

Outdoor **Commercial** Use

Guidelines for businesses



Patio, retail display, and community programming options for local businesses in Vernon's Business Improvement Areas

INTRODUCTION

An Outdoor Commercial Use (OCU) is an opportunity to use City infrastructure for part of your business activities in the open air.

Common uses include patios, retail displays, and community programming (like parklets and outdoor yoga).



Image: Typical City infrastructure along store fronts downtown.

Businesses in the Primary and Secondary Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) may apply to use part of the sidewalk, boulevard, and/or on-street parking directly in front of their business. OCUs must avoid existing infrastructure like street lights and maintain a cleared 1.8 m walkway for pedestrians.

First time applications are \$100 plus rental fees (see pages 2 and 3). Annual renewals are \$50 and can be processed along with your business licence and rental fees.

For detailed information, see the Outdoor Commercial Use Policy at www.vernon.ca/permits.

TYPES OF USES

There are two options for Outdoor Commercial Use: on the sidewalk and boulevard or in an on-street parking space.

1. Sidewalk and boulevard

Timeline: all year

Rental fee: \$30 per square metre

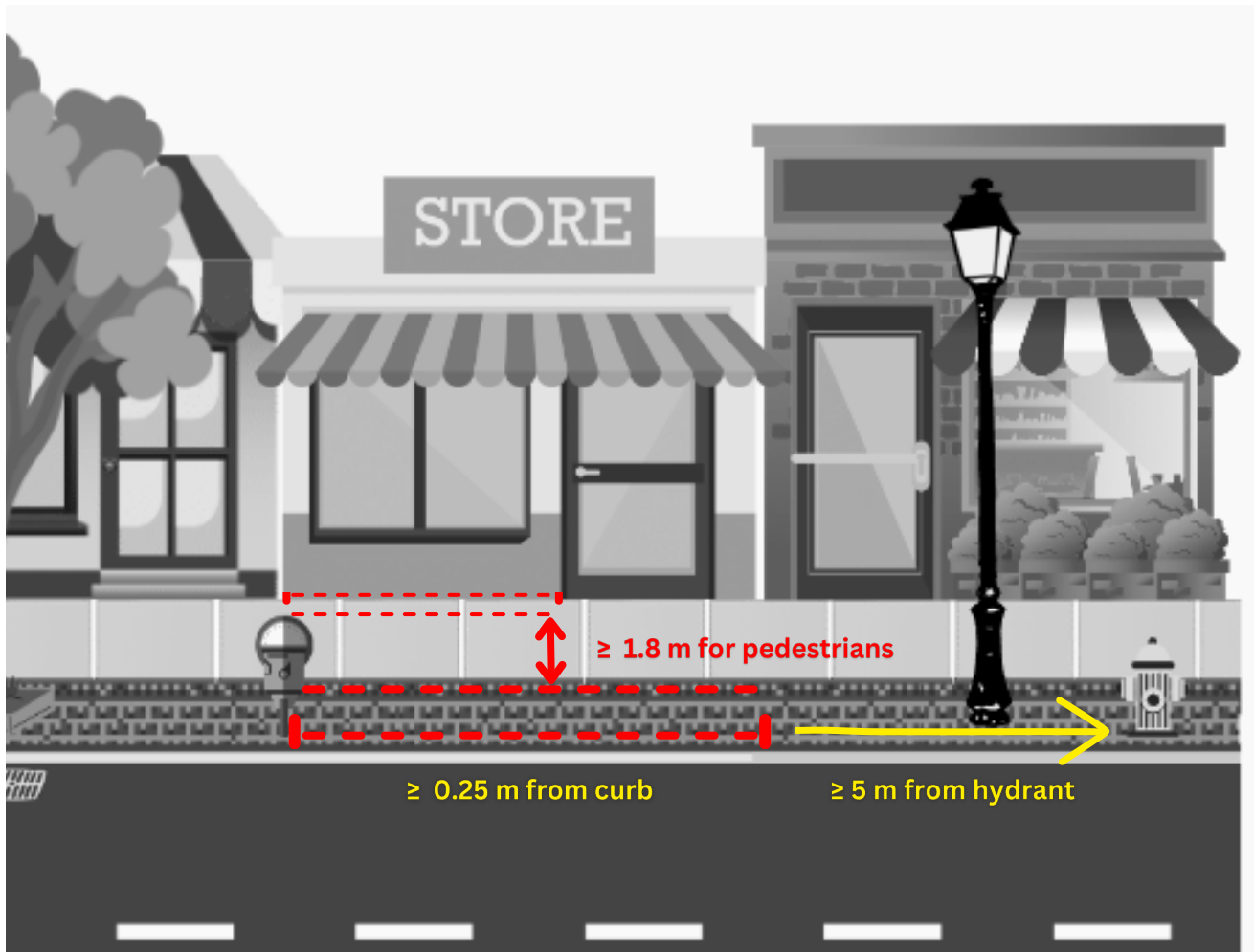


Image: Two options for location of a sidewalk or boulevard OCU (red dashed areas).

Key design considerations:

- Maintain 1.8 m clear for pedestrians
- Keep all items at least 0.25 m from the curb to avoid the doors of parked vehicles
- Keep all entrances and exits clear

