



Outdoor Seating Guide

CITY OF RALEIGH

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This document last updated February 2024

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About Outdoor Seating

The City of Raleigh's Outdoor Seating Program transforms the public right-of-way to accommodate different needs of all users of the public realm. Outdoor seating allows activation of streets, sidewalks, and plazas by providing pedestrian amenities, supporting local businesses, and fostering community interactions. The Outdoor Seating Program builds upon the Pilot Parklet Program, adopted in 2007, and the lessons learned from the Temporary Outdoor Seating Extension Program established during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Outdoor Seating Permits are issued through the City of Raleigh's Office of Special Events.

Types of Outdoor Seating



Photo courtesy of VisitRaleigh

A **parklet** converts on-street parking spaces into a vibrant, community space that is open to the public at all times.



Photo courtesy of VisitRaleigh

A **streetery** converts on-street parking spaces and is typically located outside of a business. Streeteries provide outdoor seating for the patrons of the business during its hours of operation.



Sidewalk Seating allows a portion of city sidewalk to be used by a business. It provides outdoor seating for the patrons of the business during its hours of operation.

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

City-funded Streeterly Initiative

City staff allocated American Rescue Plan Act funding to build streeteries, which convert public spaces into vibrant, community spaces. To lessen the burden and cost on businesses, the City will construct and install platforms and walls while businesses can supplement these structures with tables, chairs, décor, planters and plantings to personalize, customize, and brand the streeterly to fit the establishment's needs. To be eligible, the streeterly must involve use of the public right-of-way. Initiative offered until funding is no longer available. Businesses interested in a City-funded streeterly should reach out to us at hospitality.programs@raleighnc.gov

To accommodate Raleigh business owners interested in creating a custom streeterly at their own expense, this guide also provides design standards beginning on page 12.

Streeterly Program Scenarios

See sample streeterly scenarios below to determine the best option for your business:

I have a streeterly, and I don't desire any assistance.

Does my streeterly conform to the new standards? (pages 12-28)

Yes – Great, let's eat or drink!

No – Okay, let's document the non-conformity. Is it safety related?

Yes – Okay, let's fix it. *City staff will coordinate additional improvements to add wheel stops, reflective corner posts, planters in lieu of barricades,*

No – Okay, you're a legal non-conforming streeterly. Now let's eat or drink.

I have a streeterly, but I need some upgrades.

Does my streeterly conform to the new standards? (pages 12-28)

Yes – Great, what do you want to upgrade? *Customization is at the establishment's expense.*

No – Okay, let's determine what you need? Do you have a conforming platform?

Yes – Okay, what do we need to upgrade? Safety items? Aesthetic improvements? *City staff will coordinate additional improvements to add wheel stops, reflective corner posts, planters in lieu of barricades. Customization is at the establishment's expense.*

No – Okay, sounds like you need an entirely new streeterly. See below.

I don't have a streeterly, but I want one.

The City of Raleigh will provide a "base model" streeterly and safety materials for your use. You can add tables, chairs, décor, planters and plantings to personalize, customize, and brand the streeterly to fit your establishment's needs.

I don't have a streeterly, but I want one and I don't prefer Raleigh's basic design.

Unfortunately, the City of Raleigh cannot provide custom streeterly designs for everyone. Can you customize the basic design to fit your needs?

Yes – Great, let's start on getting you the base model.

No – Okay, this document outlines the City of Raleigh's design standards for streeteries beginning on page 12. Let us know if you have questions or if we can help you with wheel stops or reflector posts.

I don't have a streeterly and I don't want one, but I do want more outdoor sidewalk seating.

Okay, this document outlines the City of Raleigh's standards for sidewalk seating on page 5.

Streeter Design Standards and Guidelines

See Appendix, pages 12-28, for the full **Streeter Design Standards and Guidelines**.

Sidewalk Seating Standards

For sidewalk seating to be permitted, all the following standards must be met:

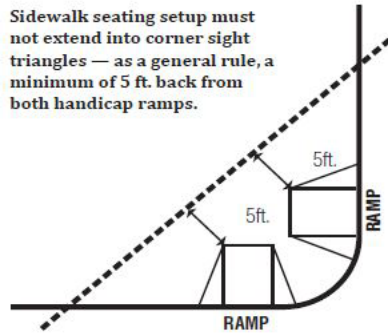
Location

- Sidewalk seating is limited to the designated area abutting the business and approved by City of Raleigh staff, as specified on the permit application
 - Delineated by medallions during the final site inspection
- A minimum clear, unobstructed straight pedestrian corridor of 5 feet must be maintained at all times
 - Must be maintained between any business entrance and pedestrian walkway
 - Must be maintained between the sidewalk seating and edge of driveways, alleys and handicapped ramps
 - Where existing obstructions are present (such as fire hydrants, street light poles or other utility structures), the path can be measured to go around these obstructions provided that the obstruction does not exceed one foot diameter. For tree grates, the corridor is measured from the outer edge of the grate, unless an ADA-compliant grate is installed, in which case the 5 feet can be measured directly from the tree trunk
- A minimum clear, unobstructed height of 7 feet must be maintained between the sidewalk surface and overhead objects including umbrellas
- Must keep 2 feet of clearance next to the curb
- Must be delineated from other neighboring outdoor seating areas
- Must not extend within sight triangles at street intersections or driveway entrances
- Must not block access to public amenities like street furniture, trash receptacles, and way finding or directional signs
- Must not block access to public utilities, building entrances, crosswalks, bus stops and transit entrances
- May locate in front of adjacent properties with proper notification of the adjoining property/business owner. A copy of the notification must be submitted to the Office of Special Events for final approval

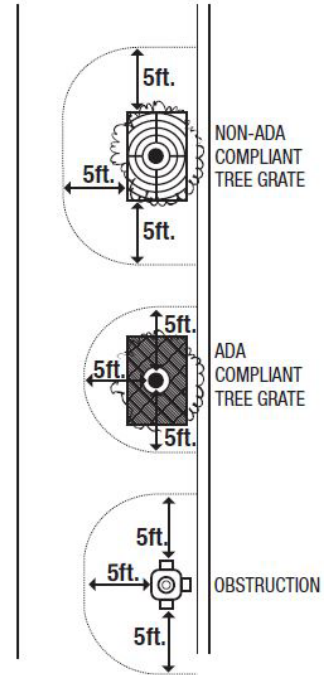
Design

- Furniture must be made of durable, commercial grade material
- Furniture must be well maintained and kept in working order
- May use removable barriers to define sidewalk seating area
- Additional lighting must not cause glare to pedestrians or vehicular traffic
- Additional lighting must not be affixed to city trees without a permit from the City of Raleigh [Urban Forestry Division](#)

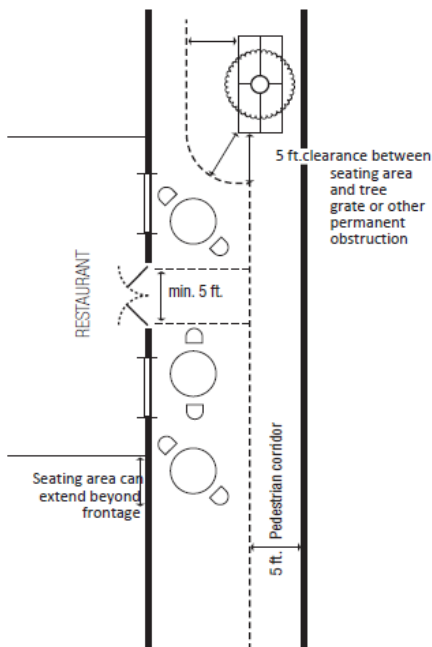
Sidewalk Seating Location Diagrams



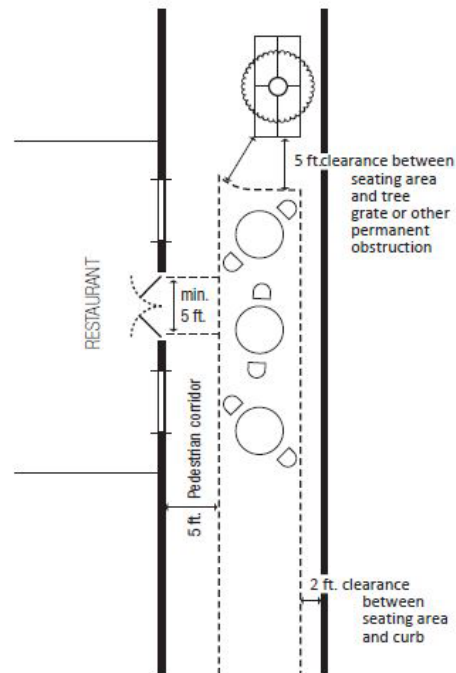
Clear space requirements around tree grates and other obstructions.



Edge of Building



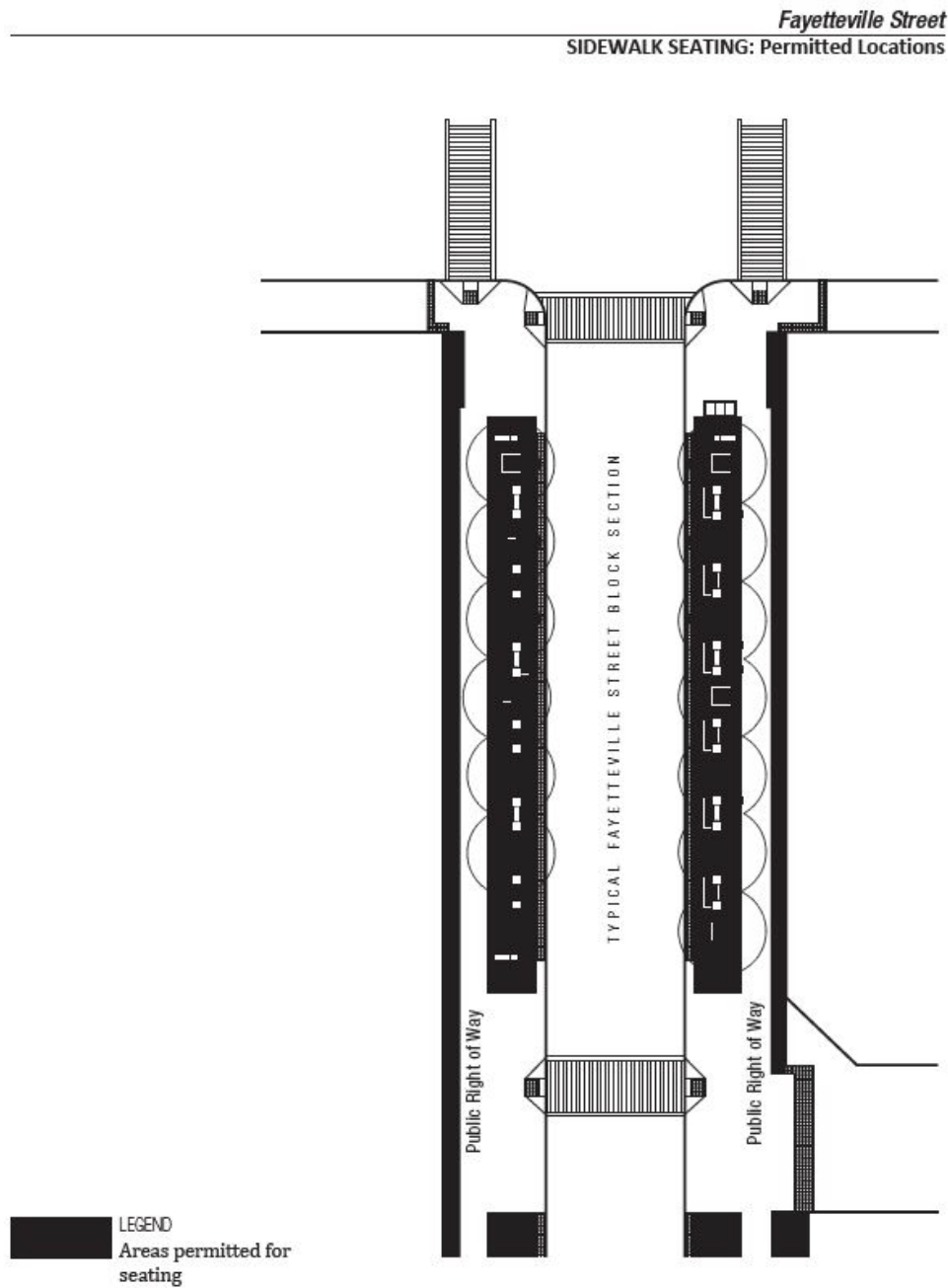
Next to Curb



Fayetteville Street District Standards

The Fayetteville Street District has wider sidewalks and enhanced streetscape elements. Additional parameters apply:

