

**Date:** November 29, 2018  
**To:** Westchester Town Center BID Board of Directors  
**From:** Nicole Mehringer, Security Consultant  
**Subject:** Proposal LAX No Vending Zone

### BACKGROUND

On January 29, 2018, Senator Ricardo Lara introduced the Safe Sidewalk Vending Act, Senate Bill SB, 946, which seeks to decriminalize vending in California and provides rules that local jurisdictions are mandated to follow when crafting local sidewalk vending policies.

On April 17, 2018, the Los Angeles City Council adopted Rules and Regulations for the establishment of a Sidewalk Vending Program (Council File No. 13-1493). The City Council also requested the City Attorney to prepare a draft ordinance, and instructed city staff to report with additional information related to the scope of work, an appeals process, and creation of sidewalk vending districts.

The proposed framework allows for a process to establish Special Sidewalk Vending Districts based on the desire of a Council District to adopt regulations to restrict, prohibit, or expand vending in such areas based on health and safety. Working with the assistance of the City Attorney and Bureau of Engineering, the Council Office will determine expansions, restrictions or prohibitions of sidewalk vending in each respective Council District, based on legitimate health and safety concerns.

To date the Los Angeles City Council has adopted No Vending Zones which include:

- As outlined in Motion 40 (A) in the Economic Development, Public Works and Gang Reduction, and the Arts, Entertainment Parks and River Committee's Report to add and adopt No Vending Zones to include Venice Beach, as of 42.15 Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument as described in 25 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code,
- As outlined in Motion 40(B), requesting the Chief Legislative Analyst Report to Council regarding the feasibility of No Vending Zones for Melrose Business Improvement District (BID), Westwood BID, and Encino BID,
- October 31, 2018, the Council discussed further exemptions/ No Vending Zones in the areas within 500 feet of the Hollywood Bowl, Dodger Stadium, Staples Center, the Memorial Coliseum and the Hollywood Boulevard Walk of Fame.

The Draft Ordinance specifically addresses, "Special Sidewalk Vending Districts" and makes allowances for the City Council to establish certain areas where Vending may be expanded, restricted or prohibited.

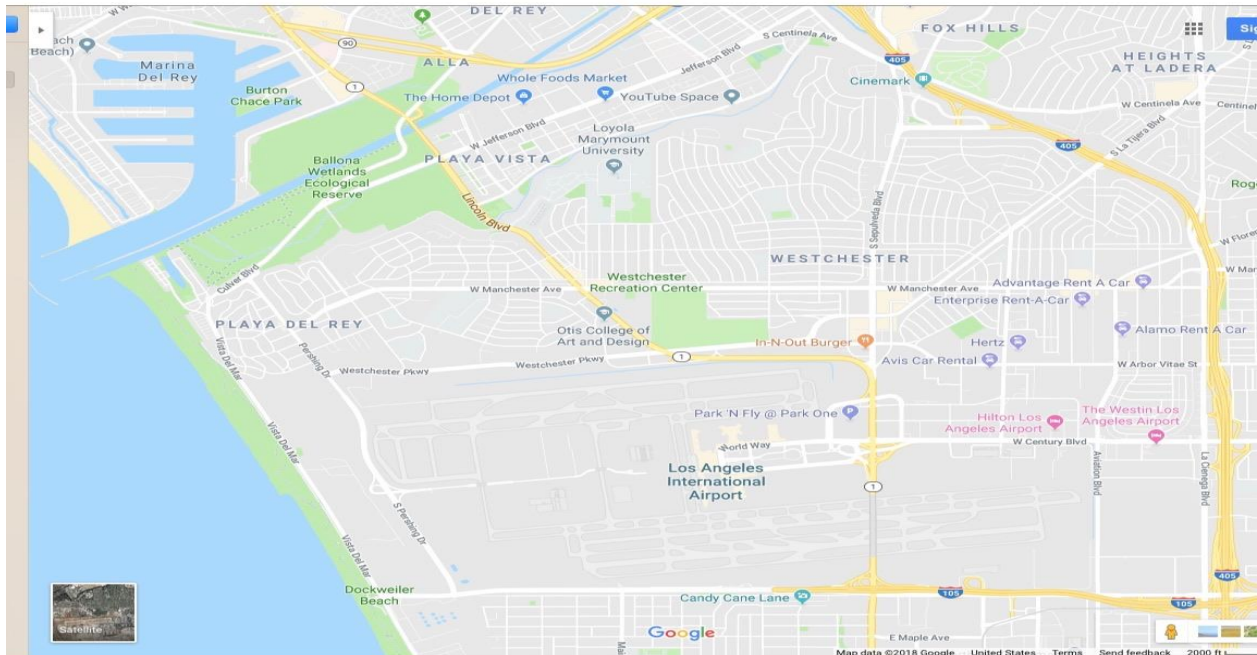
It is recognized that the estimated 50,000 sidewalk street vendors who operate in the city of Los Angeles are a fixture in our diverse communities and a part of the vibrant food cultures.

Concurrently, it is understood that within those diverse communities, there are districts that require unique attention and regulations to ensure public safety, mitigate crime and enhance the quality of life. Careful examination and consideration was taken to assess the areas that were previously cited as approved No Vending Zones.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The concerns stated in this document are rooted solely and legitimately in the interest of public safety. They are not derived from community animus or economic competition. As with the previously approved exemptions, this recommendation was made after careful examination and consideration to add and adopt a No Vending Zone around the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

The recommended LAX Zone includes the major thoroughfares providing access into LAX, which include<sup>1</sup>:



*Manchester Avenue west from Sepulveda Boulevard to Rayford Drive (west of Lincoln Boulevard)*  
*Lincoln Boulevard beginning at Jefferson Boulevard extending to Sepulveda Boulevard*  
*Manchester Avenue east from Sepulveda Boulevard to Airport Boulevard*  
*Sepulveda Boulevard at Manchester Avenue south to the city limit at Imperial Highway*  
*Sepulveda Boulevard from the city limit at Imperial Highway north to Century Boulevard*  
*Airport Boulevard from Manchester Avenue to Century Boulevard*  
*Century Boulevard at Airport Boulevard west into LAX*

## **RATIONALE**

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<sup>1</sup> The LAX No Vending Zone proposal recommends a “No Vending Zone” on both sides of the designated streets and includes the area contained within the identified boundaries.

Los Angeles is known as the city of fun, sun, glitz and glamor; however, it is the city equally known for the traffic. Our major thoroughfares leading to LAX are particularly congested. According to the Airport Council International's full year figures, LAX was ranked as one of the top five airports for passenger traffic, from 2014 through 2018, with an exception only in 2015, when the airport was ranked sixth. In 2017, passenger traffic at LAX rose 4.5 percent to 84.6 million people passing through the airport.

In an effort to remedy traffic concerns, the Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) has embarked on its Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP) at LAX. This innovative program aims to relieve congestion for people traveling to and from LAX, labeled as the fifth-busiest airport in the world and second busiest in the United States. As part of the modernization plan, the Automated People Mover (APM) is under construction. This elevated 2.5-mile electric train system will connect mass transit for the millions of passengers moving through LAX and will connect travelers to the regional rail system, rental car facility and other drop-off/ pick-up locations. The APM is projected to be fully operational in 2023.

Pending the completion of the APM, current challenges exist. These challenges include unreliable travel times to and from the airport, significant traffic congestion on the surrounding streets, no direct passenger connection to the Metro Rail and dispersed location of current rental car facilities with significant shuttle traffic around the terminal area. All of which, create a significant increase of traffic congestion in and around the major surface streets that lead into the airport.

### **Traffic Safety**

The concerns in establishing LAX Zone as a No Vending Zone extend beyond travel times, delays and perceived inconveniences. With any increase in traffic congestion, comes increased risks for the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists

Traffic safety is paramount in the City of Los Angeles, as evidenced in 2016 when Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti announced his Vision Zero plan and implemented the program in partnership with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). The stated goal of the policy is to reduce the number of traffic injuries in the city, ultimately reaching zero traffic fatalities by 2025. However, Los Angeles saw a 43% increase in fatal car accidents during the first year of Vision Zero. In 2017, the second year in which Vision Zero was in effect, Los Angeles saw an additional 22% increase in fatal accidents. Today, Los Angeles has the highest rate of injury-causing and fatal traffic accidents in the nation.

Pedestrian deaths in Los Angeles have surged more than 80% in the first two years of this high-profile initiative. In 2015, 74 pedestrians were killed by drivers in Los Angeles. That figure rose to 134 in 2017, the highest number in more than 15 years. In Los Angeles, 630 lives are lost each year as a result of traffic related accidents.

