



Venice Neighborhood Council

LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 | www.VeniceNC.org



Land Use & Planning Committee (LUPC)

Staff Report --DRAFT

October 4th, 2025

City Case No: DIR-2024-7033-CDP
CEQA Case No: ENV-2024-7034-CE
Project Address: 3205 Washington Blvd
Coastal Zone: Single
Known As: "Firestone Walker Brewery"
Applicant/ Owner: Nick Firestone
Applicant's Representative: Dana Sayles
City Planner: Sienna Kuo
LUPC STAFF: David Feige
Hearing Scheduled: 11/03/2025

Detailed Project Description:

Permanent AI Fresco Dining permit for a 4,650 square-foot outdoor dining patio, and a 1,425 square-foot covered outdoor dining area providing 144 total seats for an existing restaurant and microbrewery.

Size of Proposed AI Fresco Area: 6,075 SQ Feet

Current Interior Seats: **187** Proposed Additional AI Fresco Seats: **144** New Total: **331** Capacity Increase: **77%**

Does the Requested Permit Reduce Parking? ☒ YES ☐ NO (If yes) by how many parking spaces **23**

Are Additional Bathrooms Proposed to Accommodate Added Capacity?	☐	YES	NO	☒
Has Owner Read the AI-Fresco Ordinance and Agreed to Abide by It?	☒	YES	NO	☐
Has Owner Certified That They are Currently in Compliance with the Ordinance?	☒	YES	NO	☐
Does LUPC Staff Agree that Owner is Currently in Compliance with the Ordinance?	☒	YES	NO	☐

Affected Area and Community Response:

Approximate Number of Homes/Apartments within 500 feet of proposed AI Fresco Space: **72**

Is There Current Opposition by Neighbors to Issuance of AI Fresco Permit?	☐	YES	☒	NO
Have There Been Previous Complaints About AI Fresco Space to City or to Owners?	☐	YES	☐	NO
If Yes, Approximate Number of Complaints to City?		Complaints directly to Owner?		

Nature of Complaints: (check all that Apply)	Noise:	☐	Unpermitted Speakers or Screens:	☐
	Operating Hours:	☐	Maintenance of Adjacent Areas:	☐
	Other:	☐	Unpermitted Live Music or Karaoke:	☐



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Background:

Firestone Brewery is a buzzy brewpub near the busy intersection of Lincoln and Washington Blvd. It serves a wide variety of craft beers and features a gastropub style menu. With additional locations in Paso Robles and Buellton, Firestone has been a popular Venice spot nearly since the day it opened. The interior is capacious and includes a retail space along with a well-proportioned dining area. Patrons are served seated. In addition to the indoor service area, Firestone has operated and is now seeking to permanently permit a large outdoor dining area. The proposed al fresco space, located on private property spans the area between the applicant's two buildings, running from the South Side of Washington Blvd south to the alley connecting Carter and Stanford Avenues. Prior to the COVID 19 emergency, the area was used as a parking lot. Since the pandemic it has been devoted to outdoor dining, resulting in the loss of 23 parking spaces. However, it is worth noting that unlike many applicants, Firestone also owns an additional sizable lot on the South Side of the aforesaid alley which is used for parking and offers some 46 parking spaces to patrons. A parking study found the remaining spaces sufficient for the patron load.

Applicant is seeking to permit two separate but adjacent spaces: One which is covered and comprises an additional 30 seats and the other which is not covered and contains the additional 114 seats. They describe this as follows: *"The covered portion of the dining area includes trellis structures located adjacent to the existing southern restaurant building. The trellis structures have a height of approximately 10 feet, and a maximum of 11'-7". The outdoor dining area will provide a total of 144 seats, including eight (8) accessible seats, and will add a total of 6,075 square feet of outdoor service area."*

Given the large number of additional seats proposed here, there is (as with all larger expansions) the very real possibility of attendant disruptions. But while an additional 144 seats is a significant increase in capacity from a numerical point of view, because Firestone is such a large establishment to begin with, it represents a sizable but not overwhelming increase of 77%.

Nonetheless, as discussed below, given the widespread public urination problems in and around Al Fresco hotspots, which have added significant capacity but not bathrooms, the addition of nearly 150 additional outdoor seats suggests that noise and bathroom capacity are areas worth paying special attention to.

