



NEW BEACH SIDE DINING
RESTAURANTS STAY CREATIVE TO DRAW MORE CUSTOMERS

INSIDE
BUSINESSES TRYING TO WORK
WITH NEW HEALTH GUIDELINES
SEE PAGE 5

The expanded outdoor seating by PB Shore Club and Waterbar has temporarily eliminated parking spaces on Ocean Boulevard.

PHOTO BY THOMAS NEVILLE

By DAVE SCHWAB

As if the latest COVID restrictions were not confusing and concerning enough, local restaurateurs are now trying to handle limited indoor dining while increasing outdoor seating.

Billy Ramirez, owner of PB Shore Club and the Fish Shops in PB and Point Loma, said coastal restaurants are being hit hard.

"Obviously with all the hard times hitting the restaurant industry, businesses are being forced to get creative," said Ramirez noting he and the Waterbar next door to PB Shore Club on Ocean Boulevard, jointly decided to

explore outdoor dining options.

"We decided that maybe we could grow out more toward the beach, instead of into parking lots in the alleys," said Ramirez, noting that effort culminated in 26 parking spaces next to the lifeguard tower and fire station on Ocean Boulevard between Grand and Thomas avenues being temporarily converted to outdoor dining.

Up and running for a couple of weeks now, Ramirez said the new outdoor dining option has hit something of a snag.

"Some of the locals are upset about the temporary loss of parking," he said. "I understand their concerns. But businesses

have to survive. This is a way to help us stay open. This is something the City needs to be forward-thinking about, perhaps extending this even beyond the shutdown, if they want to support businesses and help us grow and also survive."

Further complicating matters are Uber and Lyft threatening to ultimately withdraw from California, which Ramirez noted really crimps local restaurant and bar owner's efforts to keep a lid on DUIs and irresponsible behavior.

In response to an August court order requiring both rideshare companies to reclassify their California drivers as "employees"

instead of independent contractors, they both threatened to leave the state. Subsequently, the California Court of Appeal issued an order temporarily permitting Uber and Lyft to maintain their current employment status. The court has also given the companies until early September to come up with plans for how they would comply with the law.

"If we were to lose Uber and Lyft, that is going to impact business, something I don't think the public is aware of," argued Ramirez. "It's a public safety issue because DUIs have declined with ridesharing. The government needs to rethink some of the unintended consequences of its actions a little bit better."

Beach & Bay features Fish Shop

9/18/2020