

San Francisco

**Shared  
Spaces**

# Shared Spaces Design Guidelines

Using the sidewalk or parking lane for your business

[sf.gov/SharedSpaces](https://sf.gov/SharedSpaces) | v.12.17.2020

San Francisco's Shared Spaces program was created for local businesses to provide services outdoors safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are guidelines for creating or adapting a Shared Space for use during the darker, colder, and wetter winter months. Review the complete Design Guidelines online at:

[sf.gov/file/shared-spaces-design-guidelines-using-sidewalk-or-parking-lane](https://sf.gov/file/shared-spaces-design-guidelines-using-sidewalk-or-parking-lane).

### Fire Safety

**The use of propane is regulated by the Fire Department.** A SFFD Operational Permit is required for storage and use of liquid propane gas (San Francisco Fire Code 105.6.27).

Please go to [www.sf-fire.org/permits](https://www.sf-fire.org/permits) to review these guidelines, or call **628-652-3260** for more information.

- Open flame devices are **not** allowed.
- Use outdoor heating fixtures safely and according to State and City Code Requirements.
- Propane Heaters cannot be placed underneath overhead canopies, awnings, inside buildings or tents. They must have 5-foot clearance from any flammable materials.



### WALLS AND ENCLOSURES

#### Sightlines

Maintain clear sightlines into and through the Shared Space. You should be able to see through the Shared Space from the sidewalk out into the street. This helps emergency responder personnel perform their work swiftly and safely. Sidewalk environments also feel more safe when they pedestrians can survey their surroundings.



#### Airflow

Outdoor activities minimize risk of transmission of COVID-19. **Shared Spaces should provide sufficient cross-ventilation** through the dining facility. You must follow the most current guidance from [CDPH](https://www.cdph.ca) and [SFDPH](https://www.sfdph.org), as they are



### DECKS AND PLATFORMS

#### Universal Accessibility

All people must be able to pass safely and comfortably through streets and sidewalks. You must maintain a minimum 6-foot wide continuous path for pedestrians on the sidewalk clear of tables, chairs, and other fixtures.



#### Drainage

Prevent flooding onto sidewalks by allowing for drainage of rainwater in the gutters during storm events. 6-inch wide x 6-inch high minimum clear gutter space must be provided along the entire length of the curb.

