

Signage

Signage is not permitted within an outside dining area except with a valid City permit. No extra or additional signage is permitted solely as a result of having an outdoor dining area.

Waste Receptacles

Waste receptacles shall be provided in outside seating areas for “quick serve” establishments (typically using disposable utensils) and/or when table service is not provided. Waste receptacles shall not be placed in outside seating areas when table service is provided unless required by the Planning Director.

Entertainment

Outdoor seating areas that include dancing, entertainment, or amplified music require the preparation of a noise analysis with the appropriate mitigation measures. Outdoor entertainment requires a separate application from the City.

Parking Requirements

Small outdoor seating areas will not be required to provide additional off-street parking. Large outdoor seating areas shall comply with the requirements for off-street parking for the full measurement of the seating area.

Compliance with Laws

1. Handicapped Accessibility Requirements: If any of the standards listed are found to be inconsistent with the American's Disabilities Act (ADA) or California Building Code (CBC) requirements, the ADA and/or CBC standards shall apply.
2. To the extent any requirements of the ABC are more stringent than the standards listed for restaurants serving alcohol, the ABC requirements shall apply.



Design Standards

1. *From Property Lines or Parking Lots:* a minimum unobstructed setback of three (3) feet from property lines or parking lots, including cars overhanging the curb.
2. *Residential Uses:* a minimum setback of two hundred (200) feet from residential uses (except approved mixed-use projects).
3. *From Other Businesses:* the minimum setback necessary to maintain the visibility of neighboring businesses to pedestrians and motorists.
4. *Pedestrian Space:* a minimum of four (4) feet of totally unobstructed walkway space shall be maintained around the outdoor seating area, and outdoor seating areas shall not disrupt disabled access.
5. *Perimeter Enclosure:* adequate space to ensure handicapped accessibility and to permit the movement of patrons and wait staff within the enclosure.
6. *Potential Impacts:* outdoor seating should consider the location of sensitive land uses and proper measures.



Hold Harmless Agreement: Outdoor seating areas immediately adjacent to the public right-of-way, a Hold Harmless Agreement in a form approved by the City Attorney, releasing the City from any liability related to the outdoor seating area.



City of Los Alamitos Small Outdoor Dining

The intent of the design standards for outdoor dining is to ensure quality outdoor seating area, the appropriate use of the public sidewalk for outdoor dining and safety for pedestrians in Los Alamitos.



“Restaurant, with outside seating area” means an area used as a seating area with tables and chairs for the contiguous restaurant. This seating may be in addition to the indoor seating or it may be the only seating available for the restaurant.

“Small outside seating areas” means outdoor restaurant seating that has a footprint occupying a total of 300 square feet or less in area.



Furniture & Fixtures

To ensure compatibility with surrounding uses and a high standard of design quality, all physical elements associated with an outdoor seating area shall be compatible with the overall design of the main structure. A wide range of furniture styles, colors and materials are permitted. All furniture and fixtures must be maintained in good visual appearance, without visible fading, dents, tears, rust, corrosion, or chipped or peeling paint. All furniture and fixtures must be maintained in a clean condition.

Table & Chairs: tables and chairs need to be functional not only for patrons, but also for pedestrians, given the limited space available in some areas. Outdoor dining furniture must also contribute to the overall atmosphere and be complementary in both appearance and quality. Table may be a dark earth tone or natural unpainted material (wood, metal etc). Tables shall not be white plastic or any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color. Upholstered chairs are permitted.

Umbrellas:

- Umbrellas must be free of advertisements or product names and all parts of an umbrella (including the fabric and supporting ribs) must be contained entirely within the outdoor seating area.
- When extended, the umbrella must measure at least 7 feet above the surface of the outdoor dining area in order to provide adequate circulation space below. This includes not only the umbrella frame and panels, but also any decorative borders such as fringes, tassels or other such ornamentation.
- No part of an umbrella may exceed a height of 10 feet above the surface of the outdoor dining area to avoid an undue visual obstruction of other businesses.
- Umbrellas must blend appropriately with the surrounding built environment.
- Umbrella fabric must be one solid color, and is not permitted to be a fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color.
- Given the constrained space of many outdoor dining areas, it is strongly recommended that square or rectangular umbrellas be used, as opposed to round or octagonal umbrellas.
- Market-style umbrellas (those specifically for patio or outdoor restaurant use, and must be canvas-type. No plastic fabrics, plastic/vinyl-laminated fabrics, or any type of rigid materials are permitted for use as umbrellas within an outdoor seating area.

