



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS FOR IN-STREET OUTDOOR DINING PARKLETS ON SOLANO AVENUE

DEC. 14, 2022

Current Installations



PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Restaurants along Solano Ave who would like to continue utilizing in-street parklets for outdoor dining for an additional three years will be required to receive City approval to do so. The purpose of this meeting is to review the applications received for the continued use and upgrade of outdoor dining parklets and provide the Commission an opportunity to offer guidance to restaurant operators and City staff on the parklet design and application processing

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission review the preliminary applications and provide guidance to restaurant operators and City staff on the parklets size, preliminary design and materials, and application processing.

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany has an encroachment permit process to allow for temporary outdoor uses on public right of way. During the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic, the encroachment permit process was adapted to allow in-street outdoor dining for a number of Albany restaurants along Solano Avenue.

On November 1, 2021, the City Council reviewed and discussed considerations for extending the in-street parklet program and provided comments to staff on proceeding with development of the program. During 2022, the Transportation Commission, Economic Development Committee and the Planning and Zoning Commission held a series of meetings to review draft regulations. Ultimately, On September 19, 2022, the City Council approved the City's Parklet Program Regulations (attached). Key dates are:

- permit application under the new program must be received by January 31, 2023;
- March 31, 2023 is the date at which existing temporary parklet permits that do not apply for a new permit will expire and parklets removed; and
- May 31, 2023 is the date at which existing temporary parklet permits will expire and new parklets shall be installed.

DISCUSSION

Currently there are 11 operational in-street parklets (Solano Junction has not yet applied). All in-street parklets currently in use have submitted preliminary applications. At the preliminary level of review, there are three general areas of consideration.

1. Parklet Size – Of the eleven applications, nine are requesting to maintain their current configuration. Two, Crepe Suzette, and Chez Mansour, have indicated on their application that they are requesting to reduce the number of parking spaces occupied from three spaces to two spaces. The reduction in the number of spaces at Chez Mansour may help resolve concerns expressed by a neighboring retailer.
2. Design and Materials – Several of the applications appear to seek to adapt their current installation without major changes in appearance. These include Rendez-Vous, Zaytoon, 5 Tacos and Beers, Chez Mansour, and Barney's. Commission feedback on these installations would be beneficial.
3. Application Process – Staff recommends that the Commission at a future meeting review in detail all new large (3-space) installations as well as any 2-space installations with unusual design or where the applicant is requesting an exception to the approved guidelines. In addition, the Commission may be requested to review any installation where there are unresolved concerns by neighboring businesses. Based on these criteria, it is anticipated that proposed designs by Everest Kitchen and Bua Luang will be reviewed by the Commission. The review process for Boss Burger, Kim's Café, and Duo Grill is to be determined. Staff is recommending the Commission authorize the 3-space installations at Barney's and Zaytoon to proceed under staff review because they are utilizing the materials and basic design already completed.