Winter Guidelines for Temporarily Relocating Restaurant Seating Outdoors

On May 28, 2020 the South Lake Tahoe City Council issued an emergency ordinance allowing restaurants to temporarily relocate some or all existing indoor seating capacity to outdoor seating after the City Development Services Department conducts a Seating Layout Review and Site Inspection. The review and inspection will focus on safety measures, fire code compliance and accessibility. These guidelines provide information on aspects to consider while planning outdoor seating for your business prior to the Seating Layout Review and Site Inspection. For detailed information or consultation regarding these guidelines, please contact the City Building Division at (530) 542-6010 or the City Fire Inspector at (530) 542-6019.

General Safety

- Seating Layout must accommodate pedestrian and vehicle traffic.
- Seating areas must include adequate separation and/or barriers from vehicle circulation areas.

Fire Safety

- Seating must not impede access to emergency exiting, fire extinguishers, fire hydrants or other fire safety equipment. (CFC 1031.1, 906.6, 507.5.4, 503.4)
- Any tents or membrane structures must meet fire codes and safety standards set forth by National Fire Protection and Association (NFPA) and must include an affixed manufacture's label stating the tent meets NFPA requirements. A State Fire Marshall seal on the tent or a certificate is needed to prove treatment. (NFPA-701, CFC 3104.3, CPAI-84, H&S 13115)
- Tents or canopies larger than 400 square feet or allow for 10 or more people in them require a building permit. Building permit applications must include information indicated on the City [Submittal Checklist for "Temporary Tent" Projects](#).
- Tying multiple tents or canopies together results in tent area that is the aggregate of all tents and canopies for the purposes of permit requirements and regulation. (CFC 3103.2)
- Appliances and fixtures with open flames, including propane heaters and fire pits, must be a minimum of 20 feet from combustible materials (i.e. structures, tents, umbrellas, vegetation, etc.). "No smoking" signs are required to be posted in the area. Provide an approved portable fire extinguisher. Use of open flame appliances and fixtures are prohibited on Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch Days designated by the United States National Weather Service. (CFC 3104.7, 3104.6, 3104.12)

- Propane storage must be secured. (CFC 6101.1, NFPA 58)
- Electric heating fixtures may be used within tents and canopies. All wiring methods must meet the California Electrical Code, listed for wet locations and GFCI protected. (CFC 605.10.2)
- Generators must be a minimum of 20 feet from combustible materials and a fire extinguisher must be within 75 of the generator. (CFC 3104.19)
- Tents are required to be adequately anchored to withstand weather and prevent against collapsing. Tents are required to have an exit no less than 72 inches. (CFC 3103.9, 3103.12.2)

Accessibility

- Where outdoor seating is provided (tables, picnic, benches, etc.) at least 1 of each table type must comply with applicable ADA requirements.

- When the seating or walkways areas are on concrete, asphalt, or board surfaces, the slope must be no steeper than 1:48 (2 percent) in any direction. When the surface is constructed of materials other than concrete, asphalt, or boards, slopes no steeper than 1:20 (5 percent) are allowed when necessary for drainage.
- Aisle widths must meet ADA and Fire Code requirements.
- An accessible route shall be provided to all functional areas such as dining area of each type, bar, dancing area, condiment station and self-service areas, and toilet facilities.

PROBLEM Wheelchair users traveling on a sidewalk with a cross slope greater than 2% use more energy to to offset the force of gravity that directs them towards the curb and into the street

GOOD DESIGN A level area at least 915 mm (36 in) wide improves access when the street elevation is lower than the building elevation

- Self-Serve Drink Refrigeration, Condiments Stations, etc. must be within reach limitations.