

Downtown Denison Sidewalk Usage Design Guidelines

City of Denison

Main Street Advisory Board

January 2022

Contact: Donna Dow, Main Street Director

E-mail: ddow@cityofdenison.com

Phone: 903-464-4452



Downtown Denison Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines

City of Denison

Main Street Advisory Board

January 2022

Contact: Donna Dow, Main Street Director

E-mail: ddow@cityofdenison.com

Phone: 903-464-4452





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose

Background

Existing Ordinances

Application Procedure

Outdoor Dining Elements

Section 1: Barriers

Section 2: Street Furniture and Fixtures

Section 3: Outdoor Planter Guidelines

PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

Outdoor dining contributes to the vibrancy of Denison's historic district and creates dynamic experiences to walk, socialize, and dine.

The purpose of these Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines is to provide meaningful standards for the use of outdoor dining areas within Denison's Historic Overlay District. This helps to ensure quality outdoor seating areas, the appropriate use of the public sidewalk for outdoor dining, and safety for pedestrians in Denison. We further hope to achieve a quality appearance while maintaining the historic character of downtown Denison. Essential to this process is the necessity of ensuring that street furniture and other items placed within the city's public sidewalk space will complement the overall character of the district and not detract from the shared vision of downtown.

This document provides acceptable dimensions for outdoor dining access, provides descriptions of acceptable sidewalk barriers, and promotes the use of durable and high-quality outdoor furnishings and materials to increase the safety and comfort of residents and visitors to downtown Denison.



BACKGROUND

While the City of Denison encourages the use of outdoor dining arrangements, restaurant operators must be mindful of the safety and flow of pedestrian traffic and the visual appropriateness within downtown Denison's historic district.

These guidelines are intended to ensure that restaurants use the public sidewalk for outdoor dining in a way that is safe for pedestrians, does not present constraints for individuals that may be handicapped or visually impaired, encourages interactions and unique experiences, and supports a pleasant outdoor dining experience.

Outdoor dining provides an amenity for restaurant patrons that has become an increasingly popular feature throughout the global economy. We hope this document will encourage more restaurants or cafe's to embrace outdoor dining while helping to further the vision of making Denison a Community of Choice.

Existing Ordinance

Sec. 21-122. - Use of public sidewalk.

- Notwithstanding other provisions of this Code and subject to the requirements and limitations herein provided, the public sidewalks within the district adjacent to commercial enterprises within the district may be used by the proprietors of such enterprises during the hours of business operation for such uses as, but not limited to, the display of merchandise, merchandise racks, sandwich board signs, benches, tables, food service, etc. Prior to initiating the use of the adjacent sidewalk, the proprietor shall file with the city secretary a certificate of insurance for general liability in the minimum coverage amount of five hundred thousand dollars/one million dollars (\$500,000.00/\$1,000,000.00), combined single limit, evidencing the City of Denison as an additional insured. Additionally, during the period when the adjacent sidewalk is occupied by the adjacent proprietor, the following standards shall apply:
- Between the curb of street and the area of sidewalk used, maintain at least six (6) feet of clear passage for pedestrians,
- Tables and chairs shall not be placed within ten (10) feet of an entrance or doorway,
- No fences, walls, partitions, barriers, or other fixtures or objects may be placed in the sidewalk area with the exception that a removable freestanding balustrade may be used to mark the boundaries of a sidewalk café or food serving area, if applicable,
- Keep clean of spills, debris, litter, etc. the adjacent sidewalk and street areas,
- The property owner is responsible for condition of the sidewalk and the making of repairs to the sidewalk area and to brick pavers. Repairs shall be made within thirty (30) days after notice from city.
- Nothing herein shall be construed to limit or prohibit an adjacent property owner from applying for and receiving a sidewalk license agreement for commercial use of the sidewalk beyond that which is contemplated by this section.
- (Ord. No. 4643, § 1, 3-5-12; Ord. No. 4701, § 15(a), 6-17-13)

APPLICATION PROCEDURE



Outdoor dining is permitted in Denison through an administrative approval process. This administrative process saves time and expense by pre-establishing standards that must be followed for all outdoor dining set-ups.

