



Planning & Community
Development

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Outdoor Seating

Private Property and Right of Way

Temporary regulations for outdoor seating areas went into effect on July 27, 2020 (Ordinance No. 895). The temporary regulations allow existing eating and drinking establishments (e.g. restaurants and bars) to expand their seating areas outside while still complying with the Safe Start Washington Plan. The temporary regulations allow for seating on private property (e.g. parking lots) and on City right-of-way (e.g. sidewalks).

Seating on Private Property

An Outdoor Seating Registration must be filed with Planning and Community Development prior to establishing outdoor seating on private property. There is no filing fee for the registration.

Parking requirements for both the indoor and outdoor areas of the business are also temporarily waived.

Seating on Right-of-Way

Seating on City right-of-way, such as a sidewalk or in a parking lane, requires a Right-of-Way Site Permit. A decision on the permit application will be issued within 7 business days of a complete application being submitted. Conditions may be placed on the permit to maintain safety and balance the needs of all users of the right-of-way.

Considerations for Seating on Right-of-Way:

1. Can seating be provided without blocking the sidewalk? A minimum 6 feet clear sidewalk has to be maintained around any seating areas.
2. Can seating be provided without blocking bike or vehicular traffic? The use of bike lanes or travel lanes will not be approved for seating on the Right-of-Way. Parking lanes may be used.
3. Can you safely keep traffic away from seating area? The use of traffic control devices such as signs and cones may be needed to ensure traffic does not enter the seating area.
4. Can you obtain the required insurance? Before submitting for the permit, a Certificate of Liability listing the City of Shoreline as additional insured is required. For more information please see our handout here:
<https://www.shorelinewa.gov/home/showdocument?id=13146>
5. Can you ensure the Right-of-Way remains clear of garbage and debris?
6. Can you provide ADA accessible access to the seating area?

Hours of Operation:

Monday 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Tuesday 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Wednesday 1:00 pm–5:00 pm
Thursday 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Friday 8:00 am–5:00 pm

Permit Processing Ends at 4:00 pm Daily

Other Considerations

While the temporary regulations allow flexibility to establish outdoor seating areas, they do not waive a business from continuing follow other applicable rules and regulations. Below are additional topics to consider and helpful contact resources.

Property Owner Permission

The City encourages businesses to check first with their landlord to obtain permission prior to creating outdoor seating areas.

Building Permit

Freestanding structures and attachments to existing structures require a building permit from the City of Shoreline. [You can learn more about the building permit process here.](#)

Fire Department Permit

Tents, canopies, and similar temporary structures may require a Fire Operations Permit. If your seating area will include a temporary covering you should contact the Shoreline Fire Department at 206-533-6565.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Outdoor seating areas should continue to meet ADA-accessibility standards.

Noise Control

The City of Shoreline has a Noise Control Ordinance (SMC 9.05) which establishes maximum noise levels leaving a property during daytime and nighttime hours.

State Liquor and Cannabis Board Licensing

[The State has issued guidance to alcohol licensees.](#) Businesses should confirm their seating areas are following LCB regulations.

Washington's Safe Start Re-Opening

Businesses should become familiar with guidance issued by the [State of Washington](#) and [King County](#) for businesses and workers.