TYPES OF USES

2. On-street parking

Timeline: March 1 to October 31

Rental fee: \$360

Hazard marker sign purchase: \$85

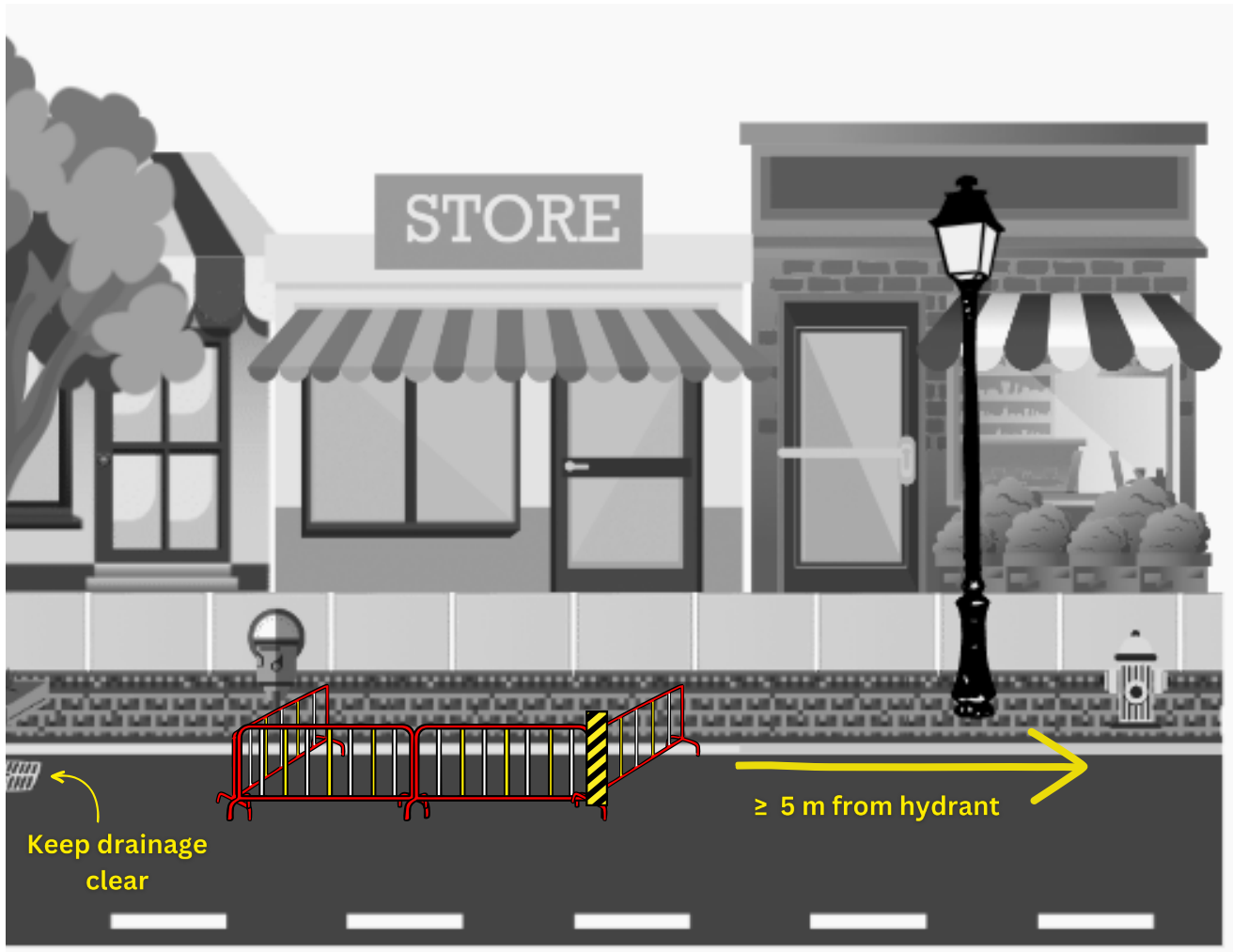


Image: Option for location of an on-street parking OCU (fenced area).

Key design considerations:

- Include a fence or barrier to separate your customers from traffic
- Keep all drainage or fire connections clear