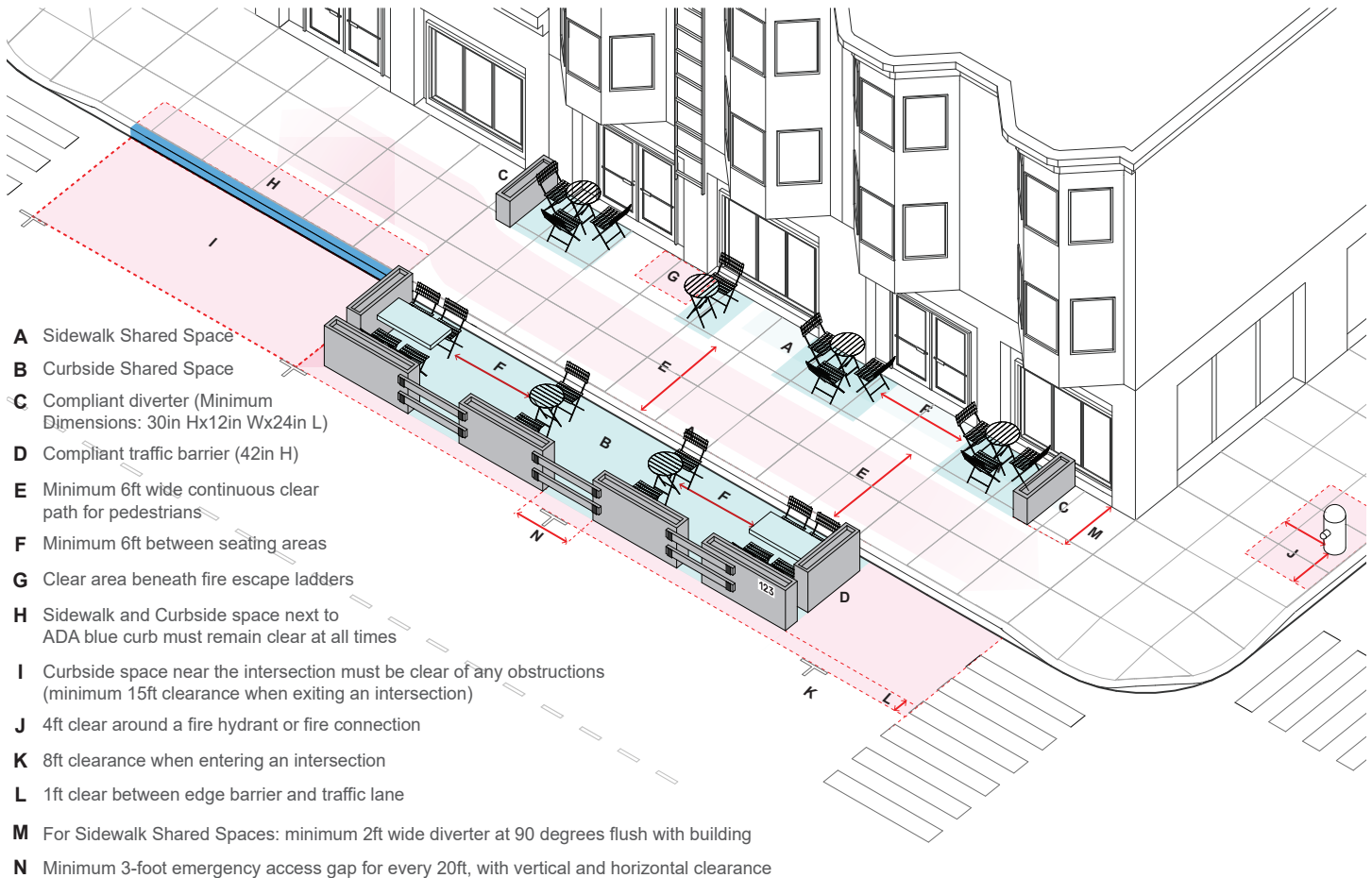


### Movability and Portability

Whenever possible, **avoid erecting fixed structures that will be costly to modify, move, and replace.** Public Health Directives and corresponding Shared Spaces Design Guidelines can change over time.



You may use the parking lane for: curbside pickup area for cars, physical distancing space for your customers to stand in line, seating or dining, personal services, retail use, and accompanying entertainment. You will need to provide compliant traffic barriers to use this space.



## Before you build a structure, consider:

- A comfortable space can be provided with compliant traffic barriers and furniture. Fixed structures are not necessary to implement a successful Shared Space.
- If you can provide equivalent accessible amenities on the sidewalk or via an accessible ramp, a deck or platform is not required to [make your Shared Space accessible](#).
- You may provide an [accessible ramp](#) to your parking lane Shared Space: 8.3% maximum slope (1:12), with raised side edges, ([example](#)).



Structures on the sidewalk must be brought inside after close of business.

Structures in the parking lane should not block motorists' visibility of crosswalks or traffic signals.

You must comply with these guidelines and sign the attestation in the last page of this document.

## EMERGENCY PATH OF TRAVEL

Emergency responders utilize the most direct path to access a building from the street to assist citizens in need of medical attention or for firefighting operations. Obstructing emergency access may lead to immediate danger to health or life safety. The following safety guidelines are required:

- A **minimum 3-foot-wide emergency access gap**, with vertical and horizontal clearance, is required for every 20 feet of structure length, or from existing adjacent Shared Spaces or other structures in the parking lane (see Figure 1).
- The gap must be kept clear of any tables and chairs or other elements. The pathway between the building and each 3-foot-wide emergency access opening, through the Shared Spaces and over the sidewalk, **shall remain clear of fixed overhead obstructions** (string lights, canopies, decorations, heaters, wires, poles, etc.) at all times. Ladders and other emergency equipment may need to be carried through the opening to the building (see Figure 1).
- The barrier must be easily removable by emergency personnel (see Figure 2).

