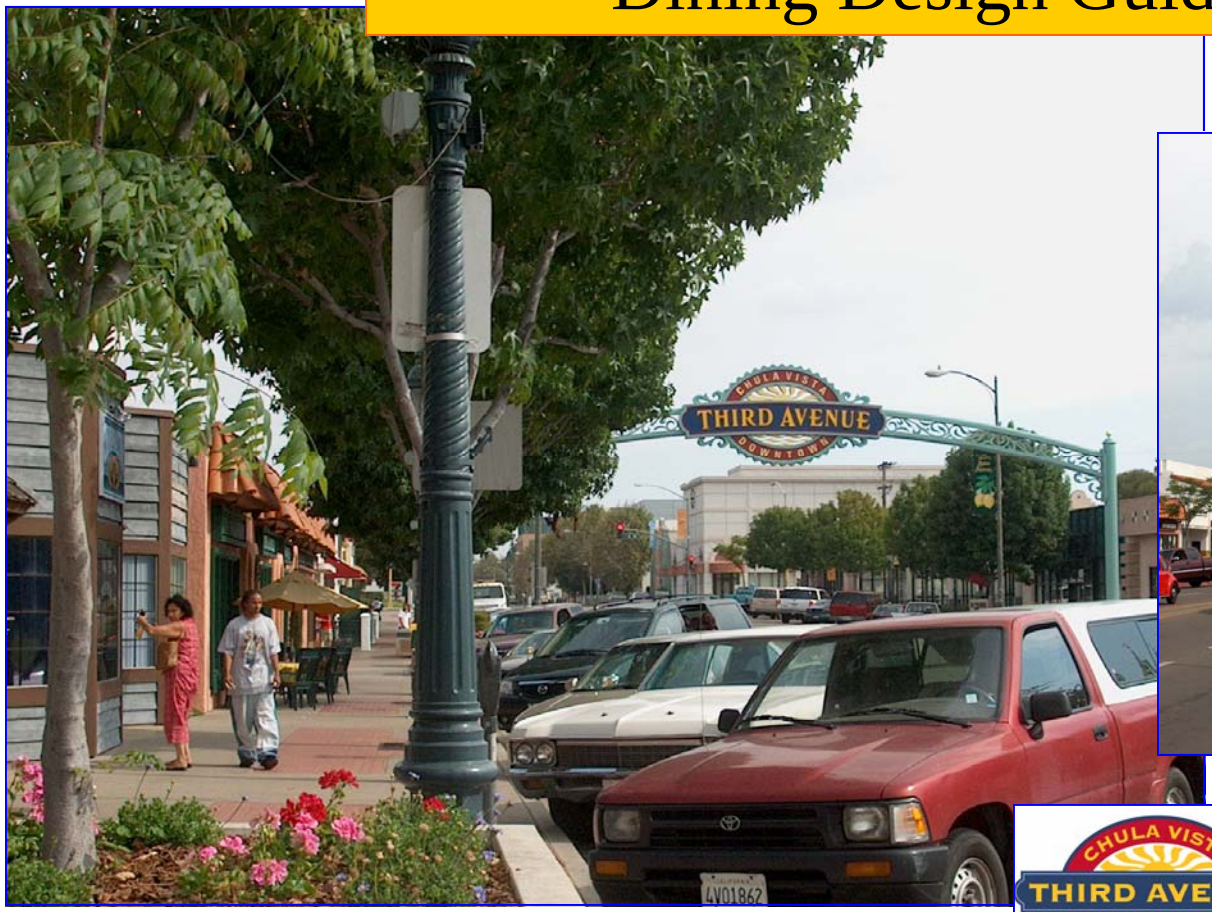
Third Avenue Village Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines



Prepared by MMS Design Associates in cooperation with the Third Avenue Village Association.