Compliance with the Ordinance and "Neighborliness"

As shown on the attached radius map, there are some 72 homes/residences within 500 feet of the applicant. But because of the specific location of the applicant there is a significant buffer between several of them and Applicant—namely Washington Blvd to the North and the parking area still owned by Applicant to the South. Thus the area vulnerable to exposure to noise, loitering and other problematic behavior is fairly confined.

Important also is the fact that there appear to be no complaints filed against the applicant. From all appearances, Firestone has been an excellent neighbor, with no known issues concerning noise, service hours, loitering, trash or any other concern. Advancing that has been the establishment of community events hosted by the applicant designed to solicit feedback from the surrounding neighbors.

The applicant has signed all the self-certification documents, acknowledging their awareness of and full compliance with the al fresco ordinance and confirming that they had received no neighborhood complaints, And a site visit verified that speakers that had previously been placed in the Al Fresco area have now been removed.

Thus, we are pleased to find that the applicant **is currently in compliance with the ordinance.**



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Compliance with Previously Imposed Planning Conditions:

The current operational conditions were set forth in Case No. ZA-2013-3173-CUB-1A-PA1 and Case No. ZA-2013-3173-CUB-CU. The 2013 determination letter can be found here: <https://planning.lacity.gov/pdiscaseinfo/document/MjU4Mjk0/fe3b456d-e5a5-4f0e-9fa7-879f1ff43502/pdd> among other restrictions, operating hours were limited, and dancing, live entertainments, DJ's, Karaoke, and any after-hours usage, including promotional events, are all prohibited. (see conditions 7, 12 and 13). In addition, no music, sound or noise may be audible beyond the subject premises.

It appears that applicant has indeed complied with the conditions. They do not advertise or list any live music events, it does not appear that there have been any noise complaints filed with LADBS or other city agencies, and the self-certification filed by applicant lists none. The taproom is open within the granted operating hours, and in fact, closes earlier than permitted.

Parking Impacts

The outdoor dining area is located in what used to be a surface parking lot. Pursuant to Certificate of Occupancy No. 13016-10000-24517, the Project was previously required to provide a total of 64 parking spaces, a condition satisfied by providing 38 off-site spaces and 26 on-site spaces. Of the existing 26 on-site parking spaces, 23 are being displaced for the legalization of the outdoor dining patio. However, three (3) parking spaces are being maintained along the southern wall of the restaurant along the rear alley with two of those being accessible parking stalls. The applicant also owns another lot located across the alley which provides 43 parking spaces for patrons. Adding the three additional spaces yields a remaining total of 46 total parking stalls. There is also bicycle parking both on the premises, with an additional rack to be added in the parking area. There is also a bike share station at the corner.

While there has been a broad parking study commissioned by the council to evaluate the parking impacts of the Al Fresco transition, this study is not yet complete. As a consequence, it is impossible to adequately assess or contextualize the larger parking impacts of the Al Fresco transition. Thus it is the view of the committee that such an overall assessment is critical to the evaluation of any Al Fresco application, and the failure to have completed that study is a significant impediment to a full and proper assessment of any application. Therefore, as with every other application passed on prior to the completion of the study, staff recommends the inclusion of a provision making the parking reduction subject to any recommendations passed in the wake of the completion of the parking study.

Bathroom Sufficiency:

As a sizable establishment with an indoor approved seating capacity of 187, Firestone currently provides 3 toilets in the women's room, and one in the men's room with an additional two urinals. Each restroom also has two sinks and is ADA compliant. With the new total seating capacity of 331 (not including staff) Table 422.1 (A)(2) suggests that the addition of a toilet on the men's side might be necessary. As a consequence staff recommends that a special condition be added requiring compliance with the plumbing code before the Al Fresco permit may be issued.



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Aesthetic or Code Concerns:

The proposed space is well-designed, with Corten steel mesh fencing surrounding an orderly courtyard framed by the buildings to the East and West. The Trellis is sturdy and elegant, and the tables and service area are generous with plenty of room between tables. All dining in the al fresco space is table service, and all patrons are served seated. Umbrellas provide shade for six-person high-end picnic tables and four-seater high tops. It is clear that a great deal of attention was paid to design, build and execution, and the space reflects that attention. There is nothing noted in the site visit that would be cause for concern.

