



CITY OF LETHBRIDGE

# OUTDOOR PATIOS, PARKLETS, AND STREET VENDING HANDBOOK

Last Updated: March 26 2025

# INTRODUCTION

Outdoor Patios, Parklets, and Street Vending are different ways to convert City of Lethbridge (City) owned Right of Way (ROW)<sup>1</sup> into a use that serves people rather than vehicles, which supports local business, beautifies the streets, creates walkable destinations, and makes the city more welcoming and people-friendly.

In order to support these requests, a permit process was developed that supports businesses, ensures that pedestrian flow and public safety are maintained, and that consideration is given to adjacent businesses or residences regarding the potential impacts. As such a permit is required for Outdoor Patios (Minor and Major), Parklets, and Street Vending.

NOTE: Patios and outdoor seating located on a private parcel of land including parking lots are required to receive a temporary development permit. Contact :

[developmentservices@lethbridge.ca](mailto:developmentservices@lethbridge.ca)

## PURPOSE

This guideline will identify safety and operational requirements, as well as provide general conditions and clear direction to individuals who would like to understand this process from the perspective of either the business wanting to use the ROW adjacent to their business (Applicant), other businesses or citizens. The conditions and requirements in this guideline provide the City with a means to monitor and coordinate activities within the ROW in order to:

- Allow outdoor patios to be established in a non-disruptive manner.
- Efficiently use of the ROW for the benefit of our citizens.
- Minimize disruption to businesses, residents and road users (i.e. motorists, cyclists and pedestrians).
- Maintain safety for all users.

## PERMIT TYPES

**Parklet / Curbside Patio / Detoured Walkway** (all referred to as 'Parklet' in this document) is an enclosed area, used for either seasonal dining, recreational purposes or for the purpose of detouring pedestrians to accommodate a sidewalk patio, that uses the parking spaces adjacent to a business (May 1 – October 15). **MAX 2 Spaces Permitted.**



**Minor Patio** is an unfenced area used for dining and/or recreational purposes (during business hours) directly abutting a business.



**Major Patio** is a separated area by a fixed structure such as fencing, used for dining and/or recreational purposes directly abutting a business.



*A Major Patio is permanent in nature and a specialized application will be necessary including dimensional drawings, encroachment agreement and lease agreement. Please contact City of Lethbridge via 311 for additional details.*

**Street Vending** is a business placing merchandise for display and/or sale directly adjacent to their business only.



# PERMIT PROCESS

## Completed Application MUST include:

- Valid City of Lethbridge Business License
- General Commercial Liability Insurance
- Dimensional Site Plan
- Dimensional Elevation Drawing (if required)
- Business Letter of Support (if required)

## Submit the Application

- City of Lethbridge Urban Revitalization Department  
910 - 4th Ave South, 4th Floor
- Email to [Justin.Schipper@lethbridge.ca](mailto:Justin.Schipper@lethbridge.ca)

## Application Review

- Applicable City departments will review the application for compliance with safety and operational regulations.
- Downtown BRZ will also review for applications within the Downtown.

## Approval

- Usually granted within 5 days
- Payment (if required) due prior to Permit being issued.

## Annual Permit Renewal

- All Outdoor Patio, Parklet, and Street Vending Permits will be issued on an annual basis.
- Patio, Parklet, and Street Vending permits expire March 31st.

# DETAILS

**General Commercial Liability Insurance** with the City of Lethbridge listed as an "Additional Insured" with a minimum of \$2,000,000 coverage.

**Dimensional Site Plan Drawing** is a view from above with measurements noted.

**Dimensional Elevation Drawing** is front and side views with measurements noted.

**Business Letter of Support** is a form signed by businesses on the block face indicating support/opposition for the proposed application. A template can be found on the Public Spaces webpage.

