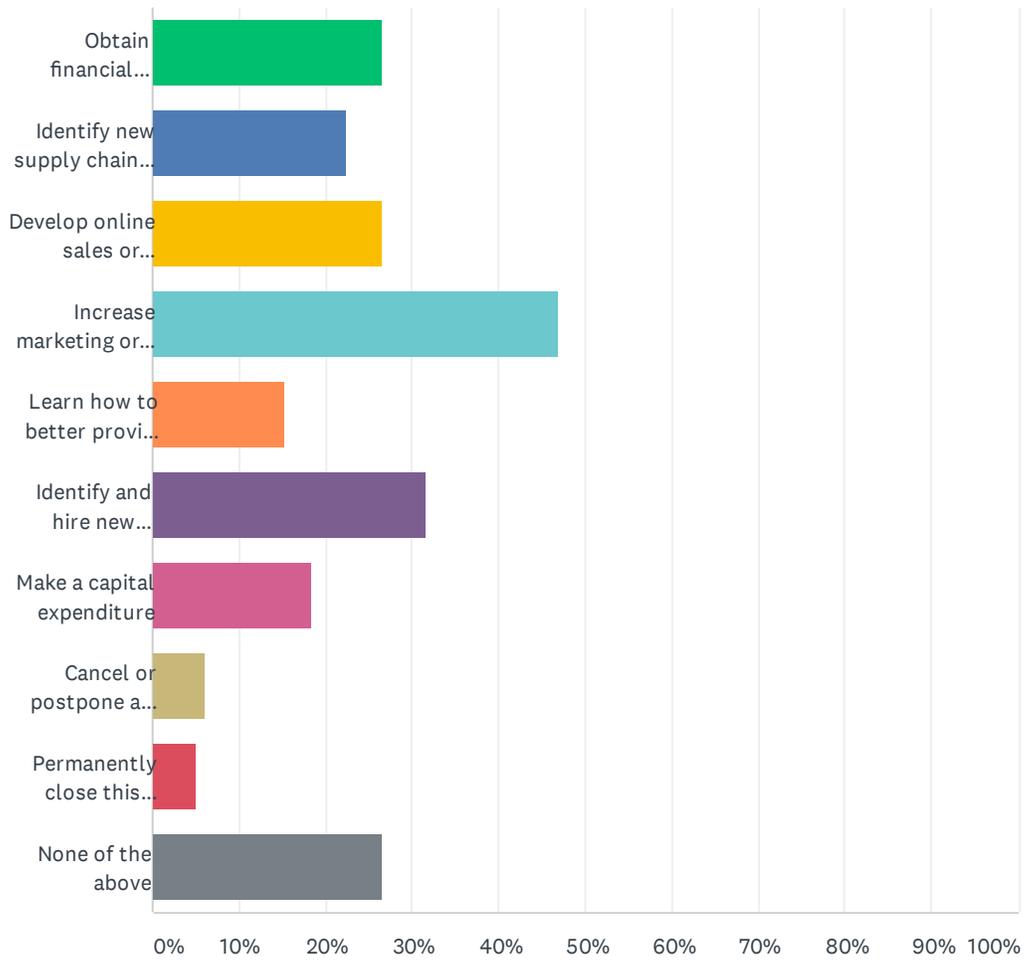
Answered: 55 Skipped: 48



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	80.00%	44
Yes	20.00%	11
TOTAL		55

Q12 In the next 6 months, do you think this business will need to do any of the following? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 98 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Obtain financial assistance or additional capital	26.53%	26
Identify new supply chain options	22.45%	22
Develop online sales or websites	26.53%	26
Increase marketing or sales	46.94%	46
Learn how to better provide for the safety of customers and employees	15.31%	15
Identify and hire new employees	31.63%	31
Make a capital expenditure	18.37%	18
Cancel or postpone a planned capital expenditure	6.12%	6
Permanently close this business	5.10%	5
None of the above	26.53%	26
Total Respondents: 98		

Q13 Please share your contact information if you would like to be contacted by members or staff from the City of Albany's Economic Development Committee.

Answered: 36 Skipped: 67

From: [Patrick Phelan](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Support for Albany Inside Out
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 5:06:17 PM

You don't often get email from patrick_phelan@ci.richmond.ca.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Dear Albany Transportation Commission,

I am writing to voice my support for Albany Inside Out. I urge you to continue the In-Street Outdoor Dining program on Solano Ave and to consider making it permanent and allowing businesses to make more permanent and attractive structures and parklets.

I work for the City of Richmond and understand how challenging it can be to permit new uses of the roadway and manage the needs of all users of commercial streets. Richmond has failed in this sense, whereas the Solano Ave outdoor dining has been a great success. One need only travel to Oakland or San Francisco to see how far we can go to reimagine vibrant corridors that make more room for people to walk, bike, play, and dine. A paradigm shift is happening and I urge Albany to continue to be a leader in promoting reallocation of street width to give more space for active use of the space as opposed to parked cars. One parking space is often occupied by a car that brought only one person to the street, while multiple people could be seated in the same footprint. Solano Ave is also very accessible by foot, bike, or public transit.

On a personal level, I live in Berkeley, and Solano Ave is one of the few places I have dined during the pandemic. Most people are still very nervous about eating inside. I don't have great outdoor dining opportunities where I live, and travel to Albany specifically for this reason.

Please continue and bolster the In-Street Outdoor Dining program!

Thank you,

Patrick Phelan

Infrastructure Administrator

pride and purpose

Tel: 510-307-8111 | Email: patrick_phelan@ci.richmond.ca.us

Water Resource Recovery www.ci.richmond.ca.us/wrr

Engineering & Capital Improvement Projects www.ci.richmond.ca.us/engineering

450 Civic Center Plaza | Richmond, CA 94804

From: [Kellie Lund](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Cc: [Veronica Davidson](#)
Subject: Support for keeping In-Street Outdoor Dining (on Thursday Transportation Commission agenda)
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 5:13:51 PM

You don't often get email from kelund@google.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Hi Albany Transportation Commission-

I'm sending along my thoughts on tomorrow's agenda item regarding keeping outdoor dining and parklets in Albany for the long term.

As a supporter of outdoor dining, I'm wanting to send along my vote to continue this dining experience long term. The parklets and outdoor dining extensions have added an absolutely magical quality to our beloved thoroughfare. Driving or walking down Solano at any time of day, you are instantly aware of the vitality it adds to our neighborhood, how it slows traffic, and improves walkability. The connectedness between all the businesses is noticeable as well, creating yet another core to our vibrant community here in Albany.

Thank you!

Kellie (11 year Albany resident)

Kellie Lund | Operations Manager | Google Children's Centers |

From: [Jeffrey Luna-Sparks](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Outdoor dining
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 6:19:11 PM

You don't often get email from jinglejeff2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi M and Albany home owner and I am in complete support of continuing the outdoor dining. It makes Albany seem very European and raises the standard of living in our community. It's a fantastic addition to an already wonderful city. I hope you will allow the restaurants to continue the outdoor dining for safety and overall ambience.

Sincerely

Jeff Luna-Sparks,
Albany Home Owner
1016 Talbot Avenue Albany, CA
(510) 334-8851

From: [Karen Nierlich](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: TC: Parklets and Parking on Solano Avenue
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 8:43:32 PM

You don't often get email from knierlich@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Transportation Commission,

1) I'm writing you as I feel that the parklets are set up in a fashion that is not equitable. They were fine as a temporary creative solution to an extreme situation, but now need to be reconsidered.

Why are they not equitable? To keep all of them will create winners and losers on Solano. Taking parking from some businesses and giving free extra space to other businesses is unfair to some.

The fairest thing to do at this point would be to do an analysis of the Solano Avenue street parking and document what percentage is occupied depending on the hour of the day and the block.

2) Having less parking will hurt some small Solano Avenue businesses.

2a. I'm uncomfortable with the idea of taking @30 parking spaces from the @130-170 spaces we have total. At some hours of the day there is often no parking on Solano or near Solano. Based on my personal experience (which is at least a couple of times weekly), I can tell you that the block near the post office often has no parking within an entire city block. This typically happens mid-day and early afternoon. When I say city block, I mean the entire block of Solano, Talbot, Cornell and Washington.

2b. Some businesses will lose appointments from elderly people who can't park nearby. Some restaurants will also lose rush hour business because people coming home from work won't be willing to drive blocks in order to pick up their dinner order.

2c. Our small businesses can't afford to lose business because of lack of parking. While there are a handful of highly profitable businesses and destination businesses on Solano Avenue, they are the outliers. Most of our businesses are small family-run businesses. Many Solano businesses earn a living but are always financially vulnerable. They are always on their toes working long hours to be successful and are in recovery mode from 2020.

3. And if the desire is to MAKE people walk or bike, that's not going to happen. It more likely that people will drive more if they can't park in Albany. They will drive to a

neighboring shopping or dining district where they can park.

3a. As a person who is extremely concerned about climate crisis, I feel very weird about standing up for parking. I'd love to see people walk and bike more, and I tend to walk around Albany myself and live a zero-commute lifestyle.

But I know you can't force people to walk or bike. First, they have to be able to walk and bike. And it needs to fit their needs. For example, if you are picking up a large catering order, a tree, or a large printing order, you need a car for it. That doesn't make you a bad person, and it doesn't mean you don't walk or bike on other days.

I just don't want our fight for less driving to adversely effect the small businesses. There are other places to start...other ways to reduce driving without taking away parking from the small businesses that depend on it.

Can you imagine taking parking away from BevMo or Target to force people to walk more? That'd be a total non-starter. So taking parking away from our beleaguered small business community is patently unfair.

If the desire is to get people out of their cars to reduce Co2...let's brainstorm other creative ways to do that.

Karen Nierlich
Member/ Blue Glove Crew
Member/ ACoC & SAA
Co-Owner/ Full Orbit Web and Marketing
Co-Owner/ Raven Fox Capes and Cloaks

From: [John Alexander](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Outdoor cafes
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 8:48:30 PM

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Hi Transportation commission,

I am just writing to you in support of leaving the parklets on Solano Ave. They had added a lot to the street, and I really enjoy outdoor eating, and continue to support several cafes with parklets.

--

Thanks,

John Alexander

From: [Lin B.](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Outdoor Parklets
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 10:11:02 PM

[You don't often get email from techmomster@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

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Dear Transportation Commission members,

I am writing in support of the continuation of Albany's outdoor dining parklets. Obviously, until we have herd immunity or full vaccination, this is a viable alternative with minimal risk. But it's not just a great solution to cope with Covid. The outdoor dining areas have made Solano a vibrant community experience. As I walk up or down the street, I see friends and neighbors, and people wave at one another. They spend more time on Solano Ave., and this helps the non-food businesses as well. I'm not sure how well they will do when colder winter weather sets in (maybe they could be allowed to "roof" their areas?) but I definitely think the outdoor parklets are a keeper in milder weather. Solano Ave. now has the activity and buzz that I typically see on 4th Street. It's not just good for the merchants, it's good for all the residents of Albany.