To apply, a business owner needs to complete the following steps:

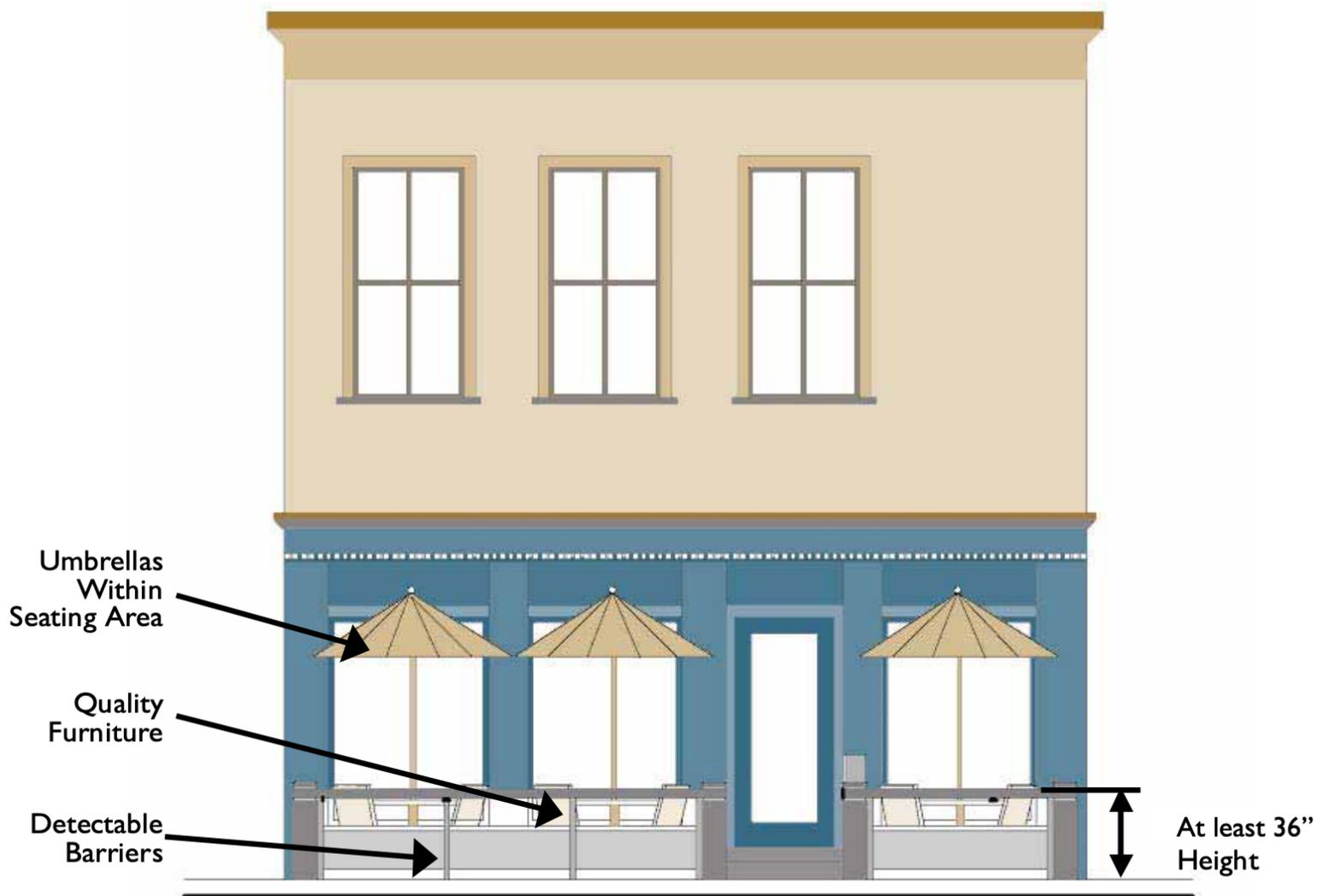
Letter of Intent: A brief document with basic information about the outdoor dining area and proposed number of seats.

Site Plan: A plan including the proposed outdoor dining area with detailed measurements. This must include a visual representation showing that at least 6 (six) feet of unobstructed sidewalk space will remain for pedestrians.