City of Chula Vista

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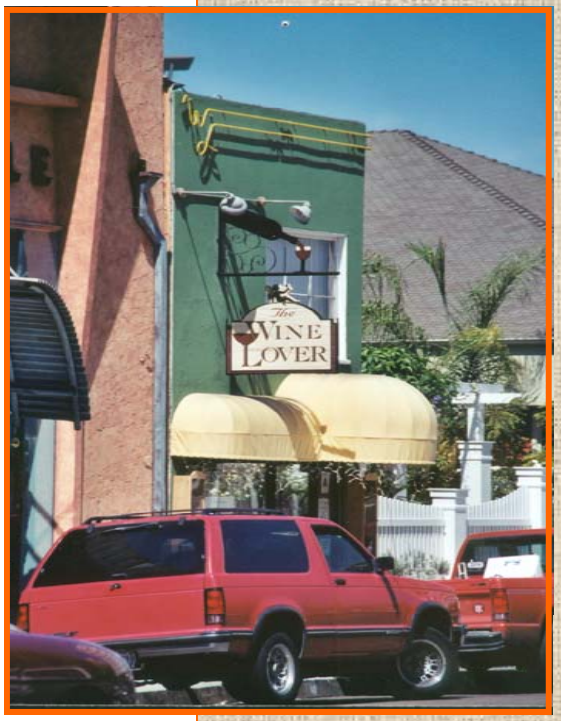
Purpose of Guidelines

The purpose of these Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines ("Design Guidelines") is to provide overall standards for the use of outdoor dining areas along Third Avenue and adjoining streets. This achieves a quality appearances and maintains the Third Avenue Village character. Central to the process of permitting outdoor dining along one of the south county's older downtown avenues is the necessity of ensuring that the street furniture and other items placed along the street will complement the overall character of the Village and not detract from the Village's architectural and character vision.

The City of Chula Vista permits outdoor dining along Third Avenue and adjoining streets in the Village area through an administrative permitting process Including the issuance of an encroachment permit if within the public right of way.

This document contains further description for the implementation of these guidelines for street furniture, preferred appurtenances and furnishings that are considered acceptable within the architectural and cultural framework of the Third Avenue Village area.



Background

The City of Chula Vista and the Third Avenue Village Association are pleased to offer existing and encourage future restaurants within the Village the option of utilizing the public sidewalks as outdoor dining areas. Outdoor dining gives restaurant patrons an amenity that has become an increasingly popular feature within the southern California area, due to its sunny weather and mild climates year around.

While the City supports the use of outdoor dining arrangements, restaurant operators must be aware of three (3) important factors in determining how to use an outdoor dining area:

1) Public safety and visibility
2) Circulation flow of pedestrian traffic and
3) Visual appropriateness within Village's character.

These Outdoor Dining Design 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 handicap constraints for the visually impaired, encourages interactions, and supports a pleasant outdoor dining experiences.

The Outdoor Dining Design Guidelines has blended elements of the existing Resolution No. 1410 with the current visions and strategies, USCP guidelines, other communities downtown guidelines and local knowledge to create a set of visual pictures to describe the intent and application. We hope this document will encourage more restaurants or cafés to that this opportunity to create an outdoor dining experience within the Village area.

Application Processing and Procedures

Outdoor dining is permitted within the Village along Third Avenue and adjoining streets through an administrative approval process. This administrative process will save time and expense by establishing standards that must be followed for all outdoor dining locations.

To apply, a restaurant owner or his/her designee needs to complete the following:

- **Application Form:** The applicant should fill out the a brief form with basic information about the restaurant, proposed number of seats and how these are to be arranged within the proposed outdoor space.

- **Site Plan:** A plan showing the proposed outdoor dining area with specific measurements (including a representation showing that at least 5 feet of unobstructed sidewalk space within the public right-of-way will remain for pedestrian circulation).

- **Photos or Drawing of Street Furniture:** Photos or other graphic representation (including color and materials) of furniture, umbrellas, stands, fences and/or railings needed for the City to verify that the proposed furniture conforms to these Design Guidelines.

For application forms, information or questions regarding the outdoor dining design guidelines, please contact the Development Services at (619) 691-5101 or visit in person at City Hall located at 276 Fourth Street, Chula Vista.