## DIMENSIONAL SITE PLAN DRAWINGS:

Show with measurements noted for:	PARKLET	MINOR PATIO
Entire frontage of the building	√ and location of proposed parklet	√
Location of the door		√
Curb, including the distance between curb and building		√
Location of the proposed patio barrier and the distance from the barrier to the curb and nearby municipal obstructions (e.g. street light poles, signs, parking meters, garbage receptacles, benches, bus stops, trees, etc.). Trees must be measured from the edge of the tree-well grate, not the tree trunk.		√

## DIMENSIONAL ELEVATION DRAWINGS:

Show with measurements noted for:	PARKLET	MINOR PATIO
Design/layout of the barrier posts, rails, and stiles, including a description of the construction materials.	√	
Disassembly process.	√	

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that their Permit is valid prior to installing any patio furniture, fencing or equipment.
2. Patios will be restricted to establishments located on the ground floor of the adjacent building. The patio is permitted only on the portion of the sidewalk directly abutting the related building face.
3. The Applicant must contact the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) Commission if the intent is to serve alcohol or cannabis within the patio.
4. Patios will be considered and reviewed for commercial zones only as described in the Land Use Bylaw.

## AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

1. Patios must be kept tidy and all furniture and fixtures must be maintained in good condition and visual appearance.
2. Lighting may be used to add character to the patio space, so long as it does not interfere with traffic.
3. Furniture, decorations, planting of flowers and container-grown vegetation are all encouraged within the boundaries of any approved patio.

## SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

1. The patio space and adjacent sidewalk must be clear of any hazards including the timely removal of snow, ice and refuse.
2. All outdoor furniture must be of a commercial grade and shall not be secured to municipal infrastructure (e.g. the sidewalk, tree wells/trees, posts, fire hydrants, parking meters, street lights, bicycle racks, etc.)
3. No open flames are permitted.
4. A minimum of 1.8m (6') of unobstructed pedestrian space must be maintained between the outer extents of the patio (including but not limited to: lights, plants, tables, chairs, umbrellas, awnings, etc.) and any municipal infrastructure. (e.g. tree wells, posts, fire hydrants, parking meters, street lights, bicycle racks, etc.).
  - a. If a detoured walkway is built through a parking lane (on a roadway) to accommodate a sidewalk patio, the detoured sidewalk must meet the minimum unobstructed 1.8m (6') walkway clearance for pedestrians.
5. No parts of the patio, including decorations shall pose a hazard (e.g. thorns, poisonous plants, sharp edges, tripping hazards, etc.)

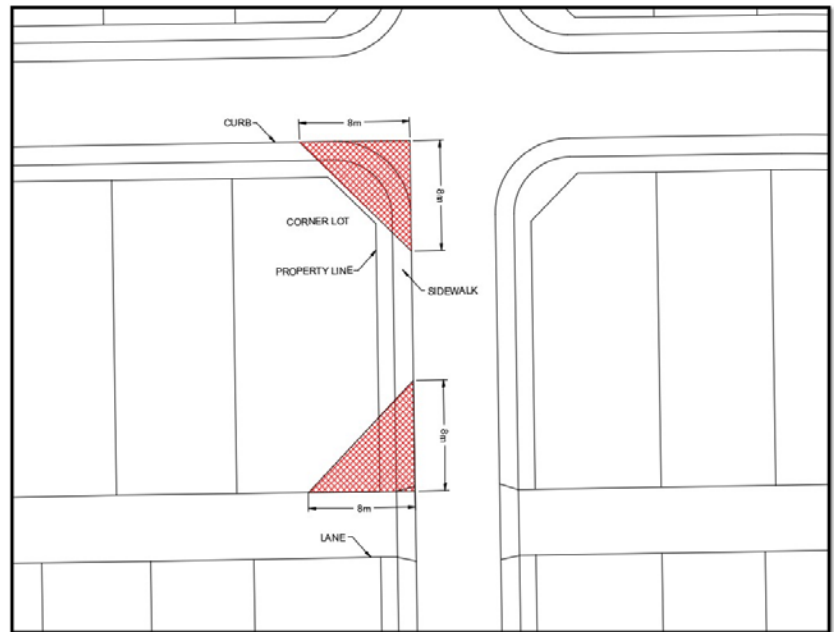
## OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Stacked storage of tables and chairs is not permitted during business hours.
2. Exterior lighting used within an approved patio shall be down-facing to minimize light spill into abutting properties and shall not interfere with the public thoroughfare, and be free of exposed cables.
3. The Applicant must comply with relevant City Bylaws, including the Noise Bylaw which states that bells, whistles, music or other attention seeking or intrusive sounds are not permitted between 10:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m.
4. A garbage can must be provided within the patio area.
5. The patio layout must accommodate wheelchairs and must not impede wheelchair access to the related building or to neighbouring buildings or businesses.
6. All patio furniture and other fixtures such as flower planters, portable lights, decorations, etc. must be located within the patio area and not in the pedestrian travel area, with the exception of umbrella canopies which may extend into the pedestrian travel area provided that there is a minimum 2.1m (7') ground clearance.