Linda Berland

From: [Ariel Lustig](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: let's keep the outdoor dining!
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 10:26:53 PM

You don't often get email from ariel@helloariel.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello, I heard that you're going to be discussing whether or not to keep the outdoor dining around Albany.

I hope you decide to keep it! It so adds to the happy feeling of the street. Our family loves that we can eat safely outside (some of our household is too young for vaccination) and it also has brought my attention to restaurants I may not have discovered. Also I think it has helped many small businesses to have this outdoor seating during this time.

Please keep outdoor seating!

Ariel Lustig
827 Jackson Street
Albany

From: [mdg *](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Parklet continuation in Albany
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 10:57:37 PM

[You don't often get email from spanky_velo@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

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Dear Albany Transportation Commission,

My name is Michael Gill. I'm a resident of North Berkeley, but frequent many Albany businesses, as they are actually much closer to me than downtown Berkeley. I often walk or bike to Solano.

I understand that an item will be on the agenda of a Sept 23 meeting to discuss the continuation of parklet permitting currently used by restaurants for outdoor dining as they have been during the pandemic. In my view, these parklets that offer outdoor dining opportunities have obviously saved many businesses from closing. While there may be some parking taken on Solano, the life of these businesses should take priority over a few parking spaces. In addition to allowing businesses to survive, when done to code, they safely slow traffic, they allow residents to socialize safely with outdoor dining, and they offer the opportunity to spend money in your town (and generate taxes). Sounds like everyone wins to me! If people cannot walk or bike to Solano, parking is available literally a short walk in any direction from Solano. It's never that far away.

Vibrant Solano Avenue is the heart and soul of your town. More restaurants will likely close if the town doesn't continue to allow parklets. It's clear that they are successfully used by many other cities to adapt to the pandemic. Why not in Albany? Without these businesses, the town will truly suffer. Please vote to continue parklets on Solano.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Michael Gill
1206 Neilson Street
Berkeley

From: [Albert Reinhardt](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Support for outdoor dining
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 7:40:23 AM

You don't often get email from albert.reinhardt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello, I'm writing to support the outdoor dining available on Solano Ave. One of the pleasant surprises to come out of the pandemic was the availability of outdoor dining. I recommend the council consider keeping this despite the decrease in transmission. The outdoor seating and dining in parklets is a welcome addition as it has helped slow traffic and also has made biking the corridor between the Olohne Greenway and West Solano feel safer.

Thank you,
Albert Reinhardt (Jackson and Solano)

From: [SilverPhoenixFlight](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Cc: vonnies@oceanviewbrews.com; [Amy S](#)
Subject: Continued outdoor dining
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 12:22:31 PM

You don't often get email from silverphoenixflight@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To the Transportation Commission and Staff,

I am writing to show my support for continued outside dining on Solano Avenue. The pandemic may be on the way out (or it may not be) and restrictions are being lifted (for who knows how long) but outside dining should remain.

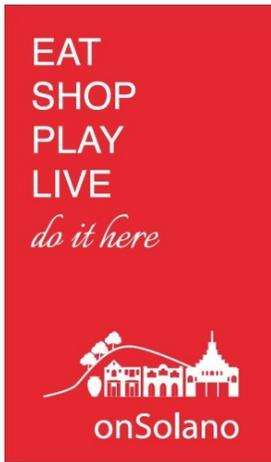
When Covid raged and we could not support our local restaurants, we got take out. Most, if not all of us, can read, and we can cook, but we wanted to support local restaurants because we are fond of the restaurant owners, because we love the Albany international community, because the restaurant taxes support Albany, because we don't like to cook every night (believe me, I've been cooking dinner for over 53 years and sometimes I need a break) to name a few reasons.

Little did we anticipate how **Albany Inside Out** would bring us hope, bring us even closer to our neighbors and friends, vitalize and bring our community even closer together. Strolling down Solano, we can see our friends, stop and chat, and smell and taste the delicious international cuisines. Why it's almost like being in Paris.

I was about to say it's like being in Paris except we're not speaking French, but if you want to speak French, you can go to Rendez-vous, Cafe Raj, or Suzette. Thai, Nepali, Farsi, Hindi, Arabic, Korean, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tibetan, Newari, or Yemeni? You can find it all, and now it's outside, too.

Let's keep it that way!

Margo Wecksler
Kains Avenue



The Solano Avenue
Association

SolanoStroll.org
info@SolanoStroll.org

510-527-5358

1569 Solano Avenue #101
Berkeley California
94707-2116

President
Jennifer Hansen-Romero
Winkler Real Estate Group

Vice President
Jason Bellevue
RAF Investments

Secretary
Janet Snidow, The Mane Alley

Ge'Neil Gary
Albany Resident

Peggy and Richard Smith
Allstate Insurance

Rafael Rangell
YMCA – East Bay Area

Robert Abrams
Abrams-Claghorn Gallery

Tod Abbott
Full Orbit Web and Marketing

Allen Cain
Operations Manager (Staff)

9/22/2021

City of Albany Transportation Commission: tc@albanyca.org

We have been involved in several meetings and conversations with regards to the outdoor dining and the SAA appreciates the review of the program.

The SAA's members of businesses are most interested in the safety and equity of any outdoor commerce features; as we have been from the beginning.

We are supportive in the measure of the City re-examining these features with an open mind to allow for more permanent structures with the focus of safety and fairness to the other businesses, their clients and our community with all best interests being considered.

Could you please provide to us a copy of the survey and to the list of businesses it was sent out to? How many have responded?
Could you share a copy of the presentation to us to share with our business community?

We are asking if there will be plenty of advance notice to the SAA and the Chamber of Commerce of any potential recommendations or decisions prior to this going forward to council so that we can give our businesses adequate time to provide additional feedback, questions or concerns.

While we understand your primary focus with this meeting is on Transportation and Safety, (safety is highest on the priority list), we would like to be sure when other business districts are being looked at that you consider, safety standards on a like business district, bus routes, similar grade of street slope, how much visibility loss from neighboring businesses are allowed, mix of business types, utilization of spaces that are needed for other commerce (IE 2-20 minute parking zones near post office during holidays when there are already available tables are the adjacent bulb out).

Some questions from our board and our members are as such:

What are the number of spaces that will be allowed to be used per business?
Will there be a fee for the public spaces to be used for private use?
Will there be design review and public hearings available prior to the spaces being approved for neighboring businesses/property owners?
Who will be enforcing such features/will they be enforced?
What are some of the safety standards being considered?
Will there be a professional safety company involved?
Will the aesthetics of these features be reviewed and approved?
When will these be re-examined again moving forward?
What will the process be?

Continued on page 2

Solano Avenue Association

Page 2 of 2

Some are also seriously concerned about the changing character and usability of business district

I know from the past, often times so much time and money is spent trying to put together proper feedback in the City for many other projects, we feel it is important that all of these factors be considered this time as well.

Have the other jurisdictions been contacted for their thoughts and feedback including AC transit, WM and the health department, ADA, as well as other city departments such as public works, planning and zoning, fire department, police and economic development committee?

(I copied some of the other departments as well in case anyone has any additional input)

For our members, please help provide us with a clear timeline of when decisions will be made, what the overall process looks like, how and when implemented and how it will be monitored moving forward so that we can keep open lines of communications to our businesses and our community being considered.

All my best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Hansen Romero", is centered within a light blue rectangular background.

Jennifer Hansen Romero, Volunteer President of the Solano Avenue Association

CC: Albany City Council / Clerk

From: [Melissa Hammesfahr, L.Ac.](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Comments for meeting tomorrow night about the parklets becoming permanent
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 1:46:12 PM

You don't often get email from ember.acupuncture@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi, I'd like to submit my comments to the Transportation Commission -

I believe there are pros & cons to having more permanent parklets, and would support a compromise. I do not have a business that requires a parklet, but I do have a business that requires accessibility for people with mobility issues, as well as serving people who are not local to Albany. My business has been impacted by nearby outdoor dining, positively and negatively.

I'm wondering if it would be helpful, instead of an across the board Yes or No for parklets, to designate a percentage of each block for that type of converted use, and designate another percentage to remain as parking spaces, maybe determined by capacity limits of businesses or some other metric that seems fair?

Also wondering if we have any data on safety issues from the past year with regard to traffic & pedestrians, or if the Commission has reached out to the surrounding residential area for their comments & input around this proposal.

Thanks!

Melissa Hammesfahr, L.Ac.

Ember Acupuncture
1209 Solano Ave, Albany, CA 94706
Office phone: 510-526-5028 (landline)
<http://emberacupuncture.com>
ember.acupuncture@gmail.com

From: [Francesca Cavanaugh](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Outdoor Dining Comment
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 3:41:09 PM

[You don't often get email from opaleneskincare@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

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Hello,

I wanted to share that I completely concur with the sentiments of my studio mate, Melissa Hammesfahr - Ember Acupuncture, shared below regarding permanent outdoor dining.

Safety is a priority, of course. And anything that can be done to ensure that all businesses along Solano Avenue are taken into consideration regarding parking is very much appreciated. There seem to be some blocks with several parklets which displace many more parking spots, while other blocks aren't affected much at all. Perhaps one community parklet on certain blocks that diners can take their to go food to would be a possible solution?

Our hope is that all businesses can thrive and customers/clients/patients/patrons have a easy time navigating and enjoying that Solano has to offer.

Thank you,
Francesca Cavanaugh
Opalene Skincare

- > Hi, I'd like to submit my comments to the Transportation Commission -
- >
- > I believe there are pros & cons to having more permanent parklets, and would support a compromise. I do not have a business that requires a parklet, but I do have a business that requires accessibility for people with mobility issues, as well as serving people who are not local to Albany. My business has been impacted by nearby outdoor dining, positively and negatively.
- >
- > I'm wondering if it would be helpful, instead of an across the board Yes or No for parklets, to designate a percentage of each block for that type of converted use, and designate another percentage to remain as parking spaces, maybe determined by capacity limits of businesses or some other metric that seems fair?
- >
- > Also wondering if we have any data on safety issues from the past year with regard to traffic & pedestrians, or if the Commission has reached out to the surrounding residential area for their comments & input around this proposal.
- >
- > Thanks!

Francesca

. . .

Opalene Skincare
opaleneskincare.com
opalene.skincare@gmail.com
510.868.4245
1209 Solano Ave
Albany, CA 94706

From: [Susan Sholin](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 3:56:22 PM

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Dear Commissioners and Staff,

Please accept my feedback regarding outdoor dining in Albany, specifically along Solano Ave.

Since the Pandemic, I have not dined indoors at all. I appreciate that most people here are vaccinated and mask wearing is encouraged but for me, it is still too much of a risk. For this reason and many more, I strongly support outdoor dining via parklets, patios, curbside tables, and the like.