Chapter 1: Barriers

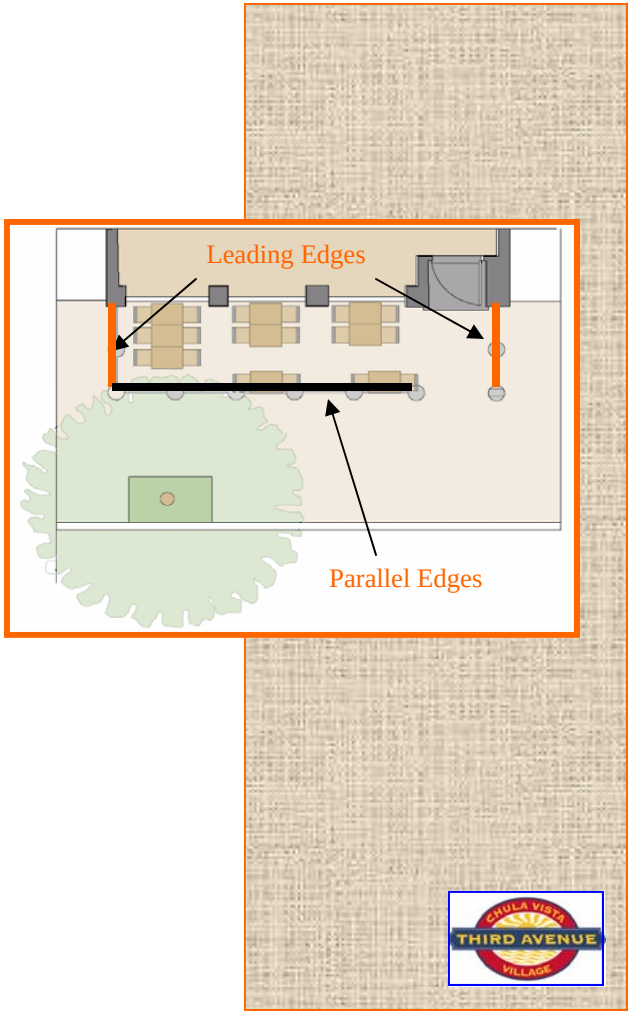
Dining area barriers (fences, gates, ropes etc.) are visually appealing and help to define and separate the dining area from the public sidewalk. All barrier material must be maintained in good visual appearance, without visible fading, dents, tears, rust, corrosion, or chipped or peeling paint.

Barriers are required in the following instances:

- Required for Leading Edge of all Dining Areas: A solid detectable barrier is required for the leading edge of all outdoor dining areas to ensure that visually impaired pedestrians using canes can detect the dining areas safely. The leading edge, illustrated to the right in orange, is defined as the section of a dining area that is at or near a perpendicular angle to the building wall and/or curb line.

- Required for Full Perimeter of Some Dining Areas: A solid detectable barrier is required for the full perimeter (with the exception of access openings) when the outdoor seating area extends more than 3 feet into the public right-of-way. The perimeter includes both the leading edges and parallel edges. Restaurants which do not serve alcohol and whose outdoor seating area extends less than 3 feet into the public right-of-way are not required to enclose the full perimeter of the seating area, but may do so on an optional basis.

- Required for Full Perimeter of All Outdoor Dining Areas Serving Alcohol: State law requires that outdoor dining areas where alcohol is served or consumed must enclose the area, with only one opening to the sidewalk for access.



Barrier Designs

1.1 Barrier Design Applications

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

Sectional Fencing: Sectional fencing (generally defined as rigid fence segments that can be attached together to create a unified fencing appearance) is the most desirable solution for outdoor seating areas using barriers. Such fencing is easily portable, but cannot be shifted by patrons or pedestrians, as can less rigid forms of enclosures. Sectional fencing must be of metal (aluminum, steel, iron, or similar) or of wood construction and must be of a color (either painted or stained).