Service Hours and Noise Concerns:

Applicant's website lists the current service hours as: SUNDAY: 10AM – 9PM, MONDAY – THURSDAY 11:30AM – 9PM and FRIDAY and SATURDAY: 11:30AM – 10PM this is consistent with both condition 7 of their 2013 CDP (which allows service indoors from 11AM to 11PM Monday through Thursday and 11Am to midnight Friday and Saturday) and with the hours approved within the Al Fresco Ordinance for business that abut a residential neighborhood (as this does). Thus, we recommend that the hours of operation for the Al Fresco space be consistent with the dictates of the ordinance and limited to 11 AM to 10:30 PM Sunday through Thursday and 11 AM to 11 PM on Saturday and Sundays.

Conclusion:

Given applicant's responsiveness, excellent track record of compliance, thoughtful design, reasonable operating hours, and lack of neighborhood opposition, Firestone offers an al fresco dining experience that can enhance a community without creating burdens for those who live nearby. Therefore....

Recommendation:

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS:



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Applicable Law:

Coastal Act, with certified Land Use Plan (LUP) as guidance
Venice Community Plan

Permanent Al Fresco Dining Ordinance:

mailto:https://cityclerk.lacity.org/online/docs/2020/20-1074-S4_ord_188073_1-31-24.pdf

Proposed Motion:

The Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) LUPC recommends that the City APPROVE of the project at 3205 Washington as proposed, with the following additional condition:

1. That the CDP for Al Fresco dining make clear that as applicant abuts a residential neighborhood, the approved operating hours shall be 11 AM to 10:30 PM Sunday through Thursday and 11 AM to 11 PM on Saturday and Sundays.
2. That applicant be required to add restroom space to comply with all plumbing code sections applicable to this project such as those codified in table 422.1 (A2) of the Building & Safety Code.
3. The CDP for Al Fresco Dining shall be subject to the City's Coastal Access study and any mitigation measures adopted to address the impacts of the loss of parking related to coastal access.

Moved by: _____

Seconded by: _____

VOTE:

YES

NO:

ABSTAIN:

Attachments:

Signed Self Certification of Compliance
LUPC Community Relations Form
CDP Coastal Act, Standard of Review and Parking Study Information
Affected Area Map
Current Bathroom Layout
Floor Plan



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Signed Self Certification of Compliance

LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE AL FRESCO DINING PERMIT SELF-CERTIFICATION

Instructions: Owner/Applicant should fill out this form, only after reviewing the Al Fresco Ordinance or the Fact Sheet distributed by the LUPC which lists the basic requirements of the ordinance. Please initial each box and sign the certification at the bottom. The form need not be notarized. Please return the signed and dated form to the assigned evaluator via USPS or E-mail for inclusion in the staff report to the board. Please note that a failure to execute this self-certification will be a factor to be considered in the evaluator's recommendations.

- I Adam Firestone am the owner and applicant, and am seeking a permanent Al Fresco Dining Permit for my business, known as Firestone Walker Brewery and located at 3205-3223 N. Washington Boulevard, Venice, CA 90292 in Venice, CA.
- I have personally reviewed Ordinance 188073, enacted by the City Council on December 23rd, 2023 and codified in LAMC Section 12.21 A. I am familiar with the requirements therein, and my initials in the boxes below indicate my familiarity with, and agreement that I am abiding by, and will continue to abide by each the following provisions:

Initial Here



Section 24(d)(ii) of the Ordinance which prohibits background music and speakers in outdoor areas.



Section 24(d)(iii) of the Ordinance which prohibits television monitors and similar audio-visual devices in outdoor areas



Section 24(d)(iv) of the Ordinance which prohibits Live music, and live entertainment including but not limited to disc jockeys, karaoke, dancing, pool tables, billiard tables, and adult entertainment uses.



Section 24(d)(v) which mandates that An Outdoor Dining Area shall operate no later than 10:30 p.m. on Sundays through Thursdays and no later than 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, if abutting or across an alley from a residential zone, not including the RAS zone. If the Outdoor Dining Area is not abutting or across an alley from a residential zone, then the Outdoor Dining Area is subject to any applicable hours limitation imposed by law, discretionary action, or previously issued permit.



Section 24(d)(vi) which requires that notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary, the noise levels of the Outdoor Dining Area shall not exceed the standards set forth in the Noise Ordinance (Ordinance No. 156,363).



Section 24(d)(vii) which requires that Outdoor Dining Areas shall be cleaned nightly and adjoining sidewalk areas shall be kept free of debris, litter, and graffiti.



