

CASE STUDY

CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

2025



CASE STUDY: "DINE DIFFERENTLY" – TRANSFORMING BEVERLY HILLS WITH OPEN-AIR PARKLETS





CASE STUDY: "DINE DIFFERENTLY" TRANSFORMING BEVERLY HILLS WITH OPEN-AIR PARKLETS

As cities across the globe grapple with urban density and the demand for innovative environments, public space activation has become more important than ever. The City of Beverly Hills took an innovative step forward by transitioning its temporary OpenBH outdoor dining program into a permanent, structured solution that enhances its world-renowned streetscapes. Central to this transformation are custom parklets engineered and manufactured by Planters Unlimited, in partnership with LOHA Architects and the City's Planning Division.

THE VISION FOR BEVERLY HILLS

Originally launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, OpenBH was a vital, emergency response that allowed restaurants and cafes to serve patrons in sidewalk and parking space conversions. With the program's popularity and success, city leaders chose to formalize and elevate the parklet initiative. The vision was clear: create semi-permanent outdoor dining areas that enhance the pedestrian experience, maintain public safety, and meet the City's high aesthetic standards.

THE CHALLENGE

To turn a patchwork of temporary installations into cohesive, high-design outdoor spaces, Beverly Hills convened two task forces: the Design & Operating Standards Subcommittee and the Code & Fee Changes Subcommittee. Their task was to create a set of comprehensive design guidelines and infrastructure standards. This required extensive collaboration with stakeholders including businesses, designers, technical experts, and the public.

Planters Unlimited was brought in as a manufacturing partner due to their ability to meet the city's precise engineering, material, and visual requirements. Our role was to design and fabricate barrier systems that were not only attractive, modular, and safe—but also customizable to the needs of individual establishments and compliant with city code.

OUR ROLE: CUSTOM ENGINEERING MEETS URBAN DESIGN

Planters Unlimited's core strength lies in custom fabrication, and this capability was pivotal in bringing the Beverly Hills parklet initiative to life. We were selected as the City's partner due to our unmatched ability to engineer site-specific, high-quality solutions that combine aesthetics, durability, and modularity. From the outset, we collaborated closely with the City and LOHA Architects to develop a tailored Kit-of-Parts system that not only met every technical specification but also elevated the visual and functional aspects of the pedestrian experience. A major design priority was ensuring that each component could be easily removed and reinstalled without compromising safety—allowing the City to adapt installations for maintenance, seasonal changes, or special events. Despite this flexibility, our barrier and planter systems were engineered to meet rigorous impact resistance standards, delivering a secure, semi-permanent solution that required no permanent ground attachment. This balance of mobility and structural integrity, combined with our in-house manufacturing precision and collaborative approach, made us the ideal partner for this forward-thinking urban design initiative.



1. Modular Frame System

- Designed to accommodate any length of parklet.
- Engineered for placement on custom deck platforms that extend curb height to street level.

2. Impact-Resistant Barriers

- Barrier systems constructed from GFRC.
- Weight-calibrated to meet city-mandated vehicular safety standards (6,000 lbs impact resistance at 30").
- No need for permanent attachment—barriers are freestanding and interlocked for stability.

3. Vegetation-Ready Designs

- Barriers double as planters with pre-integrated vegetation compartments.
- While the City provided pre-approved palettes of living plants, Planters Unlimited can also offer artificial plant palettes as part of our core offering for future projects—delivering low-maintenance greenery without sacrificing design integrity.

4. Accessory Integration

- Supports screens, branded signage, trellising, lighting, and weather-protection elements.
- Seamlessly integrates into the Kit-of-Parts design with quick-install capabilities.