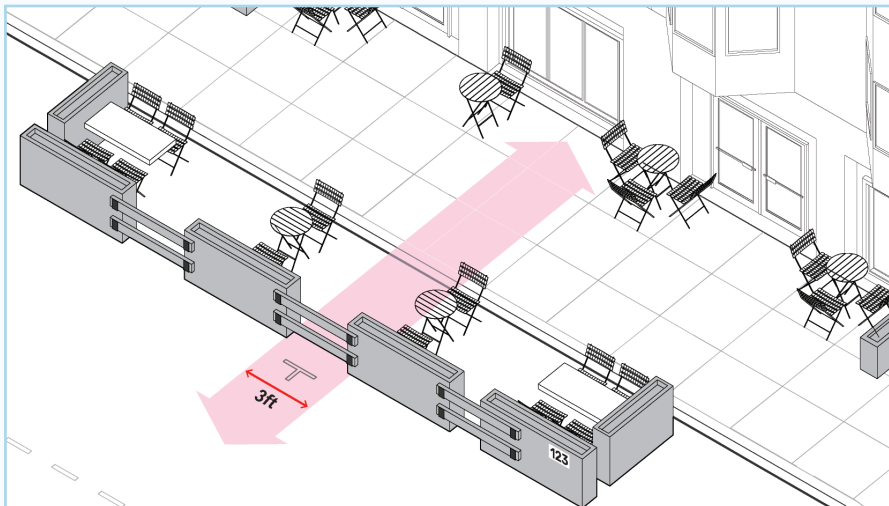


Figure 1

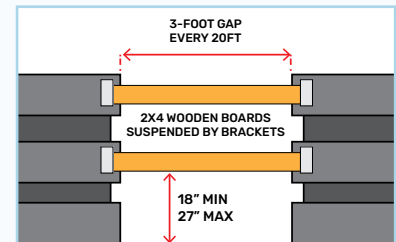


Figure 2

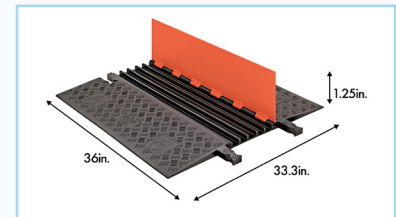


Figure 3

- All cables, cords, or wires must all be run at ground level and completely covered with approved ADA accessible cable ramps (1:12 slope) (see Figure 3). Taping down or stringing **overhead wires are NOT permitted**.
- **No part of a structure shall exceed 10 feet in height**, (including poles, posts, canopies, wires, string lights, signs, or pergolas) while still complying with the maximum 42 inch high enclosure construction requirements above. If constructing a structure where Muni overhead lines are present, the top of the structure (including any roof) must not be taller than 9' from the road surface.
- The **address for each storefront shall be displayed at a height of 36-42 inches on the street facing side of the enclosure wall/guardrail and readily visible for emergency responders**. Address numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches tall (5/8 inch wide stroke) with black numbers on a white background.

## SPACE HEATER REQUIREMENTS

- The use of propane is regulated by the Fire Department. A SFFD Operational Permit is required for storage and use of liquid propane gas (San Francisco Fire Code 105.6.27). Please go to [www.sf-fire.org/permits](http://www.sf-fire.org/permits) or **628-652-3260** for more information.
- A site plan with the desired location of each heater is required at time of application. A final onsite SFFD permit inspection will be conducted to ensure the proper spacing of heaters from combustibles and emergency access/egress.
- Use outdoor heating fixtures safely and according to State and City Code Requirements.
- Propane is flammable and can be readily ignited by a spark. If confined or exposed to fire, propane poses an explosion hazard. Propane is heavier than air, which means it accumulates in low places, where people and ignition sources exist.
- Propane Heaters cannot be placed underneath overhead canopies, awnings, inside buildings or tents. They must have **5-foot clearance from any flammable materials**. (see Figure 4)