Driving down Solano has always been a bit nerve wracking. I ride my bike around Albany and have always avoided Solano as much as possible. But since the creation of outdoor dining spaces, it actually feels a lot better. Traffic is much slower and after 18 months of the Pandemic, I think many drivers have been more respectful driving on Solano than they used to be. I know, isn't that amazing! Personally, I don't mind driving on Solano so much now because traffic has slowed down, there are so many pedestrians and people milling about, I find it enjoyable to go super slow and allow pedestrian traffic and people enjoying themselves having a drink or a bite without fear of someone speeding. There are so many small restaurants and cafes on Solano that would not have survived the Pandemic had it not been for outdoor dining spots. Not to mention other small businesses that need our support; pet grooming, stores for children's supplies, jewelry and shoe shops. I'm sure you want to support small business; that's part of what makes Albany special - not so much corporate business, but small businesses; ice cream carts, people drinking coffee, having a cocktail, and enjoying food that by the way, is often made by immigrants. Surely we want to support people who have worked to achieve the American dream and have their own business. I know I do.

Thanks for taking the time to read my letter and I welcome you to contact me if necessary.

Very truly yours,

Suzi Sholin
Albany resident
I Albany

From: Lisa Schneider
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Albany parklets
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 9:25:30 PM

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Hello,

I strongly urge Albany to keep its restaurant parklets as long as possible for the following reasons:

- 1) They have kept Albany's Solano Ave. restaurants going throughout the pandemic. Let's reward this investment in Albany's vitality.
- 2) Due to Delta and (gosh help us) beyond, Covid keeps going and mutating, prolonging the demand for outdoor dining,
- 3) Albany is blessed with a mild climate and walkable neighborhoods near Solano Ave, such that long-term outdoor dining there should be sustainable,
- 4) Even after the pandemic, people will want continued outdoor dining. It's fun, inviting, and sidewalk cafes are where people want to be, weather permitting, in cities from D.C. to Dubrovnik to Paris.
- 5) So long term, I would encourage the construction of a nearby parking garage and/or arranging shuttles to transit, to compensate for diminished street parking around Solano. I know a parking garage might not sound pretty to some, but it would help people outside the walkable/bikeable zone get to Albany's movie theater, restaurants and shops. I'm in this for the long haul.

Thanks,

Lisa

Sent from my iPad

From: [R.K](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Outdoor dining on Solano Ave.
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 4:47:55 PM

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Hello,

I want to express my support for continuing to permit outdoor dining along Solano Avenue, as the topic is scheduled for discussion at an upcoming meeting. It adds a lot to the energy on the Avenue, and feels safer to me and my family as the COVID-19 pandemic continues throughout the area and the world. While I know it takes up some parking spaces, I believe it's worth the trade-off to keep more dining options open for all, and to give increased visibility to the restaurants and nearby businesses.

Thank you.

Ruth Konoff
964 Tulare Ave.
Albany, CA

From: [Tay Tah](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Albany out door dining
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 4:58:27 PM

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Hi there

I am supporting outdoor dining on Solano till pandemic is over.

Thanks for allowing local businesses doing this. It helps community a great deal.

Best

Pat Viboonlarp

Sent from my iPhone

From: mattison.ly
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: In-street outdoor dining support
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 8:45:41 PM

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Hi Commissioners,

I'm writing to encourage you to keep the outdoor dining parklets available for a longer term. These parklets have contributed to the incredible vibrancy of our community and have allowed local restaurants to stay in business through this pandemic. It's vital for them to stay in business.

It also slowed vehicular traffic down on Solano and made it more safe to be on that street. My family enjoys dining outside and seeing the many activities passing by as we dine and people watch.

Thank you for your consideration.
Albany resident,
Mattison Ly

From: [Lucinda Young](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2 In-street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 12:27:27 AM

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Dear Commision,

I am a long-time Albany resident and am writing to express my strong support for continuing the in-street outdoor dining and parklets along Solano Ave. Like many, I want to support and to enjoy our town's restaurants, but I do not feel safe dining inside while the virus is still wide-spread. Take-out meals are no substitute for me or my family as they lack the social aspect of dining out and generate a large amount of packaging waste, much of which is neither compostable or recyclable. Solano Ave's in-street outdoor dining has allowed me and my family to enjoy dining out and supporting our local businesses during the pandemic.

I appreciate that outside dining has made Solano Ave more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly with slower traffic. I realize that some parking spots have been taken by the parklets and outdoor dining. However, Solano Ave is very easily accessible by walking, biking or public transit. Fewer parking spaces on Solano Ave will, I think, encourage people to use transportation other than single family cars -- an important action item in our city's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. Approximately 56% of our city's emissions in 2018 were from transportation according to our climate report. All city decisions should be guided by our Climate Action Plan if we are going to attain the goal of zero emissions by 2045.

The many benefits of continuing with outdoor dining far outweigh the disadvantages of the loss of some parking spaces.

Lucinda Young
726 Pomona Ave.
Albany

From: [David Wemmer](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2 In-street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 12:50:15 AM

You don't often get email from david.wemmer12@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Transportation Commission:

A resident of Albany and a home-owner, I would like to urge you to continue with the in-street outdoor dining and parklets on Solano Ave. This has created a lot of business for these restaurants at a very difficult time for businesses. It's also made dining out safer for customers during the pandemic, and has created a festive community atmosphere in that area. Without the outdoor dining, I would be eating at home and unable to support these restaurants.

I hope you will allow the success of outdoor dining on Solano Ave to continue permanently.

David Wemmer

726 Pomona Ave, Albany, CA 94706

From: [Sylvia Paull](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: "Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining"
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 7:23:40 AM

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Commissioners,

As a longtime resident of Albany -- who owns a condo on Solano Avenue -- I fully support the permanent installation of the current and any future parklets for dining on Solano Avenue. They benefit our neighborhood in immeasurable ways and create a livelihood for the restaurant owners and their employees on our street. There's plenty of parking off Solano, and because Albany is a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly urban environment, allowing the presence of dining parklets encourages walking and cycling even more.

Sylvia Paull
Albany Strollers & Rollers
Founder of valet bicycle parking for the Solano Avenue Stroll

Sylvia Paull
www.sylviapaul.com
510.388.8932

From: [Ben Noble](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: In-Street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 9:13:28 AM

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Dear Transportation Commission,

I am writing in support of continuing in-street dining on Solano in some form. Many cities in California and throughout the nation are doing the same in recognition that in-street dining areas promote vibrant public spaces, community cohesion, and economic vitality in neighborhood-serving commercial areas.

If Albany does continue in-street dining on Solano, it will be important to establish clear rules for the allowed location and number of dining areas, the City approval process, design standards, and enforcement procedures. Some cities are preparing prototype designs for in-street dining decks that will allow for by-right approval of in-street dining consistent with these pre-approved designs. This approach helps to ensure quality design and reduces permitting costs for businesses. Albany may wish to consider a similar approach.

Sincerely,

Ben Noble
733 Carmel Avenue

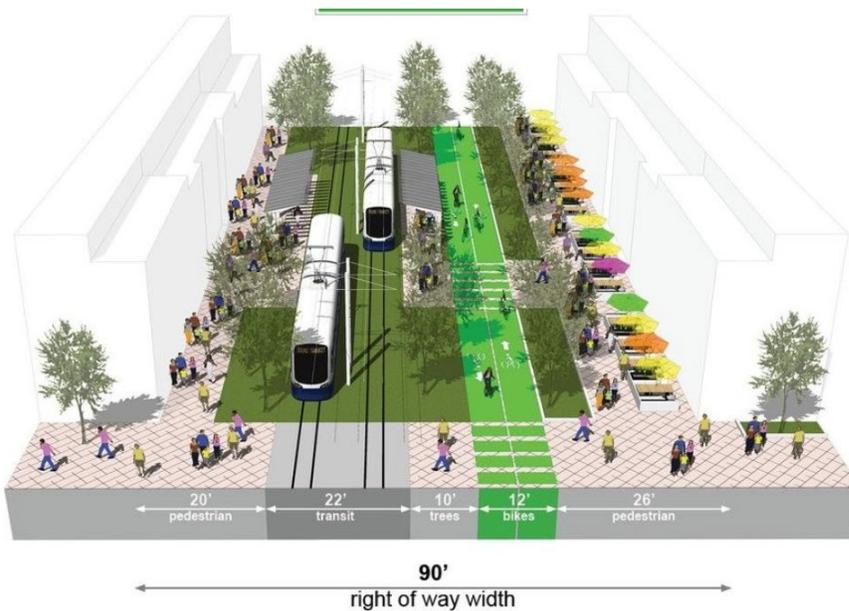
From: [Dan Johnson](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public comment on TC 9/23/21, Agenda 5-2, "In-Street Outdoor Dining"
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 10:32:01 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image \(1\).png](#)
[image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

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Transportation Commission,
Thank you for reviewing and considering public comment as input to your Agenda item 5-2, "In-Street Outdoor Dining" on 9/23/21.

As a citizen and restaurant patron, here are Key Things I'm asking for:

- It's well established that streets are more vibrant and economically successful without car traffic, and there are >20,000 people within easy walking distance of Solano.
- Outdoor dining is politically popular and provides a "vehicle" or "free political pass" to remove more car traffic from Solano Avenue.
- Direct staff to plan now for a San Pablo & Solano Ave that look like this screenshot below. Ironically this is how both streets were originally designed (the interlude of private car storage was an historical anomaly)
- Direct staff to create a policy opening to streamline parklets ANYWHERE in Albany in lieu of car storage in the public right of way
- Public right-of-way should be used as public space, not for private car storage





Albany Councilmember Peter Maass: My vision of a future Solano Avenue is one that has minimal to no private car traffic.

https://acgreens.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/peter_maass.pdf

It's primarily a walking and biking promenade with buses (and eventually railed transit). Businesses have been rebuilt to allow two or three stories of housing above them. Street layouts in Amsterdam and Copenhagen, as well as La Rambla in Barcelona, provide much of my inspiration for Solano Ave.

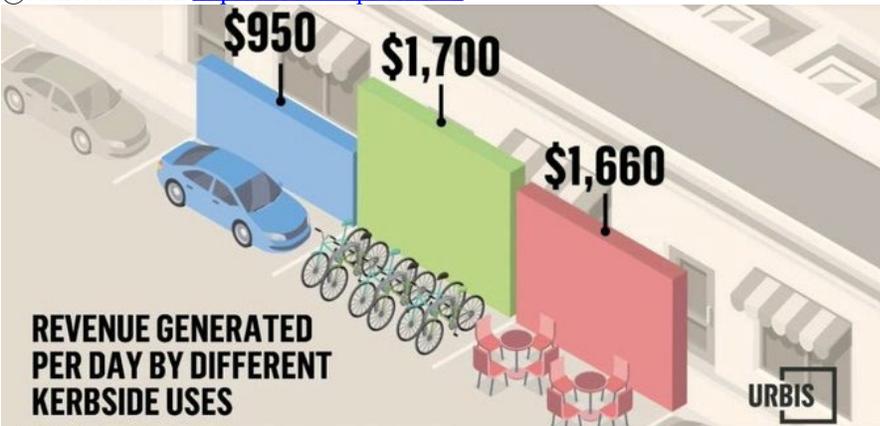
Boston Gave Up Hundreds of Parking Spaces to Outdoor Seating. Good Riddance.

