

# City of West Hollywood Outdoor Dining In The Public-Right-Of-Way Eligibility and Design Guide

November 2023 - Prepared for The City of West Hollywood by Studio One Eleven



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

How to use the Outdoor Dining Eligibility and Design Guide	3
Outdoor Dining Application Process	4
Section 1 - Eligibility & Siting Criteria	5
Section 2 - Design Standards	12
Section 3 - Design Inspiration	25
Appendix	31



# How to use the Outdoor Dining Eligibility and Design Guide



Use this Design Guide as a resource to understand the application process and requirements to successfully get outdoor dining permitted on the sidewalk for your business. The Guide summarizes information from City ordinances and provides additional information on design standards and design inspiration.



For more information, contact:  
City of West Hollywood  
Community Development Department -  
(323) 848-6475 or [planning@weho.org](mailto:planning@weho.org)  
Public Works Department (Engineering  
Division) -  
(323) 848-3135 or [www.weho.org](http://www.weho.org)



## Outdoor Dining Permit Application Process

Get an overview of all the required and optional steps to prepare your outdoor dining permit for submission and for subsequent review and approval



### Section 1

## Eligibility & Siting Criteria

Find out whether your business is eligible or not to request an outdoor dining permit based on sidewalk width condition and other basic criteria



### Section 2

## Design Standards

Review all general standards and specific regulations applicable to your case and verify that your proposed design complies with all requirements



### Section 3

## Design Inspiration

Get inspired and make your outdoor dining great by implementing best design practices, utilizing creative yet functional materials and elements



## Appendix

Expand your knowledge by reviewing current regulations, terminologies, and other official documents on which this guide is based



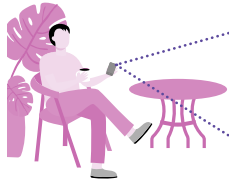
# Outdoor Dining Application Process



Use this roadmap to navigate through each step of the Outdoor Dining Permit Process

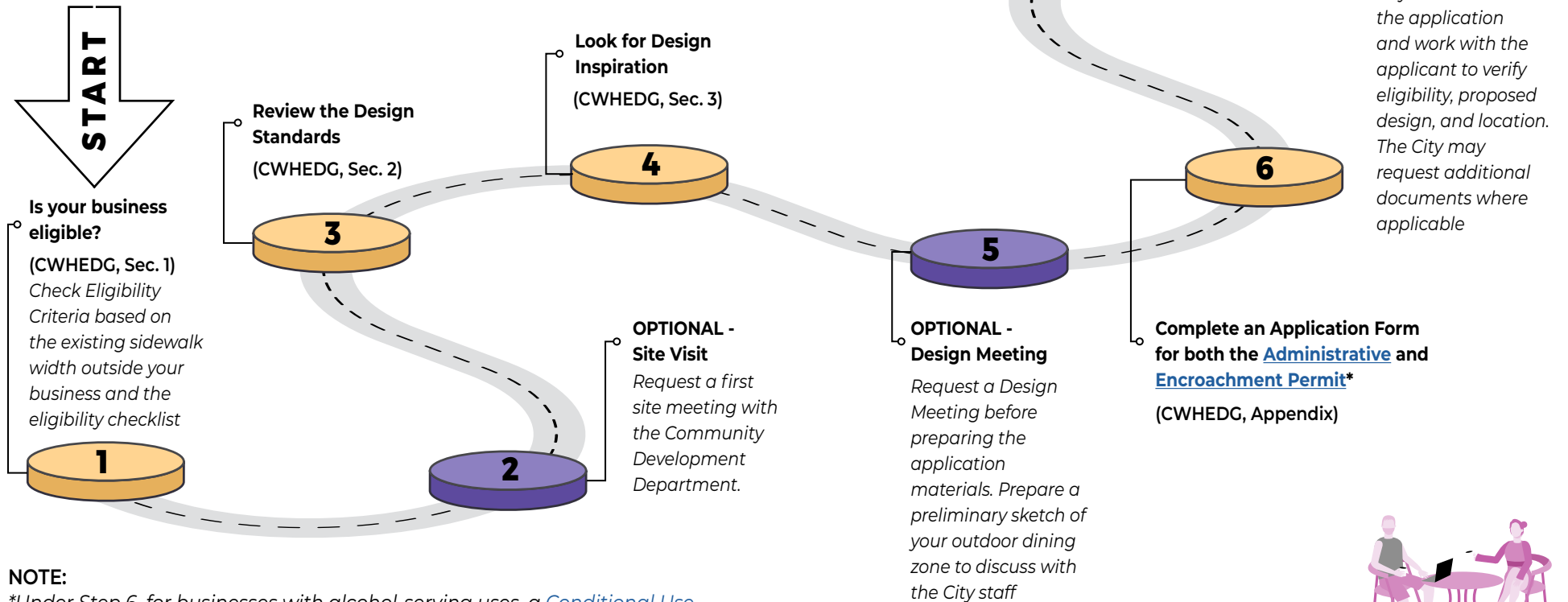
More information about each step is available as referenced in -

- [West Hollywood Municipal Code Chapter 11.28 Outdoor Dining on Public Right of Way \(CWHMC\)](#) ([link](#))
- [West Hollywood Municipal Code Section 19.36.210 \(CWHMC\)](#) ([link](#))
- [West Hollywood Outdoor Dining Eligibility and Design Guide \(CWHEGD\) Sections 1, 2, 3, and Appendix](#)



## CONTACT - Site Visits / Design Meetings

Garen S Yolles (323) 848 6827  
Urban Designer GYolles@weho.org



## NOTE:

\*Under Step 6, for businesses with alcohol-serving uses, a [Conditional Use Permit \(CUP\)](#) or a [Minor Conditional Use Permit \(MCUP\)](#) may be required.



# SECTION 1 - ELIGIBILITY & SITING CRITERIA

## Outdoor Dining Eligibility Checklist



Every business must comply with the following eligibility criteria before to start preparing an application for outdoor dining

Use this checklist provided below to confirm that your business complies with ALL these requirements.

If your business does not comply with all the requirements you may not be eligible to request an outdoor dining permit.

For more information, refer to (CWHMC Ch. 11.28.090) ([link](#)) or contact the City's Planning Department ([link](#)).

Review each point to confirm eligibility before preparing your Outdoor Dining Permit Applications:

- 1**  Identify the width of the sidewalk in front of your business
  - Narrow Sidewalk (<12')
  - Moderate Sidewalk (≥12'-<19')
  - Wide Sidewalk (≥19')
- 2**  Ensure your business has sufficient space for outdoor dining while maintaining the minimum clear walkway required based on sidewalk width and Outdoor Dining Sitting Criteria ([link](#))
- 3**  The property owner is required to sign the permit application along with the business owner
- 4**  The proposed outdoor dining area is not located in an alley adjacent to a residential zoning district
- 5**  The applicant must be able to provide the required Bond prior to issuance of the Encroachment permit and the required Liability Insurance Policy after the approval of the permit ([link](#))

- 6**  Storefront door shall not swing out into the public right of way and the intended outdoor dining zone shall not obstruct access to any public utilities – or it must allow for a minimum clearance distance from seating or tables
  - There is no presence of any public utilities , vaults, meters, etc.
  - There are utilities but it allows for the minimum clearances
- 7**  For dining on sidewalk extensions close to intersections, a minimum distance of 15' from the beginning of curb radius to the edge of proposed outdoor dining area shall be maintained for drivers' visibility
- 8**  Sidewalk extensions for outdoor dining shall not be located in a red or blue curb zone
- 9**  The intended outdoor dining zone shall not block a bus-only lane or bus stop curb extension
- 10**  The intended outdoor dining zone must not obstruct driveway access
- 11**  The intended outdoor dining zone must not block a scooter/bicycle drop off zone



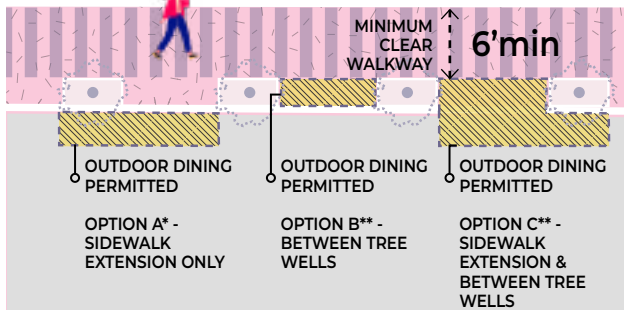
# Outdoor Dining Siting Criteria



Eligibility for outdoor dining is determined by the width of the sidewalk in front of your business

**Narrow sidewalk (<12' wide)** - Eligible to remove up to two street parking stalls to install dining on sidewalk extension,

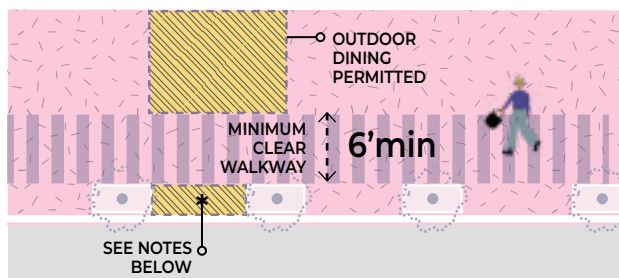
**Moderate (≥12' - <19')**, and **Wide sidewalks (≥19')** - Only eligible for dining on existing sidewalk in accordance with the areas and the configurations show below. For more information, refer to (CWHMC Ch. 11.28.090) ([link](#)).