- Include a reflective hazard marker sign for on-coming traffic

HOW TO APPLY

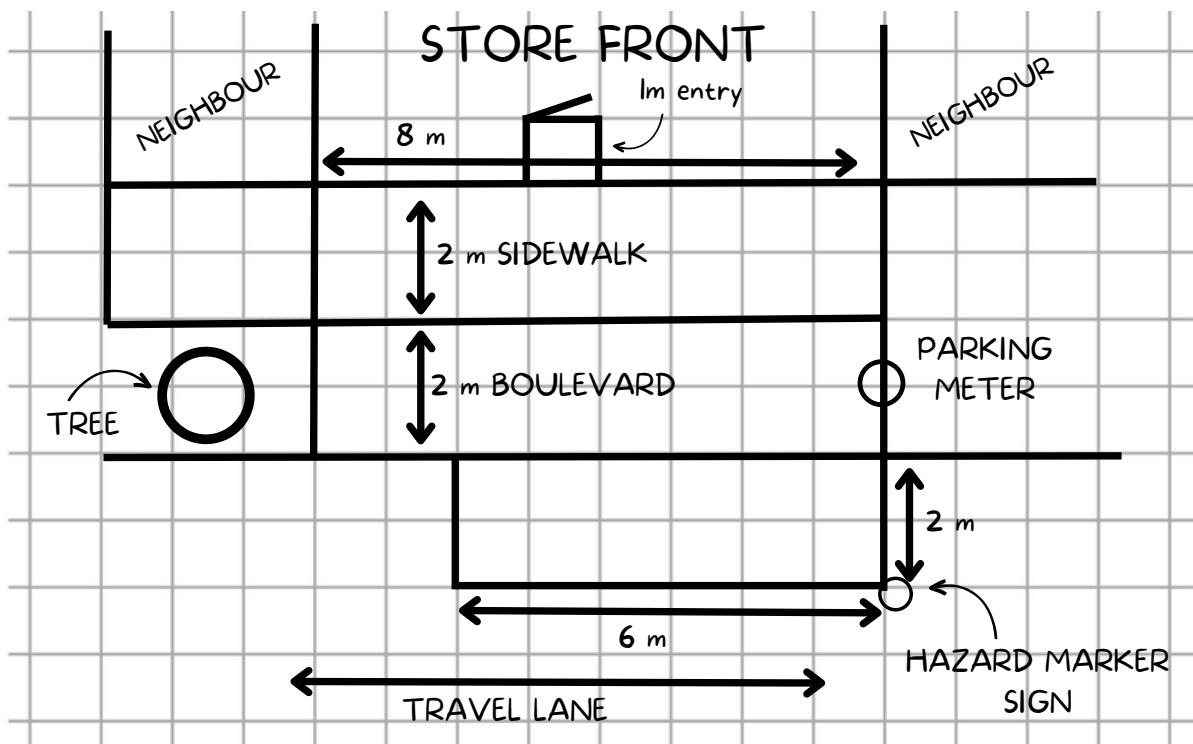
1. Download the application form at **vernon.ca/permits** (under the 'Road and Sidewalk Related Applications' tab) and submit it to the Building and Licensing counter at the Community Services Building, along with the applicable fees.