Section 24(d)(viii) which requires that A City-issued identification be posted and clearly visible indicating that the area is subject to the standards of the Al Fresco Ordinance. The identification shall include the City's MyLA311, A hotline phone number and contact information for LADBS, and a telephone number of the restaurant operator or manager for complaints or concerns regarding the operation of the Outdoor Dining Area.



Section 24(d)(ix) which requires that a sign reminding guests to be respectful of surrounding neighbors shall be posted in the Outdoor Dining Area.



Section 24(d)(3)(i)(a)-(c) which provide that All patrons shall must be seated, all alcohol shall be delivered to and served at tables by employees, and that only fixed or portable bars not used as a point of sale are permitted in an Outdoor Dining Area.



Finally, I understand that any violation of LAMC Section 12.21 A.24 may be prosecuted criminally as a misdemeanor, and that failure to comply with those or any other of the regulations and standards set forth in the Ordinance shall constitute a violation of the Al Fresco Ordinance and may result in a citation, Administrative Citation, Orders to Comply and/or other available enforcement mechanisms.

By signing below, I Affirm That:

I have reviewed the Al Fresco Ordinance in connection with my application for a permanent Al Fresco Permit; That I, the applicant, am currently in compliance with all the requirements of the Al Fresco Ordinance, and that I, the applicant, will continue, in the future, to comply with all of the requirements of the Al Fresco Ordinance as well as any specific conditions related to the granting of the Al Fresco Permit for which I am currently applying.

SIGNED ON THIS 3rd DAY OF October, 2025

Adam Firestone

Signature of Applicant



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LUPC Community Relations Form

LAND USE PLANNING COMMITTEE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SURVEY

Instructions: Owner/Applicant should fill out this form, and sign the certification at the bottom. The form need not be notarized. Please return the signed and dated form to the assigned evaluator via USPS or E-mail for inclusion in the staff report to the board. Please note that a failure to execute this survey will be a factor to be considered in the evaluator's recommendations.

1. I Adam Firestone am the owner and applicant, and am seeking a permanent Al Fresco Dining Permit for my business, known as Firestone Walker Brewery and located at 3205-3223 N. Washington Boulevard, Venice, CA 90292 in Venice, CA.
2. We (check one) ☐ **HAVE** or ☒ **HAVE NOT** received complaints from the community concerning the noise, crowds, or other issues concerning the operation of our temporary Al Fresco Space.

If "HAVE NOT" is checked, please simply sign and date the form below. If "HAVE" is checked please fill out the sections below.

3. The complaints we received concerned (check all that apply):
☐ Noise ☐ Hours of Operation ☐ Conduct of Patrons ☐ Cleanliness ☐ Other
4. Approximate number of complaints (count each person and date as a separate complaint) _____
Approximate dates of complaints received: _____
5. Please describe below any actions taken as a result of these complaints and the resolution, if any (feel free to use additional space if necessary):

By signing below, I Affirm that the above statements are true:

SIGNED ON THIS 3rd DAY OF October, 2025

Adam Firestone

Signature of Applicant



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CDP Coastal Act, Standard of Review and Parking Study Information:

Coastal Development Permit (CDP)—Coastal Act & certified Land Use Plan (LUP) are standard of review

Parking/Coastal Access—Assembly Bill 2097 must also be considered in the standard of review

Coastal Act Section 30252 states: *The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by:*

- 1. facilitating the provision or extension of transit service*
- 2. providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads*
- 3. providing non-automobile circulation within the development*
- 4. providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation*

Coastal Access is a Coastal Resource that must be protected under the Coastal Act. In order to assure conformance of the project with the Coastal Act and certified LUP Coastal Access provisions, no CDP for Al Fresco Dining shall be issued until the City's Coastal Access study to assess the impacts of the loss of parking related to the Al Fresco program on public coastal access is completed and mitigation measures to address impacts to public coastal access are determined.

Information about the City's Coastal Access study:

City Planning and LADOT Launch a New Study to Assess Coastal Access in Venice

Last month, Los Angeles City Planning launched a collaboration with the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and Walker Consultants to prepare a study to assess public access to the Venice Coastal Zone area, including parking and other mobility options. The analysis will include the observation of outdoor dining areas under the Al Fresco program and their impacts to public coastal access. This study will assist restaurants with temporary Al Fresco authorizations obtain a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) in order to transition into the permanent Al Fresco program by providing a list of mitigation measures to address impacts to public coastal access. The study will be completed in 2026 and is available to track through Council File No. [Council File 20-1074-S5](#). This effort is an example of how City Planning supports small businesses as part of Mayor Karen Bass' [Executive Directive No. 4 - Identifying Barriers to Small Business Creation, Development and Growth](#).

