



April 11, 2017

Jaye Robinson, Chair  
Public Works & Infrastructure Committee  
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

VIA E-MAIL: [pwic@toronto.ca](mailto:pwic@toronto.ca)

**RE: Item PW 20.9 A Framework for the Toronto Sidewalk Café Design Manual**

Dear **Chair and Committee Members**,

On behalf of the Ontario Restaurant, Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA) members I am writing with regards to item PW 20.9 A Framework for the Toronto Sidewalk Café Design Manual. The staff is seeking more time for further review and consultation which we support as we have initiated conversation with the team at Transportation to ensure they were aware of our concerns going forward with the framework.

ORHMA represents 4,000 members and 11,000 establishments across Ontario at both the provincial and municipal levels and in Toronto through the ORHMA Toronto Region. Our members represent a wide range of establishments including fine dining restaurants, local pubs, ethnic and trendy foodservice concepts. Many of them operate with patios located on city boulevards. An overwhelming percentage of our membership is operated by independent small business.

**ISSUE:** As you know in addition to the patio fee increases inevitably coming forward on April 18<sup>th</sup> at MLS Committee (Item: LS 18.2) is a huge concern surrounding a pedestrian straight clearance standard on sidewalks (Item: PW 20.9). The City of Toronto Proposed Pedestrian Clearance on sidewalks: **A straight clearance** of 2.1 m for arterial and collector streets and 1.7 m in local streets. The pedestrian clearance proposed is highly concerning and will reduce most of the existing boulevard patios. We need to protect existing patios and the right to keep existing between buyers for restaurant.

There are design options for new seating but these will not be a fit for all existing patios – it is not a question if patios will close but how many existing patios through this straight clearance the City of Toronto is proposing will be forced to not open up ever again. Iconic tourism hubs such as the Greek Danforth area and the entertainment district's King Street restaurant row will not meet the new standard.

We **remain very concerned** that while Municipal Licensing Standards is reviewing patio fees, the City of Toronto Transportation Services, Public Realm Section is proposing a change in the pedestrian clearance on sidewalks where patios are located. The two together will impact restaurant patios. There will be jobs lost and revenues eliminated while diminishing Toronto's outdoor life and vibrancy.



**RECOMMENDATION:** We recommend that you continue to support our ORHMA efforts to keep all of the City of Toronto existing patios open. Patios need to be exempted and defined as legal. We request you review the straight clearance proposals and ensure all patios remain open for business.

We thank you for your time, consideration and commitment to working with Toronto's hospitality industry. Together, we can make a true difference in sustaining and growing Toronto's small businesses. We are available to meet along with ORHMA Toronto Restaurant Owners and Operators to discuss these very important policies.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elenis", is positioned above the typed name.

Tony Elenis  
President & CEO  
Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association