## NARROW (<12')

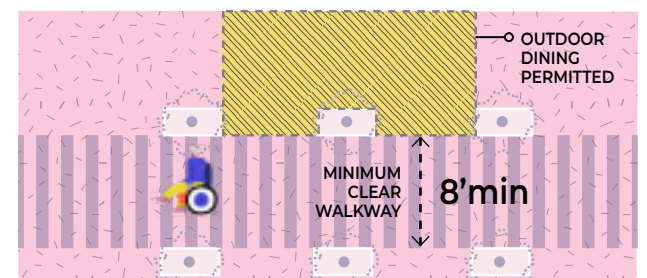
\*Apply for one option only (A, B or C).

\*\*Options B and C can be granted on a case-by-case basis for locations with low pedestrian volume, where applicable.



## MODERATE (≥12' and <19')

\*The proposed outdoor dining may extend into the space between tree wells if there is no presence of public utilities.

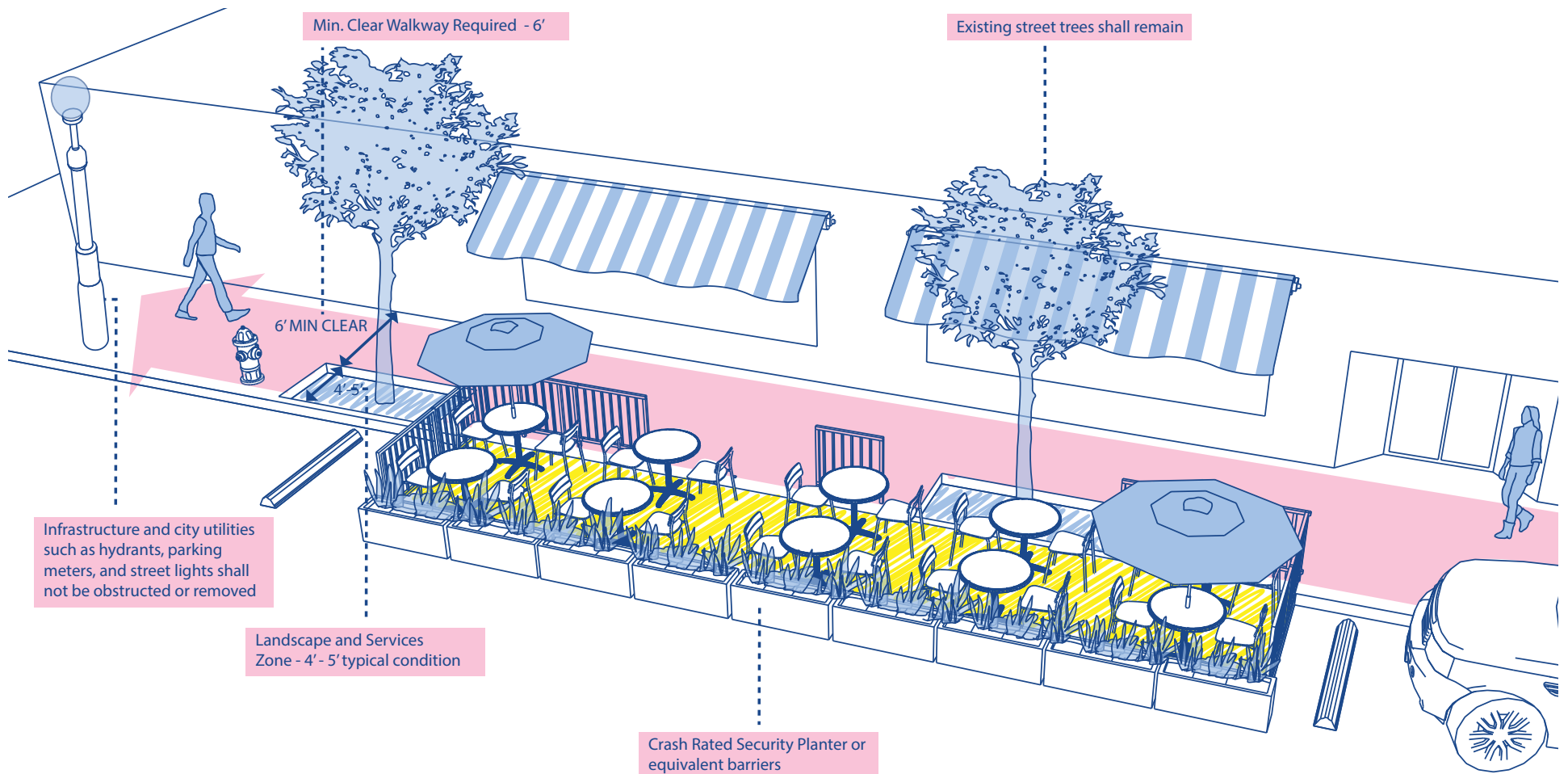


## WIDE (≥19')



# Narrow Sidewalk (<12')

## Option A - Sidewalk Extension Only

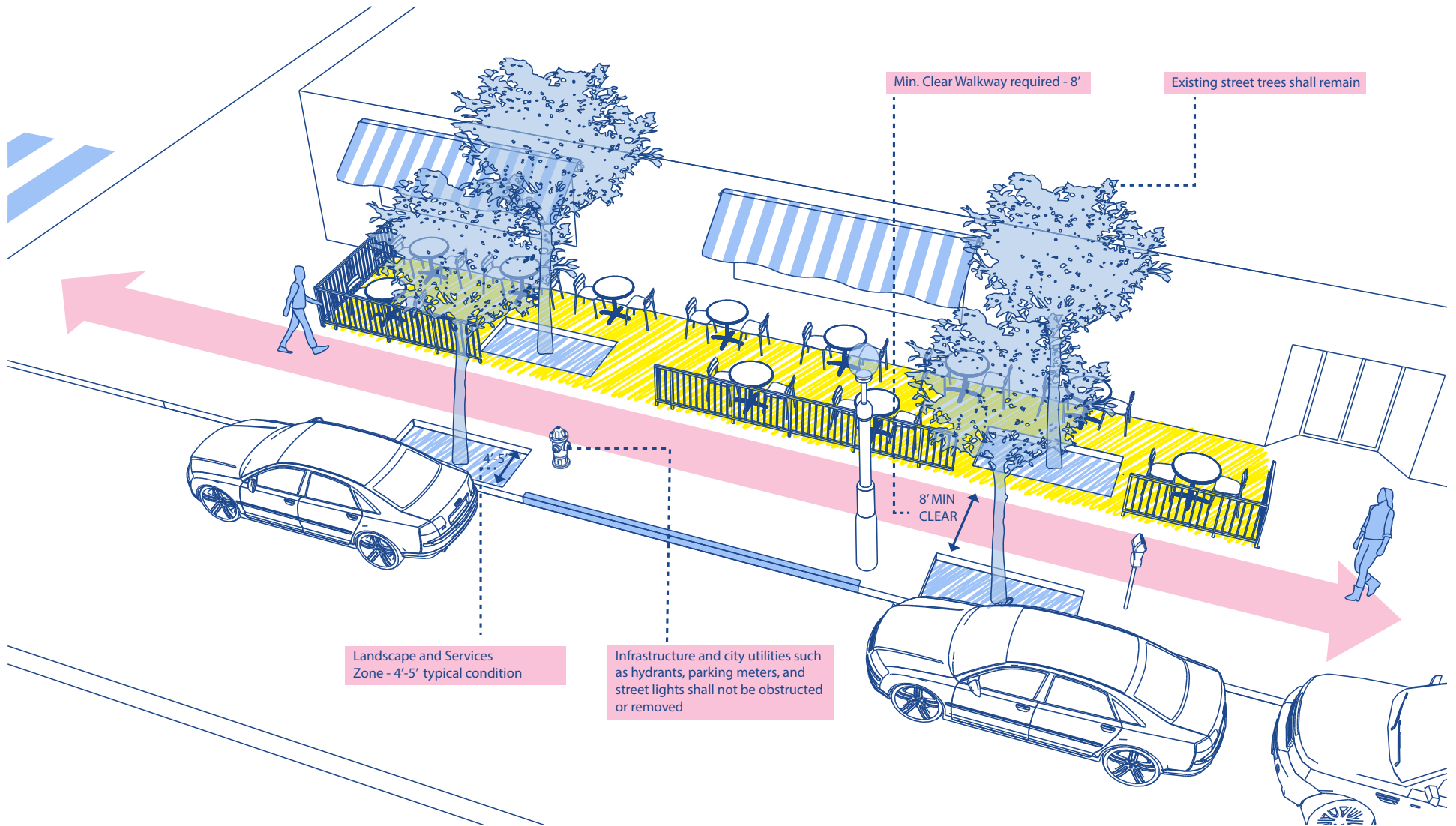








# Wide Sidewalk ( $\geq 19'$ )



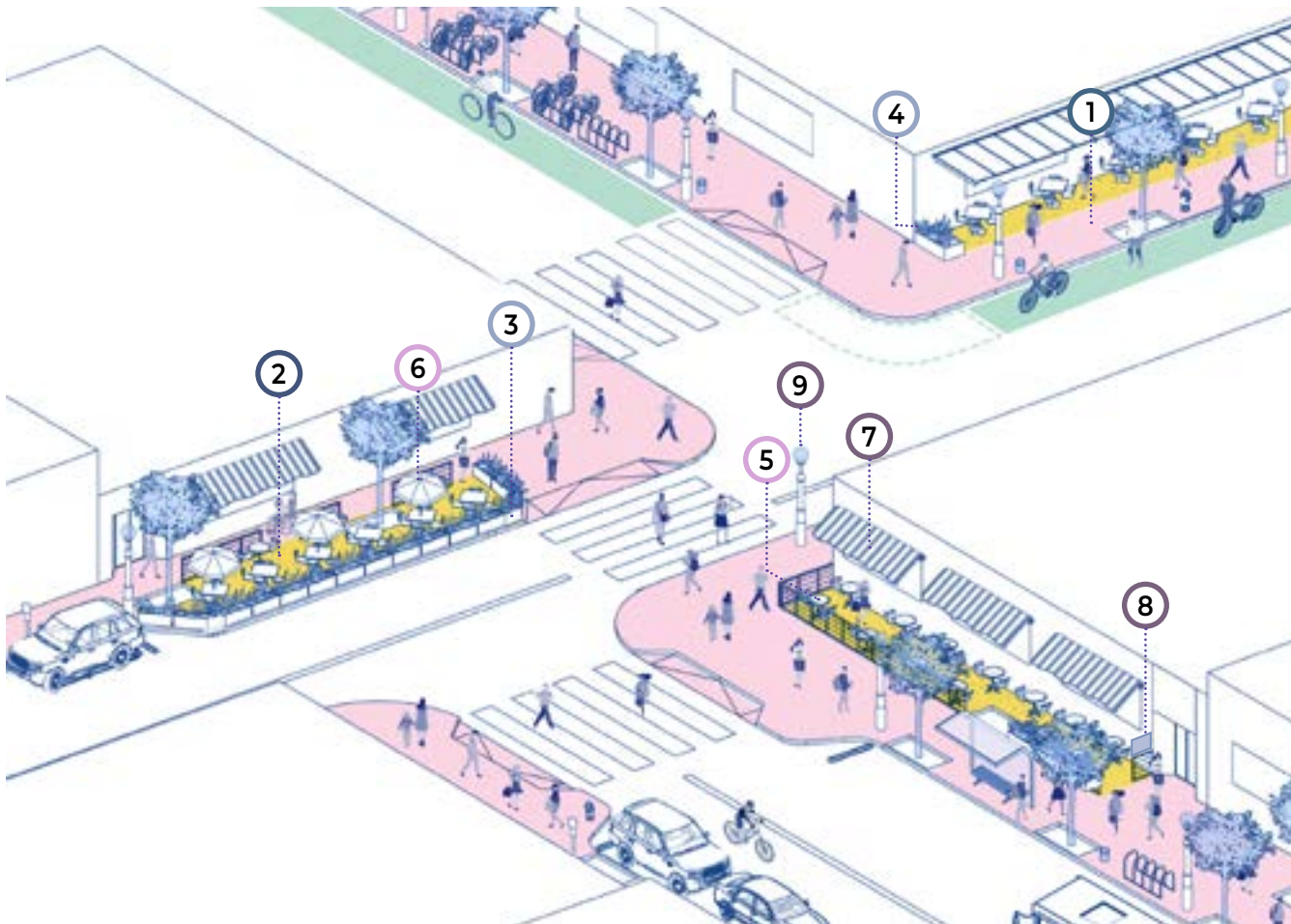
# SECTION 2 - DESIGN STANDARDS



Use this section to review the general design standards and specific regulations with which proposed outdoor dining site plan must comply.

In addition to the standards below, all requirements for egress and safety considerations from the Building and Safety Department should be met ([link](#)). Please also refer to the Standards of Operation ([link](#)). Businesses shall establish and adhere to a nightly operational schedule for their outdoor areas, avoiding neglect of their outdoor spaces on less busy nights.

For more information, refer to (CWHMC Ch. 11.28.090) ([link](#)) and California Building Code (CBC) ([link](#)).

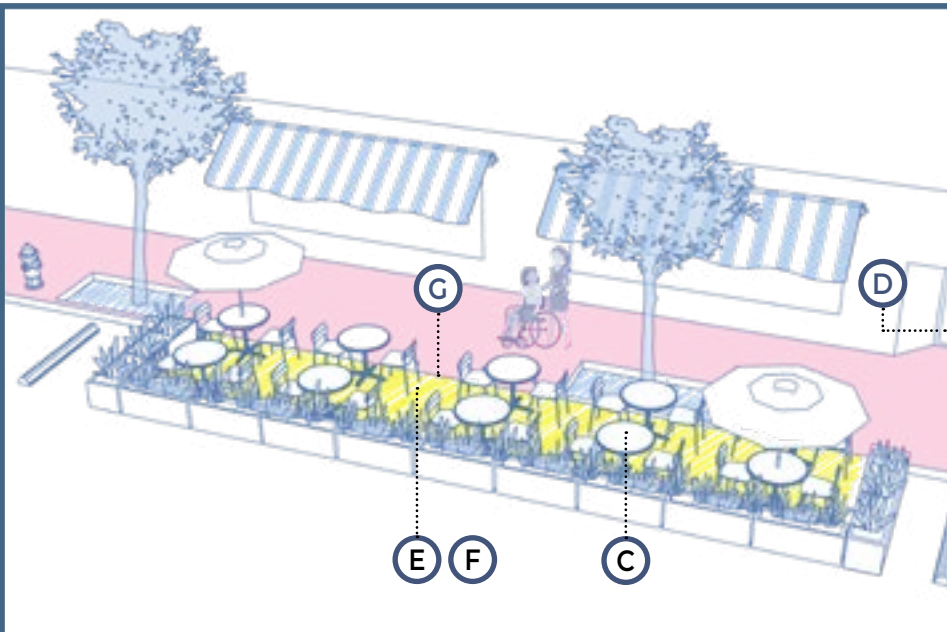