Rope or Chain Rails: Rope or chain-type barriers (generally defined as enclosures composed of a rope or chain suspended by vertical elements such as stanchions) are permitted only if they meet the following criteria:

- Rope/Chain Diameter: The rope or chain must have a minimum diameter of 1 inch, in order to be detectable by the visually impaired.
- Posts: Vertical support posts (stanchions, bollards, etc.) must be constructed of wood or metal (aluminum, steel, iron, or similar).
- Stanchion Base Must Not Be A Tripping Hazard: If a stanchion or other vertical supporting device is attached to as base, that base must be flat and must measure no more that one-half (1/2) of an inch above the sidewalk surface. Typically stanchion have a minimum height of 36". No domed stanchion bases are permitted.

Figure 1: Use of rope or chain barrier must have a minimum diameter of one (1”) inch. Note the approved connection to the stands.

Figure 2: Acceptable use of a sectional fence.
Note appropriate base and connection to the fence.

Figure 3: Good example of a preferred stanchion base that is flat and no more than 1/2” above the sidewalk surface.

Figure 4: Here is an example of a stanchion that is not permitted within the outdoor area.

Figure 5: A great example of the outdoor sectional fencing that is linked together with a great design and has a low profile stanchions.

Freestanding: Any barrier (whether sectional fencing or rail-type) must be freestanding, without any permanent or temporary attachments to buildings, sidewalks or other structures.

Prohibited Barrier Styles:

- Fabric Inserts: Fabric inserts (whether 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 strictly prohibited. Materials not specifically manufactured for fencing or pedestrian control (including, but not limited to filled buckets, food containers, tires, tree stumps, vehicle parts, pallets, etc.) and not expressly permitted elsewhere in these Design Guidelines, may not be used as components of a barrier.

1.2 Barrier Measurements

To ensure their effectiveness as pedestrian control devices and to be detectable by persons with visual impairments, barriers must meet the following measurement guidelines:

Height: The highest point of a barrier (such as a stanchion) must measure at least 36 inches in height, with the exception of planters.

Open Appearance: Fences or other perimeter enclosures with a height of between 36” and 50” must be at least fifty percent (50%) open (see-through) in order to maintain visibility of street level activity. Any enclosure with a height over 50” must be at least eighty percent (80%) open (see-through).

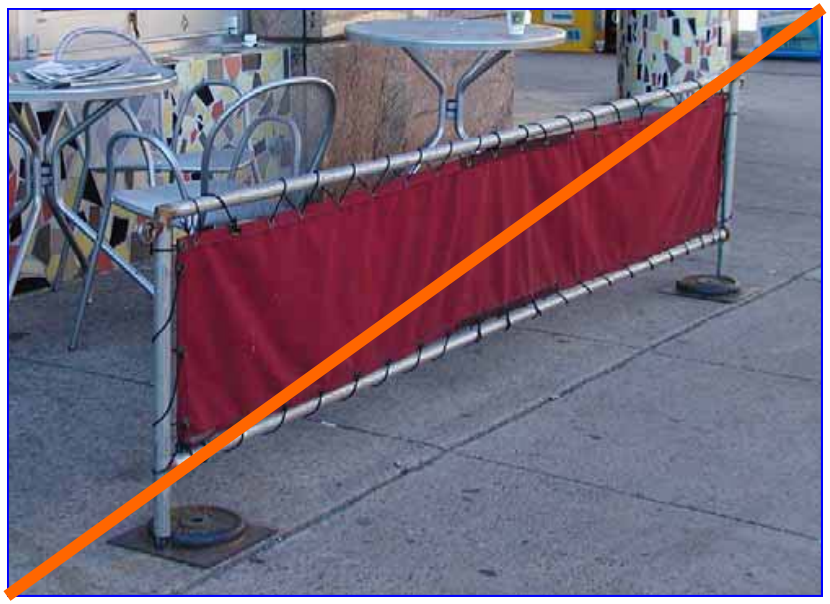


Figure 6: Fencing with fabric inserts are not permitted to be used as part of the barrier.

