



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Sierra Madre, CA. May 15, 2020 - CITY ANNOUNCES EXPANDED AL FRESCO DINING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH "SIERRA MADRE CARES INITIATIVE"

Sierra Madre Cares is an initiative designed to provide assistance to Sierra Madre residents and business owners during the current COVID-19 pandemic. As part of that initiative, and in an effort to assist Sierra Madre food establishments during the County's Safer at Home reopening strategy, the City of Sierra Madre is announcing a plan to provide opportunities for outdoor seating and dining throughout Downtown Sierra Madre.

"Our local restaurants have done a tremendous job of operating safely and in compliance with the State and County Safer at Home orders" said City Manager Gabriel Engeland. "Allowing restaurants to expand their outdoor seating capacity will enable them to serve more customers while still practicing social distancing."

Through the City's analysis of the Downtown areas, staff identified locations on West Sierra Madre Boulevard and North Baldwin Avenue that could be transformed to provide expanded outdoor seating and dining that can accommodate social distancing, while increasing restaurant capacity, allowing customers to dine. This feature of the Sierra Madre Cares initiative will provide for:

- Permitting the use of some private parking lots to use as dining areas.
- Permitting the use of sidewalk areas beyond traditional constraints.
- Permitting the use of some street parking stalls for seating.
- Permitting areas of Kersting Court (details still yet to be determined).

In all cases, permits will be required. Permits will be administrative and there will not be a fee charged for the permit. However, the permits include provisions to protect public safety, including keeping the areas clear of trash and debris, maintaining Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rights, and closely following the County Health Department guidelines for business reopening requirements.

"Sierra Madre cares about our local restaurants, where we spend time with our families and meet our friends and neighbors while enjoying a wide variety of cuisine. Our restaurants make Sierra Madre the "Gem of the San Gabriel Valley", and we're so happy to be able to help in this small way to keep them viable while keeping employees and guests safe!" said Mayor John Capoccia.

The City collaborated on this program through their partnership with the Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce. Chamber President Luther Tsinoglou said, "The Sierra Madre Chamber and City recognize that our local businesses are struggling from the effects of COVID-19. We want to work with the City to help out businesses and the community as much as possible. This is a step in the right direction."

City staff will reach out to qualifying business in the upcoming weeks. To apply for a permit, please contact Chris Cimino, Director of Public Works at 626-355-7135 or ccimino@cityofsierramadre.com.

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