# PARKLET SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

1. All parklets are limited to the period between May 1 and October 15.
2. All outdoor furniture shall not be left unsecured after business hours.
3. The parklet area shall not be used for storage.
4. The parklet shall not exceed the width of the abutting on-street parking stalls.
5. The parklet will require additional traffic barriers (e.g. jersey barriers, large planters, etc.) to ensure the safety of the patio users and/or pedestrians, dependent on the design submitted. Any barriers used for the parklet must be constructed so that they can be completely removed within 24 hours. No permanent attachment of any fence or barrier to City property is permitted.
6. The design of the parklet should direct patrons to access/egress at the ends on its sidewalk-facing side and ensure that the transition between the existing sidewalk and parklet is fully accessible and mobility friendly.
7. The parklet must not interfere with storm water drainage, restrict access to catch basins/maintenance holes/utilities, or be located within 5m (16'5") of a fire hydrant or fire lane.
8. The parklet cannot be physically attached to the surface of the road, sidewalk or boulevard.
9. Furniture, planting of flowers and container-grown vegetation are all encouraged but shall not extend past the boundaries of the patio.
10. In accordance with the Streets Bylaw, no item with a height greater than 1m (3'4") above the established elevation, measured from the top of the curb where there is a sidewalk or from the level of the crown of the Roadway where there is no sidewalk, shall be placed within a triangle formed on a corner site by the way of two curb lines adjoining an intersection, including an alley intersection, and two points located 8m (26'3") from the said corner where the curb lines meet
11. If it has been determined that a parklet is not in compliance with the specified conditions and Streets Bylaw the parklet holder will be given (2) written warnings and the parklet will be required to be taken down at the owners expense after the 3rd strike.
  - a. If the parklet is owned by the applicant, they will have 24 hours to remove the parklet. If the Parklet Patio is not removed within 24 hours, the city will remove this and retain any materials the parklet was constructed with.
  - b. The City of Lethbridge reserves the right to remove or request a removal of a parklet for any reason.
  - c. The payment of parklet fees will be based on a 6 month term (May- Oct) and regarded as a seasonal cost. This cost will not be prorated or refunded in the instance that a parklet patio is taken down or removed earlier.
12. Payments of fees and placement of authorized items within the right of way does not provide a business ownership or control over the right away. All right of way ownership remains with the city of Lethbridge.



## MINOR PATIO SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

1. All outdoor furniture (including portable heaters/lights and/or plants) shall be set up only during business hours, and must be taken in at the end of each business day (11:00 p.m. at the latest) and stored indoors (not stacked and stored outside).

## STREET VENDING GUIDELINES

1. It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all conditions and requirements of this guideline have been met prior to placing any merchandise, stands or equipment within the ROW.
2. Merchandise placement is permitted directly in front of the associated business's building face. It is not permitted to extend in front of neighbouring buildings or businesses.
3. Merchandise placement will be restricted to establishments located on the main floor of the building.
4. Merchandise, stands and equipment must be removed from the ROW at the end of each business day.
5. The Applicant must maintain a minimum of 1.8m (6') of unobstructed pedestrian space between the merchandise and any municipal obstruction (e.g. tree wells, posts, fire hydrants, parking meters, street lights, bicycle racks, etc.) for safe pedestrian movement.
6. No cords, cables or other tripping hazards associated with the merchandise display shall cover any area of the sidewalk adjacent to the display.
7. No sharp objects or edges, bright lights, inappropriate subject matter, or other hazards/distractions may form part of the display.
8. The Applicant must comply with relevant City Bylaws, including the Noise Bylaw.