- A minimum clear, straight path of 7 feet must be maintained parallel to the street at all times



Outdoor Seating Operational Requirements

The following operational requirements are applicable to Streetery and Sidewalk Seating Permits:

- Outdoor Seating Permits may be operational until 12:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and until 2:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday
- No cash registers, tents or bars are allowed in the outdoor seating area
- No cooking or open flames are allowed in the outdoor seating area
- No food preparation, plastic food displays, food storage or refrigeration apparatus are allowed in the outdoor seating area
- Waiters are allowed to access pedestrian space between the establishment and the outdoor seating area to serve patrons
- Alcohol beverages cannot extend beyond the outdoor seating area
- “No Alcohol Beyond This Point” signage is required
- Signage must not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic or violate the ADA standards of accessibility
- Businesses must comply with all federal, state and locals laws
- No amplified sound is allowed in the outdoor seating area
- Outdoor seating areas must be open to the air, except that seating may be located under approved umbrellas, awnings or canopies
- Except for the required medallions, nothing can be permanently affixed to the sidewalk or other public property

Outdoor Seating Permit Provisions

The following permit provisions are applicable to Streetery and Sidewalk Seating Permits:

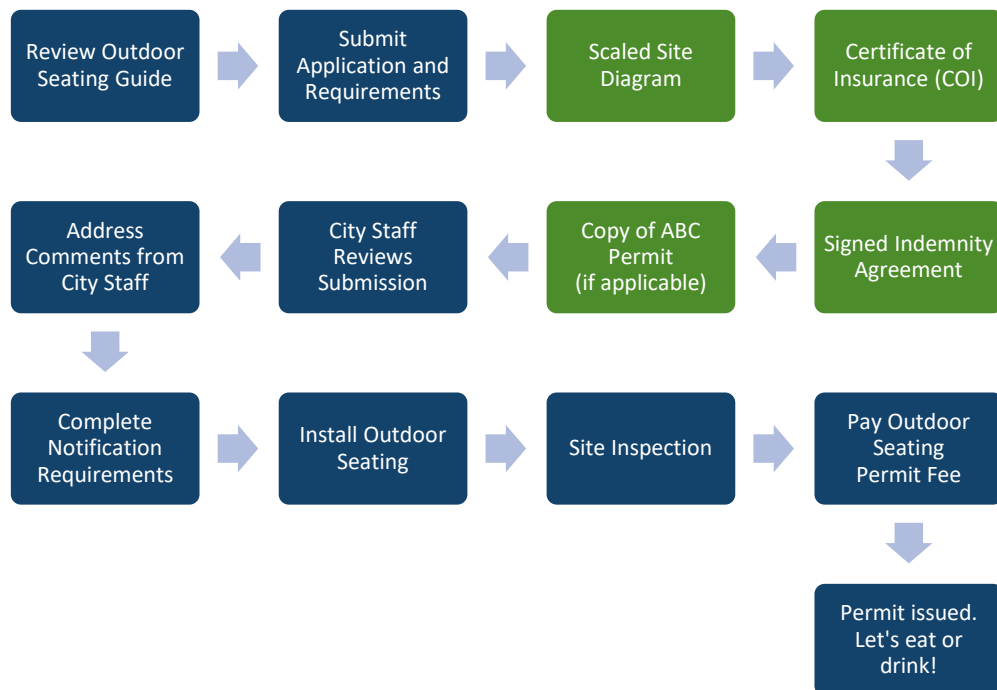
- To be eligible for outdoor seating, an establishment must be located ground floor and visible from the street and directly accessible to the public from the street
- Outdoor Seating permits are valid for one year (July 1 – June 30)
- Permit renewals must be submitted by June 30th each year through the [Permit and Development Portal](#) or permit will expire
- Permit holders must keep all licenses and permits required for their business operations continuously in effect
- Annual site inspections are required
- Permit holders are liable for damages and repairs to streetscape, trees and vegetation, sidewalks, streets or other public amenities that directly relate to use of permitted space
- Permit holders are responsible for the maintenance, upkeep, cleanliness and security of outdoor seating furniture and accessories
- Permit holders must resolve all violations and comply with any repair order within 10 days of notice. Failure to resolve a violation or comply with a repair order within 10 days of notice will result in permit revocation and fines
- Permit holders must remove all outdoor seating elements including, but not limited to, fixtures, furniture and structures at the end of the permit period, upon permit non-renewal or the termination of the permitted business
- Outdoor Seating permits are non-transferable

Application Process

How to Apply

Step	Description
1. Review Outdoor Seating Guide	Review the Outdoor Seating Guide to learn about necessary requirements. Not sure if you qualify for an outdoor seating permit or do you have questions? Reach out to us at hospitality.programs@raleighnc.gov .
2. Gather Required Documents	The following documents are needed in order to apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Scaled Site Diagram – Certificate of Insurance – Indemnity Agreement – Copy of ABC permit (if applicable)
3. Apply and Submit Documents	Register or login to your Permit and Development Portal account, apply for the permit, and submit all documents for approval. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Registration video tutorial in English – Registration video tutorial in Spanish
4. City Review	The City will review submissions, reach out with any comments or feedback, charge the permit fee, and schedule an onsite inspection. After a successful site inspection and payment, the City will issue the permit.

Permit Process Flow Chart



Fees

All outdoor seating fees have been waived through FY24. Fees are subject to change year-to-year.

Streeterly Fees	
FY22 – FY24: Waived encumbrance fee	Waived = \$0
FY25: Reduced cost encumbrance fee	50% = \$1,500
FY26 & Beyond: Full encumbrance fee	100% = \$3,000

Sidewalk Seating Fee	
Annual permit fee	\$352

If a streeterly involves the relocation of a parking meter, the business will be responsible for paying associated fees before installation. This fee varies and is determined by the Transportation Department.



Photo courtesy of VisitRaleigh

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1. HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Raleigh's Office of Special Events will serve as the city's one-stop shop for those interested in applying for a streetery license. Staff will coordinate site visits, internal technical review, license approval, installation, and operation of all streeteries. This document focuses on design guidelines and standards for a streetery license only.

Streetery vs Parklet vs Outdoor Seating

A **Streetery** uses on-street parking spaces and is typically located outside of a cafe or business. It provides outdoor seating for the patrons of the licensed business during its hours of operation. Outside of business hours, it extends the sidewalk, creating additional space for the public to gather and interact.

A **Parklet** converts on-street parking spaces into a vibrant, community space that is open to the public at **all** times. They accommodate unmet demand for open space on thriving, neighborhood streets or in commercial areas. By creating an extension of the sidewalk, parklets can help alleviate strain on narrow, congested sidewalks.

An **Outdoor Seating** permit allows a portion of city sidewalk to be used by restaurants or other businesses that are licensed to serve food and/or beverages, including alcohol. The use of the sidewalk for such purposes requires a separate application through the city.

Standard vs Guideline

Standards are objective and based on code and safety requirements. Non-compliance with required standards at any time will result in license denial or permit revocation. They are denoted by the following marker throughout this document: **S.#**

Guidelines are based on best practices. We encourage everyone to comply with the guidelines in order to continue to build a successful program. Guidelines are denoted by the following marker: **G.#**

Additional Review Clause

There may be instances where city staff requires additional design interventions not covered in these guidelines. Your streetery approval is ultimately subject to its adherence to the standards and safety requirements set by the City of Raleigh.

2. LOCATION AND CONTEXT CRITERIA

Raleigh streeteries must be sited along the curb where on-street parking spaces exist. Consideration of the neighborhood, block, and site-specific context of the parking spaces will help determine if a streetery is allowed. To function safely, a streetery must meet all location standards listed below.

Permits to use and/or place streeteries within the public right-of-way, including public sidewalks, are conditional licenses. The city reserves the right to require streeteries to be relocated or removed at the applicant's expense on account of public safety and convenience needs.

S2.1 A streetery may be allowed in locations that meet all of the following criteria:

- Within the Downtown Mixed Use District.
- On streets maintained by the City of Raleigh.
- On streets with parallel parking.
- On streets with speed limits of 35 mph or less.
- Two parking spaces per applicant is standard. If the desired footprint extends beyond the applicant's frontage, is greater than two parking spaces, or is adjacent to another streetery, additional review and/or requirements may apply.

S2.2 The streetery is prohibited in the following locations and in those locations prohibited by applicable city code, regulations, and the law:

- Fayetteville Street or other locations within the City of Raleigh's right-of-way that are not subject to an approved license.
- Within 10 feet of driveways (within 5 feet may be appropriate in some instances), 25 feet of intersections, and 12 feet of crosswalks.
- Within 4 feet of existing bicycle parking.
- Within 15 feet of fire hydrants.
- On streets with planned streetscape improvements or resurfacing within 1 year.
- In or next to dedicated bus lanes.
- In ADA parking spaces, no parking zones, loading zones, or in a way that obstructs access to parking pay stations.
- On or under bridges.

S2.3 Manholes and stormwater inlets.

Streeteries shall not cover manholes or stormwater inlets.

S2.4 Safety and visibility. Location on a block must consider driver and pedestrian visibility. Height and other design features must keep sightlines clear. City staff will review each site to ensure a streetery meets all safety and visibility requirements.

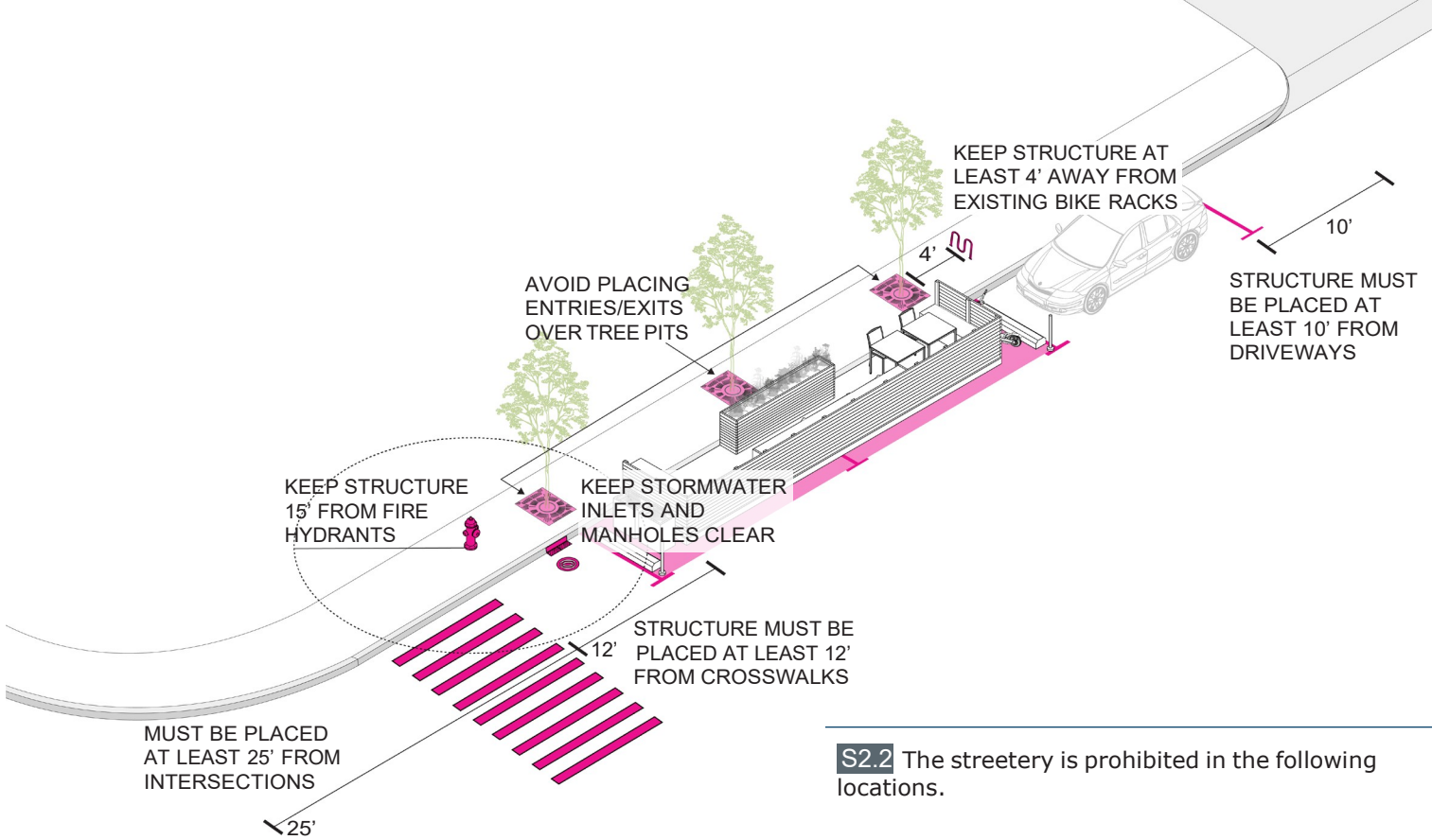
S2.5 NCDOT-maintained streets. If a streetery is requested on an NCDOT street, staff will evaluate the suitability and coordinate any requirements with NCDOT and the applicant.