<https://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/2021/06/24/parking-space-outdoor-restaurant-patios/>

That before all this, these lovely spots could be taken up by just a car, in a prime location outside a bustling restaurant, for hours at a time, and for pocket change from the owner, now feels absurd. It *is* absurd.

Lior Steinberg on Twitter: "One of the greatest achievements of the car industry is convincing business owners that parking spaces lead to more revenue. By @urbisaustralia HT

@considerthefish <https://t.co/W0qG4KtZ52>



Source: Urbis, 2021

Based on the following sources:

- Dining Patinet occupancy, expenditure and duration of stay based on: Urbis, 2021, Extended Outdoor Dining Program Evaluation, for Cities of Melbourne, Yarra and Stonnington
 - Bike parking occupancy, expenditure and duration of stay based on: Alison Lee & Alan March (2010) Recognising the economic role of bikes: sharing parking in Lygon Street, Carlton, Australian Planner, 47:2, 85-92. DOI: 10.1080/07292681003797785 (factored into 2021 Australian Dollars)
- Assumptions and Notes
- Occurrence: bike parking 8 spaces, car parking 1.7 spaces per car, dining patinet 10 seats.

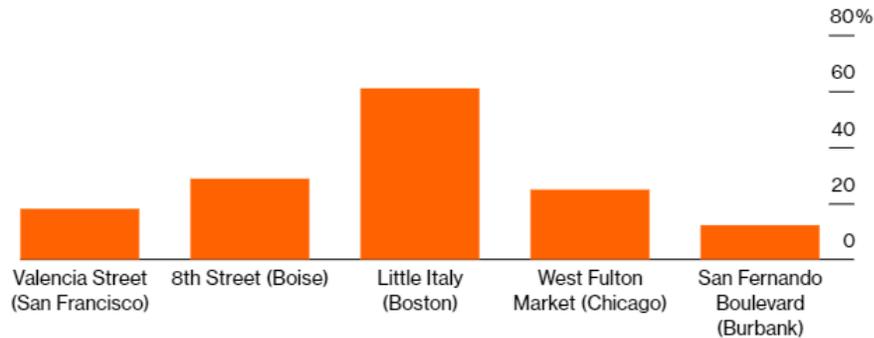
Where Covid's Car-Free Streets Boosted Business

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-11/the-business-case-for-car-free-streets>

Yelp data shows greater consumer interest at restaurants on pedestrian-friendly "slow streets" that limited vehicle traffic during the pandemic.

Fewer Cars, More Business?

Car-free zones saw boost in share of consumer activity compared to the rest of the city during Covid-19



Data: Yelp

Note: All of these programs spanned different time periods and street sections. Chart reflects the change in the share of activity from start of the pandemic to each program's respective implementation period.

Urban Design: Pedestrian-Only Shopping Streets Make Communities More Livable

<https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/ex/sustainablecitiescollective/pedestrian-only-shopping-streets-make-communities-more-livable/130276/>

Pedestrian-oriented shopping streets can be key to making communities more livable, particularly when they are well designed, managed and strategically connected to networks of public transit, pedestrian paths and bike routes.

Why Walkable Streets are More Economically Productive

<https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2018/1/16/why-walkable-streets-are-more-economically-productive>

Again and again, when we look at streets oriented toward people — that is, streets where walking is safe and enjoyable, that people are drawn to visit on foot, and where fast and extensive car traffic is not the #1 priority — we find that they are more economically productive than any other style of development. This is particularly true when we compare people-oriented places to car-oriented places

Are car-free streets good for business?

<https://www.talk-business.co.uk/2019/12/02/are-car-free-streets-good-or-bad-for-business/>

If you run a small business, you likely don't need to be told about the importance of foot traffic. While a passing motorist can be persuaded to patronise a local business that catches their eye, they need to undergo the process of doubling back, and finding somewhere to park which can prove problematic. This is where car-free streets can be beneficial for businesses. When motorists simply park their vehicles outside businesses that catch their eye, it can be a source of irritation to pedestrians. This 2015 study in Toronto revealed that over 50% of consumers approach businesses on foot while 22% rely on public transport and a further 9% cycle. Thus, in downtown Toronto, car-free zones were found to have a positive effect on business.

Why Car-Free Streets Will Soon Be the Norm

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-12-10/why-car-free-streets-will-soon-be-the-norm>

At first, area shopkeepers were concerned that customers wouldn't be able to reach their shops without the ability to drive up to their storefronts. But as evidence continues to show, retail actually improves in pedestrian zones. Rotterdam and its local businesses ended up seeing great success after this policy change, and this showed early on the efficacy of closing streets to traffic and opening them to people. By closing 14th Street and making it a dedicated busway, what was once one of New York's most congested streets is now a spot that is friendlier for pedestrians and bicyclists.... While some motorists have complained about what they perceive as a disruption, data shows that the streets to which traffic has been diverted are not more congested. And people feel like their needs are being centered, with former parking spaces turning into urban green spaces.

Closing Central Madrid To Cars Resulted In 9.5% Boost To Retail Spending, Finds Bank Analysis

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/carltonreid/2019/03/08/closing-central-madrid-to-cars-resulted-in-9-5-boost-to-retail-spending-finds-bank-analysis/?sh=7897ec3b55a7>

Twenty million anonymized transactions were analyzed by the bank and Madrid city council, and it was discovered that the decision to limit road access to the city center by motorists led to a 9.5% increase in retail takings on Madrid's main shopping street, the Gran Vía.

Cities Countywide Explore Permanent Outdoor Dining Spaces

<https://goodtimes.sc/santa-cruz-news/cities-countywide-explore-permanent-outdoor-dining-spaces/>

“We live in such a beautiful place, so it’s been exciting to explore more outdoor dining,” Unitt says. “Right now we’re looking into having more permanent parklets similar to what Hula’s and Lúpulo did prior to the street closure.” “We want it to be a space for people to come downtown and change the environment that we currently have,” he says.

Belmont council supports permanent outdoor dining options

https://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/belmont-council-supports-permanent-outdoor-dining-options/article_2d33e87c-f1a1-11eb-8218-cb862090bcba.html

“I can’t emphasize enough the importance of outdoor dining and that we continue it. I think it makes our city lively, and I look forward to what staff brings back by way of details so we can evaluate them and make sure that this continues after the pandemic,” Hurt said. Councilmember Warren Lieberman liked the approach of making safety and accessibility paramount and felt adding permanent outdoor dining could add a positive dimension to Belmont.

LA City Council votes to make outdoor dining program permanent

<https://www.dailynews.com/2021/05/12/la-city-council-votes-to-make-outdoor-dining-program-permanent/>

The city attorney was also requested to report on the feasibility of revising the Department of Transportation’s People St. Program to let restaurants have the exclusive use of the public right-of-way, and the Department of Building and Safety, City Planning and the Los Angeles Fire Department were instructed to draft recommendations on developing a regulatory framework for a permanent al fresco program. Mayor Eric Garcetti’s budget proposal for the 2021-22 fiscal year—which is currently being reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee—includes \$2 million in grants for low-income neighborhood restaurants to create permanent areas for outdoor dining as part of the program.

San Diego would make outdoor dining permanent

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/politics/story/2021-07-26/san-diego-would-make-outdoor-dining-permanent-for-restaurants-willing-to-pay-fees>

The size of the fee paid by each restaurant would be based on the amount of public “right-of-way” land they take over. The fee would be lower if the right-of-way land would be open to the public during hours the restaurant is closed. Some revenue from the new fee would be spent on sidewalk widening, street trees and other upgrades to make streets more appealing to walkers and cyclists. Money from the fee also would help boost outdoor dining in low-income areas... **The city’s climate action plan calls for more people to get around on foot and by bicycle, and less people to get around by car.** The proposal could help the city achieve the goals of the plan, which is legally binding.

Why cities are embracing the call for car-free streets

<https://citymonitor.ai/transport/streets/ban-cars-why-cities-are-embracing-the-call-for-car-free-streets>

Walkable streets tend to benefit small businesses, and the principles of induced demand appear to work in reverse: traffic doesn’t get worse, because people find alternative ways to navigate an area that’s unwelcoming to cars. When people suddenly didn’t need to drive – but did need more safe space for outdoor activity – the vast amounts of road space started to take on new meaning. Numerous cities moved quickly to add bike lanes, repurpose parking spots for outdoor dining and slow down street activity to make roadways safer for pedestrians.

The Economic Case for Car-Free Development

https://www.peoplepoweredmovement.org/site/images/uploads/The_Economic_Case_for_Carfree_Development.pdf

Qualitative Benefits:

- Less time spent driving and chauffeuring
- Independent mobility for children
- Independent mobility for older adults
- Quiet, peaceful environment
- Safe places for kids to play
- Attractive parks and plazas
- Aesthetic outdoor dining
- Spontaneous social interaction

Thank you for considering this input.

Kind regards,
Dan J

Dan Johnson
510-325-5672 mobile

From: [Simona Nass](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: please continue in-street outdoor dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 10:43:41 AM

[You don't often get email from simona@panix.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Please continue to support outdoor dining parklets in Albany. Given the on-going COVID situation, these are an important way for individuals who do not feel safe yet with indoor dining (whether due to their own situation or because they live with someone with conditions that place them at higher risk) to be able to meet with friends in an open-air setting. Thank you.

From: francesco@winklerreg.com
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Outdoor Dining in Albany
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 11:58:05 AM

You don't often get email from francesco@winklerreg.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Dear Commissioners,

I personally love outdoor dining. In particular, I love seeing so many friends that I can see, chat with, or say Hello to as they walk by while I eat. I am a senior and take Covid-19 precautions very, very seriously. Often these chance meetings lead to extended conversations and shared meals.

This pandemic will be limiting social interaction for at least the next year. Even your meeting (like all City Meetings) are virtual/zoom. I cherish the added social interaction outdoor dining encourages.

I would think the social dynamic achieved by outdoor dining would bring added value to the neighboring businesses that could outweigh the loss of parking spaces.

I suggest that the restaurants that use the parking spaces reach out to their neighboring businesses and offer ways to promote their neighbor's shops and services with flyers coupons and special promotions. Each parklet could post a FEATURED VALUED

SOLANO AVE BUSINESS box that advertises a neighboring business. A standard real estate type flyer box could distribute a flyer of the week or of the month. This kind of co-promotion might be assisted by the local business organizations.

