

Director's Rule 21-89

Applicant CITY OF SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION AND LAND USE	Page	of	Supersedes
	1	2	NA
	Publication		Effective
	11/2/89		12/15/89
Subject Parking requirements for outdoor seating areas for restaurants.	Code and Section Reference		
	Land Use Code Section		
	23.54.015		
	Type of Rule		
Index Land Use Code/Technical Requirements	Code Interpretation		
	Ordinance Authority		
	3.06.040		
	Approved Date		
<i>Dennis McLerran</i>			12/14/89

BACKGROUND:

Section 23.54.015 of the Land Use Code, which regulates required parking, states: "In the case of a use not specifically mentioned on Chart A, the requirements for off-street parking shall be determined by the Director. The Director's determination shall be based on the requirements for the most comparable uses."

Chart A in Section 23.54.015 states that the parking requirement for restaurants is one space per two hundred square feet of gross floor area. However, the Chart does not mention the parking requirements for outdoor seating areas for restaurants.

RULE:

When a restaurant includes an outdoor seating area or areas which total more than seven hundred fifty square feet in area, all of the outdoor seating areas except those located in public rights of way, shall be counted in the calculation of required parking as follows: one space per one hundred square feet of outdoor seating area for fast food restaurants, and one space per two hundred square feet of outdoor seating area for all other restaurants.

REASON:

While the outdoor eating areas in some restaurants are only open for a few months of the year and are quite small, others operate almost all year and are larger than the indoor seating area. In areas with a view or near the water, outdoor seating areas can be very popular and can draw large numbers of people. If such large outdoor seating areas are not counted in parking calculations, spillover parking from restaurant patrons can impact the surrounding neighborhood. A seven hundred fifty square foot seating area can accommodate approximately 50 patrons, and could cause a significant parking impact. According to restaurant designers, requiring parking for smaller outdoor seating areas could make them too costly to provide, or would penalize restaurants which may simply move their patrons outside in nice weather, and

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not draw significantly more people because they offer outdoor dining. For the areas over 750 square feet, in accordance with Section 23.54.015, the requirement should be the same as indoor restaurant seating, the most comparable use.

Outdoor seating areas located on public right of way require an annual street use permit, which the City does not have to renew if there are parking or other problems associated with the space. Seating areas in the right-of-way should therefore not be counted toward the restaurant's parking requirement.

RH:rm
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