S2.6 Sloped streets. If located on a street with > 5% slope, additional requirements and review will be needed to ensure accessibility. City staff can assist applicants with determining the slope of the street during the site visit. More information on accessibility requirements can be found in **Section 7. Accessibility and ADA.**

S2.7 Utility maintenance and access. If utility providers need to excavate the street or maintain utility infrastructure, any conflicting streetery must temporarily be moved or allow access. Contact the city if you have questions about a chosen site and its relationship to existing utilities.

G2.3 Street trees and planting strips.

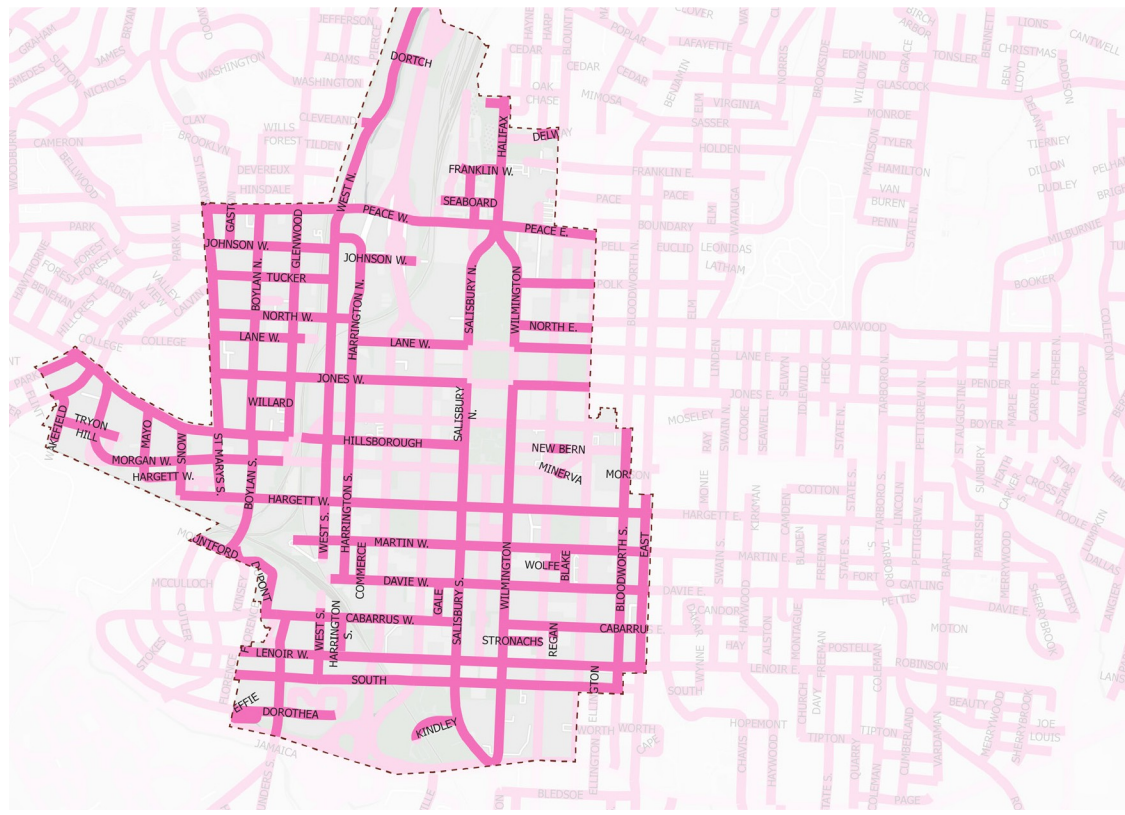
Existing street trees and landscaping can provide shade and greenery for a site. However, avoid requiring users to cross through a tree pit or landscaping to get to and from the space. Room for tree growth and maintenance should also be considered.



S2.2 The streetery is prohibited in the following locations.

LEGEND

- City of Raleigh maintained street
- + 35 mph or less
- + Within the Downtown Mixed Use District



S2.1 A streetery may be allowed in locations that meet the following criteria. This map provides an overview of streets that meet the baseline location standards. Other streets may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3. REQUIRED SAFETY ELEMENTS AND BUFFERS

The footprint of any streetery must be confined within the approved parking space(s) and include the required safety standards detailed below. These standards will help ensure visibility and seamless operation for patrons of the streetery and the public.

S3.1 Two wheel stops are required. Wheel stops must be installed 4 feet from the sides of the streetery and 1 foot from the curb. They must be at least 6 feet long and at least 6 inches in height. The following wheel stops are acceptable:

- Concrete, painted yellow
- Heavy duty rubber, black, striped yellow

Wheel stops shall be installed to and meet the city's standard. They must use at least two galvanized steel pins (rebar) with epoxy or bolts with threaded anchors. Wheel stops must be installed securely and must not move easily into the gutter area or travel lane. On removal of the wheel stops, the pins or bolts shall be removed and the holes shall be filled with epoxy to the level of the pavement.

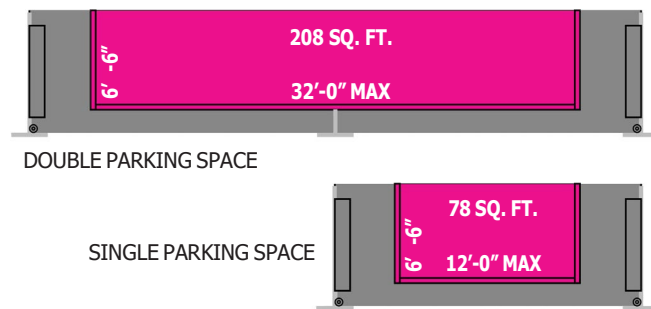
S3.2 Two soft-hit reflector posts at each corner, are required. Reflector posts are required at the outermost corners of the parking space(s). If reflective posts are used, they must meet the following specifications:

- 36 inches tall and white, with reflectors
- Surface Mount Pin Lock Base
- Butyl Adhesive Pad or 10 oz. Epoxy Kit

S3.3 Two, 12 x 6 inch streetery signs indicating the hours of operation and hours the space is open to the public are required. Streeteries must include signage that explains when it is in use by the business and when it's available to the general public. The signs should be mounted on both ends of the streetery and be visible from the sidewalk.

The design, format, and material must meet the standards specified by the City of Raleigh. The file for sign fabrication and printing will be provided upon license approval.

S3.4 Side and outer safety buffers are required. A streetery must include 4 foot side buffers between the structure and any



The dimensions and square footage shown in the footprints above represent the max space available using a standard 20' x 8' parallel parking space.

adjacent, parallel parking space. The side buffers must include a wheel stop on the inside edge of the parking space.

An 18 inch cleared, outer safety buffer must exist between the structure and travel or bike lane.

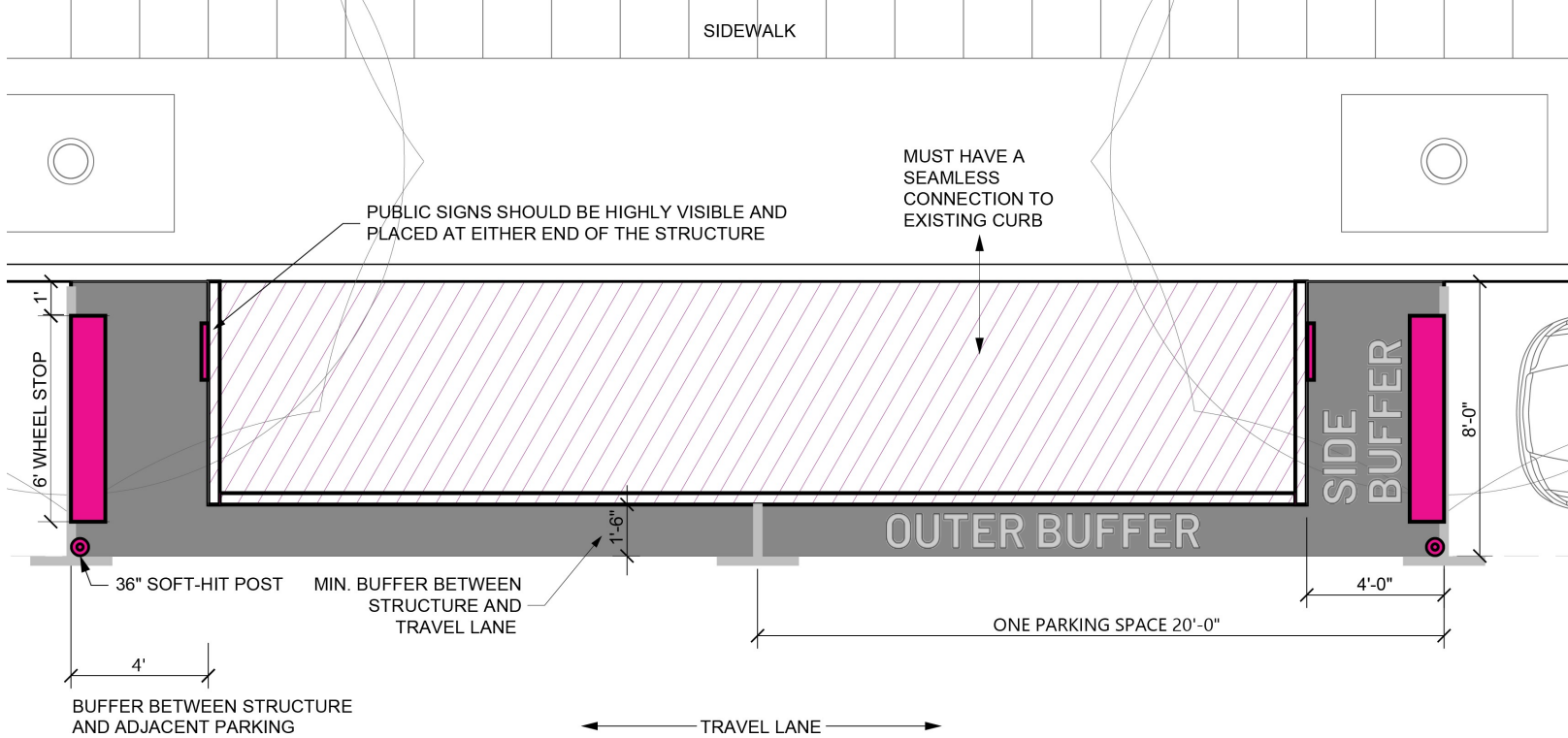
S3.5 Consecutive streeteries. If a streetery is directly adjacent to another streetery or parklet, the adjoining, 4 foot side buffers must be kept clear and shall not include a wheel stop, soft-hit post, or any other element.

S3.6 Sidewalk encroachment. Any extension of the streetery into the sidewalk area, and not included in an outdoor seating permit, will be reviewed by city staff on a case-by-case basis. Such encroachment into the sidewalk area shall not interfere nor obstruct pedestrian flow or other permitted right-of-way activities. A clear, 5 foot Pedestrian Accessible Route (PAR) has to be maintained at all times. The PAR shall not include a ramp or other transitions.