Prohibited Furniture: Unless allowed by the conditions of a CUP, all furniture other than tables, chairs, umbrellas and heaters are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, serving stations, bar counters, shelves, racks, sofas, televisions, cooking appliances, torches.

Ground Coverings: The floor of outdoor seating areas shall be uncovered sidewalk material as to provide continuity with the adjacent public sidewalk or private walkway.

Barriers

Dining barriers are only required if alcohol will be served in the outdoor seating area, otherwise they are optional.

1. Serving Alcohol: all areas where alcoholic beverages are served outside must comply with the standards established by the State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Any perimeter fence and/or landscaped planter shall be designed to clearly suggest that alcohol is not allowed outside the seating area.

2. Design & Appearance: any barrier must be freestanding, without any permanent or temporary attachments to buildings, sidewalks or other infrastructure. The barriers must be compatible with the design of the building and maintained in good visual appearance.

Sectional Fencing: sectional fencing is generally defined as rigid fence segments that can be placed together to create a unified fencing appearance. This type of fencing is portable, but cannot be easily shifted by patrons or pedestrians, as can less rigid forms of enclosures. Sectional fencing must be of metal (aluminum, steel, iron, or similar) or of wood construction and must be of a dark color, either painted or stained.

Rope & Chain Rails: rope or chain-type barriers are generally defined as enclosures composed of a rope or chain suspended by vertical elements such as stanchions. These types of barriers are permitted if they meet the following guidelines:

- The rope or chain must have a minimum diameter of 1 inch, in order to remain detectable by the visually impaired.
- Vertical support posts (stanchions, bollards, etc) must be constructed of wood or metal (aluminum, steel, iron, or similar).
- A stanchion or other vertical supporting member that has a base must not be a tripping hazard. The stanchion base shall not be domed, and shall not be more than one-half (1/2) of an inch above the sidewalk surface.



Planters: planters may be used in addition to or in place of other barrier designs. Planters may be used in situations where no barrier is required in order to provide added visual interest and create a more attractive and welcoming atmosphere. All planters must have living plants contained within them. Dead plants within the planter must be replaced. Artificial plants; empty planters; or only bare dirt, straw woodchips or similar material are not permitted.

Prohibited Materials: Fabric inserts of any size are not permitted to be used as part of a barrier. The use of chain-link, cyclone fencing, chicken wire, or similar material is prohibited. Materials not specifically manufactured for fencing or pedestrian control are prohibited unless they are expressly allowed elsewhere in these guidelines. Materials such as buckets, small food containers, tires, tree stumps, vehicle parts, pallets, etc. are not permitted and shall not be used as components of a barrier.



Barrier Measurements: to ensure their effectiveness as pedestrian control devices and their ability to be detected by persons with vision impairments, barriers must meet the following measurements:

1. **Height:** The highest point of a barrier (such as a stanchion) must measure at least 36 inches in height, with the exception of planters.
2. **Maximum Height of Planters & Plants:** Planters may not exceed a height of 36 inches above the level of the sidewalk.
3. **Rope/Chain Distance from Ground:** In the case of a rope or chain enclosure, the bottom most point on a rope or chain must not exceed 27 inches in height.
4. **Maximum Distance from Ground:** All barriers must be detectable to visually impaired pedestrians who employ a cane for guidance. Therefore, the bottom of barriers must be no greater than 27 inches above the sidewalk surface.



Application Process

Outdoor seating may be allowed on private property as an accessory use associated with a legally approved eating and/or drinking business upon approval of a permit.

Approving Authority: small outside seating areas that will not serve alcohol in the outside seating areas shall require an administrative use permit from the City.

Submittal Requirements:

1. **Floor Plan:** a diagram showing the layout of the indoor business space, the proposed outdoor seating area with appropriate setbacks indicated.
2. **Furniture & Fixtures:** the submittal must identify the style, color and materials of all fixtures that will be placed in the outdoor seating area, including but not limited to tables, chairs, umbrellas, planters, barriers.