5. Finishes & Form Factors

- Custom finishes: Charcoal, Oatmeal, Sand, White, Bone.
- Custom forms: Fluted, Pleated, Modern Rectangle, and Scalloped designs

COLLABORATION WITH LOHA ARCHITECTS

Working with one of Los Angeles' premier architectural firms, LOHA (Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects), Planters Unlimited engaged in detailed design reviews and iterative prototyping to ensure every component aligned with architectural intent, structural standards, and the City's aesthetic vision. Known for their progressive urban design and commitment to social and environmental impact, LOHA brought a deep understanding of how to craft dynamic, context-sensitive spaces that reflect the culture and needs of the community. Planters Unlimited's adaptability and precision in custom fabrication complemented LOHA's architectural vision, helping to realize a modular, forward-thinking streetscape solution for Beverly Hills. Our ability to engineer to exacting specifications, accommodate city codes, and incorporate urban design principles played a crucial role in bringing the adaptive reuse and public realm enhancements to life. This collaboration included meticulous coordination of structural analyses and tolerance requirements to ensure seamless fit with elevated decking systems, as well as the delivery of on-site prototypes for real-time feedback and approval.

While the City of Beverly Hills supplied its own pre-approved palettes of living plants for the initial installation, Planters Unlimited remains uniquely positioned to provide artificial plant palettes for future projects. This flexible, collaborative approach allowed us to offer design modifications that maintained the visual language of the project while optimizing for performance and ease of installation.



KEY INSTALLATIONS



The Cheesecake Factory

The largest parklet deployment to date took place in front of The Cheesecake Factory, where Planters Unlimited delivered a highly customized solution tailored to the site's unique safety and spatial needs. This installation featured 12 large-scale parklet planters engineered with integrated rebar cages and concrete-filled bases. These design features were not only crucial for meeting the specific weight and impact resistance requirements set forth by the City of Beverly Hills, but they also ensured the planters remained freestanding and secure without the need for permanent ground attachment. This strategic combination of structural integrity and aesthetic appeal exemplifies how Planters Unlimited blends form and function to deliver high-performance urban streetscape solutions.

Ferrarini Cafe

"Planters Unlimited provided stand-alone barrier units for this site, delivering a clean, minimalist look that aligned with the café's design vision while still meeting Beverly Hills' safety and aesthetic standards. This installation showcased the adaptability of our barrier systems to meet site-specific requirements without compromising performance or visual appeal. A key difference in this project was that we delivered the barriers without the added weight, as the client opted to add the weight onsite, allowing for greater flexibility in the installation process.

Results

The permanent Beverly Hills Open Air Dining program officially launched in March 2024. Thanks to the city's vision and Planters Unlimited's execution, the transition from temporary to semi-permanent parklets was seamless. Our products fit precisely into the platform and sidewalk extensions, offering safe, beautiful, and easy-to-install dining environments. City officials, business owners, and patrons alike have praised the functionality and aesthetics of the installations.

What Makes Us Different

- Customization without compromise: Our barriers were purpose-built to meet city guidelines without forcing clients to sacrifice design vision.
- Precision and quality: From prototype to final delivery, each product was tailored to site-specific conditions.
- Collaborative partner: From early input in the design phase to on-site adaptations, we offered the flexibility and know-how to get it right.
- Streamlined for businesses: Restaurant owners can choose from approved finishes and forms with lead times of 6–8 weeks.





LOOKING AHEAD: SCALING FOR OTHER CITIES AND BUSINESSES

Planters Unlimited offers cities and businesses a proven model for public space transformation. Whether it's a pilot program or citywide initiative.

Planters Unlimited brings the same precision, adaptability, and creative partnership to cities and businesses of all scales. Whether the goal is a citywide initiative like Beverly Hills' permanent Open Air Dining program or a single restaurant looking to expand its footprint creatively, our team offers a proven, streamlined approach. We deliver pre-approved prototypes tailored to municipal requirements, conduct educational Lunch & Learn sessions with key stakeholders, and provide full customization of designs for any climate or location. Our collaborative process also includes coordination with local architects and regulatory agencies to ensure each installation aligns with structural and aesthetic goals. This flexible, start-to-finish support system makes Planters Unlimited an ideal partner for transforming outdoor dining into a lasting community asset.

Let's transform outdoor dining—together.

BOOK A CALL WITH OUR EXPERT SALES EXECUTIVE.



6056 Corte Del Cedro
Carlsbad, Ca 92011
[1-888-320-0626](tel:1-888-320-0626)
sales@plantersunlimited.com