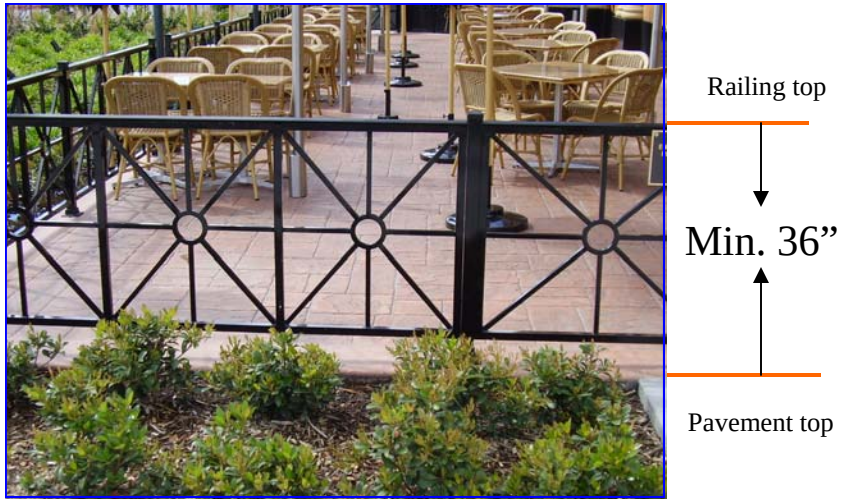


Figure 7: The Height of the sectional fence must be at least 36” along the entire fenced outdoor dining area.

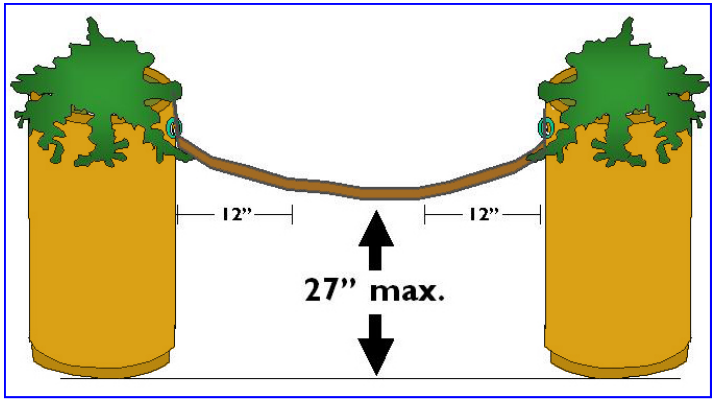


Figure 8: In all cases where the applicant is proposing a rope or chain barrier, the center of the barrier must be 27” from the sidewalk, as measured 12” from the side stanchions.

Maximum Distance from Ground: All barriers must be detectable to visual impaired pedestrians who employ a cane for guidance. Therefore the bottom of barriers must be no greater than 24 inches above the sidewalk surface.

How to Measure Rope/Chain Distance from Ground: In the case of a rope or chain enclosure, the rope/chain must not exceed 27 inches in height when measured 12 inches or more away from a vertical post (stanchion, bollard or other such support).

1.3 Access and Openings

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

Location: Enclosure openings should be placed in a location that will not create confusion for visually impaired pedestrians.

1.4 Landscape Elements

Landscape Elements, such as planters or freestanding potted plants 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 (for example, where the outdoor dining areas do not extend more than three (3') feet onto the sidewalk) in order to provide added visual interest, or to 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. (This pertains only to planters, not the plants contained therein.)

Figure 9: Here is an acceptable outdoor dining area that uses planters, materials and chain barrier.

Figure 10: Planters height may vary but in all cases must not exceed a maximum of 8' from sidewalk to top of plant materials.

Figure 11: Here are some good examples of planter design and uses of materials.

Maximum Height of Plants: Plant material may not exceed a height of 108 inches (9 feet) above the level of the sidewalk.