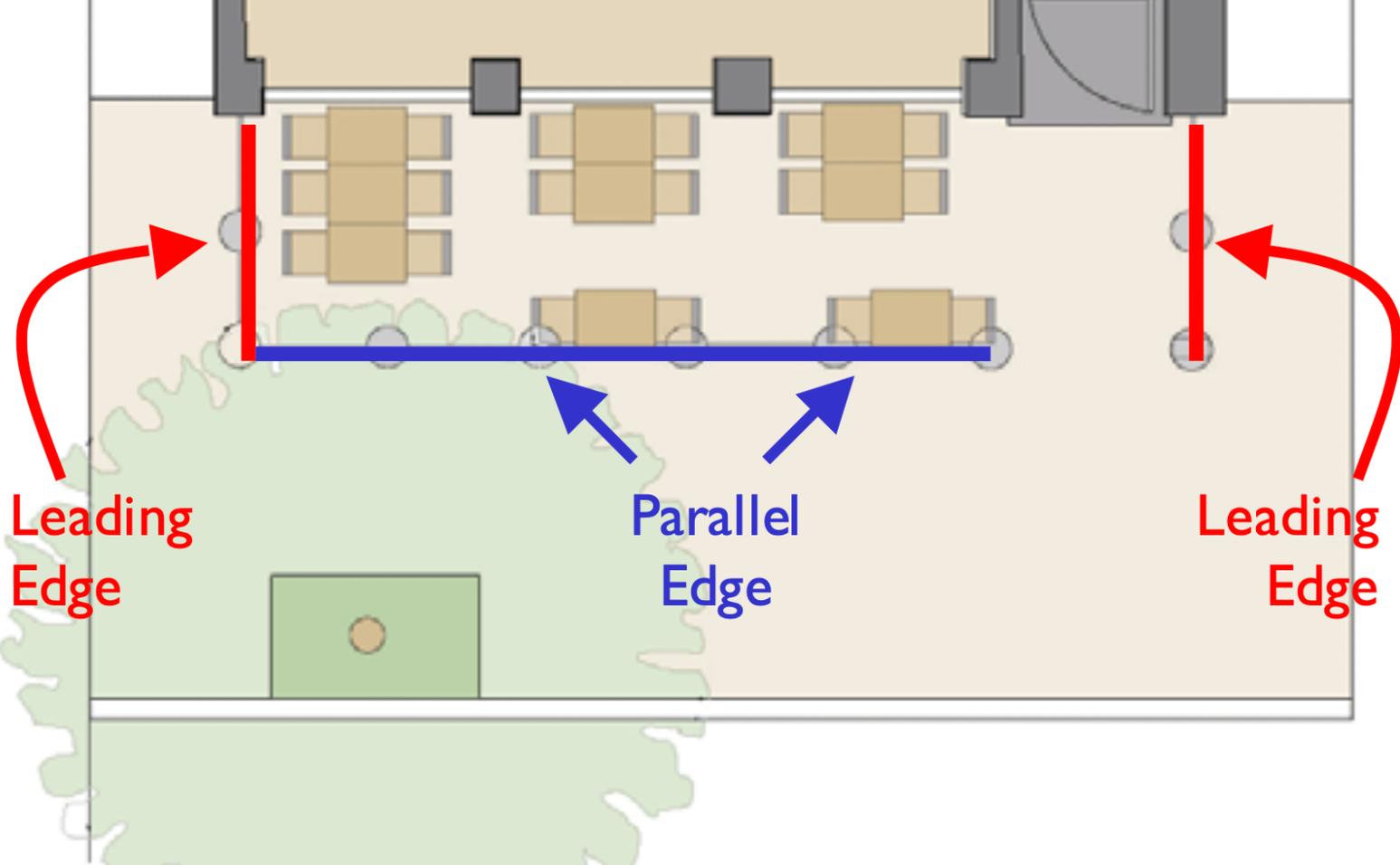
Photos of Proposed Furniture: Photos that detail color and material of all furniture and umbrellas must be presented to ensure that the proposed items conform to these Design Guidelines.

All documentation will be provided to the Main Street Design Team and the Historic Preservation Board for approval prior to any creation of an outdoor dining area.

Elements of a Quality Outdoor Dining Area



**Source: King Street Outdoor Dining Guidelines.
City of Alexandria.**



Section 1: Barriers

Barriers utilized for outdoor dining areas must be visually appealing and help clearly demarcate the section provided for elements such as tables, chairs and umbrellas from the sidewalk. All barrier materials (fences, gates, ropes, etc.) must be maintained in good visual appearance with no visible fading, dents, tears, rust, corrosion, or chipped or peeling paint.