As an Independent Contractor who has worked out of four different business locations on Solano Ave since 1996, I understand the value of foot traffic and visitor eyeballs on a storefront. Outdoor dining has great added value to all of Solano Avenue. I worked out of one location that had limited foot traffic. It was a big drawback to the location. Let's work at making outdoor dining add even more value to all businesses and residents.

One single action could free up many spaces from Monday to Friday. The 800 and 900 blocks of streets perpendicular to Solano Ave. have expensive parking ticketing on street sweeping days. This removes hundreds of spaces for over half the day on street sweep days from 10-2 pm so that the street sweeper can spend minutes on that block. This also affects parking before 10 am as residents move their cars before then and commuter/workers park elsewhere too using other spaces. I suggest that you request the City Manager to instruct the contractors to sweep all the 800-900 blocks before 11 AM and then have PublicWorks resign those blocks to the new hours permitting parking after 11 AM. These spaces include the 90-minute zones immediately adjacent to Solano Ave. that directly serve Solano Ave.

short-term visitors.

Some shop visitors may be put off by the loss of parking on Solano Ave but it must be noted that we are the only commercial zone in the surrounding cities that has free 90-minute parking. If we do not charge them, they will still come since the alternative is feeding those metal demon parking meters elsewhere.

Thank you for considering my suggestions.

Francesco Papalia.

A resident of the 800 Block of Key Route Blvd since 1987.

Justin Fried

From: Nick Pilch <nicky@mindspring.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2021 1:02 PM
To: TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Subject: Re: Item 5-2, In-Street Outdoor Dining on the Commission's 23 sept 2021 meeting

You don't often get email from nicky@mindspring.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Dear Transportation Commissioners,

Re: Item 5-2, In-Street Outdoor Dining on the Commission's 23 sept 2021 meeting:

Albany Strollers & Rollers believes that outdoor dining installations should continue at least for some time until transmission rates are low, and there is confidence that transmission rates will stay low. The pandemic continues due in part to Covid variants and those who refuse to get vaccinated. Covid transmission is through the air and it's proven that outdoors is much safer than indoors for human interaction. Continuing outdoor dining will help businesses severely impacted by the pandemic while also keeping Albany healthy.

The Business Recovery Survey done by City Staff in May-June of this year showed that a minority of businesses are concerned with the loss of parking and that the majority of businesses support it. 36.9% of respondents are not concerned about reduction of car parking, 17.9% are neutral, not applicable 19%, 14.2% concerned, 11.9% very concerned. So only 26.1% have any concern about parking issues, while an overwhelming 73.8% do not.

The latest parking survey done showed that Albany has sufficient parking. There are many car parking spaces available at all hours of the day on Solano itself, on the 800 and 900 blocks of side streets (including Masonic and Key Route) and on those blocks of San Pablo Avenue. When customers stroll along Solano on the way to their intended destination, they are certain to notice other businesses that they will return to at another time. The consultants doing this survey remarked about the high share of pedestrians and bicyclists visiting the businesses here - much higher than a usual city. This is also borne out by the number of bike racks full of bicycles of all sizes and types dotting Solano Avenue.



Since 2012, AS&R has partnered with local businesses to provide bike racks throughout Albany, which Public Works has installed. Racks on or within a half block of Solano, now accommodate more than 200 bicycles for business staff, customers, clients and patients. We are managing a new order right now. The fact that

businesses are willing to invest money to provide bicycle parking shows that they are aware that bicycles mean business.



If the Commission believes that more ADA car parking spaces are needed on or near Solano, AS&R would support that effort so people who are unable to walk a few blocks are accommodated.

Outdoor seating has changed the dynamic of strolling or rolling along Solano Avenue - for the better. When you're on the Avenue, you can't help but notice the vibrant scene, smell the food, see the activity. When you're at one of the parklets yourself, you run into friends and neighbors - they may join you for a bite or a drink, or they may come back another time. As many other members of the public have pointed out, outdoor seating has transformed Solano Avenue into a vibrant, people-oriented area, day and night.



Whatever the future holds, let's keep it that way!

Albany Strollers & Rollers

--

Nick Pilch

nicky@mindspring.com

From: [DON SIMPSON](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 1:56:03 PM

[You don't often get email from donsimpson@aol.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

When I moved to Albany in 1970, one of the first things I noticed (along with the comfortable feel of the community) was the spectrum of available food, particularly along Solano Avenue. Over the decades I have seen many of my favorite shops and cafes fail, due to two street reconstructions, rent increases, and other causes, most recently the pandemic. But Solano has retained its nature as a great place to eat and shop, or just to walk its length and enjoy the look of it, as I have done so many times.

The recent appearance of expanded outdoor dining has, in my opinion, made being on Solano even more enjoyable, as well as saving many businesses. I would hate for this addition to the feel of the community to be lost.

- Don Simpson

Sent via [ÆtherPost](#)

From: [buddycalifornia](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#); vonnie@oceanviewbrews.com; [Amy Smolens](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 2:58:44 PM

You don't often get email from buddycalifornia@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

As a home owner in Albany my family is a big proponent of outdoor dining along Solano Ave - it slows traffic, invites more people outside, helps local businesses. I am currently in N Carolina on business and they are in some serious need of outdoor dining, it's not the same without it.

We own a car but have no complaints with the altered parking

Regards

Buddy Williams

From: [Sofia Pavlova](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining"
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 3:19:20 PM

[You don't often get email from sofiarighttoknow@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

I support the continued outdoor dining and parklets program. My family would not dine inside at this point and we do not want to take food to go because of the waste to-go food creates, especially plastic waste. Please do the right thing for business and environment.

Best regards,

Sofia Pavlova

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bryan Marten](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: item 5-2 In-Street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 4:22:34 PM

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

I'm writing to express my support for the city to keep in-street outdoor dining long after the pandemic. I think it adds a lot to the ambience of Solano Avenue and would allow restaurant owners to have the certainty they need to invest in upgrades out there.

Bryan Marten
Albany resident

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Bill Pezick](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: I am opposed to making parking-area dining permanent
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 4:44:37 PM

You don't often get email from bill@billpezick.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Dear Transportation Commission,

As an Albany merchant myself, and a customer of many merchants on Solano Avenue merchants, I strongly oppose your allowing restaurants to take up scarce parking spaces on a permanent basis.

I frequently pick up or deliver large items to Solano Avenue. I am already frustrated by the scarcity of parking spaces. Why cannot restaurants provide adequate seating inside their businesses?

Sincerely,

Bill Pezick
Merchant and Customer

Bill Pezick, CFP®, EA
CA Insurance License 0739108
Enrolled to Practice before the IRS
(510)526-6121
400 Evelyn Ave., Suite 229, Albany, CA 94706

Tax services provided by Bill Pezick, CFP®, EA

From: [Stephanie Regni](#)
To: [TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION](#)
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining
Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021 4:55:06 PM

You don't often get email from stephanie@fillgood.co. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

To the Albany Transportation Commission,

I am an Albany resident and a Solano avenue business owner.
I'm writing to you today to ask you to keep outdoor dining and parklets on Solano avenue.

First of all, thanks to this program, our local restaurants were able to survive throughout the pandemic. COVID 19 is not over, indoor dining is not safe enough for people. For example, my husband is at risk, my kids are under 12 yo and cannot be vaccinated, our only safe option is outdoor dining. And many other people are in the same situation.

I hear that there are concerns about parking spaces. My store is located at 1579A Solano avenue, on a busy block. So far, none of our customers have complained about parking spaces. Everyone I talk to really appreciates the parklets and feels safe to have dinner outside instead of getting take-out.

In addition, I'm very concerned that if you stop the outdoor dining program, we can expect restaurant take-outs to increase since many people are not comfortable dining inside. That will result in more food take-out packaging waste, which has already sky-rocketed during the pandemic. It increases the litter in our streets, parks, and waterways and puts a strain on our waste management programs, with resulting costs to our communities. Much of the food take-out packaging currently being used is non-recyclable plastic so it must go to the landfill.

Finally, outdoor dining makes Solano avenue and Albany so much more enjoyable and lively. 18 months of pandemic have taken a toll on everyone's mental health; being able to enjoy outdoor spaces is helping everyone to stay sane and have a resemblance of normalcy.

Please maintain outdoor dining!
Thank you very much for reading my comments.
Stéphanie Regni
Albany resident and Solano avenue business owner

Justin Fried

From: Alex Merchant <alexmerchant@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2021 5:43 PM
To: TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Subject: Public Comment on 5-2. In-Street Outdoor Dining

You don't often get email from alexmerchant@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Warning: This email originated from outside the City of Albany. Think before you click!

Dear Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express my strong support for continuing (and expanding!) the in-street outdoor dining program. The parklets and extra space for dining have been a wonderful addition to Solano Avenue. They make the area more welcoming for pedestrians, bolster our small businesses, and encourage drivers to proceed more slowly and with more caution down Solano.

Albany should be doing everything in its power to make Solano (and really, all of Albany) a walker's paradise. This program is a step in the right direction.

I should note that as much as I want Albany to be a pedestrian's paradise, I also drive. I haven't noticed any problems driving due to the parklets and I haven't had any problem parking. Perhaps others will complain about the loss of parking, but I most certainly haven't experienced any problems.

Please keep doing everything you can to make Albany better.

Alex Merchant
Curtis St, Albany

From:
Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2021 1:23 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Nov. 1 meeting - Agenda item 10-2. Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

Dear Albany City Council,

I write as a former Albany resident who recently visited Albany again for the first time since the pandemic started.

I was blown away by the amazing changes to Solano Ave. brought about primarily by the expansion of parklets offering safe, pleasant outdoor dining. Solano was bustling with more activity than I ever remember seeing when I lived there and it was great to feel safe meeting and dining outside with dear friends. It was so much fun seeing the individual and creative approaches that many restaurants have already taken with their outdoor spaces and I can't wait to see how the settings have evolved when I visit next time. Solano also felt much safer as someone walking, since there were fewer drivers making illegal turns into parking spots and more people walking in general, raising driver awareness to look for people.

Overall, I couldn't be more supportive of these changes and I wish my own current city (St. Paul, MN) would embrace more of the same ideas!

Please support making the in-street, outdoor dining changes permanent!

Zack Mensinger

From:
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2021 9:25 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy (Nov 1st City Council meeting)

Dear Albany Transportation Commission,

My name is Michael Gill. I'm a resident of North Berkeley, but frequent many Albany businesses, as they are actually much closer to me than downtown Berkeley. I often walk or bike to Solano.

I understand that an item will be on the agenda of the November 1st Council meeting to discuss the continuation of parklet permitting currently used by restaurants for outdoor dining as they have been during the pandemic. In my view, these parklets that offer outdoor dining opportunities have obviously saved many businesses from closing. While there may be some parking taken on Solano, the life of these businesses should take priority over a few parking spaces. In addition to allowing businesses to survive, when done to code, they safely slow traffic, they allow residents to socialize safely with outdoor dining, and they offer the opportunity to spend money in your town (and generate taxes). Sounds like everyone wins to me! If people cannot walk or bike to Solano, parking is available literally a short walk in any direction from Solano. It's never that far away.