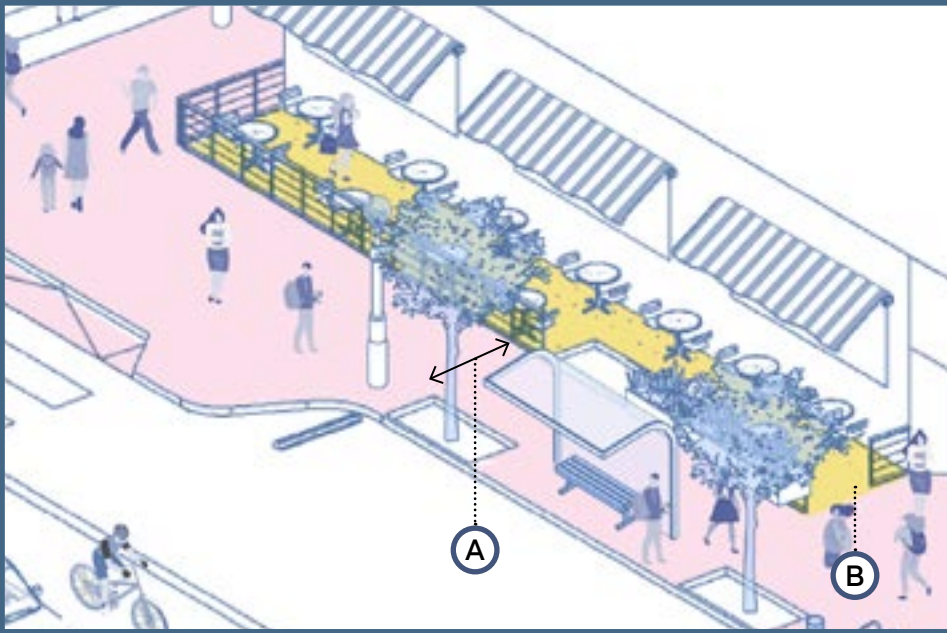


## Design Standards by Theme:

- 1 Accessibility
- 2 Sidewalk Dining Extension
- 3 Railings, Planters and Barriers
- 4 Landscape
- 5 Furniture
- 6 Umbrellas and Heaters
- 7 Overhead Structures, Canopies and Awnings
- 8 Signage
- 9 Lighting / Sound



# 1- Accessibility



**A** Minimum clearances for straight pedestrian walkways shall be maintained on the sidewalk based on the requirements for narrow, medium, and wide sidewalks (CWHEDG, Sec. 1 - p. 6) ([link](#)). The obstruction-free pedestrian clearances shall be maintained between the outdoor dining area and any sidewalk obstructions, including but not limited to street trees, news racks, bus benches, and curb lines.

**B** Queuing: Queuing areas for individual businesses shall not occupy or make use of the pedestrian clear walkway. The minimum clear pedestrian walkway required shall be maintained clear of obstructions at all times.

**C** For dining areas with fixed tables, a minimum of 5% of the tables or at least one table (if less than 20 tables are provided) shall be designed to be readily accessible and comply with CBC Disability standards.

**D** Business frontage or storefront doors shall swing in where permitted be recessed or otherwise configured to avoid projecting into the public right of way.