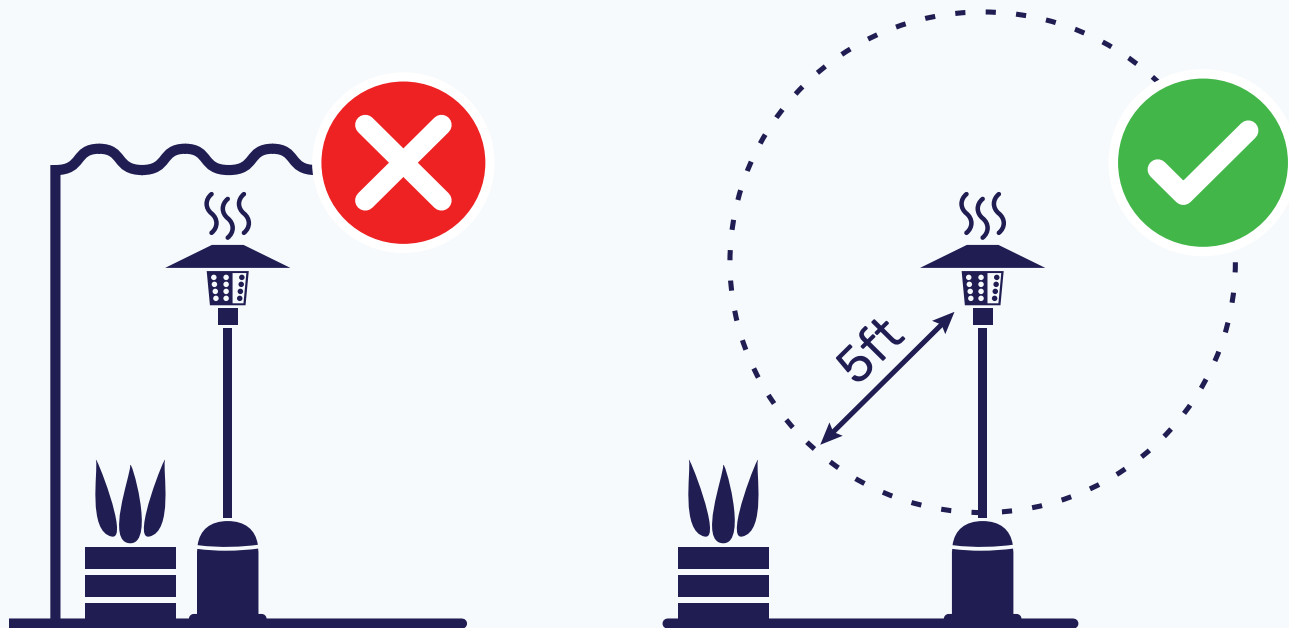
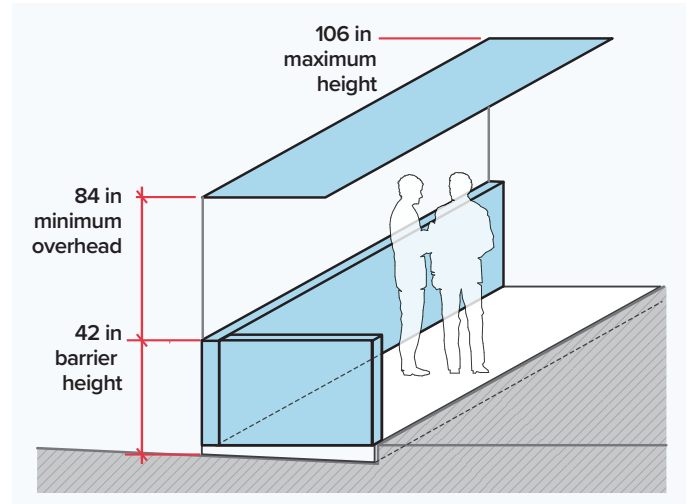


Figure 4

- Indoor storage of 20-pound propane containers is prohibited. Proposed outdoor storage of 20-pound propane containers requires plan review and inspection by SFFD.
- If restaurants do not have an approved outdoor storage area, all propane containers must be removed from the premises at the close of business.

## VISIBILITY

- Enclosure should be at least 42 inches tall.
- If you wish to install panels taller than 42 inches to separate tables or act as wind barriers, use visually transparent materials like acrylic, plexiglass, plastic films. Panels must be secure and stable. You will need to comply with Airflow guidelines as well (see next section).
- The enclosure should not block the view of traffic, including pedestrian traffic, nor block the view of traffic control devices such as traffic signs and traffic signals. It should not obstruct motorists' visibility of traffic signals from 200 feet away (about half a block).
- You must mark the edges or corners of your enclosure with high intensity retro-reflective tape or reflectors to be visible at night.
- All enclosures must follow the [Shared Spaces Universal Accessibility Rules](#). See section below for more details.



### Enclosure example

Maintain visual connection with the sidewalk while providing a stable and sturdy enclosure.



Image for reference only. (Image by Shared Spaces)

### Do not block visibility

If you want to use partitions higher than 42 inches, use see-through, transparent materials.