Vibrant Solano Avenue is the heart and soul of your town. More restaurants will likely close if the town doesn't continue to allow parklets. It's clear that they are successfully used by many other cities to adapt to the pandemic. Why not in Albany? Without these businesses, the town will truly suffer. Please vote to continue parklets on Solano.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Michael Gill
1206 Neilson Street
Berkeley

From:
Sent: Saturday, October 30, 2021 8:42 AM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

To City Council and Staff:

I am writing in support in continuing to allow outdoor dining and parklets on Solano Ave - there are so many reasons to do so!

- For the foreseeable future, many people do not feel comfortable dining indoors. Indoor vaccination mandates mean that those that are not vaccinated cannot dine indoors. To support our local eating establishments, outdoor dining is a necessity.
- Outdoor dining provides a more sensory connection to the myriad styles of restaurants that are otherwise closed off from the sidewalk - piles of mussels, taco spreads, scents of pumpkin curry, crepes, goulash, on and on...
- Moreover, outdoor dining benefits the entire Avenue, providing a festive atmosphere, which is a benefit to the other businesses on the Avenue.
- Sociability is increased as chance encounters with friends and neighbors increases.
- In terms of reduced car parking spaces - this may require some creative thinking. Of course, walking and biking is automatically encouraged with less parking, but it is still important to draw folks from further afield. Perhaps a shuttle to a remote parking area can be arranged?

Perhaps the pandemic has done us a favor in encouraging our restaurants (and city council) to “think outside the box”. At the very least, we will be well positioned for the next pandemic, but, more importantly, we will have increased the vibrancy of our beloved Solano Avenue.

Side note: The permanent parklets that have been built are beautiful. If you felt it was important to replace some of the temporary arrangements with more aesthetically pleasing and durable (and rain-protected!) structures, I would whole-hearted support that.

Thank you for your consideration

Anni Tilt, AIA
Arkin Tilt Architects
Ecological Planning & Design
1101 8th Street, #180
Berkeley, CA 94710
510.528.9830
510.418.9788 mobile
www.arkintilt.com

From:
Sent: Saturday, October 30, 2021 10:01 AM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Agenda item - Outdoor Dining

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to endorse the plan to continue outdoor dining in our city. There were so many challenges during this pandemic, but one of the positive bright spots was turning Albany “inside out.”

In 2019, I travelled to France, and I envied the way of life there. So much was happening on the streets, with cafes overflowing on the sidewalk. My husband and I kept talking about how we wished the U.S. had more of this approach.

And then out of necessity, we had it here. While this was in response to supporting our restaurants and providing our community with safe ways to gather, there was the added benefit of injecting vitality in our community. My nightly walks in Albany now include a stroll down Solano, just because I love seeing our community so alive. I’m running into neighbors more, I’m experiencing my community in a deeper way. The restaurants that have beautified their parklets with twinkle lights have only added to the charm.

I’m not sure what reasons there might be not to continue this successful experiment. Solano Avenue is more walkable and inviting. When I have decided to drive, I have not found any loss of parking to be an issue. And if anything, I have found that I am more incentivized to walk to Solano, than drive. That’s just a win in this climate-impacted world.

I am grateful to the restaurants who ventured outside this past year and created a safer way to dine. Let’s reward them with permanent parklets!

Lynn Eve Komaromi
Homeowner & Resident
545 Pierce Street

Sent from my iPad

From:
Sent: Saturday, October 30, 2021 5:34 PM
To: citycouncil
Cc: Amy Smolens
Subject: permanent outdoor parlet

Hi ! my name cathy tra 's owner kim's café & sandwiches located on solano
Live in Albany for 33 years and had business in Albany more than 10 years
I don't see city Albany had anything exciting beside solano troll one a year
usually I told people where I live most people doesn't where is Albany?
Until pandemic with all the outdoor dinning, also help us a lot for small business owner like me to survive
So I hope we can get permanent outdoor parlets.

Sincerely,

Cathy tra
Kim's café & sandwiches

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From:
Sent: Sunday, October 31, 2021 3:18 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Nov. 1 Agenda Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines

Dear Council Members,

As a longtime Albany resident, I think that in-street dining along Solano Avenue has been a wonderful addition to our city. I urge the Council to support continuing it permanently after pandemic health restrictions have been lifted.

Beyond the added safety of in-street dining during the pandemic, here's what I like about in-street dining that makes me think it should be a permanent feature:

- It makes Solano Avenue feel like a happy, friendly place to be.
- It helps transform Solano Avenue from merely a transportation conduit into a gathering space. I believe that Albany needs more gathering spaces that bring our community together and enhance our city's sense of identity.
- In-street dining helps make Solano Avenue a more pedestrian-friendly destination. It's more fun to walk along a street where people are enjoying eating with their friends. The removal of some parking spaces has actually encouraged me to walk rather than drive to Solano Avenue, which is better for my health.
- Many of the small businesses that give Solano Avenue its character may benefit from more pedestrian activity along the street. Because I have been walking more along Solano than I did before the pandemic, I have discovered shops that I never noticed while driving down the street. I plan to revisit several of them for my holiday shopping.

In future policy, I would like to see:

- Allowing outdoor heaters for in-street dining spaces.
- Setting a lower speed limit on Solano Avenue.
- Continuing to allow restaurant owners to come up with unique designs for in-street dining spaces that add to the street's charm. I hope that city regulations will be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure public safety.
- Keeping the costs of providing in-street dining spaces reasonable for restaurant owners. While they will benefit from adding outdoor space to their business, the city will benefit from the investment restaurant owners are making in enhancing Solano as a public gathering space.

Thank you for your attention to my thoughts.

Ellen Hershey

ejhershey@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

From:
Sent: Sunday, October 31, 2021 8:06 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Keep parklet

To who it may concern:

Hello this is Joel from Duo Grill House and just want to let you know that having the parklet as an option for our customers during the pandemic has help us a lot. At the same time I want to say thank you and that I will really appreciate if we continued having it available for a long time.

Thank you

Joel

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 8:42 AM
To: citycouncil
Cc: vonnie@oceanviewbrews.com; Amy Smolens
Subject: Continued outdoor dining

I am writing to show my support for continued outside dining on Solano Avenue. The pandemic may be on the way out (or it may not be) and restrictions are being lifted (for who knows how long) but outside dining should remain.

When Covid raged and we could not support our local restaurants, we got take out. Most, if not all of us, can read, and we can cook, but we wanted to support local restaurants because we are fond of the restaurant owners, because we love the Albany international community, because the restaurant taxes support Albany, because we don't like to cook every night (believe me, I've been cooking dinner for over 53 years and sometimes I need a break) to name a few reasons.

Little did we anticipate how **Albany Inside Out** would bring us hope, bring us even closer to our neighbors and friends, vitalize and bring our community even closer together. Strolling down Solano, we can see our friends, stop and chat, and smell and taste the delicious international cuisines. Why it's almost like being in Paris.

I was about to say it's like being in Paris except we're not speaking French, but if you want to speak French, you can go to Rendez-vous, Cafe Raj, or Suzette. Thai, Nepali, Farsi, Hindi, Arabic, Korean, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tibetan, Newari, or Yemeni? You can find it all, and now it's outside, too.

Let's keep it that way!

Margo Weckslar
Kains Avenue

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 10:43 AM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outdoor dining in Albany

Dear City Council members,

I've been a long term resident of Albany and if there has been one good thing about the pandemic is the outcome of the outdoor dining on Solano. It has created such a sense of community and vibrancy never seen on Solano . One of my biggest joys now with friends is meeting at an outdoor restaurant dining area . Solano has become a destination and the change of culture with outdoor dining has made it possible. Please consider keeping outdoor dining as it's wonderful for so many families. Thank you .

Best Regards, Amy St George

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 11:22 AM
To:
Subject: Fwd: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy (Nov 1st City Council meeting)

From:
Sent: Friday, October 29, 2021 9:37 PM
To: TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy (Nov 1st City Council meeting)

>

> Dear Albany Transportation Commission,

>

> I understand that an item will be on the agenda of a Nov 1st meeting to discuss the continuation of parklet permitting currently used by restaurants for outdoor dining as they have been during the pandemic. In my view, these parklets that offer outdoor dining opportunities have obviously saved many businesses from closing. While there may be some parking taken on Solano, the life of these businesses should take priority over a few parking spaces. In addition to allowing businesses to survive, when done to code, they safely slow traffic, they allow residents to socialize safely with outdoor dining, and they offer the opportunity to spend money (and generate taxes). Please vote to continue parklets on Solano. Thank you,

> Sincerely,

> Caryn Augst 1206 Neilson St, Berkeley CA 94707

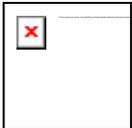
From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 11:34 AM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Restaurant Parklet Feedback from Albany Business Owners

Our opinion about the added outside dining spaces that are taking up parking is that each place should have to analyze the impact of that location's parklet and the neighboring business. If they are only gaining more seats it's really not fair. No other business gets to just take over outside to expand their business capacity for free. Especially not to take parking from other businesses who depend on it for their clients.

What would my neighbors think if I blocked all the parking out front to expand my capacity? Can I just go set up neurofeedback chairs and block those slots? We are at **half** capacity to be safe for covid. Do I get free outdoor space too? We experience the same pandemic as these restaurants yet they are getting privileges that not only increase their business capacity but also take away from the rest of us being able to offer parking for our clients. And we don't have to ability to make income from to go and curbside offerings like the restaurants can.

It doesn't make sense to treat these businesses differently from the rest of us who are paying our rents and taxes to operate on this street and all depend on the parking spaces for our clients.

Thank you,
Carleigh and Angela



Carleigh Rochon
Co-Owner & Brain Trainer, Bay Area Brain Spa

510-338-4645 | <https://bayareabrainspa.com>
hello@bayareabrainspa.com
1496 Solano Ave. Albany, CA 94706



From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 11:57 AM
To:
Cc: citycouncil@albanyca.org;
Subject: Re: TONIGHT: Outdoor Dining, A/City Council Agenda

I COMPLETELY agree with you. They are so hell bent on having those things that if / when someone is injured, the repose is going to be:

hmmmm; let's talk about it in a year and see what we come up with.

Allen Cain

From:
Sent: Monday, November 01, 2021 11:38 AM
To: info@solanoavenue.org
Subject: Re: TONIGHT: Outdoor Dining, A/City Council Agenda

I honestly don't think anyone cares. I predict the parklets will become permanent as they are, with no consideration for displaced parking or any affect on non-dining businesses. I actually fully support outdoor dining but think there should be limits on how many parking spots in each block are displaced. I think the majority and the City Council don't believe it's an issue and don't care about any other viewpoint. It's too bad...