Barriers that are durable, removable, and maintained in good condition are required in the following instances:

- Required for Leading Edge of All Dining Areas: A detectable barrier is required for the leading edge of all outdoor dining spaces to ensure that visually impaired pedestrians using canes can detect the dining area safely. The leading edge, shown above, is defined as the section of the dining area that is at or near the perpendicular angle to the building and/or curb line.
- Required for Full Perimeter of Some Dining Areas: A detectable barrier is required for the full perimeter of the dining area when the outdoor dining area extends more than 3 feet into the public right of way. The perimeter must include both leading edge and parallel edge barriers.
- Required for Full Perimeter of All Outdoor Dining Areas Serving Alcohol: All outdoor dining areas where alcohol is served or consumed must enclose the area, with only one opening to the sidewalk for access.

1.1 Barrier Designs

A wide variety of styles and designs are permissible for outdoor dining area barriers.

SECTIONAL FENCING

Sectional Fencing is a desirable solution for outdoor dining areas. Usually defined as rigid fence segments that can be placed together to create a unified fencing appearance, this is desirable in that the fencing is portable, but cannot be easily shifted by patrons or pedestrians.

All sectional fencing must be constructed of metal (aluminum, iron, steel, or similar). No use of chain link fencing or wood fencing is permissible as an outdoor dining area barrier.

Any barrier for outdoor dining areas must be freestanding without any permanent or temporary attachments to buildings, sidewalks or other infrastructure.



Acceptable sectional fence design.

