



# OUTDOOR DINING PRELIMINARY REVIEW

## SUBMITTAL PACKET

### WHAT IS AN OUTDOOR DINING PERMIT?

An outdoor dining permit is the City's approval for the *permanent* installation of outdoor tables, chairs, or other furnishings (umbrellas, portable heaters, table lighting, potted plants, etc.) intended for use by the customers of an associated restaurant, bar, or cafe. Outdoor dining on private property typically occurs in private parking lots or in other areas not previously permitted for outdoor dining. *The term "parklets" refers to outdoor dining in the public right-of-way, which is different than outdoor dining on private property.*

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, *temporary* outdoor dining was allowed for businesses to expand dining operations into required off-street parking and other areas. The authorization for temporary outdoor dining expires **December 31, 2023**. If a business continues to operate after that time without having applied for a permit, the business will be in violation and subject to enforcement action.

### WHY APPLY FOR PRELIMINARY REVIEW?

Businesses interested in permanently installing outdoor dining on private property have the option to submit a Preliminary (PRE) Application. This service helps you decide if a project is feasible before investing the time and expense in drafting complete plans and submitting a full permit application. City staff will review big-picture issues such as accessibility, plumbing fixture count, parking standards, and stormwater management. Applicants can expect written comments in about **4-6 weeks** after submitting a Preliminary Application.

### IS PRELIMINARY REVIEW REQUIRED?

No, preliminary review is not required. Submitting a PRE Application is **optional**; however, it is highly recommended for applicants take advantage of this early review process. A building permit *is required* to legally permit an outdoor dining operation. Businesses that do not submit a Preliminary Application, or a full planning or building permit, after the temporary authorization expires are subject to enforcement.

### HOW TO SUBMIT

All applications, and all supporting plans and documents, are accepted online via our [Accela Citizen Access Portal \(ACA\)](#). More information: [Apply for a Permit](#). To submit a Preliminary Application for outdoor dining, applicants should submit under the ACA "Building" tab.

## WHAT IS THE PERMITTING PROCESS?

The process to permit permanent outdoor dining will vary depending on the location. After receiving feedback from your Preliminary Application, if you decide to proceed with a permit there are some requirements you can expect below. If your project requires Planning Review, you will submit a [Planning \(PLN\) Application](#) first. If it does not require Planning Review, your next step is to submit a [Building \(BLD\) Permit](#) Application.

- **Coastal Zone**

If your project is in the Coastal Zone (S-D-3 Overlay Zone), any expansion of indoor or outdoor dining is considered a “change in the density or intensity of use” and a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) is required. However, the City has adopted a streamlined review process with a lower fee. Please see the latest fee schedule for the Planning Division online: [Fee Information](#).

- **Design Review**

All exterior alterations to commercial properties are subject to design review. Based on the site and extent of improvements, your application may qualify for staff-level administrative approval. Contact the Planning Counter to discuss the criteria for approval: (805) 564-5578  
[PlanningCounter@SantaBarbaraCA.gov](mailto:PlanningCounter@SantaBarbaraCA.gov)

- **Parking Requirements**

Since outdoor dining typically occurs in parking lots, staff must carefully review the configuration to ensure all code requirements are being met. If the new dining area eliminates required parking spaces, or requires more spaces than can be provided, a [Parking Modification](#) may be required. In some cases, minimum automobile parking requirements are waived for a project that is within one-half mile of “public transit” consistent with AB-2097. See [Parking Exemptions Near Transit](#).

- **Building Code**

Permanent outdoor dining areas must comply with State Construction Code minimums, including requirements for disabled access, required egress, and minimum number of plumbing fixtures. If the existing plumbing fixtures do not meet the occupant load for the proposed outdoor dining area, additional plumbing fixtures (bathroom, toilet, sink) may be required.

- **SWMP**

Consistent with the Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) any surface changes such as slurry sealing, overlaying existing paving, or resurfacing is counted as redeveloped impervious area for SWMP. Surfaces exempt from SWMP requirements (not considered impervious) include permeable pavement, decks with gaps between boards for water drainage installed over permeable surfaces (gravel, mulch, or soil), and outdoor tables, chairs, and other furnishings.