Francesca

. . .

Opalene Skincare
opaleneskincare.com
opalene.skincare@gmail.com
510.868.4245
1209 Solano Ave
Albany, CA 94706

On Nov 1, 2021, at 11:33 AM, Solano Avenue Association <info@solanoavenue.org> wrote:

TONIGHT (Monday 11/1) the Albany City Council is reviewing the subject...

There is a proposal to allow the restaurant parklets that have been placed in parking spaces to continue. This process kicked-off with a report at a 9/23 Albany Transportation [Commission meeting](#).

If you have feelings on this topic, now is the time to make yourself heard.

citycouncil@albanyca.org

[You can view the agenda and materials here.](#)

Thank you.



Solano Avenue Association and Stroll
1569 Solano Avenue #101 Berkeley CA 94707

You are part of the SAA on-Solano email group

[Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 12:26 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

Attn: Albany City Council

My husband and I are offering 100 percent support for keeping outdoor dining and parklets long term on Solano Ave. By frequenting the outdoor restaurants on Solano Avenue, we have had the opportunity to interact with our neighbors and friends in a safe and congenial environment, saving many of us from the stress brought on by extended isolation.

More importantly, the restaurants have been able to stay in business as a result of outdoor dining options. How many might have closed without those options?

As a result of the parklets and the resulting increased pedestrian traffic, other Solano Ave. businesses have also been able to stay afloat during these difficult times.

Albany has a unique and diverse collection of family-owned and run restaurants and we need to continue to support them. We strongly urge the City Council to approve a long-term plan to support outdoor dining and parklets.

Joan Gallagher
William Hawk

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 12:35 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: ACTION ITEM - 10-2. Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy on City Council agenda

Hello City Council,

We at Morningtide on Cornell Avenue would like to express our strong continued support for outdoor dining. Not only has this increased the vitality of Solano Avenue in all aspects, it has helped our small business thrive by increasing foot traffic and bringing more people out and about in our wonderful community. As parents with our own families, we have enjoyed the option of outdoor dining during the pandemic and would love to continue supporting the small businesses/restaurants that have worked so hard to get through during tough times.

Warmly,
Lisa + Lisa
Morningtide

Morningtide
morningtideshop.com
847 Cornell Avenue, Albany, CA 94706
@morningtide.shop [instagram](#) / [pinterest](#) / [twitter](#)

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 1:10 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outdoor dining in Albany

Hi

I am writing to voice my support for outside dining in Albany. Given the choice, my husband and I dine outside and have for years. The weather in Albany is perfect for outside dining and I am happy we have so many options now.

Outdoor dining brings a vibrancy to the area. People coming to the Albany can see that people are out and about which lends itself to "the place you want to be" feel. It is sometimes hard to tell if restaurants and businesses are open in an area. Seeing patrons outside minimizes that.

I have heard some push back that allocating parking spots to restaurants unfairly impacts other non-dining establishments as there are fewer parking spaces. I disagree. If people have to walk a block or two to the restaurant they will pass the other businesses on Solano, seeing what else Albany has to offer. They may not shop that day, but they are now aware of the other business/retail options available. Instead of focusing on the reduction of parking spots on Solano, why not work to secure other parking options? There are businesses a block or 2 off Solano that are not open in the evening. Why not work with them to provide off Solano parking options? Our city is also very pedestrian and bike friendly. We have great access to public transit. It would be great if the focus would shift away from automobiles and parking to encouraging alternate transportation options and the fact that many people already opt to leave their car at home, if they even have one.

I really hope the council will see the benefits of outdoor dining and opt to continue the program. We all benefit from this.

Thank you for your consideration

Linda Carlton

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 1:16 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

Dear Albany City Council Members and Staff,
The outdoor dining scene on Solano is the best thing that has happened on that street in a very long time (along with the parklets and additional bike parking..). Businesses have been able to stay open and now that some form of normalcy is returning the benefits of the outdoor dining can remain in place and keep the vibrancy of the pedestrian scene going. My family walks and bikes lower Solano on a weekly basis and are delighted with all the outdoor changes that have occurred.
Please keep the outdoor dining program going and if anything, increase the amenities that draw the pedestrians to the local businesses
Thank you

Buddy Williams
Albany homeowner with 2 kids in Albany schools

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 1:41 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

Dear Commissioners and Staff,

Please accept my feedback regarding outdoor dining in Albany, specifically along Solano Ave.

Since the Pandemic, I have not dined indoors at all. I appreciate that most people here are vaccinated and mask wearing is encouraged but for me, it is still too much of a risk. For this reason and many more, I strongly support outdoor dining via parklets, patios, curbside tables, and the like.

Driving down Solano has always been a bit nerve wracking. I ride my bike around Albany and have always avoided Solano as much as possible. But since the creation of outdoor dining spaces, it actually feels a lot better. Traffic is much slower and after 18 months of the Pandemic, I think many drivers have been more respectful driving on Solano than they used to be. I know, isn't that amazing! Personally, I don't mind driving on Solano so much now because traffic has slowed down, there are so many pedestrians and people milling about, I find it enjoyable to go super slow and allow pedestrian traffic and people enjoying themselves having a drink or a bite without fear of someone speeding. There are so many small restaurants and cafes on Solano that would not have survived the Pandemic had it not been for outdoor dining spots. Not to mention other small businesses that need our support; pet grooming, stores for children's supplies, jewelry and shoe shops. I'm sure you want to support small business; that's part of what makes Albany special - not so much corporate business, but small businesses; ice cream carts, people drinking coffee, having a cocktail, and enjoying food that by the way, is often made by immigrants. Surely we want to support people who have worked to achieve the American dream and have their own business. I know I do.

Thanks for taking the time to read my letter and I welcome you to contact me if necessary.

Very truly yours,

Suzi Sholin
Albany resident
I ❤️ Albany

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 1:45 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Re: ACTION ITEM - 10-2. Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy on City Council agenda

Dear city council team,

First of all, thank you, the city officials for supporting in however ways, the businesses in Albany. And we expect to have this support in the future too. Especially, our concern is for outdoor dining. As the owners of Solano Junction which opened(changed hands) during the peak pandemic, the indoor/outdoor dining has been helping us a lot lot. And no doubt, the Solano ave street is thriving and live evening or weekends morning with foot traffic and dining guests. Even though indoor dining is happening, there are majority of people still preferring outdoors for health and safety reasons or just because it's nice outside. Business owners and the guests alike would still prefer outdoor dining for a long term. We have mentioned in previous survey or email, our Bay area weather won't obstruct the outdoor dining for long period of time. Winter is here, the restaurants have already invested in heaters. Rain is here, but not everyday, so when it's dry but colder, we still can continue outdoor dining. Let's Keep the vibrancy of this Solano Ave. Writing this email in requesting the city to make outdoor dining as permanent or atleast long term as some cities have already approved.

Best,
Veena, Dev and Chef Lila

--

Solano Junction
Great Brunch, Delicious Dinner & Fine Adult Beverages
Albany CA

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 2:01 PM
To: citycouncil
Cc:
Subject: Nov. 1 meeting - Agenda item 10-2. Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

To City Council;

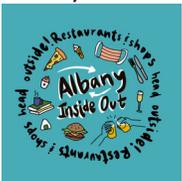
Please make the outdoor dining in Albany a permanent part of our city and utilize discretionary funds to improve safety and accessibility. The "parklets" were initially one of the only lifelines for restaurants, but have become a very positive element of the Solano Avenue streetscape. Restaurants are able to attract new customers in a way that was previously not possible. These customers dine outside and frequently shop at neighboring businesses, thus supporting the entirety of Solano Avenue. Studies have shown that more diverse streetscapes lead to safer driving and increased pedestrian comfort.

Initial installations and upgrades have been funded entirely by business owners and the volunteer fundraising efforts of Albany Inside Out -much appreciation to the Albany Community Foundation for their generous contribution and the many neighbors who donated.

This past June, Berkeley City Council made Parklets a permanent part of their business districts. If Albany does not do the same, customers will head up Solano to Berkeley or travel to Fourth Street, Shattuck Avenue, University Avenue, etc to enjoy outdoor dining. Please do the same or your will be putting our businesses at a disadvantage and Albany will lose tax revenue to our neighboring city.

We urge the City of Albany to make outdoor dining a permanent element of our city, help with funding safety and accessibility improvements and direct staff to facilitate this process.

Vonnie Davidson and Amy Smolens
Albany Inside Out



From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 2:15 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Support for Out-door Dining on Solano

Dear Commission,

We are long-time Albany residents writing to express our strong support for continuing the in-street outdoor dining and parklets along Solano Ave. Like many, we want to support and to enjoy our town's restaurants, but do not feel safe dining inside while the virus is still widespread. Take-out meals are no substitute for us as they lack the social aspect of dining out and generate a large amount of packaging waste, much of which is neither compostable or recyclable. Solano Ave's in-street outdoor dining has allowed us to enjoy dining out and supporting our local businesses during the pandemic.

We appreciate that outside dining has made Solano Ave more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly with slower traffic. We realize that some parking spots have been taken by the parklets and outdoor dining. However, Solano Ave is very easily accessible by walking, biking or public transit. Fewer parking spaces on Solano Ave will, we think, encourage people to use transportation other than single family cars -- an important action item in our city's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. Approximately 56% of our city's emissions in 2018 were from transportation according to our climate report. All city decisions should be guided by our Climate Action Plan if we are going to attain the goal of zero emissions by 2045.

The many benefits of continuing with outdoor dining far outweigh the disadvantages of the loss of some parking spaces.

Thank you for considering our input.

Lucinda Young & David Wemmer
726 Pomona Ave
Albany

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 2:51 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: ACTION ITEM - 10-2. Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy on City Council agenda

Dear City of Albany,

May I introduce myself to you first, My name is Joe and I'm the owner of Bua Luang Thai Cuisine. The business is located at 1166 Solano Ave, Albany, CA 94706.

The reason for this email is we would like to tell you how much outdoor dining is very important to our business and help us to survive through this pandemic situation.

Outdoor dining helps to advertise and pull attention from our patrons, residents and pedestrians. It makes us stand out from where we are located and many customers who would love to enjoy eating outside of the restaurant on a sunny day with all the great vibrant environment and atmosphere. Also, it can attract more people to get to know our city and it means more income and taxes the city will have as well.

Permanent outdoor dining will help slow traffic, improve walkability, vitality of our avenue, and safety for all families and neighbors who live around this area and people who come to visit.

Many businesses had been through financial hardship during this pandemic and we are really positive to say that outdoor dining is helping us to survive through this difficult time and that would be the strong reason why outdoor dining should be permanently.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me by reply to this email or call me at 510-856-8857.