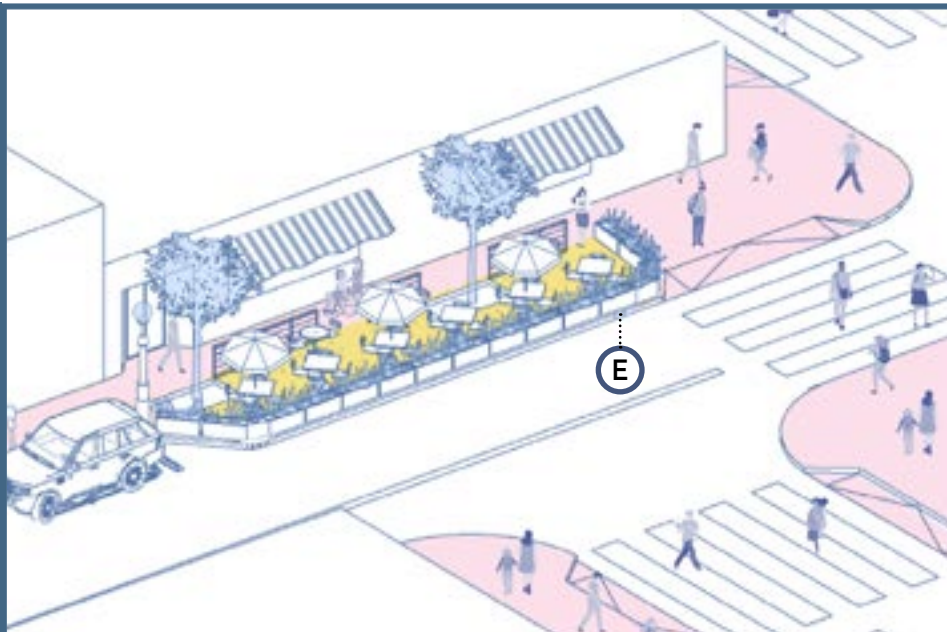
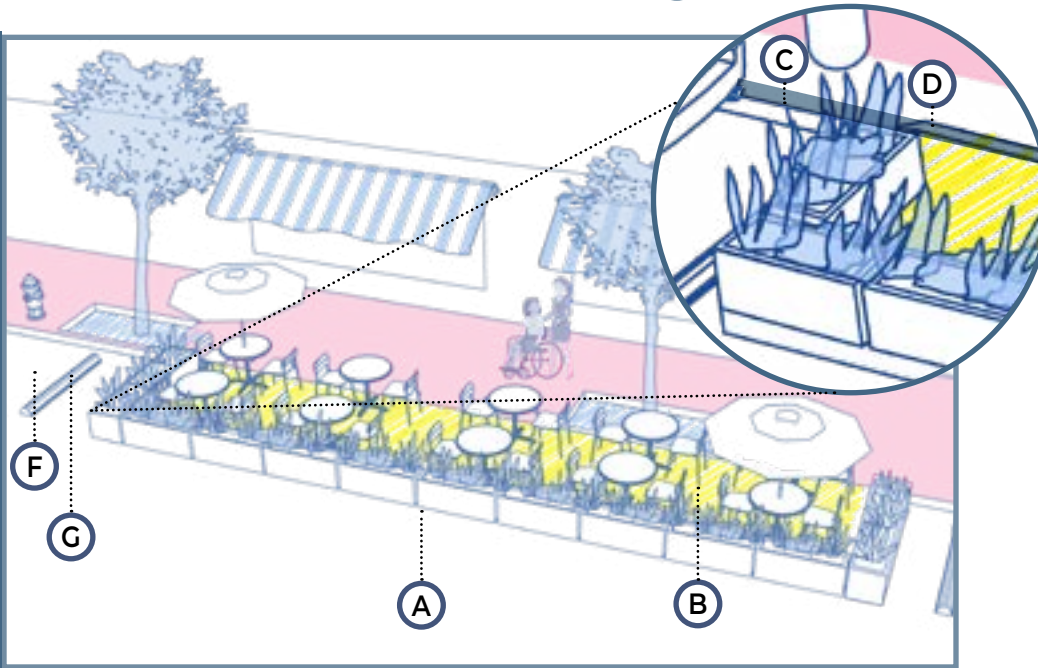
## Sidewalk Extensions:

**E** Sidewalk dining extensions shall have a maximum slope of 2% in all directions. All outdoor dining shall meet the requirements of the current code at time of permitting.

**F** Sidewalk extension shall incorporate at least one ADA access point.

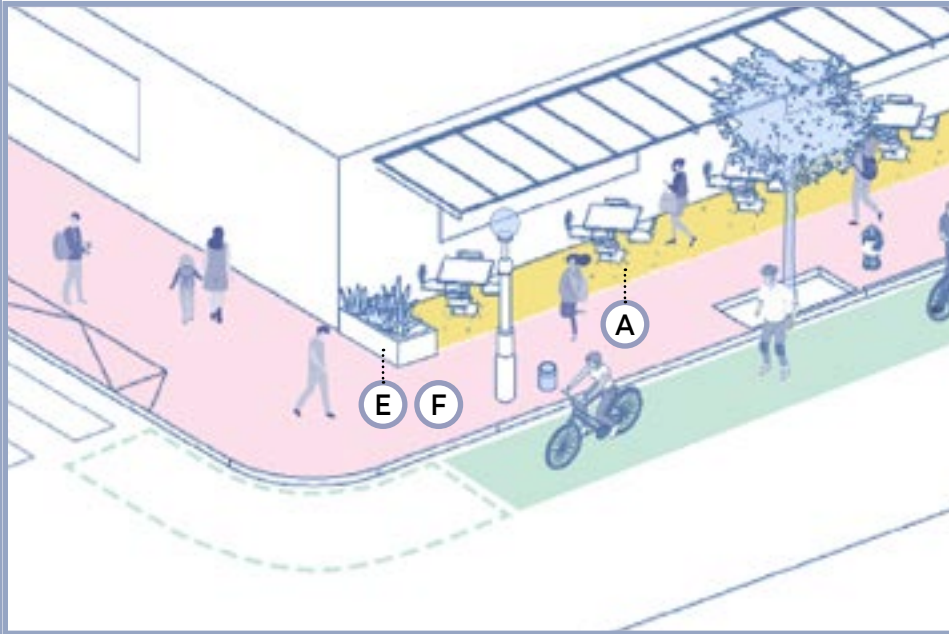
**G** A maximum permitted vertical difference of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch is allowed between the curb and the sidewalk extension.

## 2- Sidewalk Dining Extension



- A** Sidewalk dining extensions must be constructed to be fully removable, and designed to be of a solid material without any cavities or gaps between the dining surface and the street where trash may accumulate. Options for the extension can include a concrete deck on a rigid foam layer or other materials that create a stable, level surface and do not bind to the street.
- B** The weight of the deck should be less than 200 lbs per square foot.
- C** A joint or gap of maximum ½ inch between curb and sidewalk dining extension surface is allowed.
- D** Sidewalk dining extensions shall be integrated to tie into existing stormwater drainage to the satisfaction of the City's Engineering Division.
- E** Bulbouts or full extensions of the curb and gutter to accommodate dining on a sidewalk extension may be permitted at intersections subject to approval from the City's Engineering Division.
- F** Bulbouts or extensions not at a corner in former parking spaces shall ensure at least two consecutive parking spaces remain.
- G** A four foot long concrete, rubber or metal wheel stop shall be installed on the asphalt pavement, at least one foot from the curb and at the edge of the parking stalls on either side of the sidewalk dining extension. The sidewalk extension shall be set 4' back from the parking stops on either side.

# 3- Railings, Planters and Barriers



**No railing or barrier is required if ALL the following conditions are met:**

- The applicant proposes to limit the sidewalk cafe area to one row of tables and chairs.
- The row of tables and chairs abuts the wall of the establishment.
- No alcohol will be served in the sidewalk cafe area.
- Railings or barriers shall be required for all designated sidewalk cafe areas, except for outdoor dining configurations identified above.

## Railings:

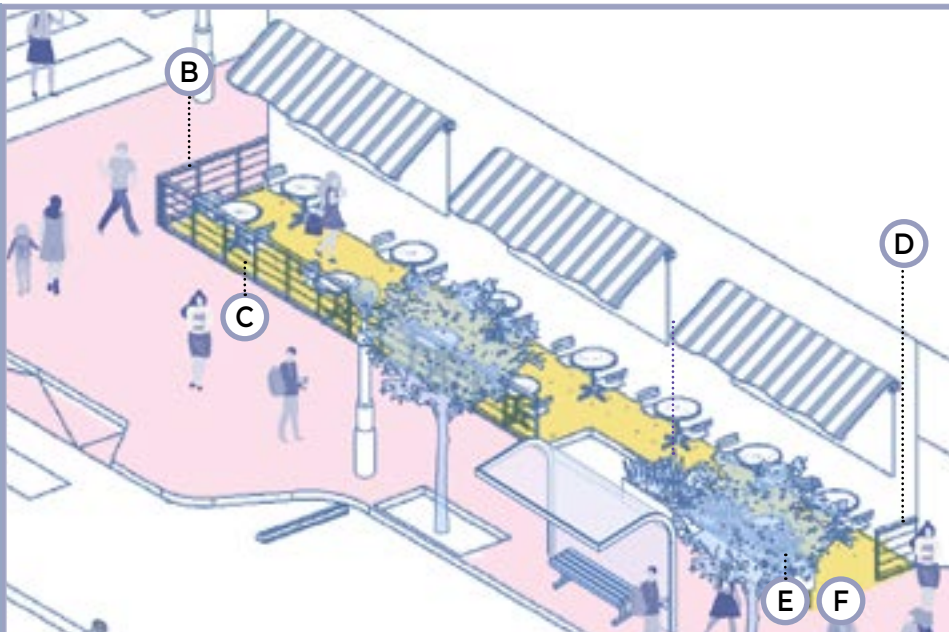
Sidewalk railings must be no higher than three feet. All ABC/sidewalk dining rails shall be designed to withstand 200 lbs of force at 36" height.