1.1 Barrier Designs

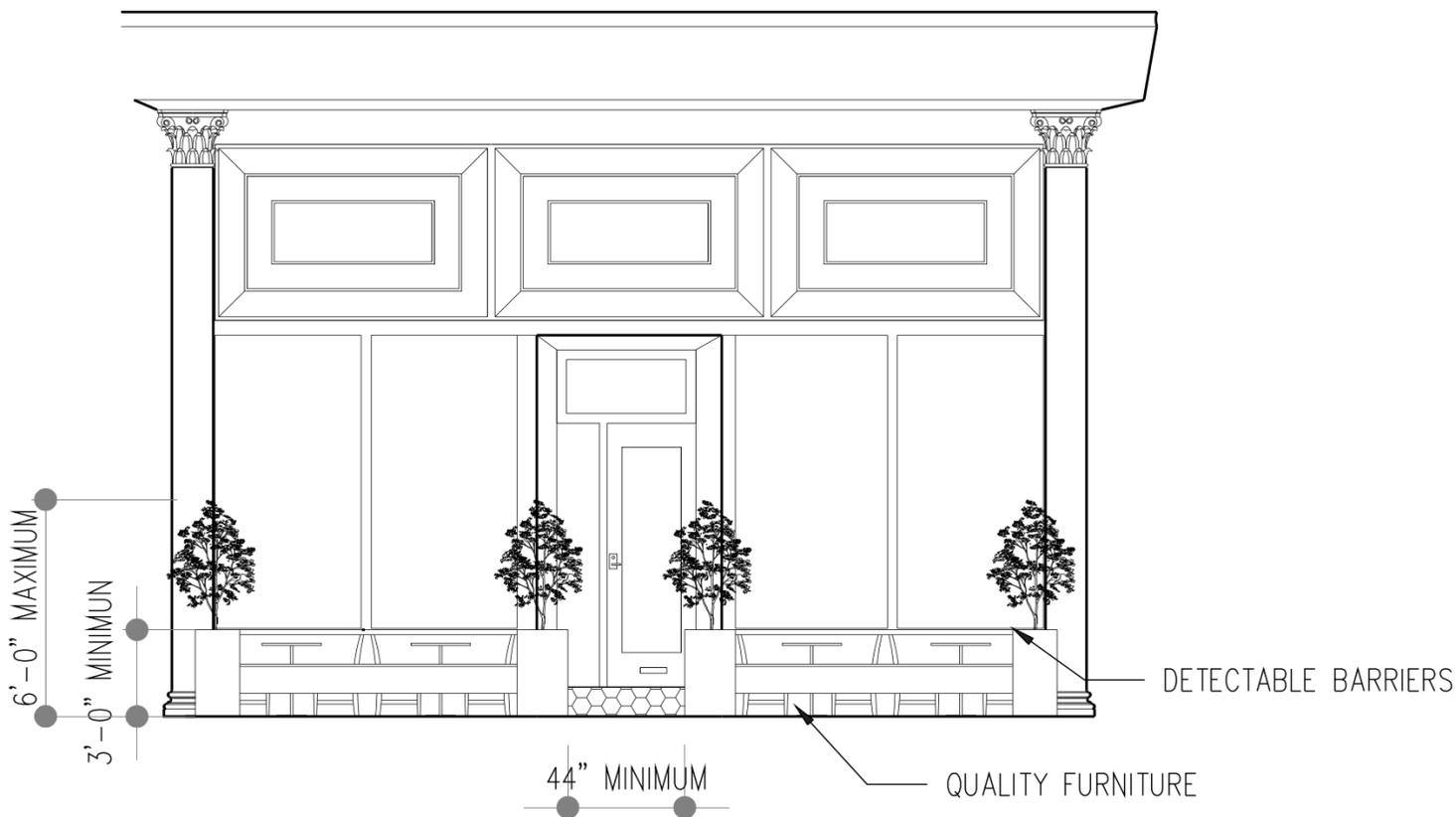
PROHIBITED BARRIER STYLES

Fabric Inserts: Fabric inserts (including natural or synthetic fabric) of any size are not permitted to be used as part of a barrier.

Chain-link and Other Fencing: The use of chain-link, cyclone fencing, chicken wire or similar appurtenances is prohibited. Materials not specifically manufactured for fencing or pedestrian control (including but not limited to buckets, food containers, tires, tree stumps, vehicle parts, pallets etc.) are not expressly permitted elsewhere in these guidelines may not be used as components of a barrier.



Examples of barriers and barrier elements that are not acceptable for outdoor dining (from left to right) include unstable sectional fencing, rounded barrier bases, and waste receptacles.



Typical sidewalk dining area illustration. Source: Sidewalk Cafe Design Guidelines. City of Richmond.

