

Guidelines for



The presence of street patios can inject vibrancy into our streetscapes and enhance the pedestrian experience. Allowing for places where people can meet and sit improves social connections and community safety, which benefits overall livability.

The District of Sechelt is allowing limited use of public street space for businesses wishing to extend outdoor dining and seating areas, following these guidelines.

What is a Street Patio?

- A *street café, sidewalk café or outdoor dining patio*
- Situated on public street space (roads or sidewalks)
- Patio elements may include decks, railings, fences, tables, chairs, umbrellas, awnings, signage, lighting and planters



Thinking of adding an outdoor patio for your business?

If you are a licenced Sechelt business interested in adding or extending an outdoor seating area for your patrons to consume food and/or beverages associated with a restaurant, cafe, bakery, delicatessen, take-out service, or brewery, you may require permissions before proceeding.

- If any portion of the proposed patio will be on District of Sechelt public street or sidewalk space, please read the 'Section A - Street Patio Guidelines'. To apply for a licence, complete the application form in Section B.
- If the proposed patio will be entirely on private property, please see 'Section C - Patios on Private Property' for guidance.

It is advisable to speak to Planning staff to discuss your proposal and to Building staff if you are considering putting up an awning or other structure. Please allow sufficient time for assessing your application and obtaining the District's permission.

A. 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:

- On District of Sechelt public street space within Sechelt's Downtown Core, and within other commercial areas at the discretion of the District.

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 or means of egress from buildings.
- Not impede roadway and curb drainage.
- Not adversely affect boulevard vegetation such as grass and trees, nor prevent District access and maintenance to hanging flower baskets or lamp poles.
- Be clean and maintained at all times by the business holding the street patio licence, 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 1.5m 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 1.5m 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.
- Awnings may require a Building Permit, check with the District of Sechelt Building Department.

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 be placed outside of the dripline of any adjacent street trees and no closer than 2m from any part of an adjacent street tree.
- 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, and/or the Gas Safety Act Regulation, 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%.

*designed to resist 1.0 kN/m of a horizontal load applied at any point

B. How to Apply

To apply for a street patio, please provide:

- Name of applicant _____
- Name of business _____
- Address of business _____
- Current District of Sechelt business licence number _____
- Proof of insurance coverage for \$2 million commercial general liability coverage, naming the District of Sechelt as an additional insured party, and with a 30 days' notice of cancellation clause.
- Detailed plan drawn to scale, in accordance with street patio guidelines, and showing:
 - Business premises in relation to proposed patio area, affected sidewalks, curb, and parking stalls
 - Width of pedestrian passageway (1.5 m minimum, more space may be required in certain areas)
 - All entrances and exits of the premises and for adjacent businesses within 5 m on either side of the proposed patio area
 - Within 5 m of patio area, any adjacent bus stops, landscaping and District-owned street furniture
 - Proposed patio objects and furnishings
- Photographs of the proposed patio area
- If proposing to extend into a neighbouring business' frontage, support in writing from neighbouring business owner (a template letter is available at www.sechelt.ca/street-patios)
- Payment of application fee (\$50)

Other requirements, as applicable:

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure their proposal complies with local bylaws and provincial/federal requirements, such as:

- District of Sechelt zoning bylaw and parking requirements, Development Permit requirements, for example 'Downtown Sechelt' form and character guidelines
- District of Sechelt Building Permit requirements
- Occupant load for the building, as well as safe egress
- BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch requirements for expansion of an existing BC liquor license area, or for a new liquor licence
- Local health authority requirements for food permits

It is advisable to speak to Planning staff to discuss your proposal and to Building staff if you are considering putting up an awning or other structure. Please allow sufficient time for assessing your application and obtaining the District's permission.

How applications are assessed:

Each patio may have a unique situation. The District will assess which guidelines apply to your business' proposal, how well the site suits the proposal, and whether the proposal complies with District of Sechelt bylaws. If approved, the terms and conditions of approval will form the Licence to Occupy Agreement between the owner/business owner and the District of Sechelt.

C. Patios on Private Property

For outdoor patio proposals which are entirely within the business' private property, and not on District-owned street space, a 'Licence to Occupy' Agreement is not required.

However, please note that all proposals must still comply with local bylaws and provincial/federal requirements. It is the owner's responsibility to find out whether their proposal:

- Complies with District of Sechelt's Zoning Bylaw and parking requirements
- Requires a District of Sechelt Building Permit or Development Permit
- Increases the occupant load of a building, or affects safe egress or public safety
- Expands the service area for an existing BC liquor license
- Requires any amendments to food permits issued by the local health authority