Address: 3001 - 32nd Ave, Vernon, BC V1T 2L8

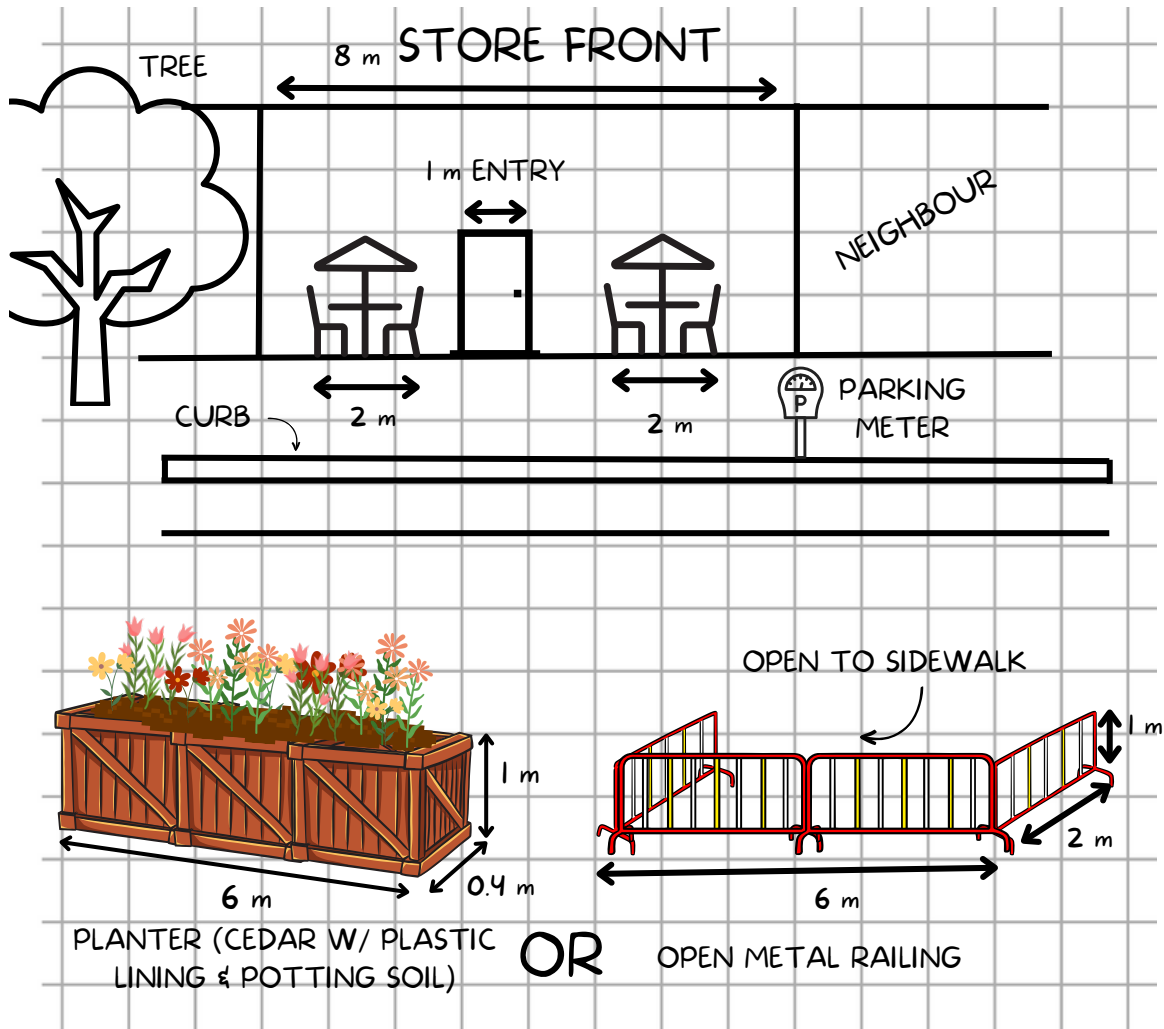
Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 250-550-3634 or buildingcounter@vernon.ca

2. You will need to include the following:
 - a) Your name, contact information, address
 - b) Your business licence number
 - c) Details about the proposal (i.e., what you are proposing, when, and the size)
 - d) Liability insurance naming the **City of Vernon** as additional insured
 - e) Site plan - this is a bird's eye view of the area you are planning to use for the OCU. (Blank graph paper is included on page 8. Please hand-draw your plan to scale and submit it with your application.)



f) Elevations - this is a straight-on view of the area you are planning to use for the OCU. (Blank graph paper is included on page 8. Please hand-draw your plan to scale and submit it with your application.)



