

The Good

Neighbours

(Patio Season) / Guide

A photograph of an outdoor cafe patio. In the foreground, there are several white metal mesh chairs and small square tables. One table has a small white cup with sticks, a glass, and a menu. The patio is covered with a dark canopy, and there are string lights hanging from it. In the background, there are more tables and chairs, and a person is visible. The overall atmosphere is bright and sunny.

Good Neighbour Patio Guidelines

2022 Season

Many patio operators proactively reach out to their neighbours to establish a point of contact so that if there are any issues that arise with the operation of the patio, neighbours are able to contact patio operators directly for a resolution.

Some patios, whether on the City Right-of-Way or private property, may be neighbours to residents. Please keep your neighbours in mind when operating your patio with things such as:

Noise

- Noise is a common complaint from residents who live nearby. Please be a good neighbour and ensure the noise on the patio does not disturb neighbouring residents.
- Regardless of the patio closing times, no music is permitted to be played on the patio after 11:00 pm. This includes outdoor audio speakers, live music on the patio or indoor speakers or indoor live music emitting from inside the establishment onto the patio.
- consider limiting or avoiding the use of outdoor audio speakers or other amplified sound systems where possible
- where a patio on private property is within 30 m of a residential zone, the Zoning By-law prohibits the use of any amplified sound system to serve the patio

Privacy and Respect

- Where a patio on private property is within 30 m of a residential zone, the Zoning By-law requires that a screen be provided facing the residential zone.
- Respecting your neighbour's property (i.e., having a designated smoking area for patrons away from your residential neighbours)
- Lighting – use of cut off fixtures that do not impact abutting residential properties

Accessibility

- Ensuring lineups are not blocking the sidewalk- consider a reservation system so that patrons can wander the neighbourhood while waiting for a table

- Please keep A-frame signs against the building so as not to block the sidewalk
- Ensure a clear and unobstructed travel path in front of your patio; always ensuring a minimum 2 meter of clearance

Patio Design Standards

- The design of patios should ensure accessibility for all users, contribute to beautification of the streetscape, and function as lively spaces for outdoor dining. Patio operators are encouraged to choose designs, materials, and colours that are compatible with the surrounding buildings and streetscape.
- Patio furniture must be consistent in theme, safe, and intended for outdoor use in Ottawa weather. The use of untreated wood, breakable plastics, and non-waterproof fabrics is highly discouraged. Smaller tables are encouraged, as they provide more layout flexibility.
- Planter boxes with annuals, vines or container grown vegetation are encouraged, but should be readily removable from site. Planters must be contained within the patio footprint and not interfere with the pedestrian clearway.
- Umbrellas are encouraged to provide shade. Umbrella colours should be compatible with the patio furniture and should not have any advertising or lettering. Umbrellas must be contained within the patio footprint.

Please help in ensuring we have a successful patio season by being a good neighbour.

RESOURCES

AND CONTACTS

Resources

- [Right of Way Patio Bylaw 2017-92](#)
- [Noise Bylaw 2017-255](#)
- [Zoning Bylaw 2008-250 section 85](#)
- [City of Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards](#)

Contact

- [ROW Patio Office](#)
- [Bylaw and Regulatory Services](#)

