

Street Patios Pilot Project

On a trial basis for 2020-2021, the Street Patios Pilot Project is an opportunity for restaurants, cafés, and certain other businesses to extend outdoors onto District-owned streets and sidewalks. This pilot is one way in which the District of Sechelt has committed to find workable solutions to assist local businesses which have been impacted by the physical distancing restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Introduction

The presence of street patios can inject vibrancy into a streetscape and enhance the pedestrian experience. Creating such places for people to meet and sit improves social connections and community safety, which benefits overall livability. Street patios in certain areas are supported by the District of Sechelt's Official Community Plan and Council's Strategic Plan.

This booklet provides guidance on the safe and appropriate use of public streets and sidewalks for businesses interested in expanding their outdoor dining or display of merchandise.

The term ***street patio*** is used interchangeably with *street/sidewalk cafés* or *sidewalk sales*, and includes all objects and furnishings associated with the street patio such as decks, railings, fences, tables, chairs, umbrellas, awnings, signage, lighting, and planters.



For permission to construct a patio or place furnishings or sales goods on public-owned streets or sidewalk areas, please review the following guidelines and contact the District of Sechelt to discuss your proposal. Not all guidelines will apply to all situations - each patio may have a unique situation.

The District may issue a Licence to Occupy Agreement for proposals which substantially meet the street patio guidelines:

Street Patio Guidelines

Guiding Principles

Street patios should

- Enhance the pedestrian experience along the street and contribute a feeling of vibrancy and activity to the area.
- Reinforce and respect the character of the surrounding streetscape, buildings and neighbourhood, and compliment the look of the business holding the patio licence.
- Allow for reasonable movement of people or vehicles in the area.
- Maintain a safe, secure, and comfortable environment for pedestrians in the area.
- Have an open appearance, i.e. not fully enclosed.
- Minimize noise issues, particularly at night.

Location

Locations for street patios will be considered

- Within the Downtown Sechelt Business Improvement Area, or within other commercial areas as determined suitable by the District.
- Only for the sidewalk area or parking stall fronting the business applying for the patio use, unless neighbouring business provides written consent. The District has a template letter for your use.

Safety, Operations and Maintenance

Street patios must

- Be visible to passing traffic and maintain clear sightlines at intersections and crossings.
- Maintain a safe clearance from road traffic and parked cars.
- Not obstruct access for emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles where reasonable alternative exists, public utilities, service connections, or exits from buildings.
- Not impede roadway and curb drainage.
- Not adversely affect boulevard vegetation such as grass and tree, nor prevent District access and maintenance to hanging flower baskets or lamp poles.
- Be maintained at all times by the business holding the street patio license, including managing waste generated by the business, repairs, painting, cleaning, and hazards within and emanating from the licence area.
- Be designed such that decks, fences and railings are fixed in place and of significant strength, yet allow for easy removal within two working days. A patio deck may be approved if there is a need to level a steep incline (more than 5%) or to harmonize indoor and outdoor seating levels.
- Not have any parts, objects or furnishings overhanging or outside of the patio area.

Accessibility and Passage

- Designs should be accessible for all ages and abilities.
- To allow pedestrian passage, maintain a minimum horizontal clearance of 1.5 m from the street patio to the nearest sidewalk obstruction, such as a tree, bike rack, signpost, utility or lamp pole, bench, portable sign, or bus shelter. A clearance greater than 1.5 m may be required in high pedestrian flow areas. Pedestrian passageways should remain as straight and clear as possible.
- Passageways for pedestrians must be on sidewalks or hardscaped surfaces only, for pedestrian safety and to avoid damage to grass, trees, and other landscaping.

Impacts to Neighbouring Areas, Trees and Boulevards

- Street patios shall not obstruct adjacent business entrances or exits.
- No liquids or cleaning products shall be dumped, allowed to flow or to drain into a tree well or District drains.
- No pesticide or fertilizer applications shall be applied to street trees or landscaping.

Furnishings

- Furnishings such as patio decking, tables, chairs, planters, low screens and accessories should be moveable, durable, manufactured for outdoor use and of a solid weight for stability.
- Use of locally produced materials is encouraged.

Weather Protection

- Awnings should be mounted on a removable wall bracket and be retractable.
- Weather protection, such as awnings, umbrellas or other similar solutions should be constructed of flame-resistant and fade-resistant canvas.

Lighting and Signage

- Lighting levels should be low and directed into the street patio area rather than out towards the street or onto adjacent properties.
- No signage or third-party advertising is permitted, other than for the business operating the street patio.
- Street patio signage should be attached to the railings or patio furnishings, unobtrusive and maximum of .5m X .5m in size.

Heating

- Heaters must not be placed within the dripline and/or closer than 2 m from any part of adjacent street trees.
- The visual impact of heating devices/ systems should be considered and arranged to be as unobtrusive as possible.
- All outdoor heating devices must conform to safety standards established by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and certified by Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada, as necessary

Use of Adjacent Parking Stall

Cafés or restaurants may apply to the District to use an adjacent parking stall for a street patio. In these cases, the following guidelines apply in addition to the guidelines above.

A parking stall street patio must:

- Provide an adequate buffer between the outer edge of the patio and adjacent travel lane and should not extend more than 2.5 m from the curb into the street.
- Have railings that are a minimum of 1.07 m in height from curb elevation on all sides that are exposed to the street with reflectors for visibility to traffic.
- Only be located where permanent parking or loading is permitted. The patio must not occupy a lane used by moving traffic at any time.
- Provide adequate space to allow vehicle access to adjacent parking stalls.
- Not be located on a street exceeding a running slope of 5%.

Permission to Occupy District-owned sidewalk or street space

To apply for a street patio “licence to occupy” agreement, please provide:

- A current District business licence, for a business use related to the patio use, i.e. food establishment or retail sales;
- Proof of insurance coverage for \$2 million liability;
- If proposing to extend into a neighbouring business’ frontage, written letter of support (the District has a template letter for your use);
- If within the Sechelt Business Improvement Area, written letter of support from the Sechelt Downtown Business Association;
- Digital copy (may be hand-drawn and scanned) of a detailed site plan drawn to scale, showing:
 - The premises in relation to the proposed patio area the affected sidewalk, curb, and/or parking stalls;
 - Width of pedestrian passageway (1.5 m minimum);
 - All entrances and exits for the premises and for adjacent businesses within 5 m on either side of the proposed patio area;
 - Adjacent bus zones, landscaping and any other District street furniture within 5 m on either side of the business frontage; and
 - Proposed patio objects and furnishings.
- Photographs of the proposed patio area;
- To apply for a street patio where food is served, ensure all necessary permissions are obtained from Vancouver Coastal Health, and for serving liquor, BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch.

And lastly:

- In order to make this pilot a success, the District is prepared to work in the spirit of cooperation, sharing of ideas and being open to possibilities, and we appreciate the same from applicants. The District will measure successes and challenges and may ask applicants to summarize their experiences at the end of the pilot.

Note: For patios which are completely on the business’ private property, a ‘licence to occupy’ District-owned land is not required. However separate permission may still be required from the District for new patios, for increases in occupant loads, or for expanded service areas under existing liquor licences. Please contact District staff to verify what is required for your proposal.