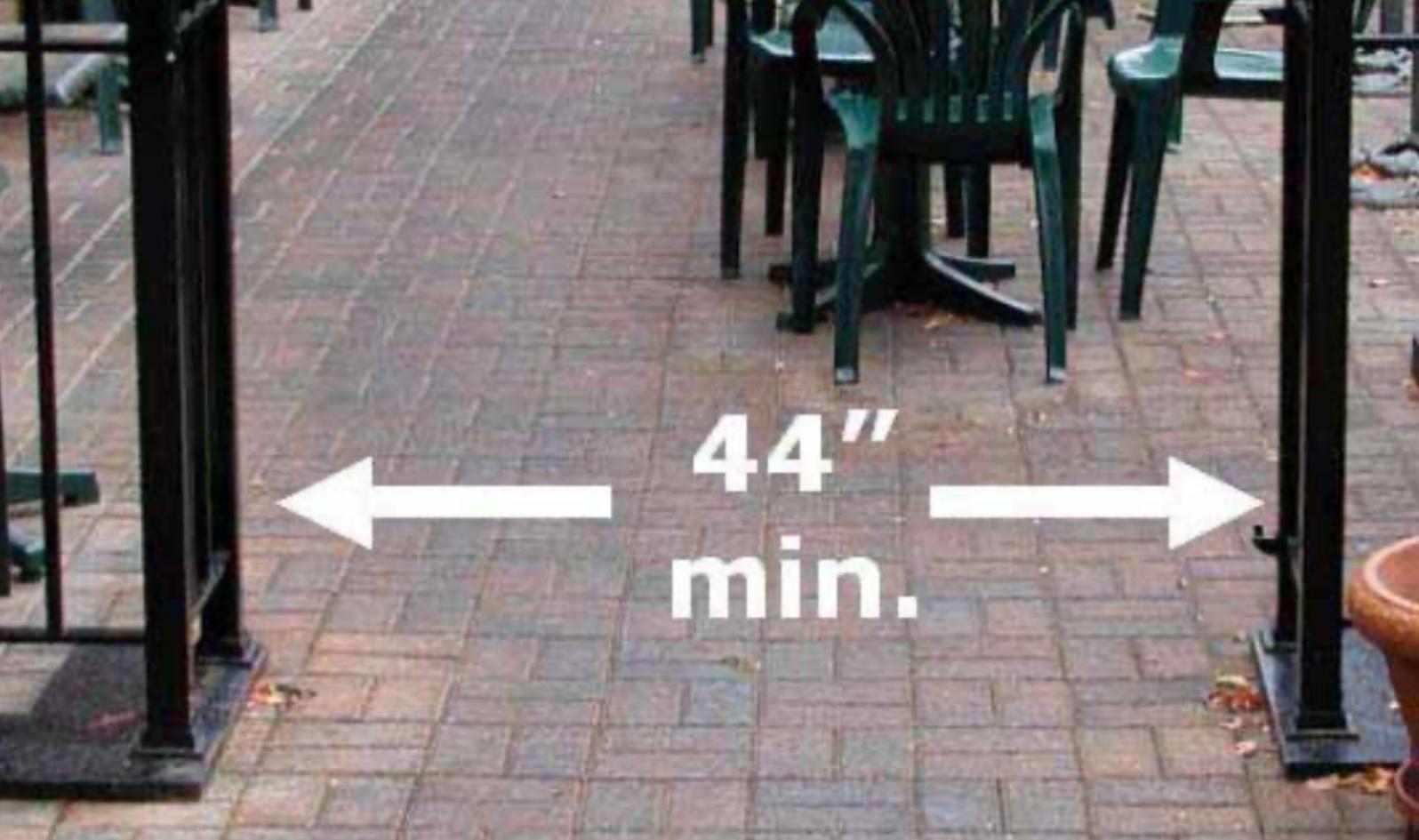
1.2 Barrier Measurements

To ensure their effectiveness as pedestrian control devices and their detectability for persons with visual impairments, barriers must meet the following measurement guidelines:

Height: The highest point of a barrier, including the stanchion if used, must measure no less than 36 inches in height and no more than 48 inches in height.

Maximum Distance from Ground: All barriers must be detectable to visually impaired pedestrians who employ a cane for guidance. Therefore the bottom of barriers must be no greater than 27 inches above the sidewalk surface.

Minimum Distance from Ground: The lowest point in the barrier should be no more than 6 inches in height to ensure that visually-impaired pedestrians who use canes will notice the barrier.



1.3 Access Openings

Minimum Access Width: Any access opening within the barrier must measure no less than 44 inches in width.

Location: Access openings should be placed in a location that will not create confusion for visually impaired pedestrians. The preferred location is along the front or parallel edge of the sidewalk barrier. The access opening must be kept clear of materials and obstructions at all times.

SECTION 2: FURNITURE AND FIXTURES

Downtown Denison's retail liveliness depends on maintaining an attractive and high-quality appearance.

Outdoor dining furniture becomes a prominent part of the streetscape when used in the front of buildings, and such furniture needs to uphold the high standards applied to buildings and other improvements in the downtown historic district.

A wide range of furniture styles, colors, and materials are permitted. All furniture and fixtures must be maintained in good visual appearance without visible fading, dents, tears, rust, corrosion, or chipped or peeling paint. All furniture and fixtures must be maintained in a clean condition at all times. All furniture and fixtures must be durable and of sufficiently sturdy construction as not to blow over with normal winds.

To ensure a quality visual appearance in keeping Denison's historic character, the conditions on the following pages apply to furniture including tables and chairs. The pedestrian experience plays an important role in the functionality of the overall economic health of downtown Denison and most importantly imparts a sense of safety.