Information about the need for the Coastal Access study:

https://cityclerk.lacity.org/online/docs/2020/20-1074-S5_rpt_plan_05-28-25.pdf



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Affected Area Map





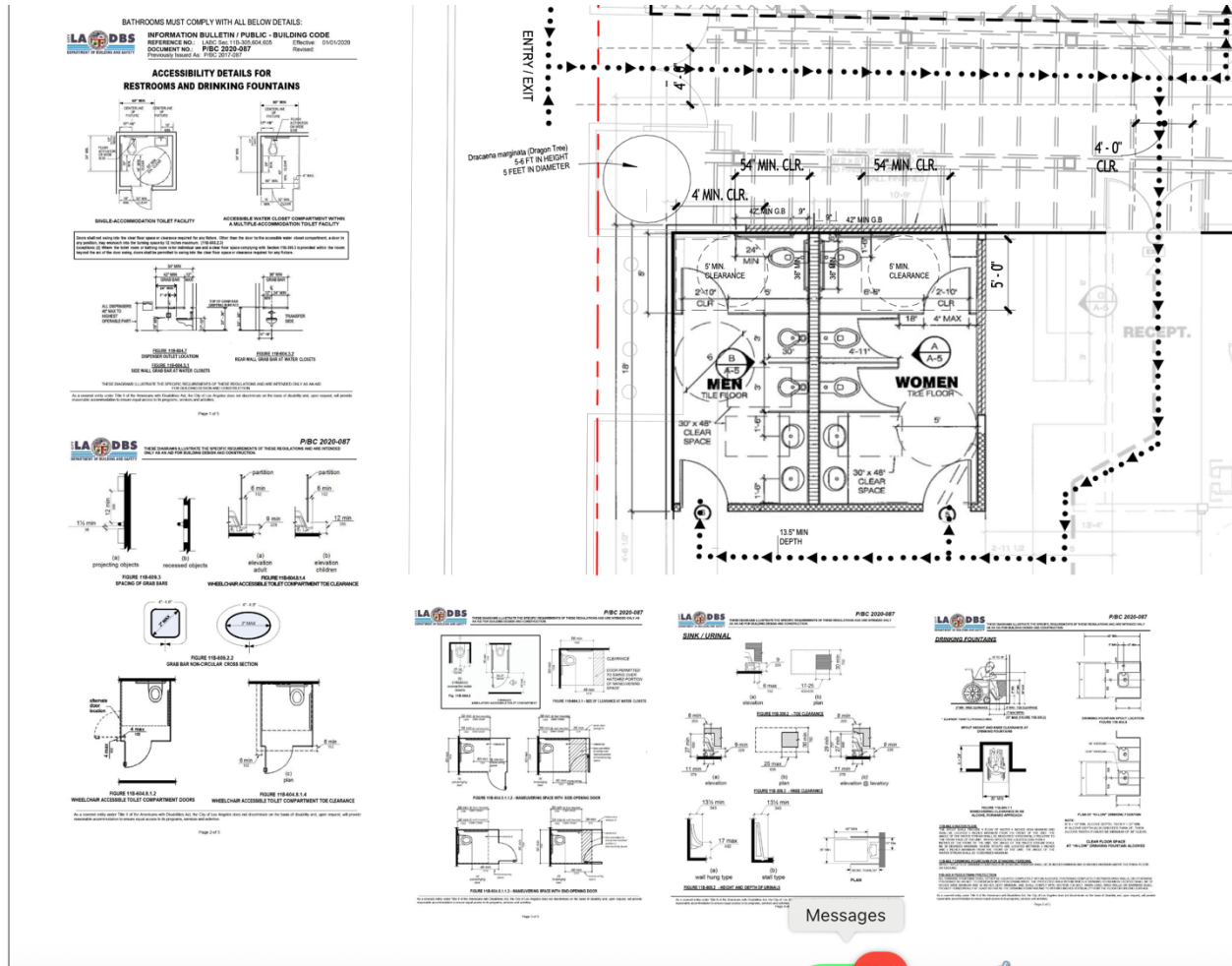
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Current Bathroom Layout:





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Proposed Floor Plan:

