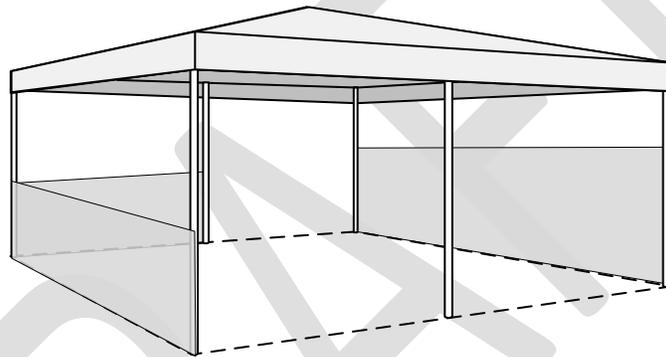




City of Sonoma

Guidelines for Fabric Covered Tents and Canopies for Temporary Parklets and Other Outdoor Spaces

11/3/2020



Disclaimer: The City of Sonoma has released the following guidelines to help restaurants, bars, pubs, brewpubs and breweries prepare for outdoor dining. These tent and canopy guidelines were developed to establish reasonable prescriptive guidance and supplemental clarification to the general requirements established in the State Blueprint for a Safer Economy for outdoor dining, bars, pubs, brewpubs, and breweries when such businesses are not allowed to open indoors when Sonoma County has been assigned the Tier 1 - Widespread (purple) classification by the State. These guidelines utilize the [Statewide Public Health Officer Order of July 13, 2020](#) relative to bars, pubs, brewpubs, and breweries which stipulated that *“outdoor operations may be conducted under a tent, canopy, or other sun shelter but only as long as no more than one side is closed, allowing sufficient outdoor air movement.”*

These guidelines are intended to meet the intent of the CA Department of Public Health (CDPH) COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Restaurants Providing Outdoor Dining. Should more restrictive requirements be established by CDPH or by the Sonoma County Health Officer, those requirements shall supersede these guidelines as applicable.

GENERAL TENT AND CANOPY GUIDELINES

- Outdoor spaces created on public property must have a Temporary Parklet and Sidewalk Encroachment Permit. Outdoor spaces on private property need to obtain permission from the property owner and follow these guidelines.
- The City Fire Marshal must issue a permit and inspect fabric covered tent and canopy structures covering an aggregate of 400 square feet or more.
- If heating devices will be used under a fabric covered tent or canopy, the City Fire Marshal must issue a permit and inspect the tent or canopy. Tents and canopies shall have a fire-resistant certification or flame certification showing material is in compliance with either California State Fire Marshal approved seal or meet NFPA 701 flame retardant standards.
- Canopies constructed of other than metal frames and fabric coverings shall be permitted by the Building Department.
- The layout of outdoor tent or canopy structures must be shown on the Temporary Parklet and Sidewalk Encroachment Permit application diagram. Tent and canopy installations shall not obstruct fire department access to existing buildings or fire protection appurtenances (e.g., fire hydrants, FDC's, etc.)
- Areas open to the public under tents and canopies must be made accessible to the disabled.
- There shall be a clearance of not less than 3 feet between the tent fabric and all contents located inside the tent.
- Fabric covered tents shall be installed a minimum of 20 feet from parked vehicles or internal combustion engines.
- No cooking is permitted in fabric covered tents or canopies.
- One or more means of egress must be provided and clearly marked as required by the CA Fire Code.
- Extension cords serving a tent or canopy must be protected by a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter and must be protected from damage. Heating devices must keep away from combustible materials at all times.
- Businesses must have sufficient fire extinguishers to cover indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Businesses utilizing outdoor fabric covered tent or canopy structures will need written inclement weather plans and trained staff to prevent any injuries in storms or other unsafe situations. After-hours emergency contact information shall be required in case the City must notify the business management of special storm or disaster preparation requirements.
- Fabric covered tent or canopy structure installations shall not obstruct fire department access to existing buildings or fire protection appurtenances (e.g., fire hydrants, FDC's, etc.). There shall be Fire Department vehicular access within 150 feet of all sides of a tent or canopy.
- Outdoor tent or canopy structures open to the public must have at least 50% of the sides open to allow airflow (see pages 5 & 6 and Figures 1 & 2). Only one full side of the roofed or covered area may be fully obstructed by a sidewall obstruction.
- If the building address is obstructed by a tent or canopy structure, the building address shall be provided on the tent or canopy.