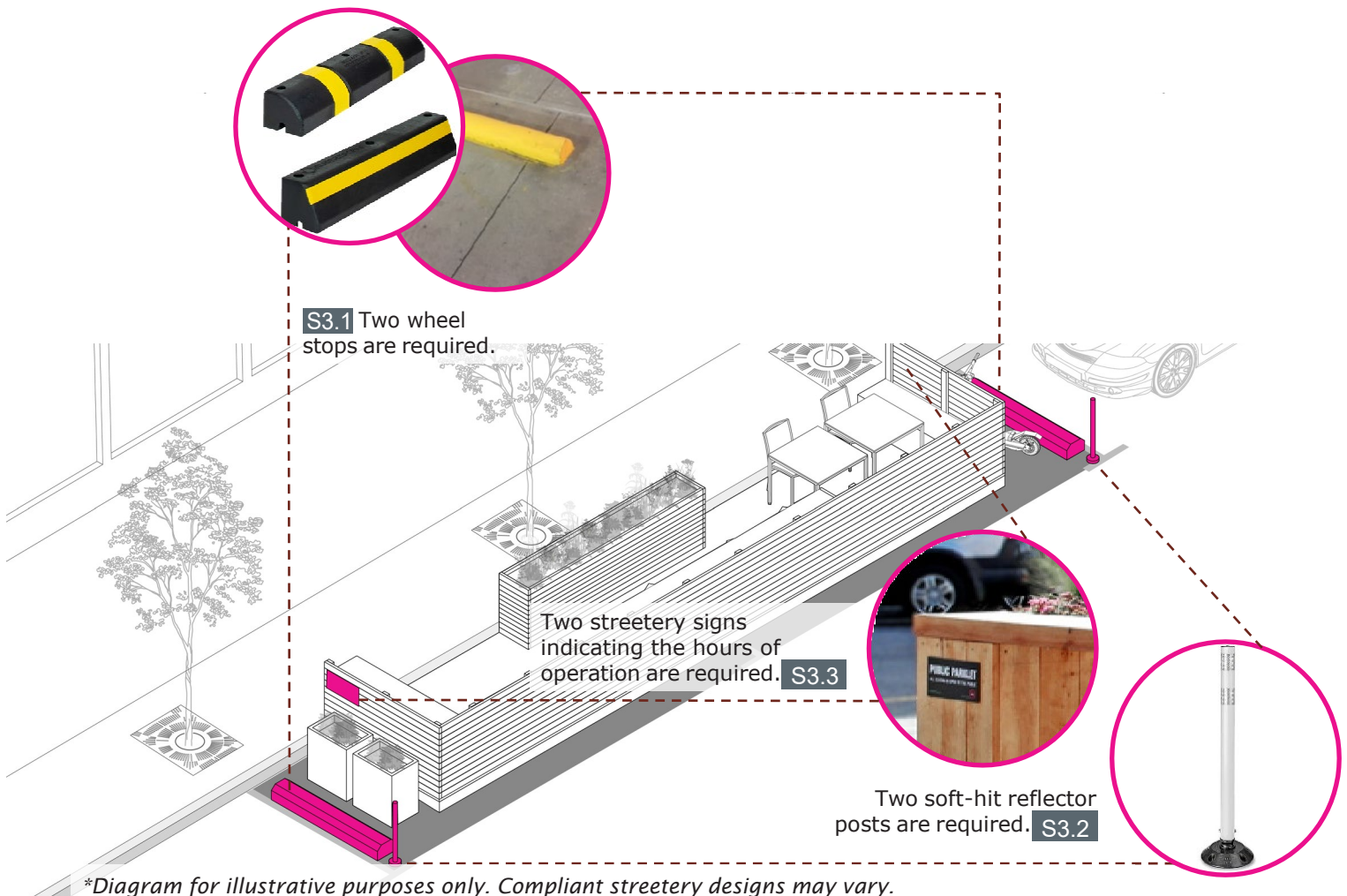
S3.7 Areas without marked parking spaces. In areas where parking spaces are not marked on the pavement, the proposed streetery shall not leave an "orphaned" space, a space less than 20 feet, that would be too small to use as a full parking space.

G.3.8 Wheel stops and accomodating the street crown. Shorter, modular sections may be linked together to equal the required 6 foot wheel stop length. Linked modules may allow for better adhesion to the street where crowning is more extreme.

G.3.9 Approved elements within the 4 foot side buffers. The space within each 4 foot side buffer can include certain, approved elements or amenities, unless it is adjacent to another streetery or parklet, in which **S3.5** applies. These approved items are described in **Section 6. Amenities and Overhead Structures.**



S3.1 - S3.4 The diagram above summarizes the safety elements and buffers required for a streetery.



**Diagram for illustrative purposes only. Compliant streetery designs may vary.*

4. SUBSTRUCTURE SUPPORT SYSTEM AND DECK

The substructure sits on the street and provides the structural foundation for the deck of the streetery. The system must allow for proper drainage under the deck, create a level deck surface that aligns with the adjacent sidewalk, and allow for removal of the structure when necessary.

The deck is the “floor” of the streetery and the material used must be non-slippery and durable enough to withstand the wear and tear of a public space.



An example of pedestals supporting specialty wooden deck tiles. Credit: decksdirect.com

S4.1 The support base and deck must be freestanding. The substructure and deck must be a freestanding, structural foundation that rests on, or is lifted off, the street surface. It shall not be permanently attached to the street or curb.

S4.2 Substructure framing and decking made of wood. In order to comply with Raleigh’s fire code, any substructure support system or decking that is made of wood must meet the following requirements:

- Must not exceed 600 sq. ft.
- Must be pressure treated
- Must be at least 2 inch nominal

S4.3 Accommodating street crowns. Streets are commonly slightly crowned for drainage with the middle of the street slightly higher than the edges; therefore, the substructure must account for this curvature in the street in order to create a level platform.

S4.4 The streetery shall not inhibit the flow of rainwater along the street or curb. The streetery must be designed to allow rainwater to flow away from travel lanes and buildings and along the curb to its intended drain or basin. The structure must keep a 6 inch x 6 inch clear zone between the curb and the entire length of the streetery.

S4.5 The deck must be flush with the sidewalk. No horizontal separation shall be greater than 1/2 inch. No vertical separation shall be greater than 1/4 inch. If larger gaps exist, a 1:12 (8.33%) bevel and/or span shall be used to ensure accessibility.

S4.6 All walking surfaces must be accessible, non-slip, and weather resilient. In accordance with accessibility standards, the deck surface must be firm and stable. The deck shall have no gaps capable of passing a 1/2 inch sphere.

S4.7 The streetery must be load-bearing and easy to remove.

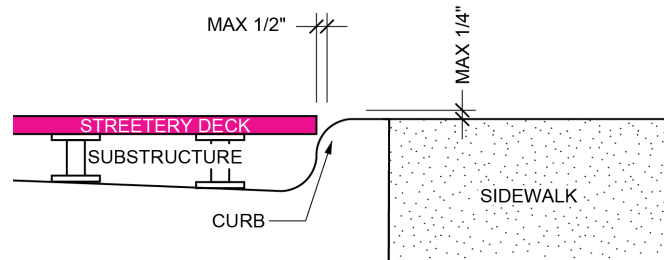
- The entire structure must be built to allow for easy removal by the license holder, within 24 hours of written notice.
- No streetery component may weigh more than 200 pounds per square foot.
- The deck shall be designed to bear a minimum of 100 pounds per sq. ft. and a maximum of 750 pounds per sq. ft..
- Material specs are required with application.

S4.8 Deck slope. In accordance with accessibility standards, the deck shall have a max running slope (parallel to the curb) of 5% and a max cross slope (perpendicular to the curb) of 2%.

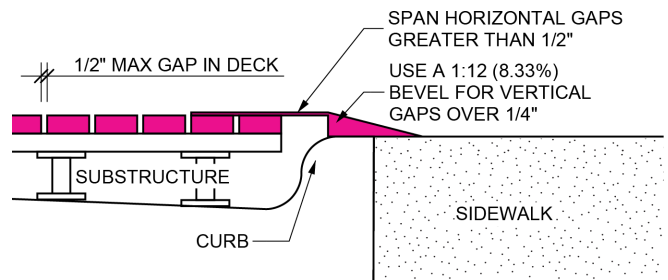
G4.1 Drainage and maintenance. Providing access under the platform to allow for repairs or debris removal is encouraged. This can be provided through access panels, removable pavers, or other means.



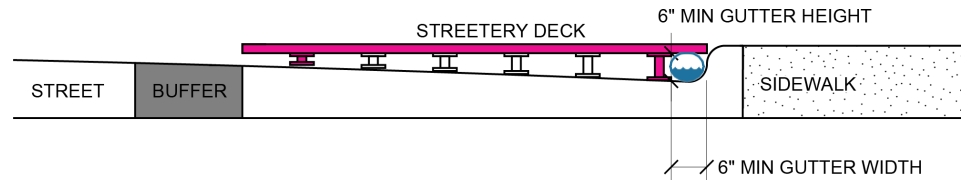
Wood decking is installed over a wooden frame. Substructure joists run parallel to the street. Credit: askstudio.com



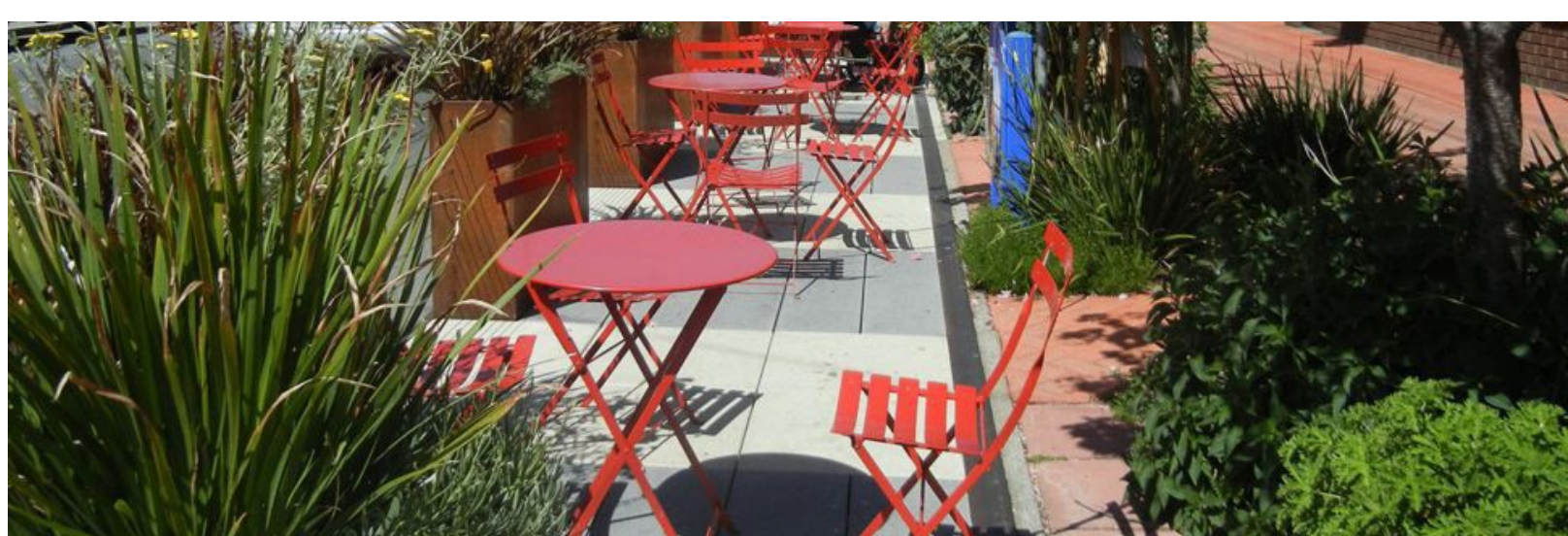
S4.6 The deck should be flush with the sidewalk.



S4.7 All walking surfaces should be accessible, non-slip, and weather resilient.



S4.4 The sub-structure should not inhibit the flow of rainwater along the street or curb.



A streetery using concrete pavers as the decking material. Pavers are flush with the existing sidewalk. Credit: nacto.org

4.1 SUBSTRUCTURE SUPPORT SYSTEM OPTIONS

G4.1.1 Material options for the substructure.

A streetery's substructure may be made of several types of materials, which may include: a pedestal support system, steel frame, pressure-treated 2 inch nominal wood (less than 600 sq. ft.) frame, or composite frame.

G4.1.2 Pressure-treated wood or composite lumber framing.

Pressure-treated wood or composite lumber can be used to build the frame that will support a streetery's deck. Frame joists should be spaced at regular intervals, 16 inches on center is standard. Any frame made of wood must comply with **S4.2** to ensure compliance with Raleigh's fire code.