Planted Material: All planters must have plants contained within them. If the plants within a planter die, the plants must be immediately replaced or the planter removed from the public right-of-way. Artificial plants, empty planters, or planters with only bare dirt, mulch, straw, woodchips or similar material are strictly prohibited. Seasonal or thematic planter displays are encouraged.

Chapter 2: Furniture and Fixtures

Commercial and Service Retail liveliness depends on maintaining an attractive and high-quality atmosphere. As stated in the Urban Core Specific Plan, within the Public Realm Strategies, the Third Avenue Village and the City of Chula Vista want to create an unified and visually attractive environment which promote a sense of place, encouraging people to dine, explore and seek a variety of shops.

The quality of the streetscape and street furnishing is vitally important to that sense of place for the Third Avenue Village retail and pedestrian ambiance. The streetscape, landscaping and the adjacent buildings and/or outdoor spaces are the most significant overall elements in providing a dynamic visual environment.

Outdoor dining furniture becomes a prominent part of the streetscape when used in the front or along the sides of buildings, and such furniture needs to uphold the high standards applied to buildings and other improvements within the Third Avenue Village.

The pedestrian experience whether strolling along Third Avenue or sitting at a sidewalk café plays an important role in the functionality of the overall economic health of the Village and most important a sense of safety.

Figure 12: The outdoor dining area is for tables and chairs only. Other appurtenances or furnishing are not permitted within this area. Note the services tables and trash receptacles, these are not permitted.

A wide range of furniture styles, colors and materials is 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 sturdy construction as not to blow over with normal winds.

To ensure a quality visual appearance in keeping with the Third Avenue Village vision, common standards and conditions on the following pages apply to outdoor dining furniture such as tables and chairs.

2.1 Types of Street Furniture and Furnishings

Prohibited Furniture or Furnishings: All furniture or furnishings other than tables, chairs and umbrellas are prohibited. This includes but is not limited to serving stations, bar counters, shelves, racks, sofas, televisions, trash receptacles, torches, etc.

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 and Chairs

Tables need to be functional, not only for patrons, but also for pedestrians, given the limited space available for outdoor dining on many of the Third Avenue Village sidewalks.

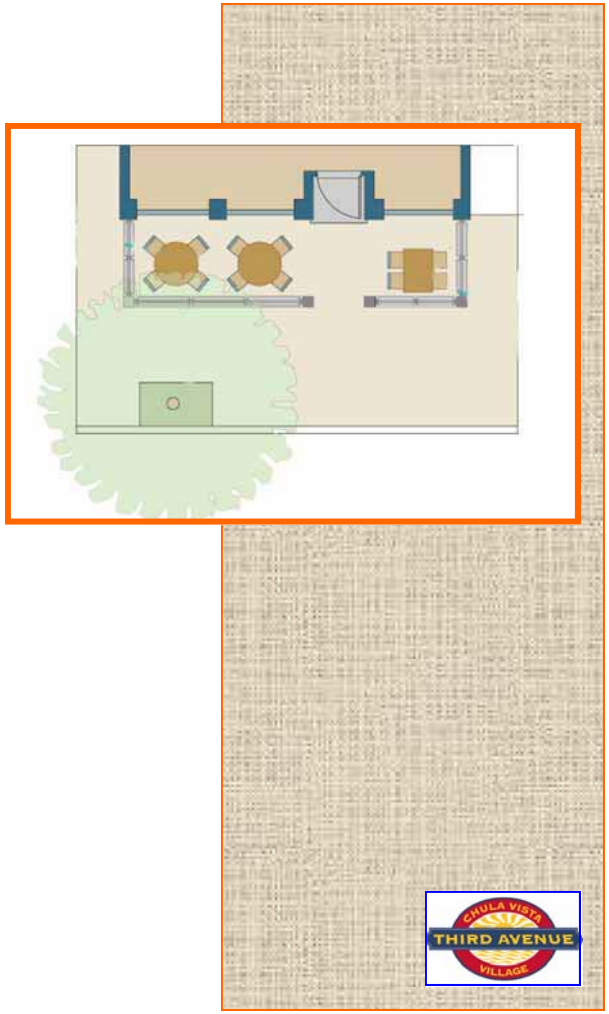


Figure 13: Here is a great example of an outdoor dining setup and furnishing. The chairs may be of dark or natural unpainted materials.