3. You may also need to include some optional items, depending on your proposal:

- Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) approval, if you are serving alcohol
- Written approval from your neighbour, if you are proposing to use a parking space that crosses their frontage
- Specification of the height and material to be used for the fence or barrier, if you are proposing to use an on-street parking space

FAQs

What is considered City infrastructure?

All land in the road right-of-way outside of the private property that your business sits on and the built materials in it. For example, the sidewalk, boulevard, on-street parking, and travel lanes make up the road right-of-way. All the furniture, landscaping, street lighting, utilities, pavement, etc. in the right-of-way are infrastructure.

What counts as an on-street parking space?

A metered or signed (e.g., 2-hour parking) space on the road right-of-way that is intended for parking. Accessible parking spaces, bus stops, and loading zones are not applicable for this program.

There is not enough room in front of my business, can I use another area?

If there is not enough room in front of your business, but there would be if you extended into one of your next door neighbour's spaces, then you could seek their approval to use the space. In this case, you would need to provide written approval from your neighbour along with your application. This is most common where on-street parking spaces are off-set from store fronts.

You may not apply to use an area that is not directly adjacent to your business.

Do I have to get professional drawings?

No. This program is designed to revitalize the downtown and be low cost to business owners. You may hand-draw your site plan and elevations so long as they are to scale. You must include measurements in metric on your drawings.

Where do I get a hazard marker sign?

The City provides your hazard marker sign for \$85.

What if I want to expand my outdoor area bigger than the amount allowed?

At this time, the program is limited to the length of your frontage and one parking space. Feedback on this may be provided to the Transportation Department for future updates to the OCU policy and related bylaws.

FAQs

Can I apply for an OCU permit and then use the parking space for my car?

No. This program is designed to revitalize the downtown with new outdoor uses. Parking is available on-street throughout the downtown, in City parking lots, and in the City parkade.

Does this mean I have to apply for my sandwich board through this program?

No. Sandwich boards are regulated through Sign Bylaw 4489 and have not changed through this program. Each business is allowed one sandwich board up to 1.2 m tall. A sign permit may be required.

My business is located in the 2900-block closure. Do I need to apply for an OCU Permit to use this block?

During the time the block is closed to vehicular traffic, you do not need to apply for an OCU Permit to use the on-street space since this is being facilitated by the Downtown Vernon Association (DVA). If you would like to use the sidewalk and boulevard area, or you would like to use a parking space for longer than the closure, you will need to apply for an OCU Permit.

Can I apply for an OCU and use the parking space for a food truck?

No. Mobile Vendors must apply for a Mobile Vending Business Licence and use the locations identified in the Mobile Vending Information Package. This program is to revitalize the downtown by introducing outdoor uses that are directly related to the adjacent business.

Can I use umbrellas at the tables?

Yes. The umbrellas must have 2.1 m of overhead clearance and cannot extend into the pedestrian space.

Can I hang decorative lights in the OCU?

Yes, if you have an independent electricity source in the OCU area. OCU users are not permitted to use the City plug ins or hang an extension cord across the pedestrian area.

For a complete list of all design requirements, see the Outdoor Commercial Use Policy at [vernon.ca/permits](https://www.vernon.ca/permits).

SITE PLAN AND ELEVATIONS

Draw your site plan and elevations to scale here. Remember to include measurements and details of all the existing infrastructure along your store front (i.e., the length of your frontage, width of the sidewalk and boulevard, locations of street trees and parking meters, etc.)

A large grid of 20 columns and 20 rows, intended for drawing a site plan and elevations. The grid is composed of thin, light gray lines forming a uniform pattern across the page.