Image for reference only. (Image by Shared Spaces)

## FURNITURE

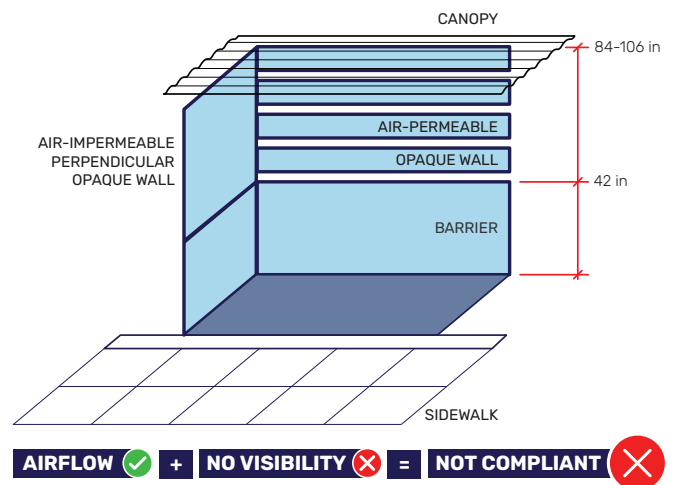
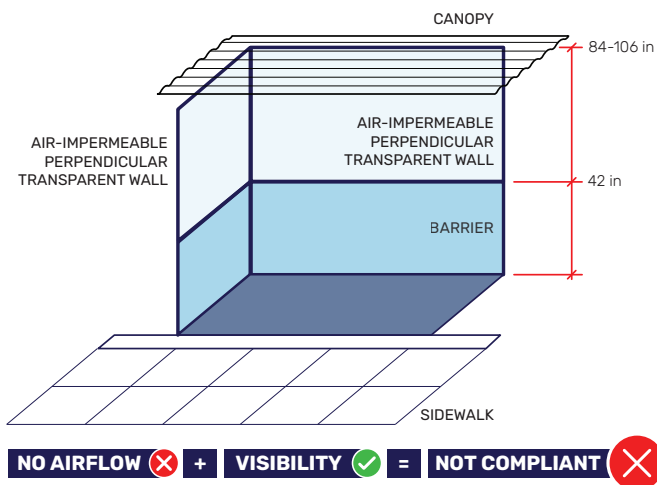
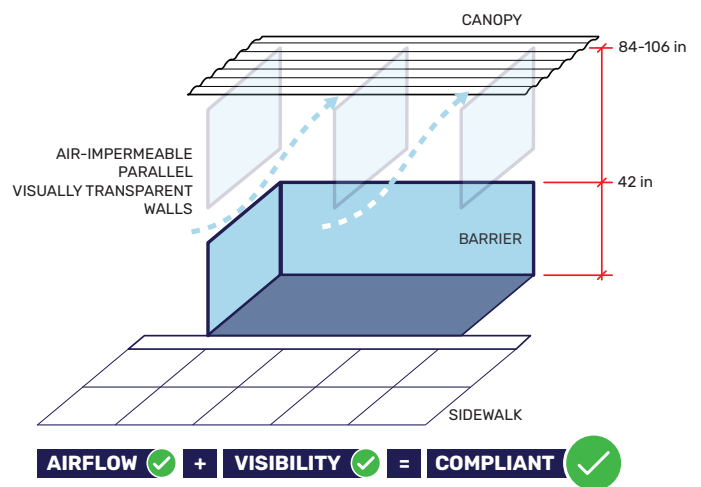
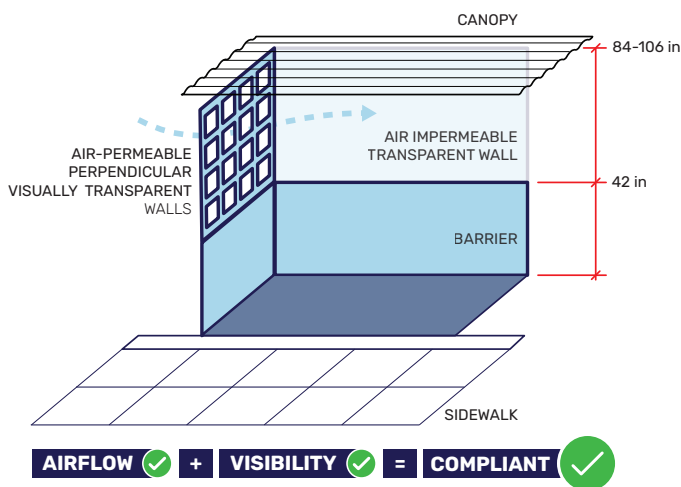
- Follow same guidance for Shared Spaces [seating or dining](#)
- Follow physical distancing protocols



