



CHAMBER
of
COMMERCE

October 26, 2021

Beverly Hills City Council
City of Beverly Hills
455 North Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Re: Policy Discussion Regarding the Long-Term Conversion of
OpenBH Program Dining Participants

Dear Honorable Mayor Wunderlich and Members of the Beverly Hills City Council:

The Chamber writes to you regarding the item on the Study Session Agenda today on the OpenBH outdoor dining program. The Chamber previously submitted a set of eight recommendations for your review.

The questions posted in the City staff report are well thought out and should be further explored.

The Chamber writes to reiterate and expand on the need to reduce or eliminate noticing requirements for permanent outdoor dining and to allow most requests to be approved by-right by staff. It currently takes at least 2-3 months to approve permanent outdoor dining requests due to the noticing requirements alone. In discussions with City staff, this process rarely if ever yields public comment. The process takes longer if a Planning Commission hearing is involved. This does not count additional time that might be incurred for the usual permitting/building and safety checks, etc. It is critical that the process be streamlined not just for OpenBH participants converting to a permanent program but for all applicants for outdoor dining to allow restaurants to open in a more expeditious manner.

As you know, the Chamber is currently working in partnership with the City to attract new and exciting businesses to our City, with a particular emphasis on recruiting outstanding restaurants. Many of the restaurants the Chamber and City have recently met with are very interested to know the length of time it will take to open a restaurant in Beverly Hills. Reducing unnecessary approvals and noticing requirements will enhance efforts to attract quality restaurants and cut down on the amount of regulation businesses face when seeking to open in the City.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Todd Johnson
President and CEO
Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce