

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

April 1, 2025

Supporting Disaster Recovery by Supporting Small Business

Helping Altadena recover from the disastrous effects of the Eaton Fire and the significant economic disruption affecting the community’s businesses, requires Los Angeles County to consider innovative approaches to existing regulations that cut red tape, including more flexible zoning regulations. Parking lot and vacant lot activation projects can create spaces for large community gatherings that benefit businesses formerly operated or currently operate in Altadena by providing a communal space for attracting consumers, increasing visibility, boosting brand image, enhancing the customer experience, and growing revenue. The County previously approved "Food Truck Fridays" in a parking lot on North Lake Avenue in Altadena that was well received by the community and local businesses, and also successfully partnered with the nonprofit Kounkuey Design Initiative to activate a vacant County-owned property at Vermont Avenue and Manchester Avenue into a community hub for people of all ages to gather and learn about the future Evermont project, which has since been developed through a public-private partnership.¹

These parking lot and vacant lot activation projects are pop-up events. County Code Section 22.188.020 authorizes the Director of Regional Planning (“Director”) to approve pop-up events, pop-up restaurants and other eating establishments, and pop-up retail and commercial uses, including alcoholic beverage sales for on-site and/or off-site consumption, through a ministerial Type I Review, which is a staff-level process that does not require a public hearing. However, these events are limited to six weekends or seven consecutive days during any 12-month period. Although the Director can approve a longer duration, the process is much more costly and time-consuming. Given that it will take several years for Altadena to recover from the devastating Eaton Fire, it would be prudent and appropriate to help local Altadena businesses by giving the Director the authority to approve parking lot and vacant lot activation projects on designated lots for a period of up to five-years through the most efficient and cost effective process possible while providing safeguards to ensure these projects are operated in a responsible manner with minimal impacts.

¹¹¹¹ https://www.kounkuey.org/projects/vermont_and_manchester

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Additionally, small businesses that survived the Eaton Fire with minimal damage, find themselves in a difficult position. Although these business have survived, their community and neighborhoods have not, resulting in a reduced customer base that shops locally. As the County has promoted “Shop Local” campaigns during the COVID-19 pandemic and “Small Business Saturday” on Thanksgiving weekend, utilizing these types of campaigns can similarly help surviving businesses post fires and keep them from closing, positively affecting both their workforce and the local community. These small businesses have experienced a severe decrease in revenue leading to a level of financial instability that threatens their existence. Maximizing the number of impacted businesses that stay open is a critical outcome of interest for the County in its response and recovery efforts. It is therefore necessary to provide funding to support continued operations of these small businesses.

Approval of these actions and projects is exempt from the National Environmental Policy Act pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations, Part 58, Section 58.34(a)(10) because they involve assistance for temporary or permanent improvements that do not alter environmental conditions and are related to activities needed to address the effects of the Eaton Fire emergency.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Regional Planning to:

1. Find that the actions and projects encompassed by this motion and the enclosed resolution, including, but not limited to response, recovery, and construction activities, are critically needed to respond to and recover from the emergency related to the Eaton Fire, and are statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21080(b)(3), and (4) and Section 15269(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Executive Orders issued by the Governor related to the Eaton Fire. Additionally, the actions and projects encompassed by the motion are categorically exempt under Sections 15301(a), 15303(e), 15304, and 15311(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 1, 3, 4, and 11 of the County's Environmental Document Procedures and Guidelines Appendix G since they consist of operation, permitting, or minor alteration of existing uses with negligible expansion of use, or the construction of new small facilities or accessory structures; and
2. Adopt the enclosed resolution, pursuant to Government Code Section 8634, authorizing the Director to approve applications for pop-up events, pop-up restaurants and other eating establishments, and pop-up retail and commercial uses, including alcoholic beverage sales for on-site and/or off-site consumption subject to any required approvals by the California Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control, with a ministerial Type I Review pursuant to County Code Chapter 22.226 in parking lots and vacant lots on properties that have been cleared of debris in Commercial and Industrial Zones in Altadena for a period of up to five-years, consisting of an initial period of three years with two possible one-year extensions, subject to the requirements and limitations set forth therein.

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I, FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to:

1. Set aside 500 Youth@Work positions in FY25-26 for youth impacted by the Eaton Fire, working with school districts, community-based organizations, the LA County Workforce Development Board, and other partners to promote these opportunities;
2. Work with the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to provide a plan in 30 days to establish a satellite America's Job Centers of California (AJCC) in Altadena to ensure priority access of worker and employer resources including job training, employer hiring and incentive supports, upskilling, resume and interview skills training, and rapid re-employment services. Services available at the temporary AJCC should include, at a minimum:
 - a. Workforce programs needed to serve displaced workers, including those that address short-term surge capacity and address workforce needs for long-term recovery;
 - b. Related services and supports like a worker equity fund that provides financial help to individuals as they complete training and transition into employment; and
 - c. Programs for impacted businesses and employers, including access to qualified candidates to meet current hiring needs, layoff aversion support, subsidized wages, and other business services.
3. Work in coordination with local municipalities including the Cities of Pasadena, Santa Monica, Malibu, Sierra Madre, and Los Angeles, the Altadena community, as well as community business organizations such as Independent Hospitality Coalition, Latino Restaurant Association, and the California Restaurant Association to take immediate steps to establish a regional public awareness campaign, along with related programs and services, and resources that both encourages the idea of "Shop/Dine/Recover Local" and promotes the fact that many commercial businesses within the Eaton, Palisades, and other fire zones are still in business, thereby ensuring their short and long-term economic resiliency. This campaign should:
 - a. Focus on awareness of small business impact as a result of wildfires,
 - b. Establish and promote a listing of all small businesses that survived the Eaton Fire and are still open in their current or temporary space in the areas immediately within or in close proximity to the fire zone;
 - c. Consider ways to promote and support these small businesses, including marketing campaigns utilizing video testimonials and advertisements, financial incentives for businesses, affordable space sharing and commercial access opportunities, capacity building, and capital and contracting access during the rebuild and for other regional events such as the 2028 Summer Olympics hosted in Los Angeles; and
4. Engage with the Altadena community, holding community engagement forums, to best understand the unique needs of the small business community in a post-Eaton Fire landscape;
5. Authorize the Director of DEO, or her designee, in consultation with County Counsel, to negotiate, execute, and amend any agreements, and necessary amendments for assistance with administration or implementation of the directives listed. The Board shall waive the requirements of Board Policy No.5.100 for these agreements. The agreements and any amendments shall be approved as to form by County Counsel; and

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6. Transfer \$850,000 from the Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund budget, \$637,639 from the SD5 allocation of Catalytic Development Funds, and up to \$3 million from the LA County Bioscience Investment Fund to the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), for the creation of a small business loan program that would assist the small businesses in Altadena unscathed by the Eaton Fire in the unincorporated area of Altadena but surrounded by devastation and authorize DEO's Director, or designee, to execute a funding agreement, or amendment to an existing funding agreement, with the LACDA for the transfer of the funds to LACDA.

I, FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors, acting as the Commissioners of the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) to:

1. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of LACDA, or his designee, in consultation with County Counsel, to accept the \$4,487,639 from the County and to accept and incorporate up to \$4,487,639 into the LACDA's approved FY 2024-25 budget as needed;
2. Authorize the Executive Director of the LACDA, or designee, to utilize up to \$850,000 in Manufacturing Revolving Loan Funds (MRLF), \$637,639 in Catalytic Development Funds, up to \$3 million from the LA County Bioscience Investment Fund, and up to \$2 million from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) de-federalized revolving loan funds for economic development activities as allowed by EDA, which includes any LACDA administrative expenses, in support of disaster relief efforts associated with the Eaton Fire in the unincorporated area of Altadena, and in consultation with County Counsel, to execute any agreements, and necessary amendments for assistance with administration and implementation of the small business loan program;
3. Authorize the Executive Director, or his designee, to execute a funding agreement, or amendments to an existing funding agreement, with the County to accept the funds from the Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund for the creation and implementation of a small business loan program for small businesses in Altadena; and
4. Authorize the Executive Director, or his designee, to execute agreements, including sole-source agreements, with nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, service providers and other consultants and to hire or contract for LACDA positions as appropriate and necessary to implement the directives contained herein.
5. Work with the Director of DEO to ensure that repaid loans that utilized funds from the LA County Bioscience Investment Fund be returned to DEO and be reinvested in the LA County Bioscience Investment Fund.

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KB:mbs/aso

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES RELATED TO THE LOCAL EMERGENCY FOR THE
JANUARY 2025 WINDSTORM AND CRITICAL FIRE EVENTS DELEGATING
AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL PLANNING TO APPROVE
PARKING LOT AND VACANT LOT ACTIVATION PROJECTS IN ALTADENA**

WHEREAS, starting on January 7, 2025, the County of Los Angeles (“County”) has been impacted by severe and life-threatening windstorms and resulting wind-driven destructive fires (“January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events”), which include the Eaton Fire that impacted the unincorporated community of Altadena (“Altadena”). These unprecedented simultaneous events have caused loss of life, widespread damage, and destruction to residential structures, businesses, public facilities and infrastructure, power outages, downed trees, road closures, rockslides, and significant debris; and

WHEREAS, on January 7, 2025, the Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (“Board”) proclaimed the existence of a local emergency for the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events (“Proclamation of Local Emergency”) in the County; and

WHEREAS, on January 7, 2025, the Governor proclaimed a state of emergency, for fire and windstorm conditions in the areas affected by the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events; and

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2025, the President approved a major disaster declaration in the State of California, and ordered federal aid for local recovery efforts in the areas affected by the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events; and

WHEREAS, on January 14, 2025, the Board ratified the Proclamation of Local Emergency; and

WHEREAS, helping Altadena recover from the disastrous effects of the Eaton Fire, including the significant economic disruption affecting all the community's businesses, requires the Board to implement innovative approaches to County regulations, including more flexible zoning regulations in Title 22 of the County Code; and

WHEREAS, parking lot and vacant lot activation projects can create spaces for large community gatherings that benefit businesses that formerly operated or currently operate in Altadena by increasing their visibility, boosting their brand image, enhancing the customer experience, and growing their revenue; and

WHEREAS, many local Altadena businesses are on the brink of economic failure and the use of parking lot and vacant lot activation projects may serve as a potential lifeline during this protracted recovery period by allowing businesses to build temporary structures and place furniture outside to sell their own food and merchandise, along with food and merchandise from other businesses and "makers," sell alcoholic beverages for on-site and/or off-site consumption, provide a location for people to pick up online food, beverage, and merchandise orders, host food trucks, live and acoustic musicians, movie screenings, and other similar community driven commercial events and activities and

WHEREAS, the Board believes that parking lot and vacant lot activation projects will be effective in the Altadena recovery efforts because the County previously approved permits for "Food Truck Fridays" in the Webster's parking lot at 2450 N. Lake Avenue in Altadena in 2011, 2013, and 2014, which were well received by the community and local businesses. Additionally, the use of parking and vacant lots for nonprofit, charitable, public service, or civic uses can also galvanize and uplift the community, which the County previously experienced when it partnered with a nonprofit, the Kounkuey Design Initiative

to successfully activate a vacant County-owned property at Vermont Avenue and Manchester Avenue into a community hub for people of all ages to gather, eat, play, and learn about future redevelopment;¹ and

WHEREAS, the Board, due to the emergency circumstances resulting from the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events, must implement swift measures to ensure that the County and its impacted communities can respond to and recover from the devastating fires and during a local emergency can issue orders to provide for the protection of life and property;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Supervisors does hereby move to take the following actions to help the Altadena community and its local businesses:

1: The Board finds that the actions and projects encompassed by this resolution, including, but not limited to response, recovery, and construction activities, are critically needed to respond to and recover from the emergency related to the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events, and are statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21080(b)(3), and (4) and Section 15269(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Executive Orders issued by the Governor related to the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events. Additionally, the actions and projects encompassed by this resolution are categorically exempt under Sections 15301(a), 15303(e), 15304, and 15311(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 1, 3, 4, and 11 of the County's Environmental Document Procedures and Guidelines Appendix G since they consist of operation,

¹ https://www.kounkuey.org/projects/vermont_and_manchester

permitting, or minor alteration of existing uses with negligible expansion of use, or the construction of new small facilities or accessory structures.

2: The Board authorizes the Director of Regional Planning (“Director”) to approve applications for pop-up events, pop-up restaurants and other eating establishments, and pop-up retail and commercial uses, including alcoholic beverage sales for on-site and/or off-site consumption subject to any required approvals by the California Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control (“projects”), with a ministerial Type I Review pursuant to County Code Chapter 22.226, in parking lots and vacant lots that have been cleared of debris in Commercial and Industrial Zones in Altadena for a period of up to five-years, consisting of an initial period of three years with two possible one-year extensions, subject to the requirements and limitations set forth herein.

3: The Director may approve applications for the following projects:

a. A project on any qualifying parking lot or vacant lot sponsored by a public agency, a nonprofit, or a religious, fraternal, educational, or service organization directly engaged in civic, charitable, or public service endeavors.

b. A project sponsored by a business currently operating in Altadena on:

i. A qualifying parking lot on the same property where the business is located.

ii. A parking lot or vacant lot on a different property in Altadena than where the business is located.

c. A project sponsored by a business that operated in Altadena within the 12 months prior to January 7, 2025, on:

i. A qualifying parking lot or currently vacant lot on the same property where the business previously operated.

ii. A qualifying parking lot or vacant lot on a different property in Altadena than where the business previously operated.

4: Any project approved by the Director shall not be an adult business, as defined in County Code Section 22.14.010, and may include alcoholic beverages sales for on-site and/or off-site consumption, if authorized by a valid California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control license, and the outdoor display of any goods, equipment, merchandise, or exhibits.

5: When making a decision on the application in accordance with County Code Section 22.226.040, the Director may consider whether:

a. Adequate parking, including bicycle facilities, will be available in the vicinity of the project.

b. The proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the project without material detriment to the use and enjoyment of the property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site.

c. The project will jeopardize, endanger, or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety, or general welfare.

d. The project sponsor has a history of non-compliance with County Code Title 22, or other applicable federal, State, or local codes, laws, rules, regulations, and statutes, including those of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

6: If the Director approves the application, the Director may apply development and/or performance standards to the project, including but not limited to those in County

Code Sections 22.188.040.A and 22.140.030.I, and those in a valid Conditional Use Permit authorizing alcoholic beverages sales for on-site and/or off-site consumption that is associated with the business sponsoring the project.

7: If the Director approves the application, the Director may require inspections to be conducted to determine the permittee's compliance with the applicable development and/or performance standards included in the approval.

8: The Director may revoke an approval at any time if the project does not comply with the applicable development and/or performance standards included in the approval, County Code Title 22, or other applicable federal, State, or local codes, laws, rules, regulations, and statutes, including those of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, and the Director's decision shall be final and not subject to an appeal.

9: This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage and shall remain in effect until repealed by the Board.


The foregoing resolution was adopted on the 18th day of March 2025, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles and ex officio the governing body of all other special assessment and taxing districts, agencies and authorities for which said Board so acts.

EDWARD YEN
Executive Officer
Board of Supervisors

By _____
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

DAWYN R. HARRISON
County Counsel

By  _____
STARR COLEMAN
Assistant County Counsel
Property Division

SC:RT