## AIRFLOW

The California Department of Public Health issued guidance for the [Use of Temporary Structures for Outdoor Business Operations](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/2019.07.02.SharedSpaces.aspx). More information at: [www.cdph.ca.gov](https://www.cdph.ca.gov)

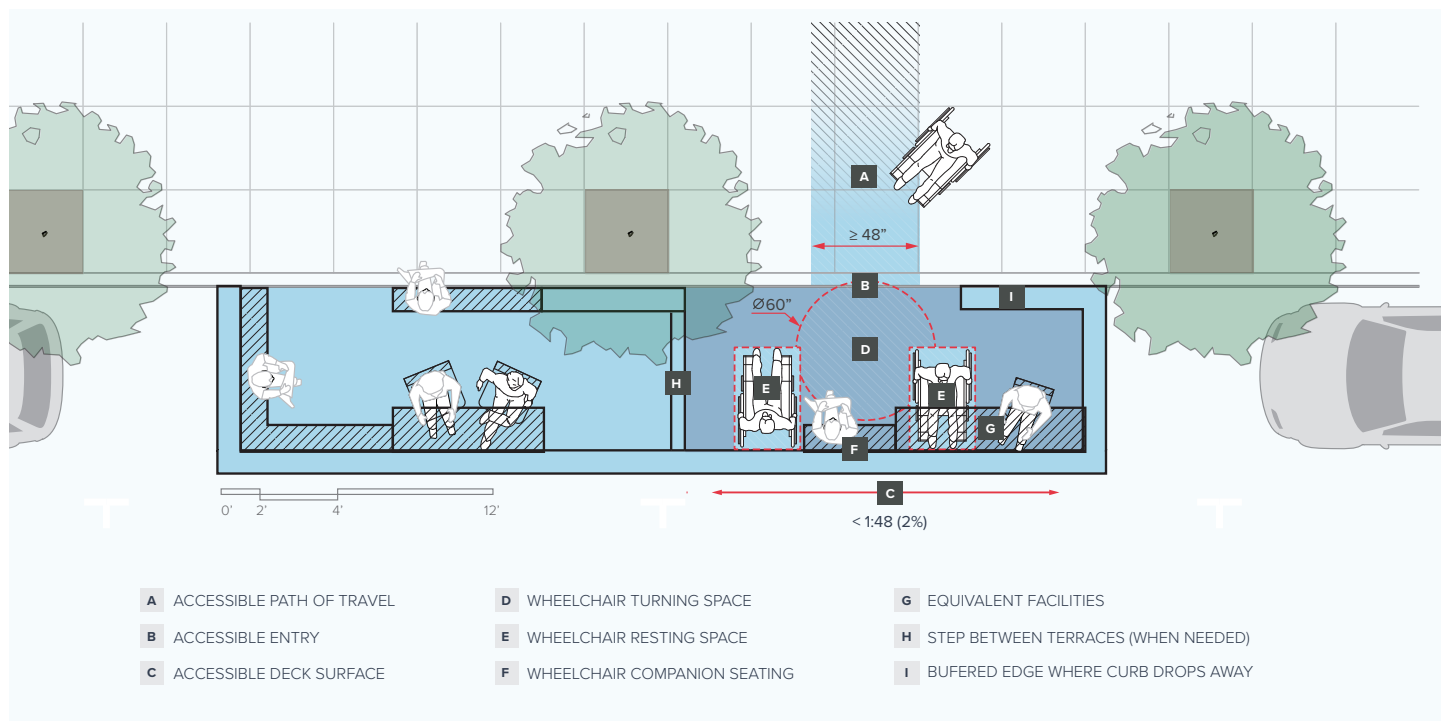
- Air-permeable materials include: wood lattice with widely separated slats, or a coarse mesh screen.
- Air-impermeable materials include: plastic films, acrylic, or plexiglass.
- Any vertical panel that is air-impermeable above 42 inches is considered a wall.
- Outdoor spaces cannot be enclosed or partially enclosed by perpendicular walls. Parallel walls are acceptable.
- Only install air-impermeable barriers between seating groups, leaving two parallel sides open for the free flow of air.



## UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY

The proposed structure shall be designed, constructed and/or conform to the applicable provisions, rules, regulations and guidelines of the: San Francisco Building Code (SFBC) and Americans with Disabilities Act 2010 Standards accessibility requirements (ADAAG). All structures must also follow our accessibility rules to use the parking lane for your business: [sf.gov/information/make-your-shared-space-accessible](https://sf.gov/information/make-your-shared-space-accessible)

- **Accessible Deck Surface:** The portion of the deck connected by the accessible path of travel to the wheelchair turning space and wheelchair resting space must be level. The accessible deck surface maximum cross slope (perpendicular to the sidewalk or curb) cannot exceed 1:48 (2%). The accessible deck surface maximum running slope (parallel to the curb) cannot exceed 1:48 (2%)
- **Accessible entry:** minimum 48 inches wide
- **Accessible path of travel:** It must connect the sidewalk to the accessible entry, deck surface, wheelchair turning space and wheelchair resting space
- **Wheelchair turning space:** Shall be 60 inches in diameter and located entirely within the platform; a 12-inch maximum overlap on the curb and sidewalk is acceptable.
- **Wheelchair landing:** A 30- by 48-inch clear floor area. It's permitted to overlap with the Wheelchair Turning Space by 24 inches maximum in any orientation
- If your business gets a Shared Space permit on a street that **exceeds a 5% grade**, you will receive additional accessibility information with your permit.
- **The slope and cross-slope of accessible areas must not exceed 2%.** In some cases, a platform or deck may assist in meeting slope and cross-slope accessibility requirements.
- **You must take the appropriate actions to be accessible and safe.**





## DESIGN DETAILS

- The structure must maintain **12 inches clearance from the adjacent travel lane**, or 12 inches clearance from the outside edge of the marked parking space
- Durable materials** that can withstand wear and tear of elements. It's your responsibility to maintain all platform elements in **good condition**.
- Threshold:** Deck or platform must be **flush with sidewalk** and must not leave a gap greater than 1/2 inch, nor a vertical separation greater than 1/4 inch. (see Figure 5)

## UTILITIES

- All structures on parking lane must allow for **access to public utilities** for maintenance and repairs (e.g. provide access panels, removable pavers) **Bolting:** At no time should fixtures be bolted or affixed in any way to the roadway or any structure (including but not limited to: buildings, fire hydrants, street trees, streetlight or traffic poles, etc.)
- Concrete:** Pouring concrete for Shared Spaces platforms is not allowed. You may use concrete pavers on a platform structure instead.
- Surface materials must be textured or treated with a non-skid coating to **ensure a safe walking surface**. Loose particles, such as sand or loose stone, are not permitted.
- Drainage:** Platforms should **allow for curbside drainage flow**. A 6 inch x 6 inch minimum clear gutter space must be provided along the entire length of the proposed platform. (see Figure 6)