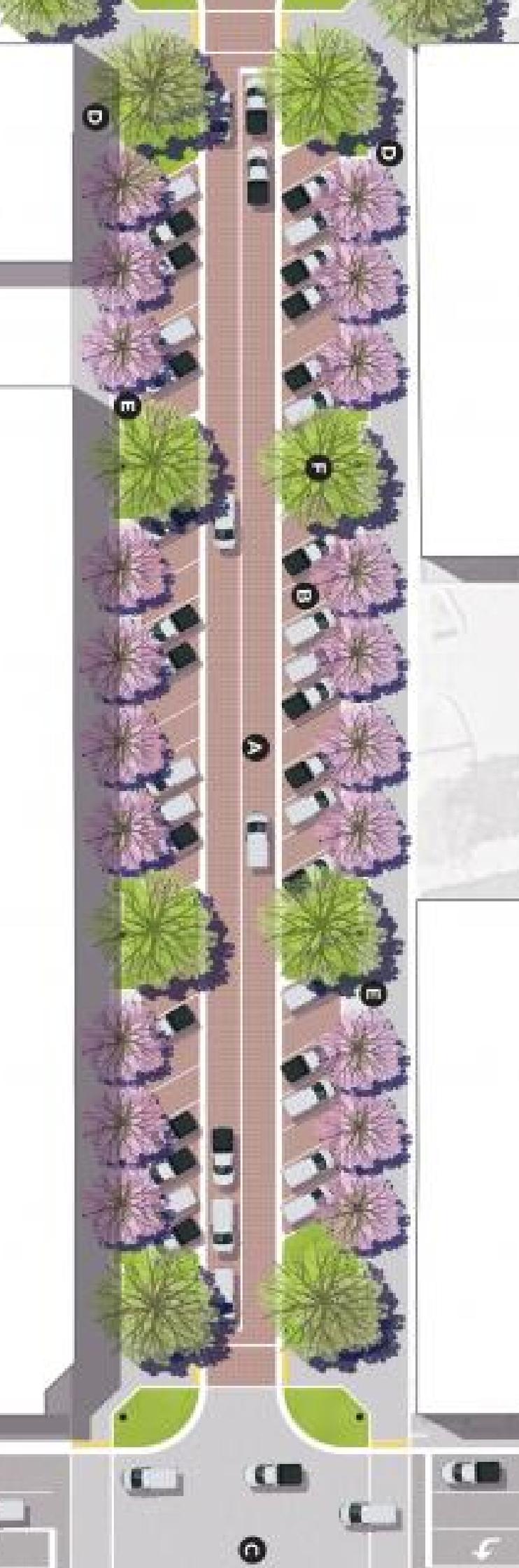


2.1 Types of Furniture



Prohibited Furniture: All furniture other than tables, chairs and umbrellas is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to serving stations, bar counters, shelves, racks, sofas, televisions, trash receptacles, and torches. Tables, chairs, outdoor heaters, menu displays and barrier elements are the only acceptable outdoor furniture items.

Freestanding: Furniture and fixtures must not be secured to trees, lampposts, street signs, hydrants, or any other street infrastructure by means of ropes, chains or any other such devices, whether during restaurant operating hours or at times when the restaurant is closed.



2.2 Tables

Tables need to be functional, not only for patrons, but also for pedestrians, given the space available for outdoor dining on many downtown Denison sidewalks.

Outdoor dining furniture must also contribute to the overall atmosphere and character of Denison's commercial district and be complimentary to surrounding structures in both appearance and quality.

Color: Tables may be colored or of a natural unpainted material (i.e. metal, etc.). Tables are not permitted to be white plastic, wood, or of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color. All tables must be properly maintained to prevent fading, peeling or chipping of the finish.

2.2 Tables

Size and Shape: The size and shape of tables strongly affects the functionality of an outdoor dining area. Due to Denison's unique streetscape design, restaurants and establishments should strive for space-efficient seating layouts and furniture configuration.

Square or Rectangular Tables Preferred: Square or rectangular tables are strongly recommended for use in Denison's outdoor dining areas. These tables may fit flush against the building facade allowing for more space for diners and wait staff.

Square or rectangular tables may fit flush against a building's wall and can permit more usable surface area for patrons while at the same time leaving more space available for pedestrians.

More flexibility: Square or rectangular tables are more flexible for use in outdoor dining areas. Such tables may be combined to seat large parties much more effectively than can round tables.

Smaller Tables Preferred: Smaller tables work better than larger tables and are more efficient and flexible. Although optimal table size varies by each restaurant's specific outdoor dining layout, smaller tables are preferred.

Note: it is advised that a minimum of 3 (three) feet for patrons and circulating waitstaff be maintained inside the dining area. Waitstaff shall not serve patrons from outside of the dining barrier.



2.3 Chairs

Chairs, like other outdoor dining elements, must contribute to the overall atmosphere of Denison's commercial district and must be complementary in both appearance and quality to surrounding structures.

Color: Chairs may be colored or of a natural unpainted material (i.e. metal, etc.). All chairs must be properly maintained to be free from fading, peeling, or chipping. Chairs are not permitted to be white plastic or of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color.

Matching: All chairs used within a particular establishment's outdoor seating area must match each other by being of visually similar design, construction and color.



2.4 Umbrellas

Umbrellas can add a welcoming feel to outdoor dining areas and provide respite from the elements, making their use desirable for outdoor dining applications. Appropriately designed and sized umbrellas are permitted for use under this outdoor dining program.

Umbrellas must be free of advertisements and contained within the outdoor dining area, and the lowest dimension of an extended umbrella must be at least 7 (seven) feet above the sidewalk surface. All umbrellas must comply with the following conditions:

Contained Within the Outdoor Seating Area: To ensure effective pedestrian flow, all parts of any umbrella (including the fabric and supporting ribs) must be contained entirely within the outdoor seating area.

