

CITY OF SPOKANE
PUBLIC RULE AND PROCEDURE

CITY OF SPOKANE PUBLIC RULE AND PROCEDURE	RULE 0750-26-04 LGL 2026-0020 RES 2026-0029
TITLE ACTIVATION OF PUBLIC SPACES PROGRAM EFFECTIVE DATE: May 11, 2026	

1.0 GENERAL

1.1 PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this public rule is to implement an activation of public spaces program. The City finds the activation of the public right-of-way through festivals, parades, athletic events, sidewalk cafes, streateries, and parklets to be in the best interest of residents, visitors, and businesses in the city of Spokane. This public rule shall be liberally construed by the City in favor of activating public spaces through its permitting and licensing processes.

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2.0 DEPARTMENTS/DIVISIONS AFFECTED

This public rule applies to all persons seeking licensure from the City of Spokane for expanded outdoor alcohol services, parklets, sidewalk cafes, streateries.

3.0 REFERENCES

- RCW 66.24.800
- RCW 66.24.820
- Spokane Municipal Code 12.14
- WAC 314-03

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 All relevant definitions may be found in SMC 12.14.

5.0 POLICY

- 5.1 A no-fee license issued by the Development Services Center is required to provide expanded outdoor alcohol service. The license must be renewed annually. The expanded outdoor alcohol service license program expires December 31, 2027, unless reauthorized by the Washington State Legislature.
- 5.2 A license issued by the Development Services Center is required to operate a sidewalk café, streatery, or parklet in the public right-of-way. All sidewalk cafes, streateries, and parklets must meet the pedestrian passage requirements outlined in SMC 12.14.
- 5.3 Off-street private parking stalls may be converted to an outdoor alcohol service area, or other temporary seating, upon permission of the parking lot owner, when the parking lot is adjacent to the restaurant or utilized for mobile food vending. ADA accessible parking stalls and access aisles may not be repurposed for an outdoor alcohol service area, or other temporary seating.
- 5.4 A sidewalk café or outdoor alcohol service area may extend past the frontage of the applicant's business so long as the applicant has permission from the adjoining property owner or the adjoining property owner's agent.
- 5.5 The operational hours of a sidewalk café, streatery, parklet, outdoor alcohol service area, or other temporary seating are limited to the operating hours of the licensed business unless approved through a special events permit. The licensee is responsible for maintenance, litter removal, activation, and programming of the outdoor space with temporary materials such as tables, chairs, and umbrellas.
- 5.6 No heating, cooking, or open flames are permitted in a sidewalk café, streatery, parklet, outdoor alcohol service area, or other temporary seating area. However, outdoor space heaters are permitted. Outdoor space heaters must follow the manufacturer's recommendations and be located at least two feet from flammable objects or materials, including umbrella canvases or foliage.
- 5.7 Licensees approved for expanded outdoor alcohol service may share use of an outdoor alcohol service area with other approved licensees, and licensees may share use of an outdoor alcohol service area with businesses that do not engage in the sale or service of alcohol.

6.0 PROCEDURE

- 6.1 An applicant for expanded outdoor alcohol service must be licensed by the City before seeking approval from the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board.
- 6.2 Applicants seeking to repurpose private parking stalls for an outdoor alcohol service area, or other temporary seating must demonstrate through their license application a detailed site map showing building accessibility and emergency access.
- 6.3 Outdoor alcohol service areas may be enclosed, at the licensee's discretion, by means of a permanent or movable barrier or by means of a permanent fence-free demarcation. For an outdoor alcohol service area enclosed by means of a permanent or movable barrier of a minimum height, the permanent or movable barrier is not required to meet minimum height requirements on sloped site conditions.
- 6.4 The number of entrances and exits into and out of an outdoor alcohol service area is dependent upon the occupant load. The Spokane Fire Department will work with licensees to ensure a layout that meets requirements and works for the licensee.
- 6.5 Any permanent structures being proposed to expand outdoor seating must meet building codes and seek the appropriate building permits.
- 6.6 An employee of the licensee with a mandatory alcohol server training (MAST) permit must be assigned to, but is not required to be in, the outdoor alcohol service area at all times that patrons are present. A direct line of sight is not required from inside the licensed premises to the outdoor alcohol service area.
- 6.7 Street closure requests are reviewed and approved through the special events permitting process.

7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 The Community and Economic Development Division and Office of the Mayor are responsible for the implementation of this public rule.

8.0 APPENDICES

- 8.1 Ordinance C36850

APPROVED BY:

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City Attorney

5/19/2026
Date

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Director of Community and
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5/19/2026
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5/19/2026
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