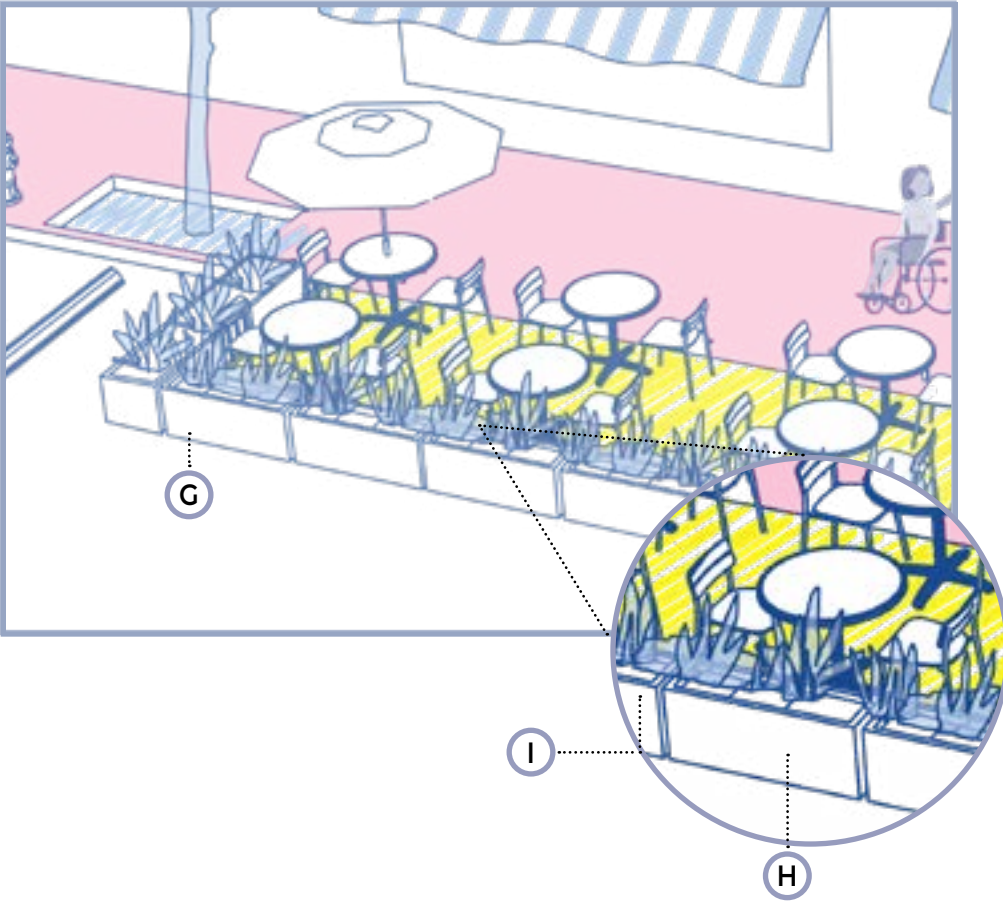
Sidewalk railing shall be at least 25% open unless required otherwise by the latest adopted CBC or State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Backings on the interior side of the railing are permitted if approved by the Director, and only planters or retaining walls may be solid barriers. Railing designs must be reviewed and approved by the Planning and Development Services Director, City Engineer, and Building Division.

If gates are used, they shall not open outward into the sidewalk area/pedestrian zone, as this could pose a hazard to pedestrians walking by.

## Planters:

Planters may be used in lieu of railings to define the edge of sidewalk dining areas. Sidewalk dining with no railing or barrier shall include provisions for the sight impaired such as placement of planters at each far corner of the sidewalk cafe area.





**F** The height of planters should be between 30" and 34", and landscaping can extend up to 48" tall, provided there is visibility maintained. Planters made of wood, ceramics, stone, or metal are allowed, while plastic is not permitted. Additionally, planters must not obstruct the minimum pedestrian walkway clearance.

**Crash-Rated Barriers:**

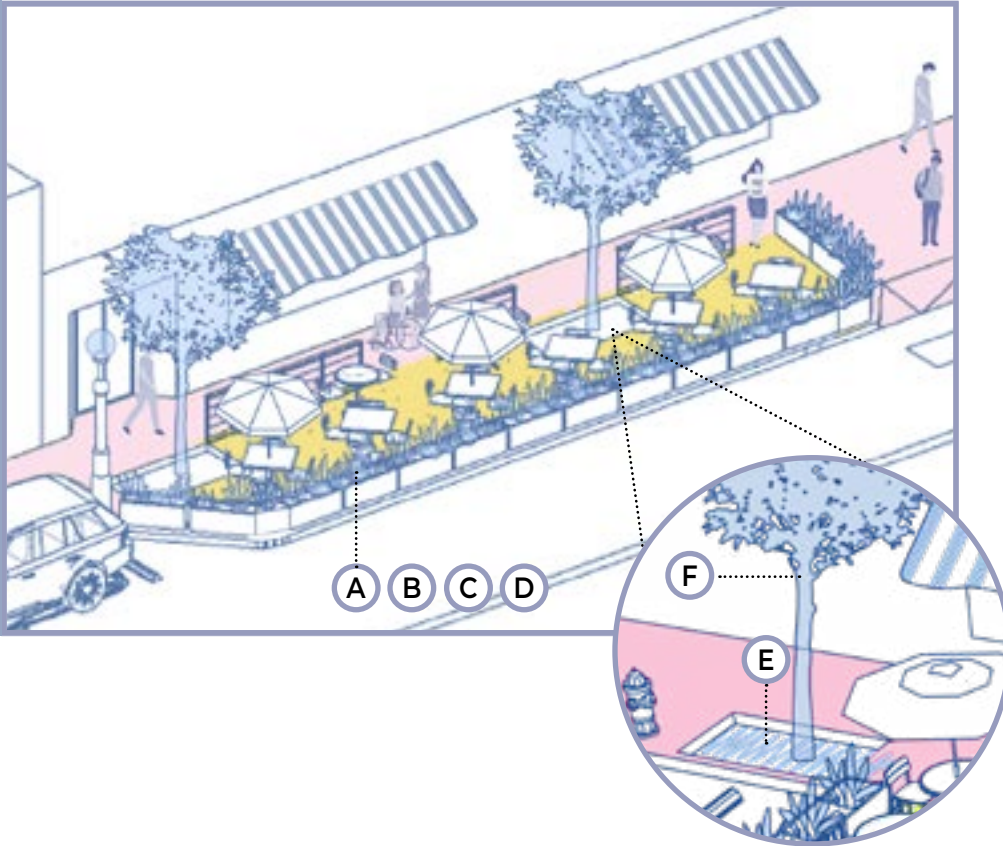
**G** Sidewalk extensions must include crash-rated barriers along the street perimeter parallel to the street and perpendicular to the direction of travel. Barriers should be minimum K4-L2 rated (based on the latest U.S. DOS Certification Standards) or be designed to withstand 2000lb of force at 24" height. Barriers must be at least three feet high and no more than four feet six inches.

**H** Crash rated barrier types can include crash-rated planters or barrier walls. Cladding or covering with aesthetically pleasing material is required for K-Rail or Jersey Barriers. These barriers should be integrated into the sidewalk extension design rather than added on.

**I** Planters or crash-rated barriers incorporating landscaping can have a maximum height of four feet six inches, including the top of any landscaping.