- ❑ Tents and canopies shall be properly anchored or ballasted in accordance with manufactures guidelines, structural calculations or as otherwise approved by the fire code official. The formula $[(L \times W) \times 5\text{lbs} = \text{total ballast required}]$ may be used to determine total ballast for tents and canopies covering typical Parklets.

The following weights for filled water barrels may use for providing ballasts.

- Water barrels top tied only = 192 lbs each
- Water barrels top tied and bottom strapped to leg = 336 lbs each

- ❑ Tent and canopy permits are revocable by the Fire Code Official or the City for non-compliance.

DEFINITIONS

CANOPY. A structure or architectural projection of rigid construction over which a covering is attached that provides weather protection, identity or decoration, and may be structurally independent or supported by attachment to a building on one end and by not less than one stanchion on the outer end.

TENT. A structure, enclosure or shelter, with or without sidewalls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects.

TEMPORARY. For the purposes of these guidelines, “temporary” means the duration of time that a tent or canopy is permitted to exist under the applicable permits issued for said structure.

PERIMETER SIDEWALL OBSTRUCTION. For the purposes of these guidelines, a “perimeter sidewall obstruction” is any vertical obstruction, including, but not limited to, solid vertical materials, fabrics, tarps, partitions, tent sidewalls, building walls, fences, planters, railings, water walls and similar obstructing vertical elements that obstruct outside airflow and that is located within 3 feet horizontally of the projected perimeter of the roof or covered area.

HEATER GUIDELINES FOR TENTS OR CANOPIES

Heating Devices under tents and canopies

- ❑ The location and type of all heating equipment must be shown on Temporary Parklet and Sidewalk Encroachment Permit application diagram.
- ❑ The City Fire Marshal will inspect all heating devices in tents and canopies regardless of the size.
- ❑ Heating appliances must be listed and used in accordance with manufactures guidelines, these guidelines and the California Building Standards Code.

- ❑ **Portable Electric Space Heaters.** Portable, electric space heaters are allowed when operated only in locations for which they are listed (e.g. must be listed for outdoor use). Portable, electric space heaters shall be located more than 3 feet from any combustible materials, including tent sides, ceiling, umbrellas, and all other combustible materials. Portable, electric space heaters shall be operated only in locations for which they are listed.



- ❑ **Portable Outdoor Gas-Fired Heaters (e.g. propane or natural gas).** Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances for businesses may only be used when Fire Department requirements are met. A propane permit must be obtained by the Fire Department prior to the installation and use of portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances for a business. Fire Department limitations and requirements for tents, canopies, membrane structures and portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances can be downloaded at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HclrRYn-3X5OdrTO2qAh9fce5r9w3LE-Y44TyBji2g4/edit>.



- ❑ Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances are not permitted within 5 feet horizontal and vertical distance from walls or ceilings of tents, canopies or buildings and shall be kept a minimum of 10 feet horizontal distance from exits from tents, canopies or buildings.



- ❑ For the purposes of these guidelines, propane tanks used shall not exceed 5-gallon water capacity. The permitted number of propane tanks shall not exceed 5 tanks total (in use and in storage at any one time - empty tanks are considered full and count towards total). Propane tanks must be located outside and secured to prevent unauthorized movement. Propane tanks shall be adequately protected to prevent tampering, damage by vehicles or other hazards and shall be located in an approved location not less than 5 feet from a tent and from fabric covered canopy walls and ceilings. Propane tanks shall be located not less than 10 feet from a means of egress (exit). *NOTE: More restrictive CA Fire Code regulations will apply to the location of propane tanks when indoor dining is allowed under the pandemic restrictions.*

- ❑ Heating equipment shall be unplugged or disconnected for overnight storage, and employees shall be trained in proper installation of fuel tanks and in detecting leaks.