Figure 14: These smaller bistro style tables and chairs are more efficient, along use of the sidewalk and could be applied to various streets within the Third Avenue Village area.

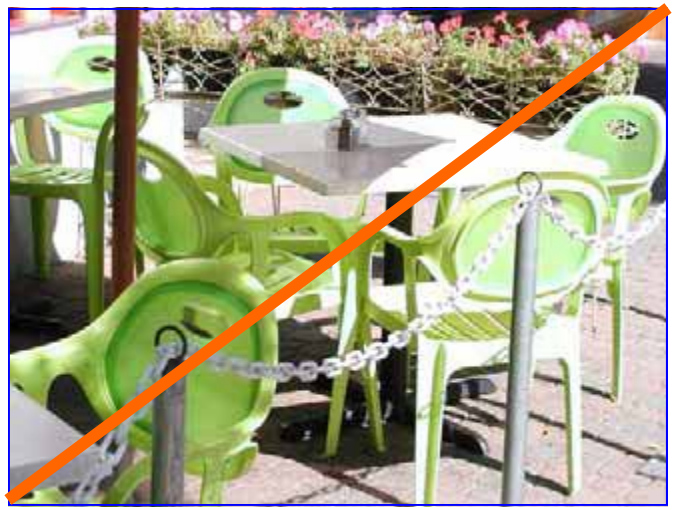


Figure 15: Plastic white or fluorescent furniture is not permitted under any circumstance within the Third Avenue Village area.

Figure 16: Combination between the chairs and tables is acceptable as long as they match each other, as shown in photos above and below.

Figure 17: Use of white plastic furniture is not permitted within the Third Avenue Village.

Outdoor dining furniture must also contribute to the overall atmosphere of Third Avenue's entertainment/retail/restaurant district and be complementary in both appearance and quality.

Color: Tables may be colored or of a natural unpainted material (i.e., wood, metal, etc.). Tables are not permitted to be white plastic or of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color.

Size and Shape: The size and shape of tables strongly affects the functionality of an outdoor dining area. Due to Third Avenue's sidewalks configurations, restaurants should strive for space-efficient seating layouts and furniture siting while creating a usable space that is not to crowded and allows for easy circulation.

Square or Rectangular Tables Preferred: Square or rectangular tables are strongly recommended for use in Third Avenue's outdoor dining areas.

Better Fit: 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 pedestrian circulation.

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

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

Chairs, like other outdoor dining elements, must contribute to the overall atmosphere of Third Avenue's commercial/retail district and must be complementary in both appearance and quality.

Color: Chairs may be colored or of a natural unpainted material (i.e., wood, metal etc.). Chairs are not permitted to be white plastic or of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color.

Upholstery: Upholstered chairs are permitted. Upholstery is not permitted to be of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color. Although not discourage, however, material covered chairs tend to be higher maintenance due to the cleaning aspects. These types of material chairs must be maintained in good visual appearance, without visible fading, dents, tears, rust, corrosion, or chipped or peeling paint.

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

Service Podiums: Podiums may be constructed of either wood or metal. The color palette shall match the outdoor dining areas theme for that given restaurant. Like other furnishings the podiums must be maintained in good visual appearance, without visible fading, dents, tears, rust, corrosion, or chipped or peeling paint. A small unobtrusive light maybe mounted on the podium, but must not create a visual or safety concern for the diners or nearby pedestrian areas. The location of the service podium may not create confusion for visually impaired pedestrians or create a blocking situation.

2.3 Umbrellas and Stands

Umbrellas can add a welcoming feel to outdoor dining areas and provide shelter from the elements, making their use desirable for outdoor dining applications. Appropriately design 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 feet above the sidewalk surface. All umbrellas must comply with the following conditions.