- **Trash & Recycling Enclosures**

Businesses also should consider if the increase in seat capacity will trigger an increase in waste generation, necessitating larger trash enclosures, or if the outdoor dining will obstruct any of the container path of travel. See the [Trash & Recycling Enclosure Guide](#) for more information.

# SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

## WHAT TO SUBMIT

All plans and photographs must be submitted as a PDF attachment to your electronic submittal. Your online application must be accompanied by all required supporting materials or it will be rejected. See the [Project Plan Submittal Guide](#) for electronic plan requirements and examples.

## FEES



### Fees

Payment via electronic check, or credit card is required before project review or processing. Fees may be paid online, mailed, faxed, or dropped off at 630 Garden Street for processing.

## PHOTOGRAPHS



### Photographs

Current color photographs are required as listed below. Photographs copied onto the project plans are preferred. Photographs must be labeled, clear and in focus, with a minimum size of 4 x 6.

1. **Site Photos**, taken from the street, and of adjacent properties. Photographs of the building front and each elevation. Show parking lot or other locations of outdoor dining, tables, chairs, and other furnishings. Show existing fences, walkways, and parking lot landscaped areas.
2. **Aerial Photos**, showing surrounding streets and properties and identify the project site. Include walking distance to offsite parking spaces or public transit, if applicable.

## PRELIMINARY PROJECT PLANS



### Preliminary Project Plans

1. **Required**. Preliminary floor plans identifying use of all rooms and exits, and preliminary site plans with existing building locations, parking layout, and dimensioned area of proposed outdoor dining. Plans must include dimensions and preferably be drawn to scale (i.e., 1/8-inch = 1-foot).
2. **Recommended**. The following list of information is *recommended* to provide staff with enough information to provide more complete feedback. The more information you provide, the more thorough the response. Applicants are strongly encouraged to work with a licensed professional, such as an architect or engineer, during the conceptual review stage to provide code analysis and plumbing fixture calculations.
  - a. **Cover Sheet:**
    - Occupancy classifications, or use, of existing buildings and spaces
    - Plumbing fixture calculations for existing layout plus additional outdoor dining space; or list number of plumbing fixture types (e.g., Restroom #1 = two toilets, one sink, one urinal)

- Existing plus outdoor dining egress load and required exits; or list total number of people at each space (kitchen = 2, bar =5, dining = 25, etc.)
- Total square feet of the indoor restaurant space and of the outdoor seating area
- A project description and basic project data with the site address, land uses, existing/proposed floor area, and existing/proposed parking (automobile and bicycle)

**b. Site Plan:**

- Building footprint of all structures on site, label the use of each building, and show dimensions to property lines and to adjacent structures within site
- Existing and proposed parking layout, including accessible parking stalls, bicycle parking, and parking lot planters and trees
- Existing and proposed accessible path of travel (i.e., show how people access the main entrance from the parking lot and the sidewalk)
- Proposed outdoor dining area, dimensioned
- If applicable, location of any proposed structures in addition to the outdoor dining area (new fences, planters, trash enclosures, bike parking)
- Location of trash and recycling enclosures and size; and proposed path of travel from the trash storage area to where they will be serviced by the waste hauler
- Required zoning setbacks (minimum distances to property lines), if applicable
- Type and number of outdoor seating (fixed or moveable)
- To determine SWMP, identify where new, redeveloped, and removed impervious area is proposed—with totals in square feet for each category

**c. Floor Plan:**

- All existing rooms labeled (dining area, kitchen, restrooms) and label all plumbing fixtures in each restroom
- Existing exits and exit path; and proposed exits after integration of outdoor dining
- Wheelchair accessible path of travel within building and from outdoor dining to main entry
- Wheelchair accessible seating at each separate seating area including at bar or counter if applicable
- Type and number of indoor seating spaces (fixed or moveable)
- Any additional restrooms required by additional outdoor dining

- d. Furniture Details** (optional), if you would like staff to comment on the potential for administrative design review approval of the outdoor dining area, include manufacturer specifications or color photographs showing the materials, colors, size of all outdoor tables, chairs, or other furnishings (umbrellas, portable heaters, table lighting, potted plants, etc.).