To maintain drainage and allow for a level deck, wood frames can be lifted off the street using posts or threaded, swivel leveling mounts.

Benefits. Wood frames can be built on-site or prefabricated in modules and transferred. They are readily available and connection and assembly details are more typical.

G4.1.3 Steel framing. Steel can be used to build the frame that will support a streetery's deck. Typically, 4 foot x 6 foot modules are fabricated off-site and then connected in the field. A certified welder would be needed for fabrication.

Threaded swivel leveling mounts can be used to lift and level the steel frame and assist with stormwater drainage.

Benefits. A steel frame's strength allows it to span from the curb to the street edge without intermediary supports, requiring less material.

G4.1.4 Pedestal support system. This system provides a series of adjustable point supports that directly support the deck above. Pedestals are arranged in a grid, located at the corners of specialized tiles/pavers. Some larger-format deck tiles may require intermediary supports.

A pedestal system can be expensive and requires experienced labor to install.

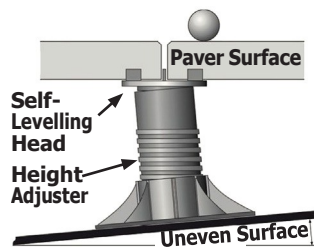
Benefits. Pedestals are self-leveling to accommodate varying street crowns. Panels or pavers are easy to remove if needed. Pedestals allow for stormwater to pass easily through the substructure.



Pressure-treated wood or composite lumber framing. A wood frame for a streetery under construction. Credit: syracuse.com



Steel framing. Left: Examples of high-capacity, ACME threaded swivel leveling mounts. Right: A steel frame for a parklet under construction. Credit: University of Cincinnati, magazine.uc.edu



Pedestal support system. Left: A diagram detailing a pedestal support unit. Right: Pedestals supporting concrete pavers. Credit: speedypavingtexas.com

4.2 DECKING MATERIAL OPTIONS

G4.2.1 Material options for the deck. The deck should be made of non-slip, durable, and weather-resistant material that can be easily maintained. Decking may be made of several types of materials including: pre-cast concrete pavers, pressure-treated 2 inch nominal wood, powder-coated aluminum, and plastic or composite lumber.

G4.2.2 Pressure-treated wood. Pressure-treated wood decking is readily available and relatively inexpensive. However, wood may show wear and tear more than other decking materials listed below. Any deck made of wood must comply with **S4.2** to ensure compliance with Raleigh's fire code. Standard dimension wood decking can be installed on a wood or steel frame; specialty wood tiles would be required for a pedestal support system.

G4.2.3 Plastic or composite lumber. Plastic decking can be made of recycled material and is available in standard lumber and timber dimensions. Composite lumber uses a combination of plastic and wood fibers. Both types are waterproof, resistant to rot and mold, and less susceptible to cracking and splitting when installed properly. It requires minimal maintenance and is available in a variety of colors, but is typically more expensive than wood. Plastic or composite lumber can be installed on a wood or steel frame.

G4.2.4 Concrete pavers. Precast concrete pavers are a durable and economical material. Pavers can be installed using a pedestal support system. A grid of 24x24-inch pavers are usually the most efficient arrangement for a pedestal system because an intermediate support would not be required. As paver dimensions elongate, more intermediate support would be required.

G4.2.5 Powder-coated aluminum. Aluminum, powder-coated decking is a low-maintenance and long lasting option for the deck surface. Aluminum is lightweight, strong, non-combustible, and can be made in multiple sizes. The powder-coat finish allows for a modest range of color options and adds texture, providing a non-slip surface. Aluminum can be more expensive, noisy, and heat absorbing which may not be appropriate in all locations.



Pressure-treated wood. An example of a streetery deck constructed with wood. Credit: orcity.org



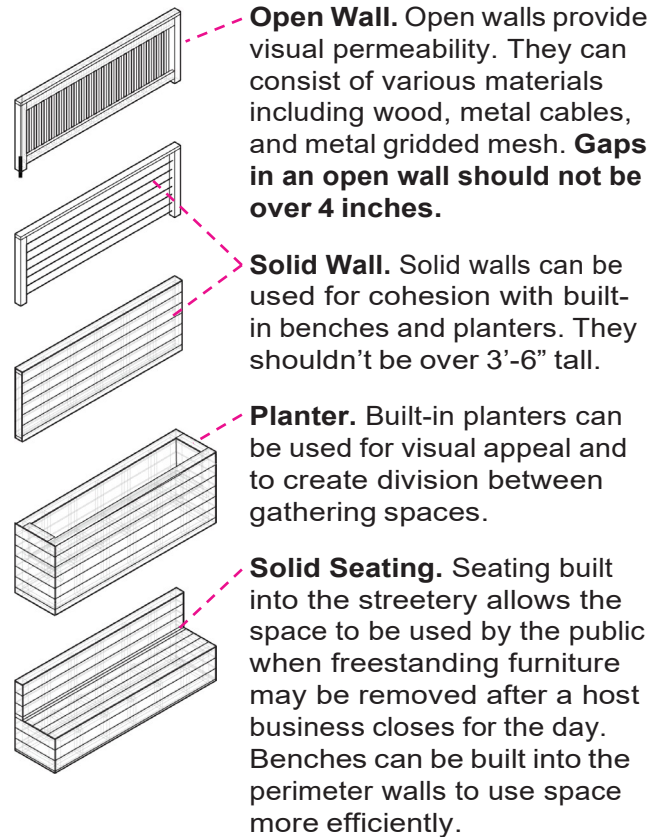
Plastic or composite lumber. An example of decking made from plastic lumber. Credit: montgomeryplanningboard.org



Concrete pavers. Elongated concrete pavers meet the sidewalk seamlessly. Credit: parkade.com, SF Planning

5. OUTER AND SIDE ENCLOSURES

The addition of vertical enclosures provides a barrier between pedestrians and adjacent vehicular traffic. These can include elements such as walls, planters, railings, and/or seating. The enclosures should be able to withstand impact while also keeping occupants safe.



S5.1 Outer enclosure.

- The streetery's outer enclosure (adjacent to the travel lane) must be a minimum of 36 inches and a maximum of 42 inches tall.
- Continuous, opaque walls above 42 inches that block the view from the street into the streetery are prohibited.
- Enclosures above 42 inches will require additional review to ensure sightlines and safety requirements are met as determined by RDOT.
- The outer enclosure must not encroach into the 18 inch safety buffer adjacent to the travel lane.
- Height shall be measured from the deck.

S5.2 Side enclosures.

- The side enclosures, on either end of the streetery, must be at least 18 inches tall.
- The side enclosures must not encroach into the 4 foot buffer required between the structure and any adjacent parking spaces.

S5.5 Planting height. Plants that reach a height over 42 inches must be visually permeable and shall not block views into and out of the streetery.

S5.4 Enclosure gaps. Any gaps in open enclosure walls shall not exceed 4 inches.

S5.3 Minimum uniform load for the outer enclosure.

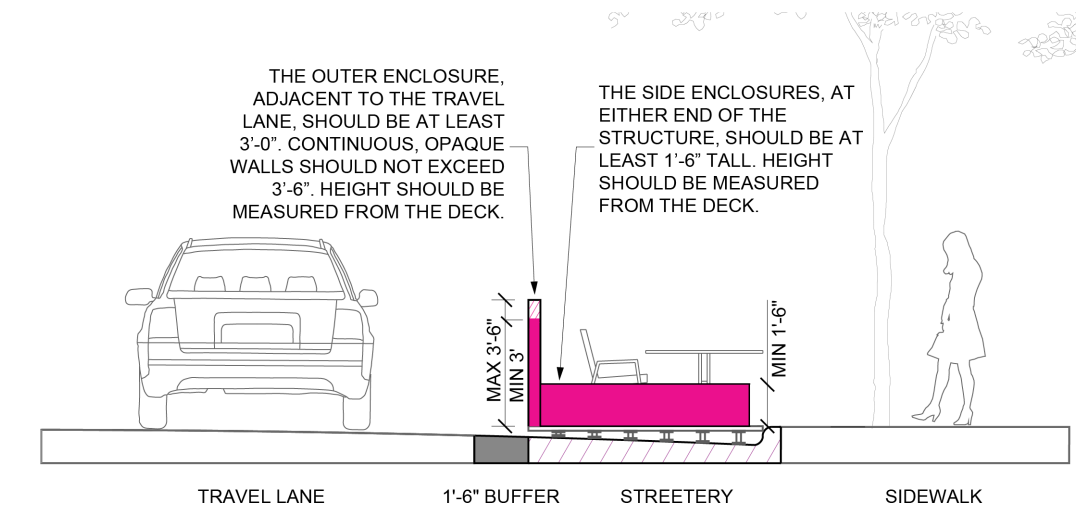
- The outer enclosure should be capable of withstanding at least 200 pounds per sq. ft.
- Material specs are required with application.
- Options for enclosure materials are listed in **Section 5.1, Enclosure Materials**.

G5.1 Neighbor-friendly construction. If possible, the enclosure walls should be aesthetically pleasing on both the interior-facing and exterior-facing sides. Any visible, structural members should face the interior of the streetery, leaving the smooth side facing the street.

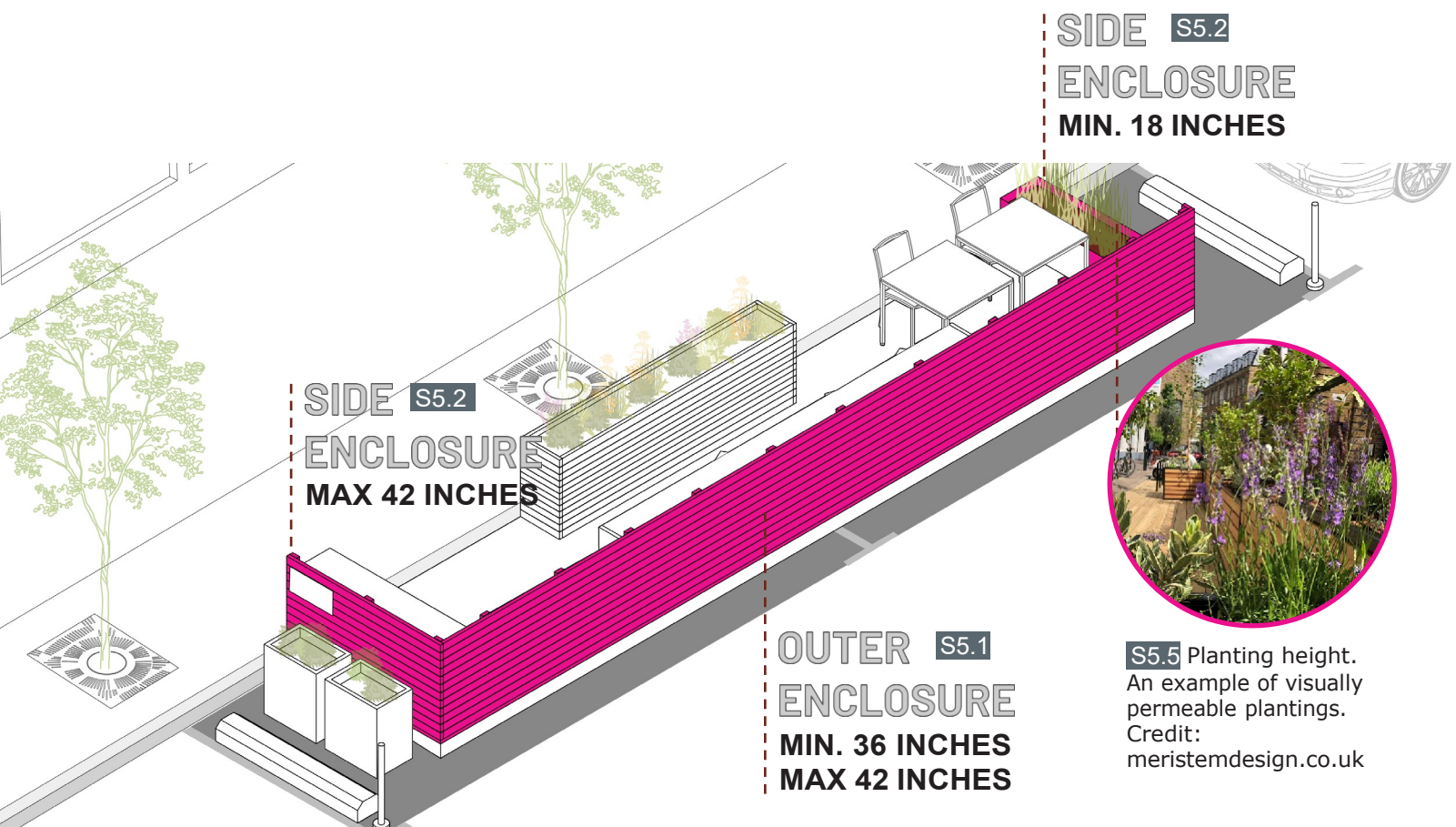
G5.2 Visibility to vehicular traffic. Vertical elements that make the streetery easily visible to traffic should be included in the design.