### Threshold

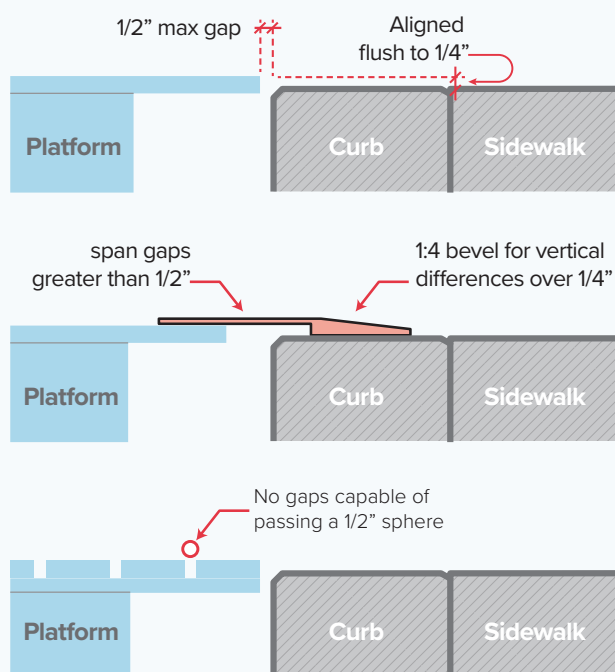


Figure 5

### Drainage

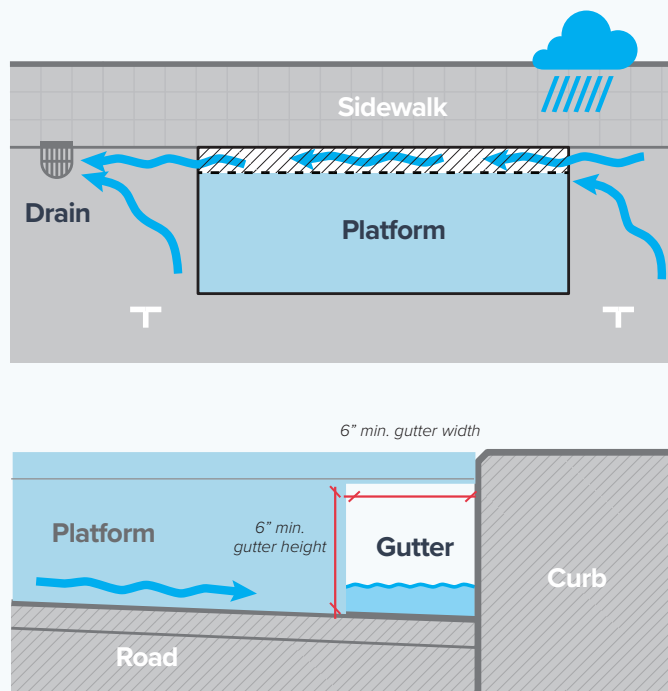


Figure 6

## MY RESPONSIBILITIES

- I understand that a Shared Spaces permit is temporary, and not equivalent to a Parklet permit.
- I am responsible for removing any structures when the Shared Spaces permit expires.
- I will ensure the space occupied and services offered under the permit comply with applicable health orders and directives, as well as with all laws requiring accessibility for people with disabilities and that the space and services do not interfere with emergency responders access.
- I have read and fully understand the requirements on this document. By signing it, I accept the conditions stated in this document, and hold harmless the City and County of San Francisco from any and all liability resulting from the use of the installation.

→ [See Shared Spaces permit holder responsibilities](#)

→ [See all safety protocols about operating an outdoor dining area](#)

## MY PHOTOS

Submit six (6) photographs of the structure to certify compliance. The photographs should demonstrate the criteria listed in this document. Follow the guidance illustrated on this diagram

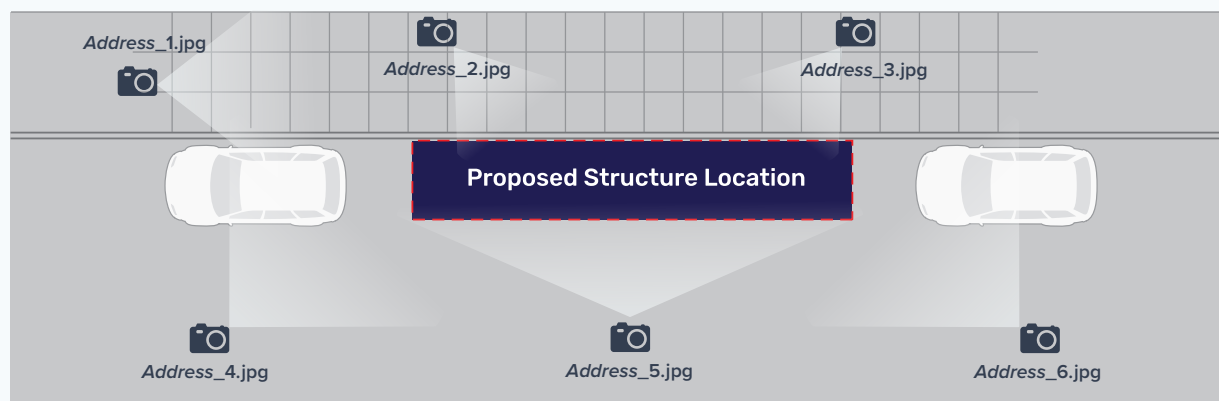


Figure 7

## MY SIGNATURE

Signature:			Date:	
Name:			Shared Spaces Permit Number:	
Address:				

- **Sign this form and submit with your photographs as part of your Shared Spaces Permit Application**  
 → **Or email the signed form and photographs to [SharedSpacesPermit@sfdpw.org](mailto:SharedSpacesPermit@sfdpw.org)**