Mayor Garcetti when asked about these statistics, responded to the Los Angeles Times, "Every life is important and we must keep pushing to do better. Safety is our top priority, and we will continue to set bold goals." According to Transportation Department spokesman, Oliver Hou, the City of Los Angeles data is on par with national trends, which show that increasing number of pedestrians are dying, and drivers are more distracted. Figures on traffic deaths across the country are not yet available for 2017, but in the previous year, pedestrian deaths rose 9% nationally and 42% in Los Angeles.

The United States Department of Transportation identified distracted driving as the number one cause of car accidents in the United States. Pedestrians are involved in approximately 14% of traffic accidents. However, they account for about 50% of all traffic accident deaths. In 2015, 2,386 pedestrians were killed or injured in a Los Angeles traffic accident. Riding a bicycle is an increasingly popular mode of transportation in Los Angeles. In fact, the city continues to make its roads more bicycle-friendly by installing dedicated bike lanes. However, bicyclists are still at an increased risk of suffering serious harm in a traffic accident. In 2015, 2,162 bicyclists were injured or killed in a Los Angeles traffic accident.

The traffic statistics demonstrate a compelling argument to protect this area and create a No Vending Zone in an effort to mitigate vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian accidents in one of the most trafficked areas in the city of Los Angeles. Allowing street vending in this already heavily congested area around LAX, will compound the existing problem of traffic and place pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers at greater risk of being involved in a collision, as a result of additional distractions.

As part of the LAMP, several new roadways will be constructed concurrently with the Intermodal Transportation Facility (ITF) - West and Consolidated Rent-a-Car (ConRAC) facility to provide access to the facilities and improve traffic conditions in the surrounding area. Additional roadway improvements to alleviate traffic congestion in and around the airport will begin in 2023 and be completed by 2035. Based on this projection, there is no immediate traffic alleviation in sight.

Existing concerns based on the rising statistics of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian related accidents throughout the City of Los Angeles coupled with the planned airport construction equate to significant concerns to protect those who live, work, and visit the heavily populated area surrounding LAX. Ensuring the LAX Zone is designated and remains a No Vending Zone will serve as a safeguard to avoid a rise in accidents. Allowing street vending along these major arteries possess a significant increase in safety risks based on the following:

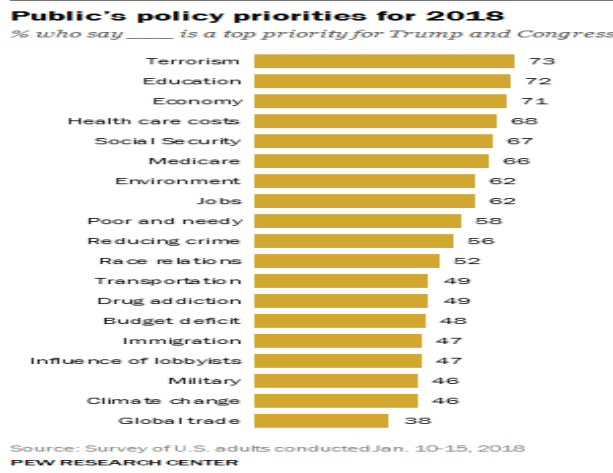
- LAX district already poses a challenging airport dynamic based on spread out rental car agencies, off-site parking structures, public transportation by way of bus, hotel and local business shuttles, taxi cab companies, and alternative transportation such as Uber and Lyft. This riddles the area and their designated waiting zones in an existing densely populated commercial area, and adds to the current limited parking along these major arteries leading into LAX. The increased likelihood of vehicles stopping and/ or double parking to patronize a street vendor, exposes dangerous road conditions and the increased potential for accidents,
- The addition of street vending along these major corridors will negatively contribute to a population already plagued with distracted driving,
- Allowing street vending along these major corridors introduces a temptation for drivers to stop abruptly or negotiate unsafe maneuvers to patronize a street vendor, who unlike existing businesses in the area can be easily identified via a Google search on the internet,
- Response times to calls for service are a continuing concern for law enforcement, fire personnel, and the public. The increased traffic congestion associated with street vending along these major thoroughfares, creates significant concerns due to distractions or unsafe driving, that could further delay the arrival of first responders,

- Allowing street vending along these densely populated streets creates increased danger to pedestrians, who are already at a high risk in Los Angeles. Concerns arise if street vending is allowed because of the temptation for vendors/customers to enter into traffic patterns that places themselves and drivers at greater risk to be involved in an accident.