G5.3 Maintain a visual connection to the street. Streeteries must maintain a visual connection from the street to the sidewalk. The use of continuous, opaque walls may block views into the streetery from the surrounding streetscape.

G5.4 Consider the back of the streetery as an opportunity. The outer enclosure is highly visible from across the street and can provide visual interest. Incorporating artwork/mural, textures, and plantings are encouraged.



S5.1 - S5.2 Outer enclosure. Side enclosures.



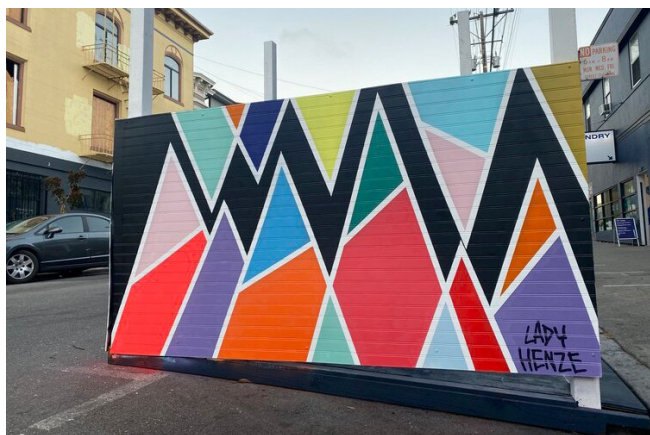
**Diagram for illustrative purposes only. Compliant streetery designs may vary.*

5.1 ENCLOSURE MATERIALS

Materials should be aesthetically pleasing to the streetscape and may not pose a safety hazard. These materials must be durable, non-combustible, and sustainable. Ease of assembly and disassembly is important to consider when choosing materials. Required standards for enclosure materials are described in **Section 5, Outer and Side Enclosures**.

G5.1.1 Materials should be high-quality, durable, and non-reflective. Steel, finished woods, salvaged building materials, and sustainably sourced materials are recommended. It is recommended that wood used for the enclosure walls be pressure treated. Ease of removal if/when necessary should also be considered.

G5.1.2 Sustainable design. Transportation costs and carbon footprint can be reduced if materials are locally sourced. Finishes such as paint, stains, or glues that emit zero or low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) improve air quality during construction.



G5.1.3 Inexpensive enclosure materials. Credit: Mission Street Parklet, artwork by ladyhenzeart.com

G5.1.3 Inexpensive enclosure materials.

These materials include:

- Reclaimed wood
- Plywood
- Reclaimed metal

Potential use:

- Reclaimed wood planters, barriers, and furniture
- Plywood barriers
- Reclaimed metal planters and barriers

Pros:

- Reclaimed wood is a cost-effective option that allows for sustainable design practices
- Plywood is available in thick sizes for stability and protection from traffic
- Reclaimed metal allows for more durability and stability if maintained
- Plywood and reclaimed wood allow opportunities for application of murals and street art

Cons:

- Reclaimed products may be hard to source
- These products are not as durable as the mid-range or high-end materials, but are an option for quick, more temporary solutions



G5.1.3 Inexpensive enclosure materials. This cafe parklet in Astoria uses reclaimed wood and other recycled materials. Credit: dailyastorian.com

G5.1.4 Mid-range enclosure materials.

These materials include:

- Solid natural wood boards
- Aluminum

Potential use:

- Solid natural wood board planters, barriers, and furniture
- Aluminum planters, barriers, and furniture

Pros:

- Natural wood boards are aesthetically pleasing, and also provide opportunity for easy customization through staining or painting
- Aluminum is a lightweight, but strong option for a streetery barrier
- These materials have higher stability and durability if maintained properly

Cons:

- Can be costly and require extensive construction
- Maintenance can be costly



G5.1.5 High-end enclosure materials.

These materials include:

- Steel
- Wrought iron
- Concrete

Potential use:

- Steel planters, barriers, and furniture
- Wrought iron barriers
- Concrete planters

Pros:

- The highest stability and durability
- Provide ample protection from traffic
- Aesthetically pleasing and come in many different sizes, shapes, and colors for easy customization

Cons:

- These materials can be costly when purchasing, constructing, and maintaining
- Ease of installation and disassembly must be considered when choosing these materials



G5.1.4 Mid-range enclosure materials. Top: Planters and railings made of aluminum, Credit: dwell.com. Bottom: A natural wood enclosure surrounds seating, Credit: parkade.com



G5.1.5 High-end enclosure materials. Top: Concrete planters enclose a streetery, Credit: parkade.com. Bottom: Parklet enclosure using steel railings and wood planters, Credit: bostonmagazine.com

6. AMENITIES AND OVERHEAD STRUCTURES

Streeteries should be aesthetic improvements to the streetscape and include amenities such as seating, planting, lighting and other elements that invite people to gather.

S6.1 Overhead structures shall be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

- Overhead structures shall not be structurally attached to street trees or buildings.
- Overhead structures must have a min. vertical clearance of 8 feet, measured from the deck.
- The design, format, and material of overhead elements must not interfere with the visibility of any traffic or wayfinding signage, block required pedestrian-clear zones, or reduce visibility for pedestrians or vehicular traffic.

S6.2 Heating and gas power.

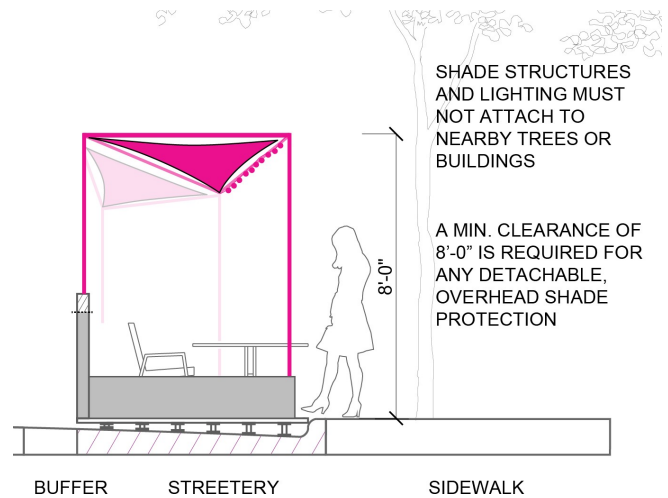
- If gas or electric heat is desired, heaters must be portable and meet all requirements of Section 603.4 of the North Carolina Fire Code .
- Outdoor fire pits are prohibited on city-owned property, including the right-of-way.
- Gas heaters must be 5 feet from buildings.
- All gas-fired heating appliances shall be reviewed and approved for use by city staff.

S6.3 Lighting. Electrical connections to nearby buildings or street trees, flashing lights, and cords that extend over the sidewalk are prohibited. Portable and solar or battery-powered lighting elements are allowed.

S6.4 Advertisements. Signage for the purpose of advertising shall not be allowed on or within a streeteries, nor shall any other signs in violation of city code or policy.

G6.1 Overhead protection is optional. Adding overhead protection can provide shade and weather protection and make the space more comfortable for users throughout the year, but it is not required.

G6.2 Furniture. All furniture should be easy to move or disassemble and approved for commercial outdoor use. Wooden or metal furniture is recommended. Specs should be submitted with application.



S6.1 Overhead structures shall be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

G6.3 Approved items for the 4 foot side buffers.

- Large, freestanding planters can be placed within side buffers to provide additional protection and aesthetic appeal. Planters within a side buffer should weigh a minimum of 700 pounds when full.
- Scooters can be parked in side buffers.

G6.4 Integrated planting or landscaping is strongly encouraged. Native and drought-tolerant plants work best for ease of maintenance and providing of habitat. The use of invasive species is strongly discouraged. Planter boxes/pots, hanging planters, green walls, and raised beds are examples of planting elements. A landscape plan clearly locating and naming proposed plants, planting medium, and watering/drainage provisions is recommended. The applicant should keep plants in good health and perform any trimming, watering, or replacing as necessary. Plantings must meet height and permeability requirements described in **Section 5, Outer and Side Enclosures, S.5.5.**

G6.5 Diversify form and use. Permanent, built-in seating is encouraged so the space can still be used outside business hours, after any movable elements are stored away. Incorporating lean rails, narrow benches, and seating steps along with traditional seating can help make a streeteries accessible and comfortable for multiple users.

G6.6 Artwork. Artwork is encouraged and can be integrated permanently into the design, or featured during rotating installations. The space and programming of any art installations should be clearly indicated on application materials.



G6.1 Overhead protection is optional. This parklet in Brighton, Colorado uses tensioned canopies for shade. Credit: rawdbf.com



G6.6 Artwork. A mural decorates the outer enclosure wall of a streetery. Credit: lbpost.com
Artwork by: Cody Lusby and Melanie Cristofaro



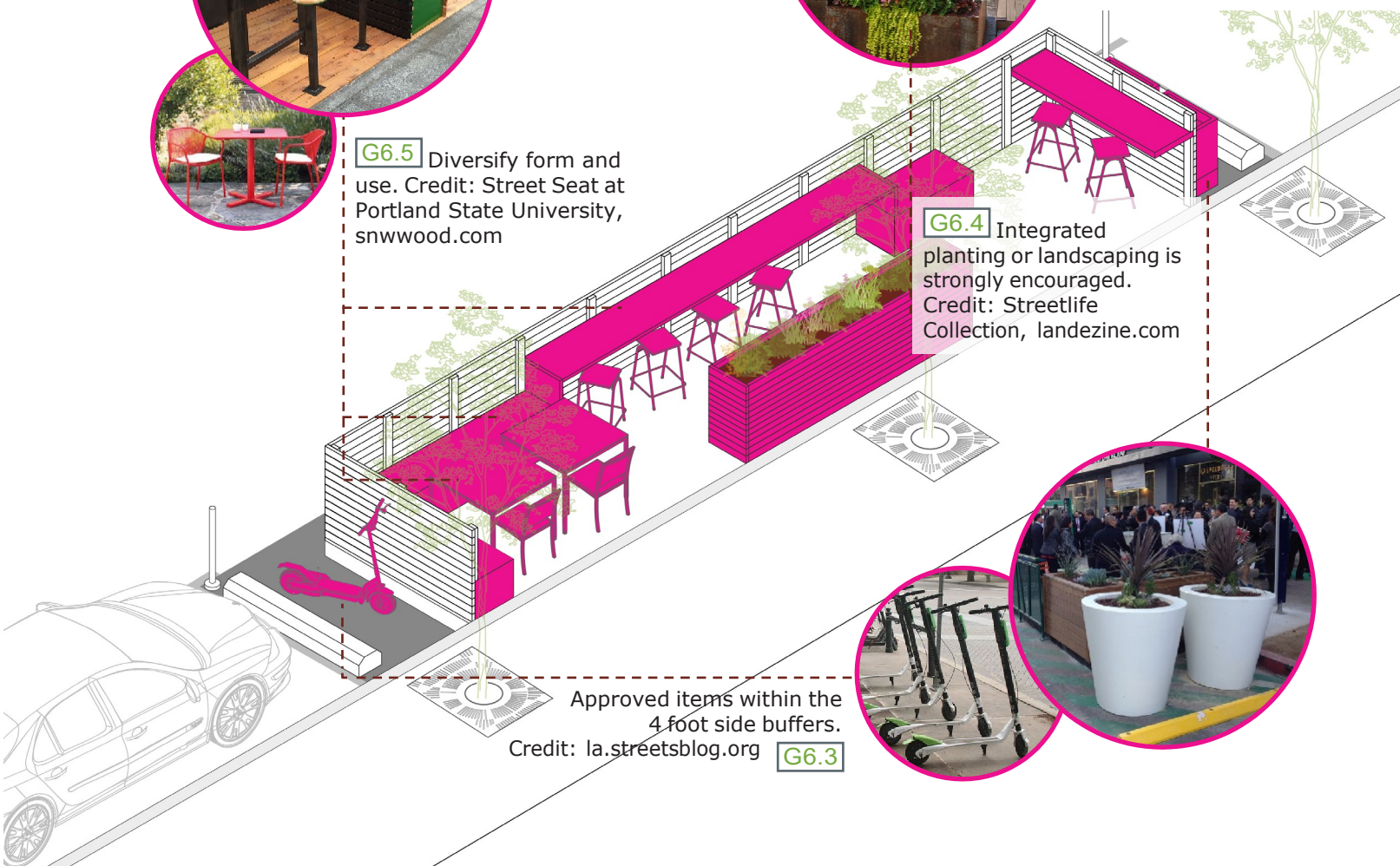
G6.2 Furniture. An example of anchored, wood and metal tables and benches. Credit: logicstreetscene.co.nz