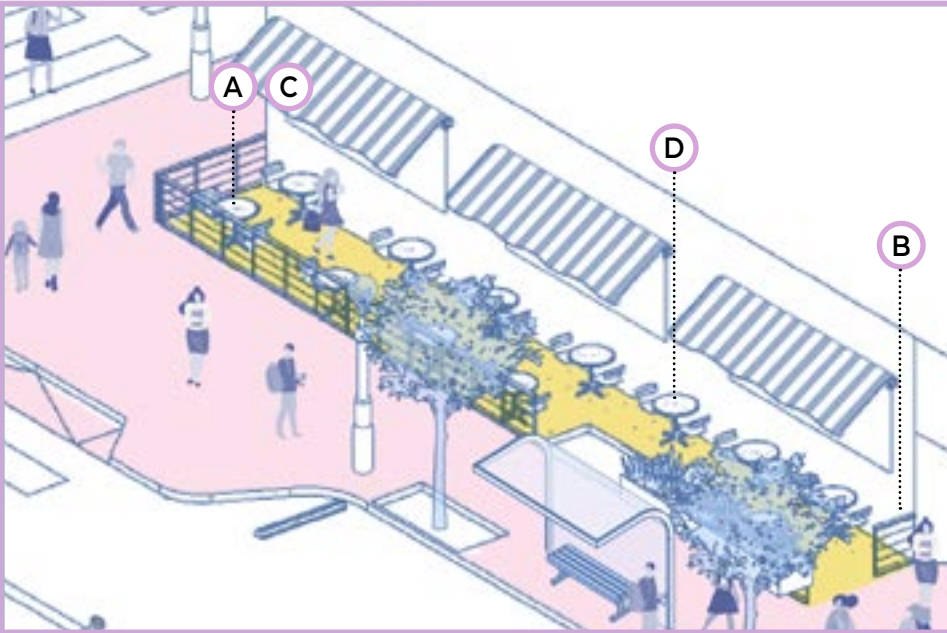


# 4- Landscape



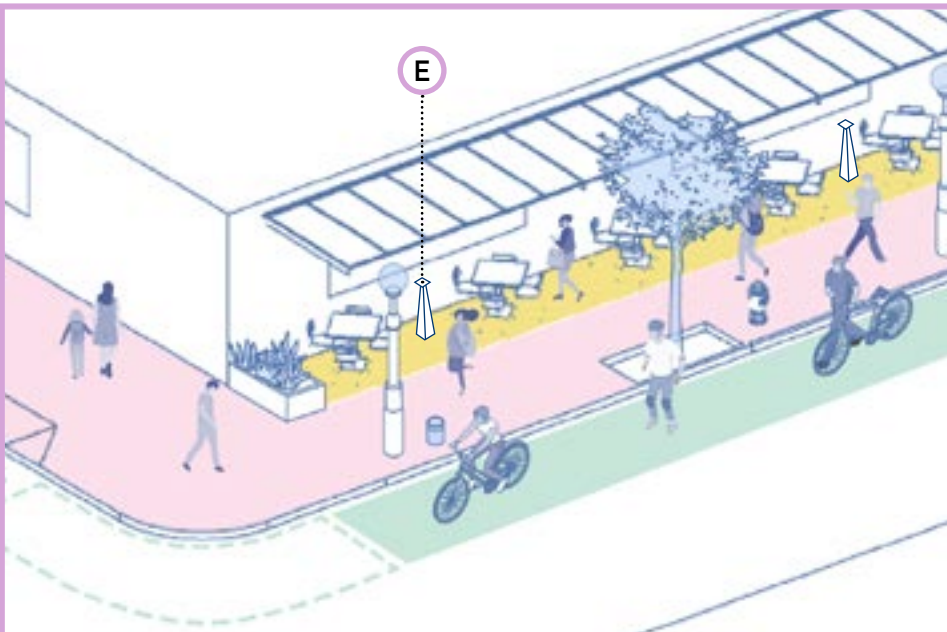
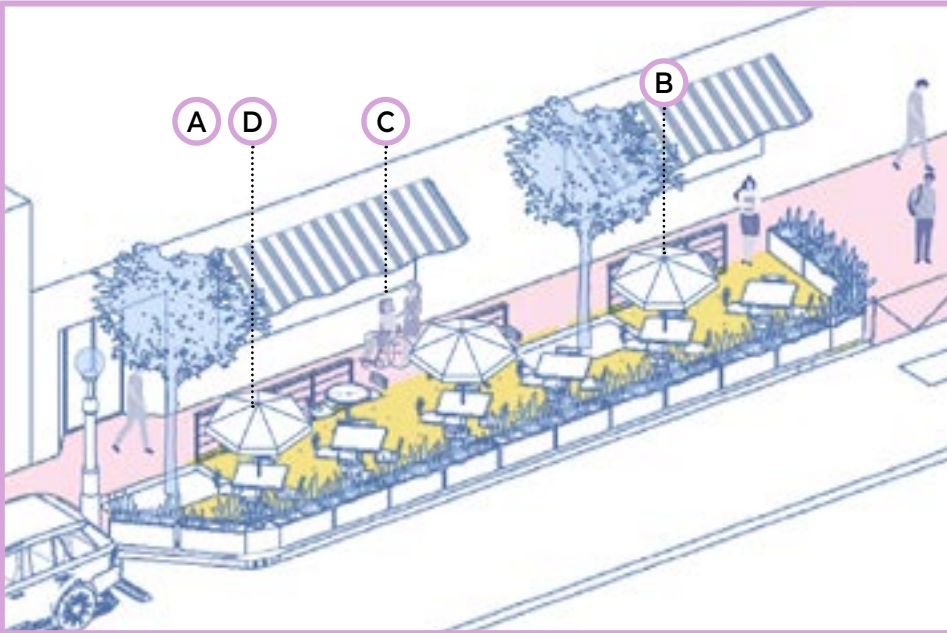
- A** Landscaping is encouraged and shall be no higher than 42 inches above the top of the curb in any part of the outdoor dining.
- B** A landscape plan for the outdoor dining area may include the use of planter boxes and permanent vegetation, which shall be designed in consideration of the Landscape Design Guidelines, and shall comply with Chapter 19.26 (Landscaping Standards).
- C** **Planting placement**  
The placement and arrangement of plants shall be carefully considered to avoid obstructing views or creating tripping hazards for diners and pedestrians.
- D** **Planting types**  
Drought-tolerant or low water usage plants shall be prioritized in the landscape design.
- E** **Tree wells**  
A tree well (planting area around a street tree) cannot be covered and should be untouched. No items can be planted, staked, or poured into a tree well as part of outdoor dining.
- F** **Public street trees**  
No part of a street tree should be compromised by the use of umbrellas or any elements of an outdoor dining area.
  - The Facilities and Field Services Division prunes public street trees to maintain safety. Requests for pruning of seasonal falling leaves or fruit will not be considered.
  - Public street tree removal or pruning for immediate grounds for license revocation and shall be subject to citation and fines.

# 5- Furniture



- A Tables and Seating**
  - All loose furnishings in the outdoor dining area (e.g., table and chairs) shall be secured nightly.
- B Other furniture or amenities**
  - Adequate space shall be allocated within the outdoor dining area for any required amenities including items such as menu boards, busing stations and sandwich-board signs.
  - No furniture or amenities serving the outdoor dining shall obstruct the minimum required pedestrian walkway.
- C Material, Design and Aesthetics**
  - All furnishings shall be designed and constructed using materials that are durable, fire resistant, weather-resistant, and easy to clean.
  - The height of tables and chairs shall be appropriate for the overall aesthetics and design of the proposed outdoor dining area and must follow adopted in the CBC standards for disability.
- D Placements**
  - Furniture shall not block any entrances and exits.
  - Proposed furniture shall be placed only in the locations shown on the approved site plan.

# 6- Umbrellas and Heaters



## Umbrellas:

**A** Umbrellas for outdoor dining must be between 7 and 10 feet tall and shall not obstruct the visibility of the business frontage. For sidewalk dining extensions, umbrellas cannot extend beyond the perimeter of the outdoor dining area.

**B** The canopies of umbrellas used for outdoor dining on the sidewalk may project into the minimum required clear public right of way for pedestrians as long as the bottom edge of the umbrella canopy is at least seven feet from the surface of the sidewalk. The required horizontal clearance must be maintained as required by CBC.

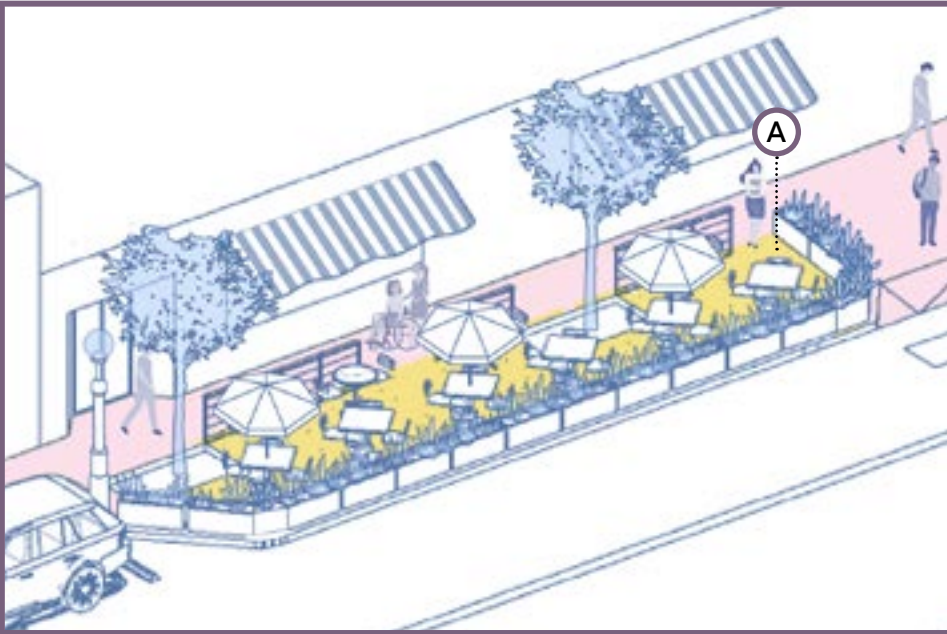
**C** Umbrellas shall not block or interfere with wheelchair access clearance zone, fire lanes, visibility of street signs or other safety features of the outdoor dining zone so that these areas are always clear and accessible. Umbrellas cannot cover or obstruct any street tree's branches or leaves from being exposed to sunlight or rain.

**D** All umbrellas shall be durable, weather-resistant, and fire-retardant as required by CBC Chapter 9. All Umbrellas shall be anchored and structurally designed to withstand all weather conditions as required by CBC.

## Heaters:

**E** Propane Heaters: If propane heaters are to be used, it is imperative to place them outside and keep them at least 5 feet away from any canopy, tent, or flammable material. Additionally, the propane heaters should maintain a minimum clearance of 6 feet vertically and horizontally from any street tree.

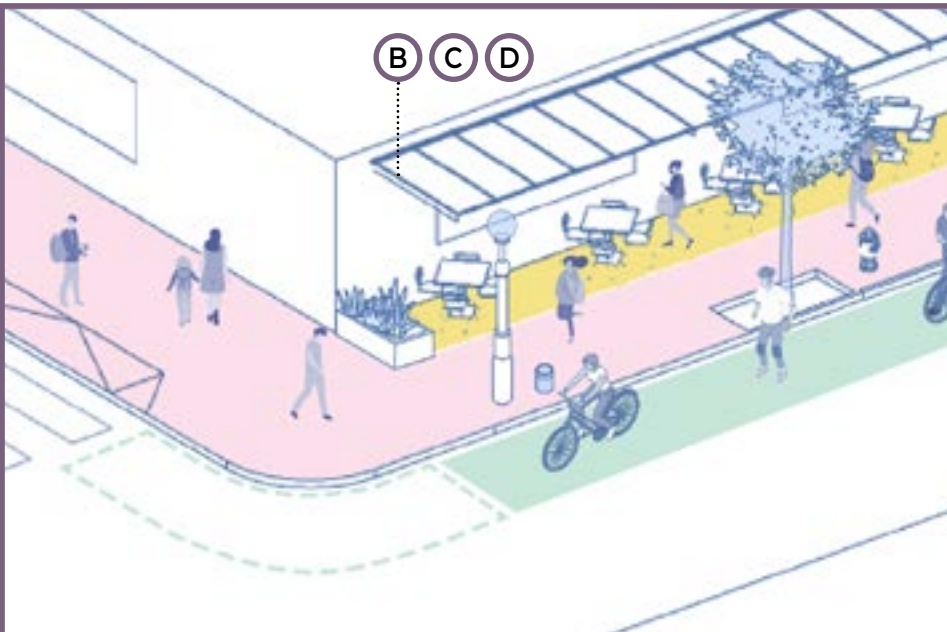
# 7- Overhead Structures, Canopies and Awnings



A

## Overhead Structures:

- Permanent structures like trellises or gazebos with walls or roofs are not permitted.
- Flexible and transparent temporary sunshade structures or removable fabric or fully transparent plastic panels may be used to enclose the sides and front of the dining area during the official Los Angeles County rainy season from October 15 through April 15, subject to the fire department approval.
- Plastic enclosures must be removed on days without rainfall and should be removed entirely from April 16 to October 14.