Guidelines for Sidewalls for Tents and Canopies

Criteria for Determining Maximum Allowable Sidewall Area for Tents and Canopies

- ❑ Not less than 50% of the *Combined Area of All Sides* (in square feet) must be open to the outdoors for air circulation. In addition, not less than three (3) sides of the roofed or covered area must have openings of 3 feet in height for the entire width of the side.
- ❑ Only one complete side of the roofed or covered area may be fully obstructed by a perimeter sidewall obstruction. A “**perimeter sidewall obstruction**” is any vertical obstruction, including, but not limited to, solid vertical materials, fabrics, tarps, partitions, tent sidewalls, building walls, fences, planters, railings, water walls and similar obstructing vertical elements located within 3 feet horizontally of the projected perimeter of the roof or covered area (see Figure 1 below for examples of perimeter sidewall obstructions).
- ❑ Any vertical obstruction within 3 feet horizontally of the projected perimeter roof or covered area shall be not be considered as open area.

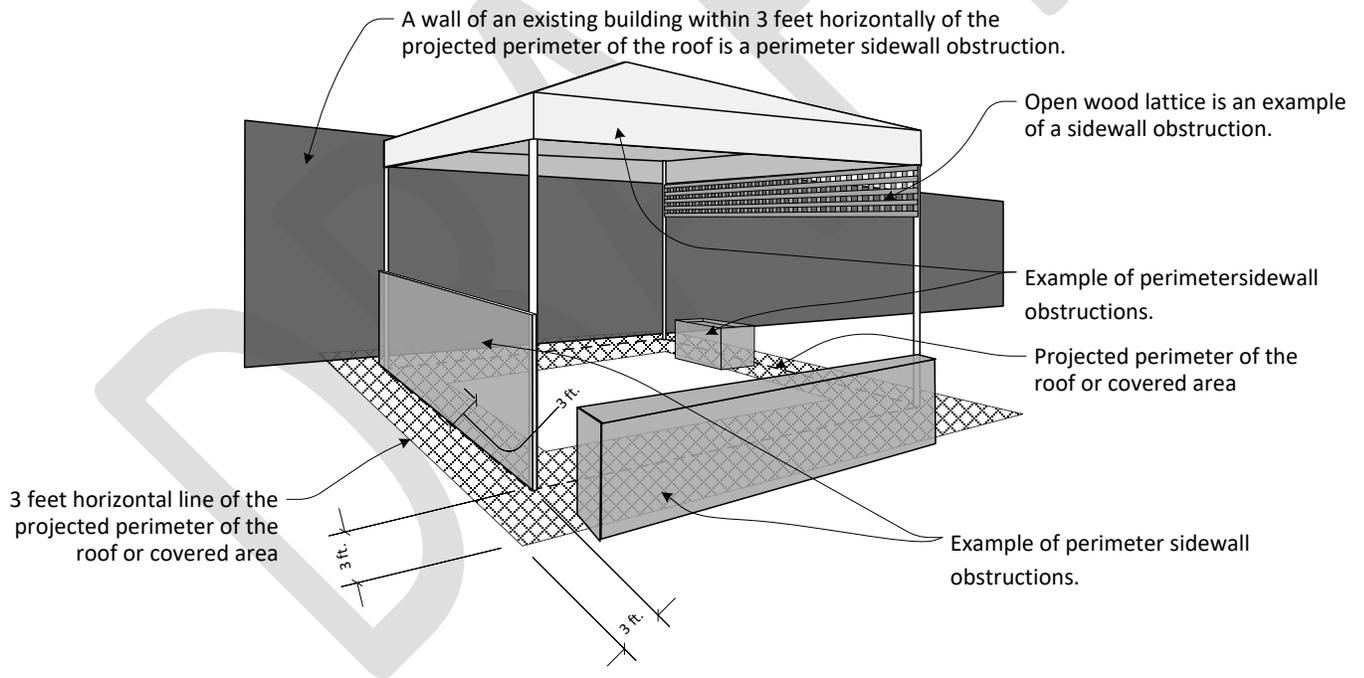


Figure 1

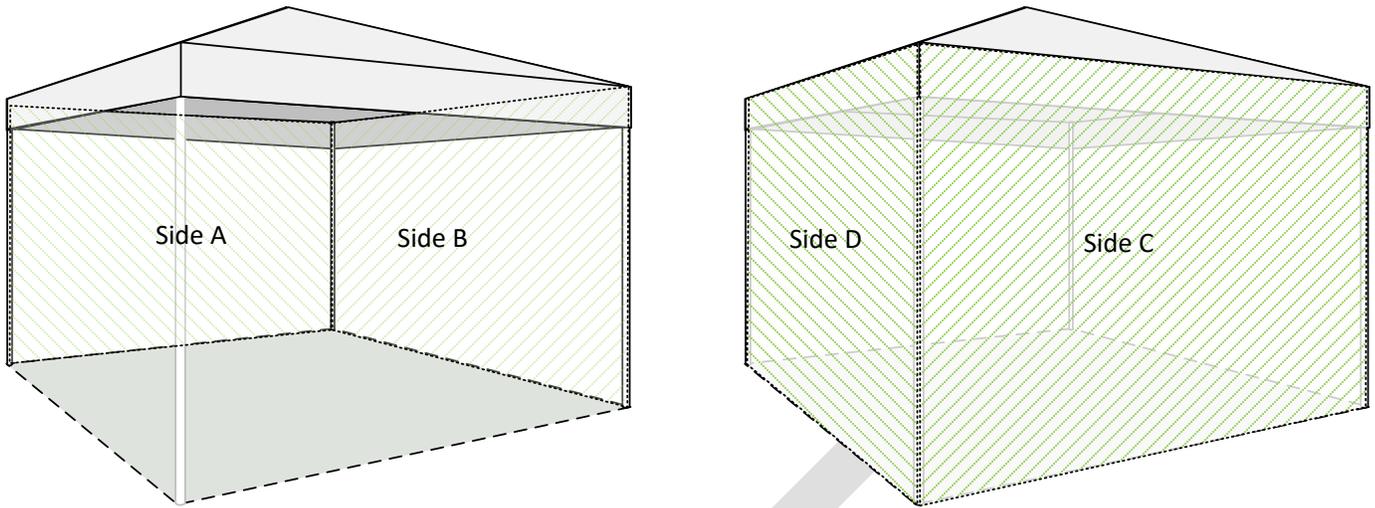


Figure 2

Steps for Determining Maximum Allowable Perimeter Sidewall Area for Tents and Canopies

Step One: Make sure that not less than three of the (3) sides have an opening of not less 3 feet in height for the entire width of the sidewall. Only one side may be fully obstructed from the floor to the tent/canopy roof.

Step Two: Calculate the Combined Area (s.f.) of All Sides of the covered area. $[(\text{Area of Side A in s.f.})+(\text{Area of Side B in s.f.})+(\text{Area of Side C in s.f.})+(\text{Area of Side D in s.f.}) = \text{Combined Area of All Sides (s.f.)}]$

Step Three: Calculate the Total Allowable Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area. $[\text{Combined Area of All Sides (s.f.) divided by 2}] = \text{Total Allowable Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area.}]$

Step Four: Calculate the Total Proposed Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area of all sides combined. A sidewall obstruction is any vertical obstruction, including solid materials, partitions, tent walls, building walls, fences, planters, water walls and similar solid vertical elements located within 3 feet horizontally of the projected perimeter of the roof or covered area. If a solid vertical element is located more than 3 feet horizontally from the projected perimeter of the roof or covered area, the element need not be considered as a sidewall obstruction. $[(\text{Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area of Side A in s.f.})+(\text{Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area of Side B in s.f.})+(\text{Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area of Side C in s.f.})+(\text{Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area of Side D in s.f.}) = \text{Total Proposed Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area (s.f.)}]$.

Step Five: Make sure that the **Total Proposed Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area** is less than the **Total Allowable Perimeter Sidewall Obstruction Area**.