G6.5 Diversify form and use. Credit: Street Seat at Portland State University, snwood.com



G6.4 Integrated planting or landscaping is strongly encouraged. Credit: Streetlife Collection, landezine.com



Approved items within the 4 foot side buffers. Credit: la.streetsblog.org **G6.3**

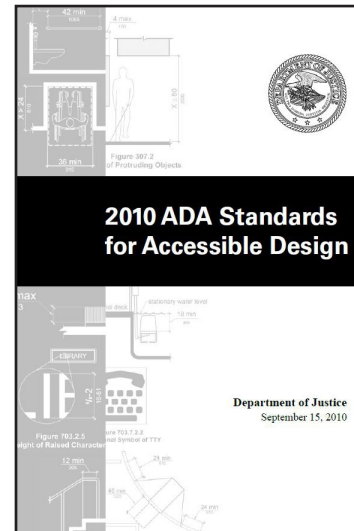


**Diagram for illustrative purposes only. Compliant streetery designs may vary.*

7. ACCESSIBILITY AND ADA

All streeteries must be accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The standards provided here are a summary. All accessibility elements of any proposed structure shall be designed, constructed and/or conform to the applicable provisions, rules, regulations and guidelines of the:

- **N.C. State Building Code**
- **2010 Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design**
- **Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines**



S7.1 Accessible path of travel. An accessible path of travel must connect the sidewalk to the accessible entry, deck surface, wheelchair turning space and wheelchair resting space. The accessible path must be a minimum of 4 feet wide on the sidewalk and not pass over tree wells. Once on the deck surface, the accessible path must be a minimum of 3 feet wide.

S7.2 Accessible entry. The streetery must contain an entry that is 54 inches or greater. The accessible entry is where the accessible path crosses the threshold from the sidewalk to the deck surface. An ideal streetery entry must be located in an unobstructed area where there is the least amount of running slope along the sidewalk and curb.

S7.3 Accessible deck surface. The portion of the streetery deck connected by the accessible path of travel to the wheelchair turning and resting space must be level. Cross slope (perpendicular to the curb) and running slope (parallel to the curb) should not exceed 2%.

S7.4 Wheelchair turning space. The wheelchair turning space allows for wheelchair users to make a 360 degree turn entirely within the streetery space. This clear area must be 5 feet in diameter and may overlap the curb and sidewalk by a max of 1 foot.

S7.5 Wheelchair resting space. The wheelchair resting space requires a 30 inch x 48 inch clear floor area. It may overlap with the turning space by 2 feet in any orientation.

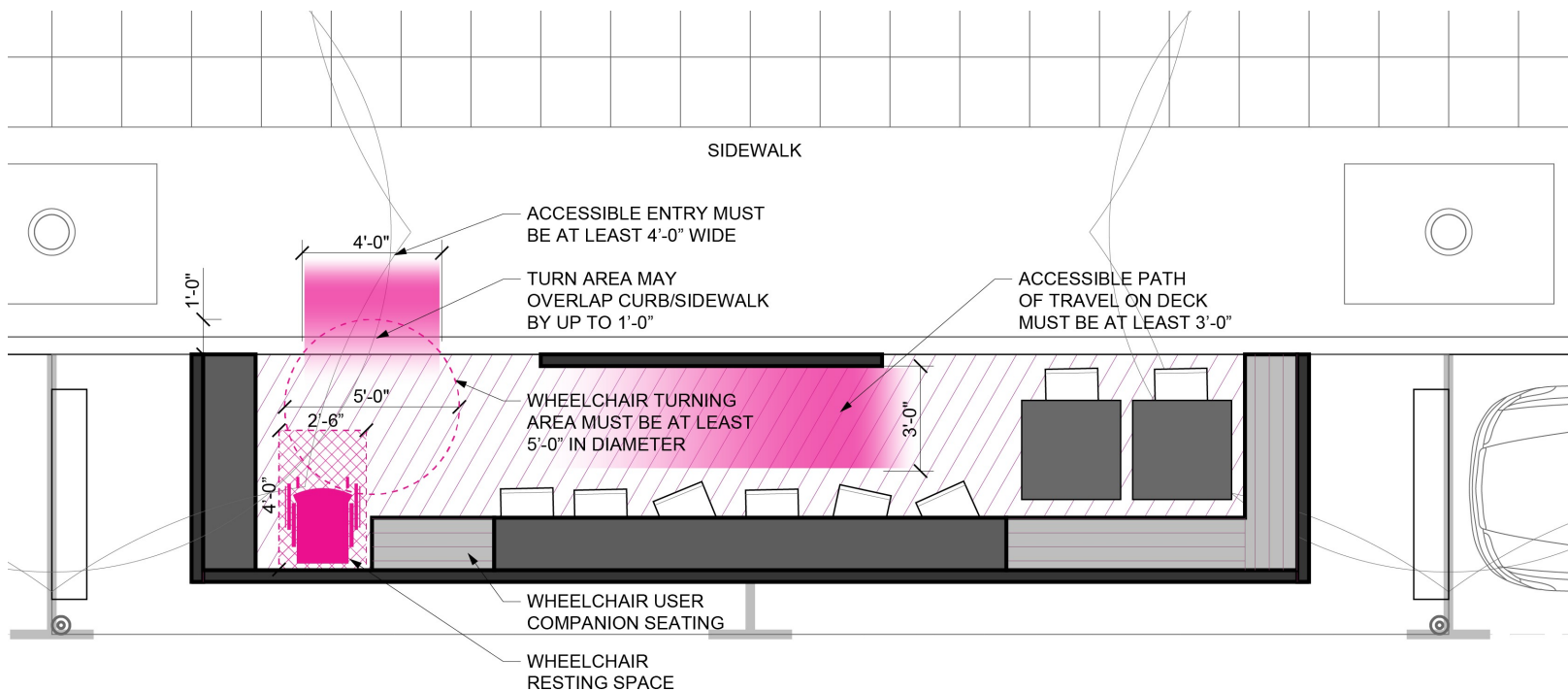
S7.6 Wheelchair user companion seating. If there is any fixed seating in the streetery design, it must provide one shoulder-to-shoulder seat for a wheelchair user companion.

S7.7 Equivalent facilities. Where tables, counters, or drink rails are provided, at least one feature should be wheelchair accessible. Streeteries must provide at least one ADA accessible seating area per parking space used for the streetery.

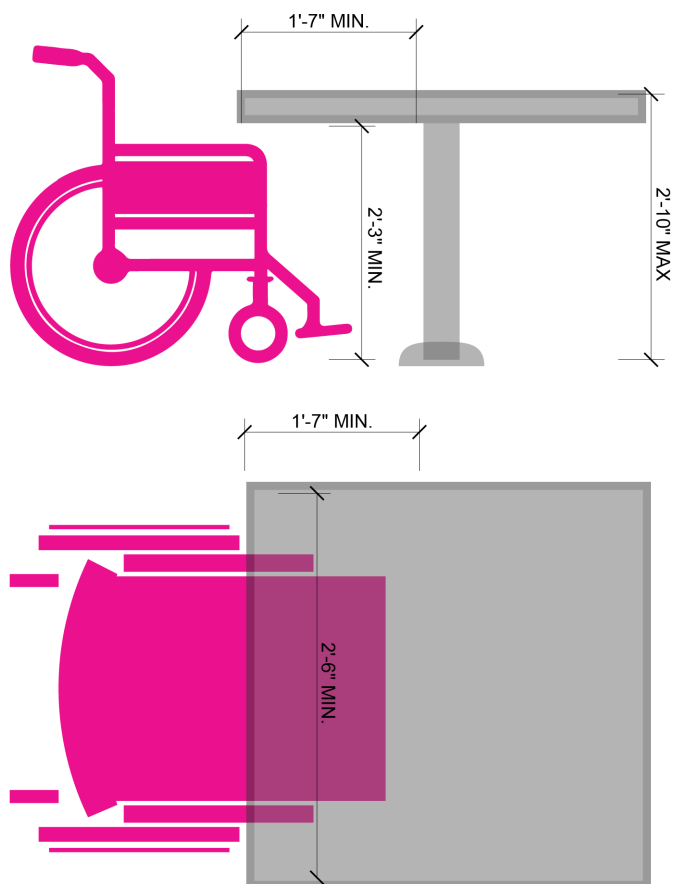
Accessible features must meet the following specifications:

- The top surface must be between 28 inches and 34 inches above the deck.
- Knee clearance must be at least 27 inches tall, 30 inches wide, and 19 inches deep.

S7.8 Terraced streeteries. On streets with grades that exceed 5%, terraces are allowed. At least one terrace must be wheelchair accessible and provide equivalent facilities. The change in level between terraces must be served by a ramp with a max 5% (1:20) running slope, additional entries, or otherwise be licensed on a case-by-case basis. Any stairs or ramps must meet all building code requirements for rise, run, width, handrails and contrasting stair striping.



S7.1 - S7.6 Accessibility standards are summarized in the diagram above.



S7.7 Equivalent facilities.

S7.8 The Reveille Coffee parklet/streeterly in San Francisco created an accessible design on a challenging, sloping site. Credit: groundplaysf.org

Notification Requirements

Applicants must notify all affected community members—including residents and businesses—about their outdoor seating area, associated loss of parking, and other impacts at least two weeks prior to implementation. Any establishment or residence that will be neighboring the outdoor seating area must be notified.

Each notification must include the following:

- Name of business
- Location of outdoor seating
- Date of implementation
- Description of possible impacts
- Business contact name, phone number, and email
- [Outdoor Seating Feedback Form](#)

Approved Notification Methods

- **Option 1:** Mailed Postcards – Applicants may mail standardized bright yellow postcards detailing outdoor seating information to all affected community members.
- **Option 2:** Individualized Establishment Notification – Applicants may individually contact affected community members in person, over the phone, or via email and submit their tracked interactions to staff from the Office of Special Events.
- **Option 3:** Apartment or Business Complex Notification – Applicants may coordinate with property managers to alert all tenants of a large complex via the preferred communication method of the complex. Proof of this alternate form of notification must be submitted to staff from the Office of Special Events.

Applicants may use a combination of the above methods of notification or may submit a suggested alternate notification plan to the Office of Special Events in advance, which may be approved, modified, or denied.

Note that while an applicant is required to notify its neighbors about plans for outdoor seating, neighbor consent is not required to move forward.



Photo courtesy of VisitRaleigh

Portable Heater Safety Guidance

The use of portable heaters brings an increased risk of fire and injury. The sections of the North Carolina Fire Code below provide standards for the safe use of portable heaters.

Gas Heaters

- 603.4.2.1.1 **Prohibited locations:** The storage or use of portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances is prohibited in any of the following locations:
 - Inside of any occupancy where connected to the fuel gas container.
 - Inside tents, canopies, and membrane structures.
 - On exterior balconies.
- 603.4.2.1.2 **Clearance to buildings:** Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances shall be located not less than 5 feet from building.
- 603.4.2.1.3 **Clearance to combustible materials:** Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances shall not be located beneath, or closer than 5 feet to combustible decorations and combustible overhangs, awnings, sunshades or similar combustible attachments to buildings.
- 603.4.2.1.4 **Proximity to exits:** Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances shall not be located within 5 feet of exits or exit discharge.
- 603.4.2.2.2 **Installation and maintenance:** Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Electrical Heaters

- 605.10 **Portable, electric space heaters:** Where not prohibited by other sections of this code, portable, electric space heaters shall be permitted to be used in all occupancies other than Group I-2 and in accordance with Sections 605.10.1 through 605.10.4.
 - Exception: The use of portable, electric space heaters in which the heating element cannot exceed a temperature of 212 degrees (F) shall be permitted in nonsleeping staff and employee areas in Group I-2 occupancies.
- 605.10.1 **Listed and Labeled:** Only listed and labeled portable, electric space heaters shall be used.
- 605.10.2 **Power Supply:** Portable, electric space heaters shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle.
- 605.10.3 **Extension Cords:** Portable, electric space heaters shall not be plugged into extension cords.
- 605.10.4 **Prohibited areas:** Portable, electric space heaters shall not be operated within 3 feet of any combustible materials. Portable, electric space heaters shall be operated in locations for which they are listed.