B

## Canopies and Awnings:

- Canopies shall be designed and constructed to sustain dead loads, tension or inflation loads, and live loads (such as wind, flood, and seismic loads) as required by CBC Chapter 16. ([link](#))
- Awnings shall not impede access to the restaurant or obstruct any disability access paths.

C

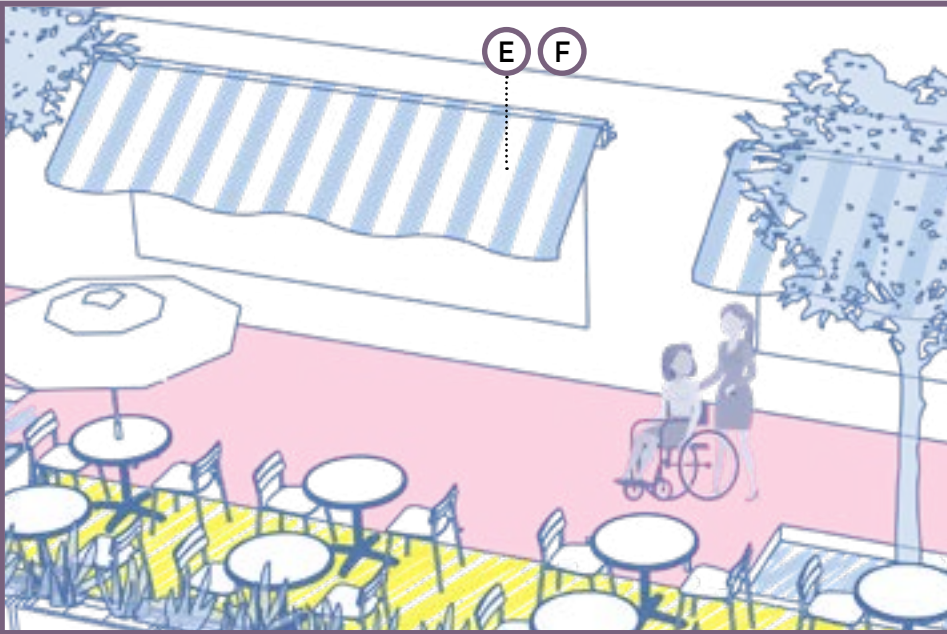
## Material and Aesthetics:

- All canopies and awnings shall be durable, weather-resistant, and fire-retardant as required by CBC Chapter 9. Additionally, their color and design should complement the aesthetic of the adjacent building facade and/or the business.

D

## Extension Limit/Functionality:

- Canopies and awnings in outdoor dining areas shall not obstruct pedestrian traffic or impede the visibility of street signs and pedestrian crossings.
- Awnings in outdoor dining areas may extend beyond three feet from the building facade, provided they are retractable and do not incorporate any elements of vertical enclosure.



#### Safety:

E

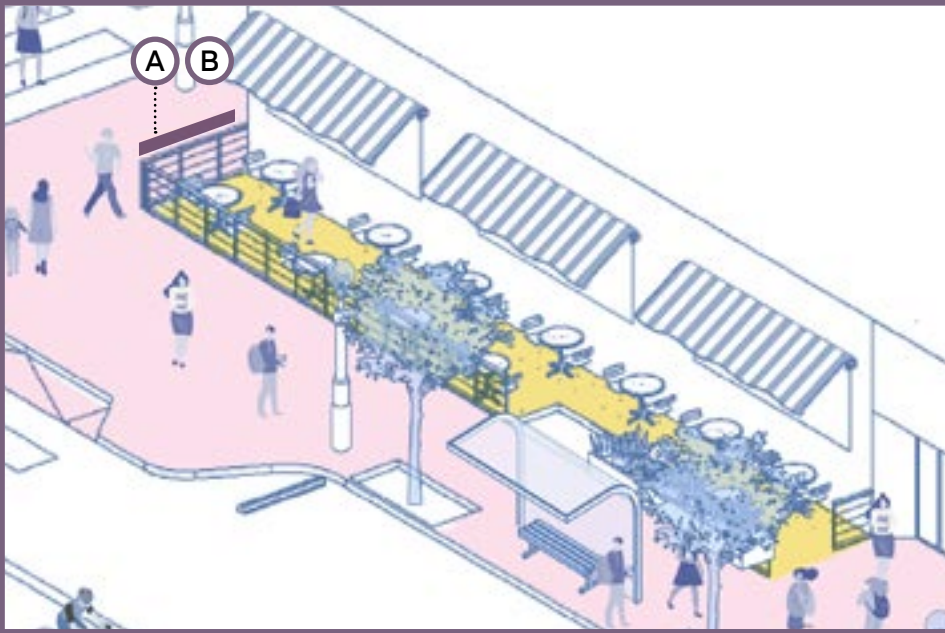
- Awnings shall be anchored and structurally designed to withstand all weather conditions as required by CBC Chapter 16.

F

#### If proposing canopies, site plan must include the following:

- Fire separation distance and wall/opening protection according to CBC Section 705.5 and CBC Section 705.
- An accessibility plan that demonstrates compliance with CBC Section 11B and CBC Section 3105.3. ([link](#)).

# 8- Signage



A

All outdoor dining signage must comply with the Sign Standards (CWHMC Ch. 19.34) ([link](#)).

B

## Encroachment into Public Right-of-Way:

- No sign shall encroach into a public right-of-way, except that a blade or bracket sign or awning attached to a building facade may project a maximum of three feet over a public sidewalk, if the lowest part of the sign is at least eight feet above the sidewalk surface, with the approval of the City's Engineering Division.

## Awning and Canopy Signs:

Awning and canopy signs may be allowed only as an integral part of the awning or canopy to which they are attached or applied, as follows:

C

## Location:

- Signs may be placed only on awnings that are located on first- and second-story building frontages (as restricted by Table 3-12), including those fronting a parking lot or pedestrian way.

D

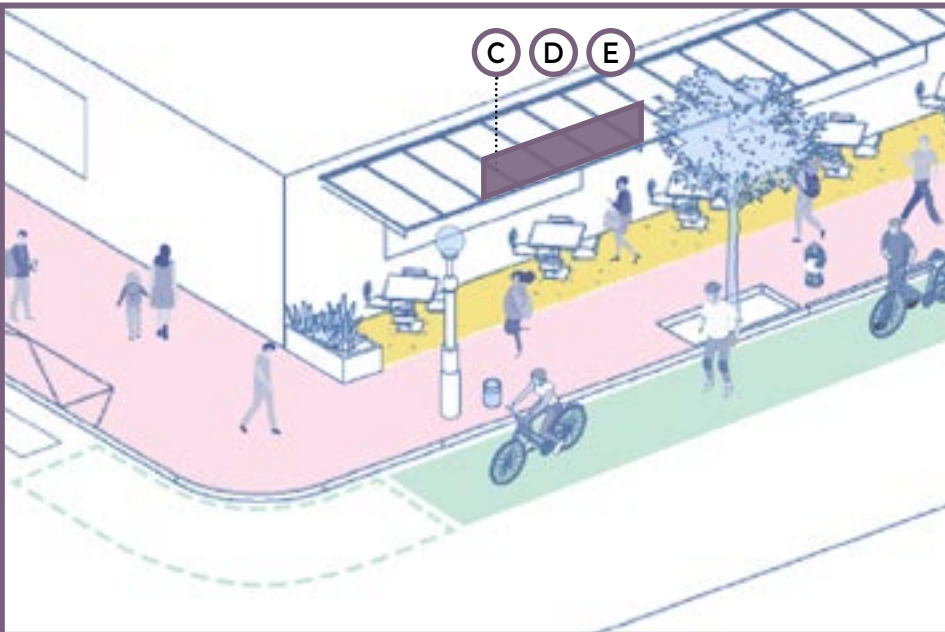
## Maximum Area and Height:

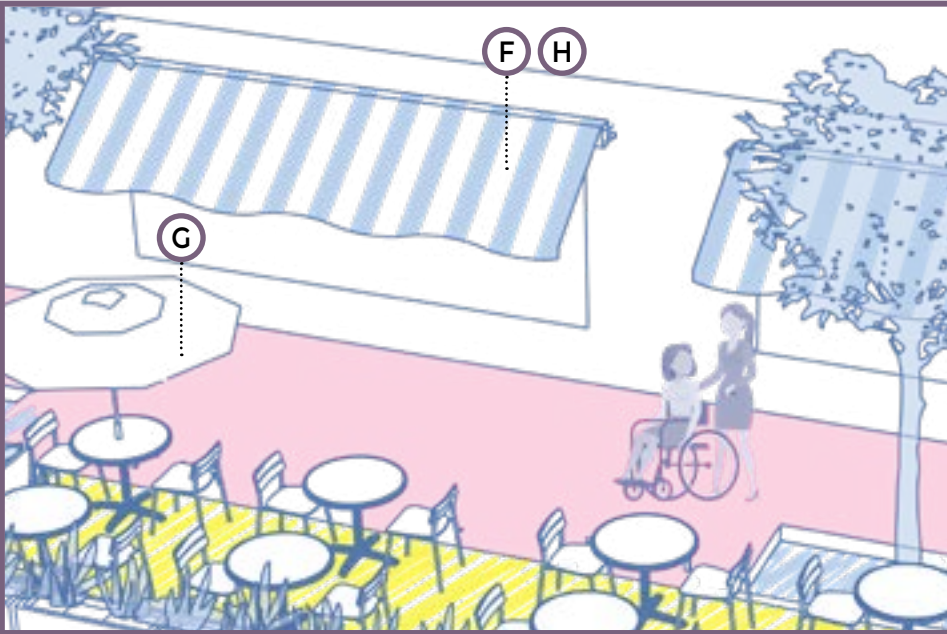
- Sign area shall comply with the requirements established by Section 19.34.030 (Sign Standards by Zoning District). No structural element of an awning or canopy shall be located less than eight feet above finished grade. An awning valance may be located up to seven feet above finished grade.