Minimum Height for Sidewalk Clearance: When extended, the umbrella must measure at least 7 (seven) feet above the surface of the outdoor dining area in order to provide adequate circulation space below. This measurement must include not only the umbrella frame and panels, but also any decorative borders such as fringes, tassels, or other such ornamentation.

Maximum Height: Any part of an umbrella used in an outdoor seating area may not exceed a height of 120" (10 feet) above the level of the sidewalk in order to avoid causing an undue visual obstruction of other businesses.

2.4 Umbrellas

Colors: Umbrellas must blend appropriately with the surrounding built environment. Therefore, umbrella fabric is not permitted to be of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color.

Size and Shape: The size and shape of an umbrella strongly affects its functionality within a constrained space such as an outdoor dining area. Due to the nature of most restaurants' outdoor dining areas, the use of umbrellas should strive to be space-efficient designs.

Square or Rectangular Umbrellas Preferred: Square or rectangular as opposed to round or octagonal umbrellas are strongly recommended for use in Denison's outdoor dining areas. These umbrellas may be placed flush against a building facade and allow for greater shaded space within an outdoor dining area.

Market-Style Umbrellas Preferred: Market-style umbrellas-those specifically designed for patio or outdoor restaurant use- are preferred for outdoor dining purposes.

Material: Umbrella fabric must be of a material suitable for outdoor use, and must be canvas-type. No plastic fabrics, plastic/vinyl laminated fabrics, or any type of rigid materials are permitted for use as umbrellas within an outdoor seating area.

Signage or Wording Prohibited: Umbrellas must not contain signage for the restaurant or any other entity in the form of wording, logos, drawings, pictorial or photographic representations, or any likewise identifying characteristic.

2.5 Sidewalk Coverings



The floor of outdoor seating areas should be uncovered sidewalk material as to provide continuity with the adjacent public right-of-way. Floor coverings or raised platforms may not be used within outdoor dining areas.

Prohibited Sidewalk Coverings:

- Carpet: Prohibited sidewalk covering include carpet or other flooring material constructed of fabric, canvas, wool, tile, linoleum, nylon, vinyl, or any covering that is intended to resemble turf.
- Platforms: Raised decks, platforms, or other such surfaces are not permitted within outdoor dining areas.

2.6 Circulation Room

As established, all outdoor dining areas must leave at least 6 (six) feet of unobstructed pedestrian space. This 6 (six) feet of pedestrian space must be clear of obstructions caused by trees, tree wells, posts, hydrants, or any other infrastructure. In addition, no part of an outdoor dining area (including plants) may extend into the 6-foot-unobstructed zone.

2.7 Signage

Signage is permitted within outside dining areas only with a valid City of Denison permit. No extra or additional signage is permitted solely as a result of an establishment's participation in this program. Should a free-standing menu display be employed, it must be within the outdoor dining enclosure.

2.8 Setback from Other Businesses

Restaurants need to be mindful of adjoining businesses when using outdoor dining areas, making sure that neighboring businesses remain visible to pedestrians and motorists.

A restaurant or like-establishment may be required to adjust the outdoor seating area's layout, dimensions, or distance from the property line by 2 (two) feet or more to ensure that visibility is maintained.

Downtown Denison Outdoor Planter Guidelines

**City of Denison
Main Street Advisory Board
January 2022**

**Contact: Donna Dow, Main Street Director
E-mail: ddow@cityofdenison.com
Phone: 903-464-4452**



Section 3

Outdoor Planter Guidelines

Planters may be used in addition to or in place of other barrier designs. In addition, planters may be used in situations where no barrier is required in order to provide added visual interest and create a more attractive and welcoming atmosphere.

Maximum Height of Planters:

Planters may not exceed a height of 36 inches above the level of the sidewalk. Note: this pertains only to planters, not the plants contained therein.)

Maximum Height of Plants: Plants (whether alive or artificial) may not exceed a height of 72 inches (6 feet) above the level of the sidewalk.

3.1 Planters

Planted Material: All planters must have plants (whether alive or artificial) contained within them. If the plants within a planter die, the plants must be replaced or the planter removed from the public view. Empty planters with only bare dirt, mulch, straw, wood chips or similar material are not permitted.

If utilizing artificial plants, all portions of the plant must be kept in good visual order and free of fading, peeling, or fraying of any kind.

Seasonal, thematic planter displays are encouraged .