Outdoor Fire Pits on City Property

City Code outlines that outdoor fire pits are considered unlawful on City-owned property, which includes sidewalks, parking spaces, streets, and plazas used for an outdoor seating area.

City Code

Sec. 13-1004. - FIRE OR FLAMES ON CITY-OWNED OR CONTROLLED PROPERTY.

It *shall* be unlawful for any person to ignite, carry, transport or to cause to be ignited, carried or transported or to allow to burn on or across any sidewalk, *street*, easement, right-of-way, park or other *property* of any kind owned or otherwise controlled by the *City*, any flame, fire, or lighted nonelectric lantern, other than a match, cigarette lighter or lighted pipe, cigar, or cigarette; provided the foregoing *shall* not apply to *City* employees or employees of a licensed utility company engaged in the performance of their duties; nor to workers engaged in the performance of their duties pursuant to a valid contract with the *City*; nor to construction workers working under a valid permit issued by proper authorities; provided further, it *shall* not be unlawful to build or ignite fires in cooking pits, fireplaces or other areas on *City*-owned or controlled *property* designated by the City as areas for fires, cooking or burning.

(Code 1959, §15-49)

Open Flame Restriction

The portions of City property used by businesses to extend their outdoor seating are not areas designated for fires, cooking or burning nor will they become acceptable locations. No cooking or open flames are permitted in the outdoor seating areas. An alternative option would be to use portable heaters. Please reference page 22 of this guide, which includes portable heater safety guidelines. It is the responsibility of businesses to procure portable heaters in accordance with North Carolina Fire Code.

Commerical Building Codes: Temporary Tents

This information is intended to help streamline permitting and inspection approvals **for only temporary shelters and tents** for businesses such as but not limited to restaurants, bars and nightclubs. This information applies to requirements on private property and not the public right-of-way. If any of the additions become permanent, they will need to be re-permitted as permanent structures.

A structure attached to a building is considered permanent and is not applicable to these guidelines.

Temporary Structure – (Less than 180 days)

1. A building permit is only required if the structure exceeds 120 sq. ft.
2. A zoning permit is required for all temporary structures.
3. The construction documents shall include a site plan.
4. The structure shall be located in accordance with Table 602 of the 2018 N.C. Building Code.
5. The construction documents shall conform to structural strength and uplift requirements.
6. The construction documents shall include the occupancy, means of egress and occupant load.
7. The construction documents shall include the location of new electrical lights, switches and receptacles. (Electrical permit required if applicable)
8. The construction documents shall include the location and type of heating or cooking equipment. (Mechanical and Electrical permit required if applicable)
9. Portable fire extinguisher shall be provided as required by Section 906.1 of the 2018 NC Building Code.
10. An accessible route to toilet facilities is required. The addition shall provide access to the maximum extent that is technically feasible.

Temporary Tents and Membrane Structures – (Less than 180 days)

1. A building permit is not required for temporary tents, canopies or membrane structures.
2. A zoning permit is required for all temporary tents or membrane structures.
3. A fire operational permit is only required for tents in excess of 800 sq. ft.
4. A fire operational permit is only required for standalone tents (12 or more feet from a building) **and** open on all four sides if tent exceeds 1800 sq. ft.
5. The construction documents shall include a site plan.
6. With an occupant load of 50 or greater, the construction documents shall include means of egress, seating capacity and seating arrangement.
7. The construction documents shall include the location of new electrical lights, switches and receptacles. (Electrical permit required if applicable)
8. The construction documents shall include location and type of heating or cooking equipment. (Mechanical and electrical permit required if applicable)
9. Portable fire extinguisher shall be provided as required by Section 906.1 of the 2018 NC Fire Code.
10. An accessible route to toilet facilities is required. The addition shall provide access to the maximum extent that is technically feasible.

TECHNICALLY INFEASIBLE – “An alteration of a facility that has little likelihood of being accomplished because existing physical or existing site constraints prohibit modification or addition of elements, spaces or features which are in full and strict compliance with the minimum requirements for new construction and which are necessary to provide accessibility.”

Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission Guidance

Extension of Licensed Premises

In accordance with [House Bill 890](#), the ABC Commission plans to adopt rules making the expansion of licensed premises for purposes of outdoor seating permanent. Extended areas on public right-of-way must be authorized by the City of Raleigh to be used for the outdoor possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages. This permission can be obtained by way of an outdoor seating permit issued by the City's Office of Special Events.

As outlined in [House Bill 890](#), permittees are subject to all of the following requirements:

1. If the licensed premise is located in a city, an ordinance has been adopted by the city authorizing permittees to expand their licensed premises. If the licensed premise is located outside of a city, an ordinance has been adopted by the county authorizing permittees to expand their licensed premises.
2. If the property to which the premises will be extended is not owned by the permittee, the owner of the property has provided written permission to the permittee allowing the use of the property for the purpose set forth in this subsection.
3. The permittee has provided written notification, including the diagram required under subdivision (5) of this subsection and, if applicable, a copy of the written permission required under subdivision (2) of this subsection, to the district office of the ALE Division, and local law enforcement agency, with jurisdiction over the licensed premises.
4. The permittee shall visibly and vertically mark off the extended area so a reasonable person could distinguish between the extended area and any sidewalk or walkway.
5. The permittee shall maintain a diagram on the licensed premises detailing the size and location of the extended area. The diagram required under this subdivision shall have the boundaries of the extended area clearly marked, specify the types of barriers used to mark the boundaries of the extended area, and specify the number of tables and seats placed in the extended area.
6. The extended area shall not be used to increase the occupant load of the licensed premises. For purposes of this section, "occupant load" is as used in Section 1004 of the 2018 North Carolina Building Code.
7. The extended area shall comply with all applicable laws governing accessibility.
8. Except as allowed under G.S. 18B-904.1 or to reenter the licensed premises, a person shall not exit an extended area with an alcoholic beverage purchased from the permittee.
9. Any additional requirements imposed by the Commission through the adoption of rules.

For any permanent extensions, an updated diagram should be submitted to the Commission.

If permittees have questions for the NC ABC Commission, call 919-779-0700 or email contact@abc.nc.gov.

Outdoor Seating Frequently Asked Questions

What is a streetery?

A streetery converts on-street parking spaces and is typically located outside of a business. It provides outdoor seating for the patrons of the business during its hours of operation.

What is a parklet?

A parklet converts on-street parking spaces into a vibrant, community space that is open to the public at all times.

What is sidewalk seating?

Sidewalk seating allows a portion of city sidewalk to be used to extend a business footprint with tables and chairs. It provides outdoor seating for the patrons of the business during its hours of operation.

What is the purpose of parklets and streeteries?

Parklets and streeteries create lively, open spaces in our community. Parklets provide valuable privately-funded and privately-maintained public spaces for people to read, sip a cup of coffee, enjoy a bite to eat, and socialize. Parklets convert on-street parking spaces into gathering places, creating a more vibrant community space. Streeteries are a new way to support these goals while also responding to the demand for more business outdoor seating.

How do I apply for a streetery, parklet, or sidewalk seating?

To apply for a streetery, parklet, or sidewalk seating read through the Outdoor Seating Guide to learn about the application process and see what you'll need to consider when building a streetery or parklet. Once you're ready to apply, submit your initial application materials via the [Permit and Development Portal](#)

Do you have additional questions about the application process? Reach out to us at hospitality.programs@raleighnc.gov

Are parklets open to the public? What about streeteries?

Parklets are free and open for everyone to enjoy 24 hours a day. Streeteries are open to the public at all hours outside of the establishment's hours of operation. Each streetery must include signage that explains when it is in use by the business and when it is available to the public.

Do streeteries close at night?

Streeteries are open to the public outside of the applicant's hours of operation. Outdoor seating areas may not operate after 2:00 a.m. on Friday or Saturday and may not operate after 12:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday.

Do streeteries and parklets require community support for approval?

As part of the outdoor seating permitting process, applicants need to provide proof of notification to neighboring businesses and residents along the block of the proposed structure location. All public feedback will be considered when making a final decision on a streetery or parklet application.

Outdoor Seating Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

Are streeteries and parklets temporary or permanent?

Streeteries and parklets are not permanently affixed to the roadway or sidewalk in any fashion. However, if it remains well-maintained, the streetry or parklet applicant may apply for annual renewals. Our office will carefully consider any community feedback when evaluating renewal applications and may require replacement of elements experiencing routine wear-and-tear.

Who pays for parklets and streeteries?

Parklets and streeteries are paid for privately. Applicants pay for design, materials, construction, maintenance costs, as well as for review and encumbrance fees.

City staff also allocated a portion of the American Rescue Plan Act funding to build streeteries in the public right-of-way to convert public spaces into vibrant, community spaces. To lessen the burden and cost on interested businesses, the City will program, construct, and install platforms and walls while businesses can add tables, chairs, décor, planters and plantings to personalize, customize, and brand the streetry to fit establishment's needs.

Can I serve alcoholic beverages in a parklet or streetry?

Parklets are public spaces, just like a plaza or a park, so you cannot drink in a parklet. The ABC Commission has allowed current On-Premise ABC permit holders to include additional outdoor seating as part of their licensed premises to maximize social distancing so long as permission is obtained for use of public right-of-way from the City of Raleigh.

Who is responsible for maintaining parklets and streeteries?

The parklet or streetry applicant. The applicant must ensure the parklet or streetry is clean and free of rubbish daily, as well as keep elements in a state of good repair.

How does the City of Raleigh ensure that parklets and streeteries are safe?

Safety is our highest priority when reviewing parklet and streetry applications. Every parklet and streetry is subject to specific design standards to ensure that it will remain safe for its users and the traveling public. As standard features, every parklet and streetry is required to have two wheel stops and two soft-hit reflector posts at each corner to increase awareness of the space and prevent cars from hitting it. Parklet and streetry applications are also reviewed by Transportation staff to ensure that they will not obstruct sightlines or impact safety for other users of the street.

Do I have to pay to encumber parking spaces for use of a parklet or streetry?

Outdoor seating fees have been waived through FY24. Encumbrance fees will be charged in the future. Fees are subject to change year-to-year.

What is the expected timeline of receiving a permit for my outdoor seating?

City staff will make every effort possible to review and complete the permitting process at the earliest possible time, respective of the necessary actions required to fulfill the proposed request.

Outdoor Seating Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

Can I exceed my interior capacity by extending my seating area onto public right of way?

No. Your overall occupancy capacity cannot exceed posted/approved capacity, regardless of size of outdoor space extension.

Can I cook or prepare food outdoors?

No. All food preparation guidelines, as permitted by Wake County Environmental Services, remain in place and must be adhered to.

Are overhead shade structures allowed?

Overhead shade structures, such as umbrellas, may be utilized to provide shade in outdoor seating areas. Overhead elements must provide the appropriate clearance and may not interfere with the visibility of any traffic or wayfinding signage. Shade structures must be secured by weighted devices. Umbrellas are not allowed on tables located within ten (10) feet of block corners.

Temporary or permanent tents, or any type of overhead installations are not allowed within the City's right-of-way, including city sidewalks and parking spaces. Any tent or overhead installation on city sidewalk or parking spaces may significantly reduce the available pedestrian space and visibility for vehicular traffic. A safe, accessible, and comfortable way to traverse our streets and sidewalks must be maintained.

Are portable heaters allowed?

Portable heaters, such as gas or electric, may be utilized to provide supplemental heat in outdoor seating premises so long as all requirements of North Carolina Fire Code are met. See page 30.

Are outdoor fire pits allowed?

No. Open flames on City-owned property, such as a fire pit, is considered unlawful. An alternative option would be to use portable heaters.

Am I allowed to expand my business's outdoor seating on NCDOT-maintained roadways?

If a streetery is requested on an NCDOT street, staff will evaluate the suitability and coordinate any requirements with NCDOT and the applicant.

Additional Questions

For more information about this process and other private use of public space inquiries, reach out to us at hospitality.programs@raleighnc.gov or call 919-996-2200.