

Outdoor patio program launches as Aurora enters Stage 2

As Aurora enters Stage 2 of Ontario's plan to re-open the Province, the Town is laying groundwork of its own.

On Tuesday, the Town announced it will gradually begin to open some community amenities and facilities, including outdoor patios for restaurants and bars.

?With support from Aurora's Business Improvement Association (BIA) and the Town's Economic Development Division, we will be working with our local businesses for a phased in opening,? said Mayor Tom Mrakas in a statement. ?We have developed an outdoor patio program to help local restaurants, bars and retailers navigate the potential expansion of their patio areas and to accommodate patrons while keeping the safety of patrons and staff a key priority.?

For restaurants and bars who are interested in extending their patio space, the Town of Aurora requires the business to submit a Site Plan Exemption Application that includes a scaled plan showing the location of buildings, location and dimensions of the patio, fencing, entrances, exits and aisle widths. All applications are required to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Ontario Fire Code. Some highlights from Aurora's Outdoor Patio Program include:

All site plan application fees will be waived

Application fees for minor variances for patio expansions will be waived

Restaurants and bars that would like to expand or create patio space onto the sidewalk will have to enter into an encroachment agreement with the Town and must maintain accessibility requirements.

The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) will not require licensees to apply or pay a fee for these temporary extensions but the retailer must ensure they have completed the Town's application form, received approval by the Town and met all other applicable requirements. The AGCO measures will be in effect until January 1, 2021.

Town staff continue to work closely with the BIA and the local business community to ensure that procedures, tools and support are available to help businesses navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information on the support Aurora is providing to local businesses please visit aurora.ca/businesssupport. For inquiries about Aurora's Outdoor Patio Program, please email planning@aurora.ca.