Contained Within the Outdoor Seating Area: To ensure effective pedestrian flow and safety, all parts of any umbrella (including the fabric and supporting ribs) must be contained entirely within the outdoor seating area. No overhanging onto neighboring sidewalk (s) or landscaped areas will be allowed.

Minimum Height for Sidewalk Clearance: When extended, the umbrella must measure at least 7 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 or safety concern to other businesses.

Colors: Umbrellas must blend appropriately with the surrounding built environment. There fore, umbrella fabric is not permitted to be of any fluorescent or other strikingly bright or vivid color. Umbrella covers must be of one solid 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 narrow measurements of most restaurants outdoor dining areas, restaurants using umbrellas should strive for space-efficient umbrella designs.

Square or Rectangular Umbrellas Preferred: Square or rectangular umbrellas, as opposed to round or octagonal umbrellas, are strongly recommended for use in Third Avenue's outdoor dining areas.

Market-Style Umbrellas Preferred: Market-style umbrellas – those designed specifically 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 for any other entity in the form of wording, logos, drawing, pictorial or photographic representations, or any other likewise identifying characteristic.

Figures 18, 19 & 20: Illustrate inappropriate signage and use of metal or plastic umbrellas which are not permitted within the Third Avenue Village.

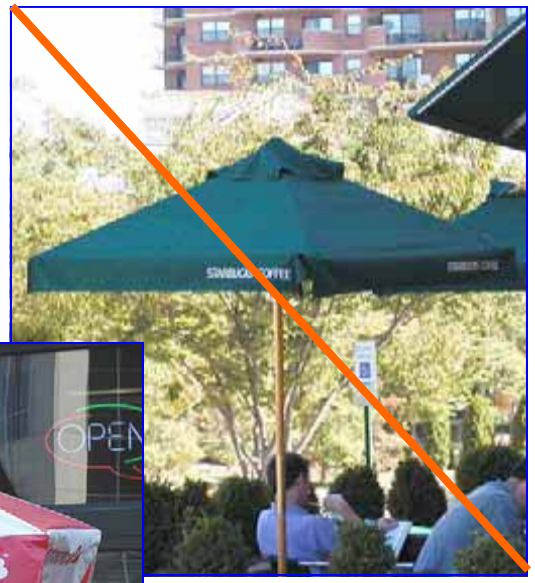


Figure 21: This photo offers another good example of an outdoor umbrella application.

2.4 Sidewalk Coverings

The basic floor of outdoor seating area should be uncovered sidewalk material (such as concrete, concrete pavers, stamped concrete, etc.) 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 coverings 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.

2.5 Unobstructed Pedestrian Circulation

As established in the Outdoor Dining Ordinance, all outdoor dining areas must leave at least five (5') feet of unobstructed pedestrian space outside of the proposed outdoor dining area. These 5 feet of pedestrian space must be clear of obstruction caused by trees, tree wells, posts, hydrants, parking meters or any other infrastructure. In addition, no part of an outdoor dining areas (including plants) may extend into the 5 feet-unobstructed zone.

Figure 21: Overall this photo illustrates the minimum clearances required for an outdoor dining application. Note that there is ample dining area reserved and the public has a safe clearance between the outdoor dining area and other street obstacles, such as the street trees. This also includes other appurtenances such as parking meters, signs or poles that may be found within the public rights-of-ways.

2.6 Signage and Applications

Signage is permitted within outside dining areas affixed only to the building structure and with a valid City permit. No extra or additional signage is permitted solely as a result of an establishment's participation in this outdoor dining program. No free standing signs or banners will be allowed within the boundaries of the outdoor dining areas or hanging from the perimeter fencing.

2.7 Adjacency to 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, and are not negatively affected by noise, odors, etc. pursuant to CVMC 19.66 and 19.68

A restaurant may be required to adjust the outdoor seating area's layout, dimensions or distance from the property line (2 feet or more) to ensure that these performance standards are maintained.