Best regards,

Joe Phoonpirom

--

Bua Luang
1166 Solano Ave. Albany, CA 94706
Ph.510.527.8288
Cell.510.856.8857

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 3:28 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outdoor seating/tonight s meeting

Bonjour,

I wanted to personally thank you all for allowing small businesses, in particular restaurant businesses to allow the outdoor seating. I know the city of Albany had to face some challenges in order for us to operate and increase business revenues but the result is clearly showing.

The outdoor seating for Rendez-Vous Café Bistro has been an absolute success! People are enjoying dining outside and it brings a very good amount of business and exposure. Now that we have reopened inside it is still an amazing addition to the business and many enjoy the outdoor experience of the parklet, for different reasons but mainly safety and open area.

It was absolutely necessary to spend and invest into building it!!

I would love and really would benefit by keeping it for as long as possible in order to bring back the money lost during the pandemic.

On top of that I'm seeing a positive change in eating habits, people simply love the idea of eating outside in a safe setting. I have customers booking reservations and requesting outside dining very often.

Solano has become a fun destination for many. I also see more and more traffic especially in the lower part. Many customers compliment the different structures/ outside dining areas of the restaurants participating. The feedbacks from customers about outside seating are all positive! We should keep it for as long as possible.

Last, safety is a must so the slowing down on Solano needs to be reinforced at all times, maybe more signs?

Thank you again for your support, help, concerns and dedication/involvement towards Albany businesses!!

Laurent/Rendez vous café bistro

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 3:38 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outdoor dining in Albany is a good thing

Hi

I am writing to voice my support for outside dining in Albany. Given the choice, we dine outside and have for years. The weather in Albany is perfect for outside dining and I am happy we have so many options now.

Outdoor dining brings a vibrancy to the area. People coming to Albany can see that people are out and about which lends itself to "the place you want to be" feel. It is sometimes hard to tell if restaurants and businesses are open in an area. Seeing patrons outside minimizes that.

I have heard some push back that allocating parking spots to restaurants unfairly impacts other non-dining establishments as there are fewer parking spaces. I disagree. If people have to walk a block or two to the restaurant they will pass the other businesses on Solano, seeing what else Albany has to offer. They may not shop that day, but they are now aware of the other business/retail options available. Instead of focusing on the reduction of parking spots on Solano, why not work to secure other parking options? There are businesses a block or 2 off Solano that are not open in the evening. Why not work with them to provide off Solano parking options? Our city is also very pedestrian and bike friendly. We have great access to public transit. It would be great if the focus would shift away from automobiles and parking to encouraging alternate transportation options and the fact that many people already opt to leave their car at home, if they even have one.

I really hope the council will see the benefits of outdoor dining and opt to continue the program. We all benefit from this.

Thank you for your consideration

Brad Carlton

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 3:55 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outdoor dining support

Dear Albany City Council,
I'm an Albany home owner and I am in complete support of continuing the outdoor dining. It makes Albany seem very European and raises the standard of living in our community. It's a fantastic addition to an already wonderful city. I have so much fun eating outdoors and seeing all my friends walk by. It's such a fun atmosphere. I hope you will allow the restaurants to continue the outdoor dining for safety and overall ambience.

--

Musically,
Jingle Jeff

- - - - -
Jeffrey L. Luna-Sparks, M.M.Ed./Kodaly & Orff Level II
Jingle Jamboree Music Studio
1016 Talbot Avenue / Albany, CA 94706
(510) 334-8851 (Text or Talk)

- www.jinglejamboree.com
- <http://jinglejamboree.blogspot.com/> (View updated schedules & openings)

Director

- Jingle Jamboree Music
- Music Club Tuesdays & Thursdays
- Ocean View Elementary School Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd Grade Classroom Music
- Cornell Elementary School TK, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Grade Classroom Music
- Director of Elementary Choir for 4th & 5th Grade at Cornell, Marin and Ocean View Elementary Schools

Register links:

For Music **Camp & Music Club:**

<http://www.jinglejamboree.com/camp/>

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 4:11 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: outdoor dining

Hello City Council Members,

I own Umami Interiors on Solano Ave. The lack of parking is definitely detrimental to business. But I still think restaurants should be permitted to offer outdoor dining in the converted parking areas for the time being. Covid is not over and kids under 12 are still not vaccinated. Many people do not feel comfortable dining indoors yet. So until that changes, I hope restaurants will be able to continue offering outdoor dining.

Just throwing this pipedream out there: I would love to see some central downtown area created in the future, with public restrooms, tables and benches where people could eat takeout from local restaurants, and perhaps a parking lot.

Thanks,
Melanie

Melanie Goldberg
Umami Interiors, Inc.
510-705-1460
1178 Solano Ave.
Albany, CA 94706
www.umamiinteriors.com

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 4:24 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Public Comment on Item 10-2, Outdoor Dining Guidelines Long Term Policy

Dear City Council,

I personally love outdoor dining. In particular, I love seeing so many friends that I can see, chat with, or say Hello to as they walk by while I eat. I am a senior and take Covid-19 precautions very, very seriously. Often these chance meetings lead to extended conversations and shared meals.

This pandemic will be limiting social interaction for at least the next year. Even your meeting (like all City Meetings) are virtual/zoom. I cherish the added social interaction outdoor dining encourages.

I would think the social dynamic achieved by outdoor dining would bring added value to the neighboring businesses that could outweigh the loss of parking spaces.

I suggest that the restaurants that use the parking spaces reach out to their neighboring businesses and offer ways to promote their neighbor's shops and services with flyers coupons and special promotions. Each parklet could post a FEATURED VALUED SOLANO AVE BUSINESS box

that advertises a neighboring business. A standard real estate type flyer box could distribute a flyer of the week or of the month. This kind of co-promotion might be assisted by the local business organizations.

As an Independent Contractor who has worked out of four different business locations on Solano Ave since 1996, I understand the value of foot traffic and visitor eyeballs on a storefront. Outdoor dining has great added value to all of Solano Avenue. I worked out of one location that had limited foot traffic. It was a big drawback to the location. Let's work at making outdoor dining add even more value to all businesses and residents.

One single action could free up many spaces from Monday to Friday. The 800 and 900 blocks of streets perpendicular to Solano Ave. have expensive parking ticketing on street sweeping days. This removes hundreds of spaces for over half the day on street sweep days from 10-2 pm so that the street sweeper can spend minutes on that block. This also affects parking before 10 am as residents move their cars before then and commuter/workers park elsewhere too using other spaces. I suggest that you request the City Manager to instruct the contractors to sweep all the 800-900 blocks before 11 AM and then have PublicWorks resign those blocks to the new hours permitting parking after 11 AM. These spaces include the 90-minute zones immediately adjacent to Solano Ave. that directly serve Solano Ave. short-term visitors.

Some shop visitors may be put off by the loss of parking on Solano Ave but it must be noted that we are the only commercial zone in the surrounding cities that has free 90-

minute parking. If we do not charge them, they will still come since the alternative is feeding those metal demon parking meters elsewhere.

Thank you for considering my suggestions.

Francesco Papalia.

A resident of the 800 Block of Key Route Blvd since 1987.

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 5:20 PM
To: citycouncil
Cc:
Subject: Restaurants in the street.

Dear Members of Albany City Council,

It is great to see so much activity on lower Solano these last few months and to know the restaurants are thriving as they are able to serve customers in the outdoor parklets.

However, I really hope moving forward, that the city takes into account the safety of patrons of all the businesses in the Solano district.

As we are heading into shorter days and the rainy season, it would be wise for a review of each parklet individually to see if any changes need to be made for visibility and obstruction.

With increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic returning to Solano Avenue it is important that the parklets reflect a regulated approach to meeting safety measures.

Thank you for addressing this topic while keeping in mind what is best for all parties.

Sincerely,
Mary D'Elia

Mary D'Elia
Executive Director
ALBANY YMCA
YMCA OF THE EAST BAY
921 Kains Avenue, Albany, CA 94706
P 510-848-6801
E mdelia@ymcaeastbay.org W ymcaeastbay.org

To Empower Youth, Advance Health and Strengthen Communities.

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 5:51 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outdoor seating

Hi there ,

My name is Izat Eliyan . I am one of the owners of Zaytoon restaurant. First,I want to thank the city of Albany for allowing outdoor seating for cafes and restaurants the past year . I'm writing this letter to urge all the council members and Mayer to vote to keep outdoor seating permanent.

Our experience in the past year with the outdoor seating was positive. Guests wanted to sit outside and enjoy the outdoors.

I believe that outdoor seating will benefit the Albany community and will add a unique flavor to Solano ave.

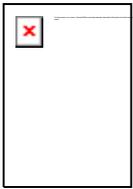
Izat

Sent from my iPhone

From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 7:37 PM
To: citycouncil;
Subject: please support outdoor dining on Solano Avenue

We are writing to express our support for continued outdoor dining-- it makes Solano Avenue more vital and our neighborhood more walkable. We urge you to encourage and expand the outdoor parklets.

thank you,
Laura Peck and Alan Stein, 38 year residents on Kains Avenue.



LAURA PECK

Principal & Wise Woman, [Laura Peck Consulting](#)

M 510.682.6133 **E** laura@laurapeck.co **W** laurapeck.co



Signup for [wisdom delivered to your inbox.](#)



From:
Sent: Monday, November 1, 2021 9:39 PM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Not just blue plates

The point is, some elderly who have mobility issues don't have blue plates FYI

Jennifer Hansen-Romero
510-290-8078

From:
Sent: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 9:44 AM
To: citycouncil
Subject: Outside parklets

Dear Albany City Council members,

I am writing since I was unable to speak at your last council meeting 11-1-2021.

I am voicing my concern on all the parklets that are located on Solano Ave.

Most are not made to prevent disasters that possibly could happen very easily.

Let alone drivers going way pass the posted speed 15 MPH, which are NOT posted at many of the parklets.

I agree with Council member McQuaid and Council member Nason with parklets not being made to a sustain vehicles causing major damage. Some have wine barrels and one I noticed has only plywood in front of their business on Solano Ave.

At nighttime it is very dark and you cannot see pedestrians trying to cross Solano Ave.

And when it is raining it becomes a disaster waiting to happen.

Since the businesses want to keep these parklets which makes so much sense.

I would suggest letting some of the federal funds (if possible) help our businesses construct these parklets to be a safer area for diners and owners. It has to be a major expense since all the businesses in our community have been hit hard.

We need the police to be more present and enforce the laws, since speeding is so prevalent on Solano Ave.

When I take my grandchildren to As You Wish Frozen Yogurt and sit at the parklet I feel very vulnerable since there is a bus stop there and drivers who are NOT willing to wait behind the buses and very fast drivers.

It is very scary!

The sooner the better you take action on upgrading these much needed parklets for our community and our businesses for a safe and enjoyable time out in our community.

Safety First is always our top priority here in Albany, Ca.

Thank you ALL for your time and commitment to making our city be the Best it can be.

Roberta and Duane Focht
Masonic Ave.

Sent from my iPhone