Guidelines for Interior Dividers, Partitions and Partial Height Perimeter Sidewalls in Tents and Canopies

- ❑ Interior dividers, partitions or other interior vertical obstructions are vertical obstructions located under a tent or canopy that are not a perimeter sidewall obstruction. The total area (in square feet) of all combined interior dividers, partitions or other interior vertical obstructions under tents and canopies shall not exceed 25% of the total projected covered area.
- ❑ Interior dividers, partitions or other interior obstructions under tents and canopies shall be not more than 5'-9" in height, unless structural design and construction detailing is otherwise provided and approved.
- ❑ Interior dividers, partitions or other interior obstructions under tents and canopies shall be located in a manner to allow for sufficient air flow around them.
- ❑ Not less than 3'-0" shall be provided from the top of the opening in the perimeter sidewall to the top of the divider or partition below to allow unobstructed air flow under the tent or canopy. *Exception: One perimeter sidewall of the tent or canopy may be fully closed.*
- ❑ The minimum clear head clearance under a tent or canopy is 80".

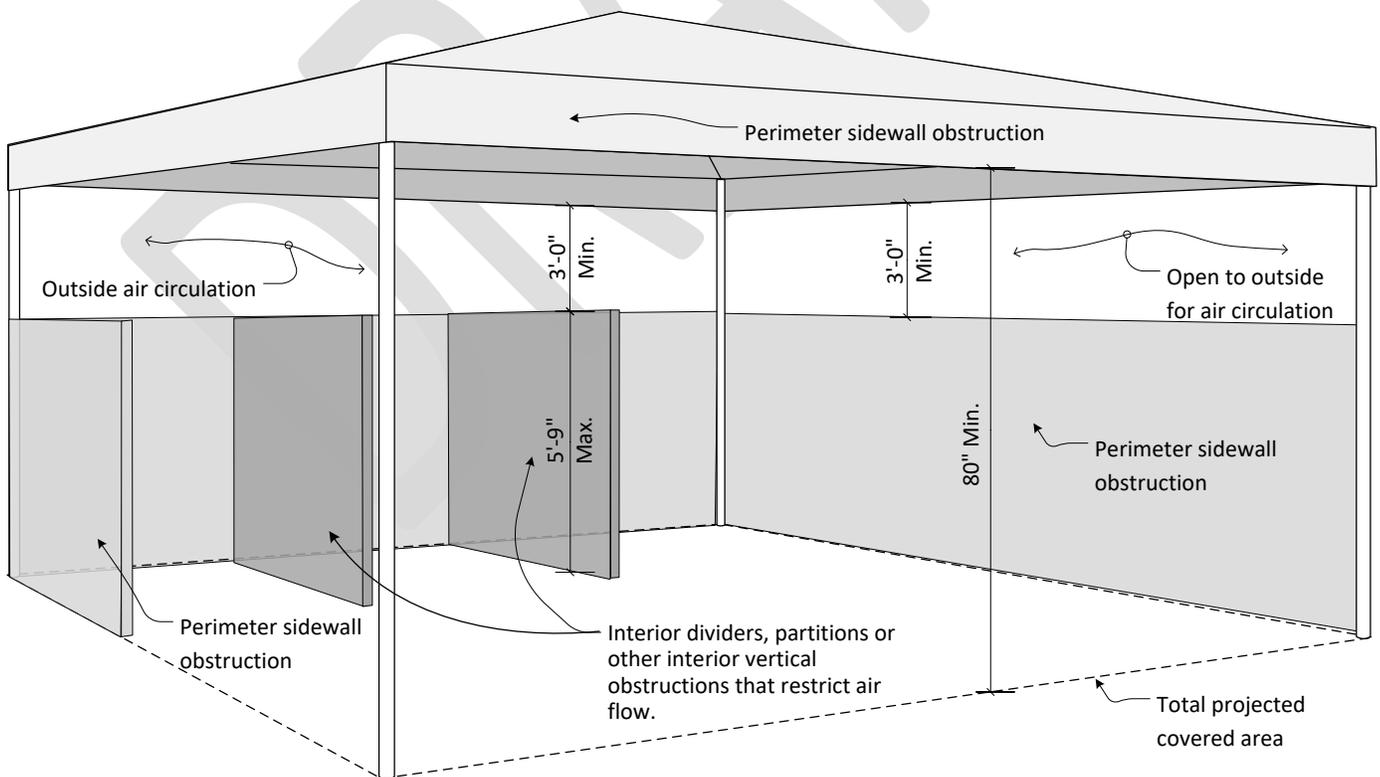


Figure 3