## Submitting an Application

Permit applications shall be made to the City of Lethbridge Urban Revitalization Department:

- In person at City Hall located at 910 - 4 Avenue South, on the 4th floor.
- Phone: 403-320-3137 or Lethbridge 311
- Email: [Justin.Schipper@lethbridge.ca](mailto:Justin.Schipper@lethbridge.ca)

Payment is due prior to the issuance of the Permit

Requirement Checklist	Parklet Patio	Minor Patios	Major Patios	Street Vending
<b>Permit</b> (See cost structure on following page)	Seasonal Permit Required; fee required	Annual Required; fee required	<p>A Major Patio is permanent in nature and a specialized application will be necessary including dimensional drawings, encroachment agreement and lease agreement.</p> <p>Please contact Urban Revitalization Manager at 403-320-3998 or via 311 for additional details.</p>	Annual Required; fee required
<b>Insurance Certificate</b>	Required	Required		Required
<b>Dimensioned Site Plan</b>	Required	Required		Not required
<b>Dimensioned Elevation Drawings</b>	Required	Not required		Not required
<b>Unobstructed sidewalk width of 1.8m (6')</b>	Not required	Required		Required
<b>Barrier Free Access</b>	Required	Required		Required
<b>Additional Lighting</b>	Down facing allowed	Down facing allowed		Down facing allowed
<b>Furniture removed at end of day</b>	Not required; must be secured	Required		Required
<b>Furniture removed at end of season</b>	Required	Not required		Required
<b>Liquor and Cannabis Sales</b>	Contact AGLC for approval	Contact AGLC for approval		Contact AGLC for approval
<b>Open Flames</b>	Not allowed	Not allowed		Not allowed
<b>Patio Heaters</b>	Allowed	Allowed		Allowed
<b>Block Face Business Support</b>	N/A	N/A		N/A
<b>Valid City of Lethbridge Business Licence</b>	Required	Required		Required
<b>AHS Food Handling Permit</b>	If applicable	If applicable		If applicable

\*limited quantities

- Parklets
- Bistro Sets
- Patio Umbrellas
- Planters

## Downtown Patios Program Payment Structure

### Program Background

The City of Lethbridge initiated the Patio and Parklet Program in 2020 as a supportive measure during the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling local businesses to expand their operational spaces in response to government-mandated restrictions. Initially, the City provided comprehensive infrastructure support, including parklets, patio umbrellas, bistro tables, chairs, and planters at no cost to businesses.

### Transition to Cost-Recovery Model

As community operations have returned to standard conditions, the City of Lethbridge will transition the program to a cost-recovery model. While rental charges will remain waived, administrative and space-utilization fees will be implemented.

### Cost Recovery Model for 2025-2026 Transitional Pricing Structure

For the 2025 season, fees will be reduced by 50%, with full pricing implemented in 2026.

Permit Type	Description	Cost	Additional Charges
Street Vending Permit	Authorization for displaying merchandise on City sidewalk space	\$25.00	N/A
Minor Patio Permit	Authorization for patio placement on City sidewalk space	\$50.00	N/A
Parklet Patio Permit	Authorization for patio placement on City parking stalls	\$50.00	\$10 per square meter*

\*Note: A standard parking stall encompasses approximately 21 square meters.

### Transitional Rate Structure

- 2025: 50% reduced cost structure
- 2026: Full cost structure implementation

***Businesses operating without a valid Permit or in contradiction to any of the permit conditions or requirements outlined in these guidelines, or specific to their Permit, will be subject removal after 2 written notices and to a fine as per the Streets Bylaw.***