E

## Lighting:

- Downward-directed light fixtures may be allowed within or under an awning only if they do not illuminate the awning itself. This limitation does not apply to creative signs.





**Sign Maintenance and Visibility:**

F

- Awning and canopy signs shall be regularly cleaned and kept free of dust and visible defects.
- Address and business name shall remain visible from the public-right-of-way and not be blocked by furniture, umbrellas, etc.

G

Business names may be incorporated onto the umbrella canopy print/pattern if desired, to promote the restaurant or establishment.

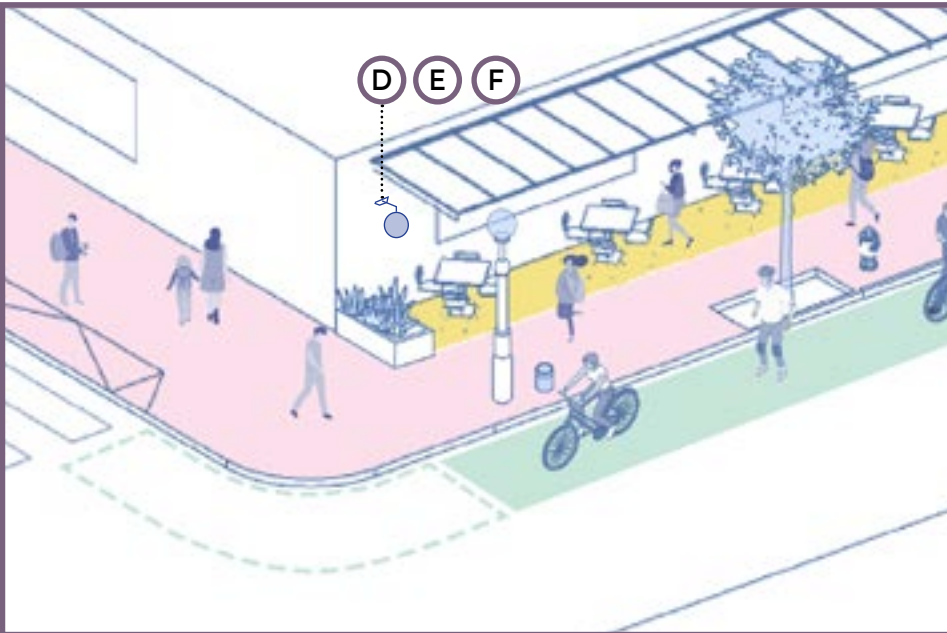
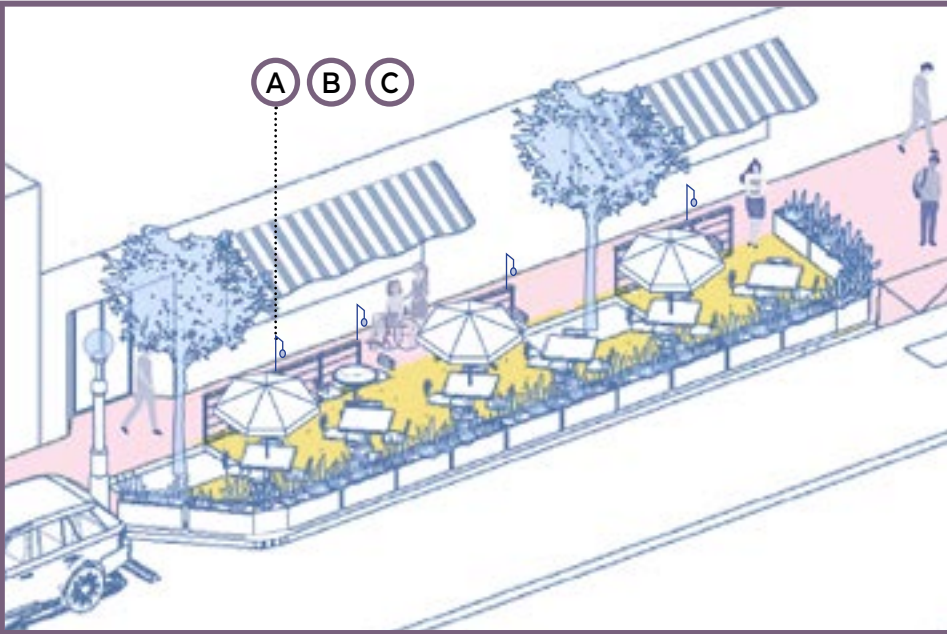
H

**Materials:**

- Signage shall be made of high-quality materials that are durable and weather-resistant to withstand outdoor conditions.



# 9-Lighting / Sound



- A** Outdoor lighting shall focus solely on the dining area and no glare should be directed towards pedestrian sidewalks.
- B** All lighting design and installation must comply with the Building and Safety Division's electrical permit requirements. Any lighting installations that could endanger the public, including stringing lights across public areas, are not permitted.
- C** Outdoor dining areas on sidewalk extensions shall not have any lighting that necessitates underground conduits or overhead cables drawn above the public sidewalk. The use of solar-powered lighting fixtures is permitted within the sidewalk extension.
- D** All applicable regulations and standards set by the Fire Department must be followed. The applicant is responsible for researching and verifying compliance with the Fire Department prior to submitting an encroachment permit for the operation of a sidewalk cafe.
- E** Certain lighting types such as bare bulb neon, blinking or "chasing" lights are prohibited.
- F** Outdoor dining lighting should be energy-efficient to reduce operating costs and minimize environmental impact. LED lighting and solar lighting fixtures are strongly encouraged.
- G** Amplified sound is not permitted. Outdoor Dining establishments shall implement measures to ensure that the ambient music remains at an appropriate volume that allows for comfortable conversations among diners.
- H** If non-amplified noise is causing a nuisance, a sound buffering acoustic wall or treatment may be required along property lines adjacent to the outdoor dining area. The design and height of the wall or treatment shall be approved by the Director.

# SECTION 3 - DESIGN INSPIRATION



**Get inspired to create a high quality outdoor dining space for your business!**

The following images showcase ideas and best practices to create aesthetic and functional elements and features for your outdoor dining. The images are for illustrative purposes on design and do not reflect all required standards from Section 2.

For a comprehensive list of requirements and more information, review *Section 2 - Design Standards* of this document (CWHEDG Sec. 2) and (CWHMC Ch. 11.28.090) ([link](#)).



## Narrow Sidewalk

Identity elements integrated into outdoor dining design

Innovative and pleasing designs for sidewalk extension barriers are encouraged





Custom or off-the-shelf crash-rated planters as barriers



Durable materials and designs that provide flexibility of use



Built-in furnishings create a cohesive and permanent quality

Expressive designs for barriers and integrating reflective material for safety



# Moderate Sidewalk



Simple open railing defining outdoor dining outside storefront

Minimalistic outdoor dining design complements the aesthetic of the business



Colorful CNC printed screens for railing design



Awnings define dining zone in the absence of railing for single row of seats



Low-height planters provide separation while maintaining visibility



# Wide Sidewalk



Open concept railing with integrated planters



Integrate space for kiosks, menu stands, busing stations and other amenities



Simple lightweight canopies shading outdoor dining while preserving visibility



Eclectic furnishings that match the aesthetic of the business



Creative landscape, appropriate heights allowing visual permeability

# APPENDIX



Expand your knowledge by reviewing current regulations, terminologies, and other official documents on which this guide is based



## RELEVANT CITY DEPARTMENTS & DIVISIONS

- [City of West Hollywood Community Development](#)
- [City of West Hollywood Public Works](#)
- [City of West Hollywood Engineering](#)
- [City of West Hollywood Urban Design + Architecture Studio](#)
- [City of West Hollywood Building and Safety](#)

## PERMITS

- [Conditional Use Permit \(CUP\)](#)
- [Encroachment Permit](#)
- [Administrative Permit](#)

## CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD MUNICIPAL CODE (CWHMC)

- [Chapter 11.28 Outdoor Dining on Public Right-of-way](#)
- [Chapter 19.36 Standards for Specific Land Uses - 19.36.210 Outdoor Dining](#)
- [Chapter 19.90 Definitions/Glossary](#)

## OTHER RELEVANT LINKS

- [California Building Code \(CBC\)](#)
- [Urban and Architectural Design Process and Principles](#)
- [Planning Division Submittal Requirements - Site Plan Instructions](#)

