



PRESS RELEASE

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City Council approves Mayor DaSilva's recommendation for outdoor dining

Mayor signs ordinance making it official

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI – On Tuesday, May 7th, 2024 the East Providence City Council authorized changes to an ordinance recommended by Mayor DaSilva's administration, which will allow our local businesses more outdoor dining opportunities at food service establishments.

Amendments to language related to restaurants that will include changes for parking relief and creation of safety and other standards for permitting outdoor dining under Article I, Section 19-1 (Definitions) Article IV, Sec. 19-284 (Off-street parking spaces required) and addition of new Section 19-360.4.

These changes will allow up to 20 outdoor seats to be exempt from "off-street parking spaces" that will not force businesses to add additional parking spaces to their establishments.

Additionally, any indoor or outdoor seating located within the 'Mixed-Use Overlay District' are exempt from these requirements provided the physical building footprint has not increased.

"These changes to our city ordinance further my administration's goal to help our struggling businesses that have and continue to be negatively impacted by the closure of the westbound portion of the Washington Bridge," Mayor Bob DaSilva said. "While the state has provided relief for businesses when it comes to outdoor dining, codifying the city ordinance is pushing the needle even further here in East Providence."

These changes will provide food service establishments the ability to incorporate outdoor dining areas while protecting public safety and minimizing negative impacts to neighboring properties.

In order to establish outdoor dining, food establishments must adhere to the following:

1. Submission of a Development Plan Review Application pursuant to Article VIII of this ordinance and the East Providence Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations. Outdoor dining areas shall be reviewed through the process by the Building Official, Fire Department and City Engineer to ensure compliance with the State Building Code and Fire Code, ADA accessibility, internal traffic circulation and vehicle crash protection.
2. When outdoor dining areas are adjacent to roadways or parking areas, vehicle crash protecting shall be provided to include permanent or semi-permanent barriers, bollard, or similar materials that are capable of protecting patrons from hazards.
3. Parking areas with outdoor dining must continue to comply with the parking space/parking lot design, maintenance and loading requirements in Division 11 of these regulations.
4. Outdoor dining hours shall be limited to between 7:00AM and 10:00PM.
5. All outdoor lighting in the outdoor dining area shall be shielded and focused directly onto the seating area and away from abutting properties.
6. All food service establishments shall comply with the parking requirements as set forth in Section 19-284.
7. Food service establishments that have been permitted through a Special Permit process shall not require a Special Permit for the addition of outdoor seating

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