**Anti-terrorism Mitigation**

LAX is a critical infrastructure site and has measures both internal and external to protect it from both domestic and international terrorism.

According to Pew Research Center, surveys conducted revealed that, “over the course of 15 years and three presidential administrations, Americans have consistently said that defending the nation against terrorism should be a top policy priority for the White House and Congress.” Recognizing the role each individual plays in public safety and specific to anti-terrorism vigilance, the LAPD launched the iWatch LA (phone application) community program intended to educate the public about behaviors and activities that may have a connection to terrorism.



The reality is that this fast-paced society places demands on individuals to multi-task, often stretching them too thin. As a result, many people are intently focused on their own day to day matters and easily distracted. With daily commuters and travelers traversing along these major arteries of LAX, smartphones out, hands held up to block the sun, and not giving the safety of their surroundings a second thought, mitigating the dangers becomes the

responsibility of City and government entities.

In the summer of 2014, Anthony McGinty and Michelle Sosa were hired by Los Angeles World Airports to lead a unique, new classified intelligence unit on the West Coast. After only two years, their global scope and analytic capabilities promise to rival the agencies of a small nation-state. Their roles suggest an intriguing new direction for infrastructure protection in an era when threats are as internationally networked as they are hard to predict. A means of mitigating these dangers is to ensure that the No Vending Zone is added and adopted in the LAX Zone.

In an already challenging theatre where people with ill intent are both unpredictable and can easily disguise themselves among what appears on the surface as mundane activities, allowing access to the major arteries surrounding LAX, increases the exposure and danger to critical infrastructures, in this case LAX.

Eliminating street vending in the LAX Zone will help prevent the ease in which the ill intended can wreak havoc. By regulating the LAX Zone, the threat of the ill intended to disguise themselves as legitimate street vendors is removed. This will serve to protect the major arteries and help alleviate existing complacency and inattention. This mitigation tactic is not suggestive that it will eliminate all threats facing the critical infrastructure, but it will undoubtedly offer existing intelligence units and anti-terrorism efforts to focus on other potential threats. What cannot be understated is the

perception of safety by the 84 plus million passengers passing through LAX. The sense of security this measure stands to offer is akin to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) pre-screening processes.

### **Economic Impacts**

When making the determination to establish a No Vending Zone at LAX, it is critical to weigh the potential economic impacts. Past high-profile incidents in and around LAX have shed light on the significant impact of a single critical event involving a law enforcement response. This was demonstrated in the tragic November 1, 2013, shooting inside the airport terminal. Beyond the tragedy of the loss of TSA Officer Gerardo Hernandez, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grounded flights. This had a domino effect to the traffic not only inside the Central Terminal Area (CTA), but impacted the streets leading into the airport. Another significant incident occurred in August of 2016. Passengers at LAX were seen running from terminals and onto the tarmac after police responded to a 911 call of “shots fired” at the facility. Fortunately, this was an inaccurate report and police found only a man dressed as Zorro wielding a plastic sword. However, this false report still generated panic and created a significant clogging of traffic into the airport and caused a standstill of the CTA. There is no question that the protection of life has no price tag. However, these events have demonstrated the fiscal impact that a closure of the airport and/or grounding of flights can create.

It is fiscally responsible to analyze, assess and mitigate, and make every reasonable effort to prevent such incidents and the collateral damage associated with them. It is recognized that not all circumstances that pose potential risks can be eradicated; however, some if not many can be mitigated. Creating the LAX No Vending Zone, is one such mitigation strategy to protect the major arteries leading into LAX and proves to serve as one tangible step.

### **CONCLUSION**

Support and approval of the LAX No Vending Zone will avoid exacerbating traffic congestion and decrease the risk of accidents for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian travelers attributed to both an increase in traffic and distracted driving. This LAX No Vending Zone will assist as an anti-terrorism mitigation measure and will serve to foster as an additional piece of security for the 84 million passengers who journey through LAX. The positive impacts of this recommendation far outweigh the slight adjustments to amend the Draft Ordinance. The proposal to add and adopt the LAX Zone is based on public safety and welfare concerns, and should be added to the list of exemptions within the City of Los Angeles.

**Attachment:** Map depicting boundaries of the LAX No Vending Zone