



City of San Marcos

# TEMPORARY PARKLET MANUAL

Summer 2020





# PARKLETS INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

In cities across the country, there is a movement afoot to reclaim and repurpose underutilized spaces for people through the use of parklets. Parklets are the reuse of on-street parking spaces or unused portions of right-of-way to provide amenities and green space for the general public. Parklets are intended as aesthetic enhancements to the streetscape and can incorporate seating, plantings, bike parking, and art, providing an economical solution to the need for increased public open space. The City of San Marcos has enacted a Temporary Parklet Program to provide an aesthetic enhancement to the downtown streetscape and provide businesses with additional visible service area as a means to reactivate downtown following the COVID-19 stay at home orders of 2020.

## WHAT ARE PARKLETS?

Parklets are generally one or two parking spaces long and are built out of semi-permanent materials installed in a way that does not require reconfiguring the roadway or pouring concrete. By not requiring a concrete base, parklets are a fast and less expensive way for the City to bring vibrancy to downtown. Parklets are used to encourage pedestrian oriented development and have been shown to increase the economic activity of the neighborhood. While parklets are funded and maintained by businesses, residents, and community organizations, they are intended to provide benefits to all uses of the public rights-of-way.

## ORIGINS

The parklet initiative was first introduced in San Francisco in 2009 through a city-wide Park(ing) Day. The program encouraged citizens to design and install a temporary park within a parking space resulting in 975 “parks” in 162 cities across 35 countries and 6 continents. The San Francisco Planning Department led the initial effort to install a Parklet Pilot Program known as *Pavement to Parks*. In order to avoid a lengthy permit process, it defined this project as “removable” in character and implemented a unique design and construction guidelines manual.



## BENEFITS & PURPOSE

Parklets have significant implications for cities. By increasing pedestrian activity and encouraging pedestrians to linger in an area longer parklets encourage economic growth. San Francisco’s first parklet, sponsored by *Mojo Bicycle Café*, featured a simple design with bright red tables, silver chairs, and three bike racks. The results were impressive:

- ❖ 37% rise in weekday evening pedestrian traffic;
- ❖ 14% increase in the number of people walking their bikes within the study area;
- ❖ 10% rise in positive public perception of the area’s community character. As more cities and downtowns become aware of these advantages, it can be expected for parklets to continue to grow in popularity. With this, the trend of reclaiming space for people will continue to grow, one parking space at a time.

Parklets have the potential to increase commercial and residential occupancy, encourage pedestrian traffic, and highlight the character of the neighborhood.

# APPLICATION

## PRE-APPLICATION

Prior to submitting an application, applicants are **required** to schedule an appointment with the Planning and Development Services department to verify the viability of the location and proposed elements. Parklets should be proposed in areas where they are likely to be used and active. To schedule a meeting, please email [planninginfo@sanmarcostx.gov](mailto:planninginfo@sanmarcostx.gov) with your top 3 dates/times of availability.

## APPLICATION AND PROCESS

After the Pre-Development meeting, the applicant may begin the process of completing the application and supporting materials. Applications can be submitted online at [www.mygovernmentonline.org](http://www.mygovernmentonline.org). A completed application will include the following:

1. City of San Marcos Parklet Application
2. A map, survey, drawing, aerial photograph, site plan or similar information showing the footprint/outline of the proposed parklet, including dimensions of parklet, property lines, existing sidewalk width, existing parking stalls/alignment and all existing sidewalk furniture and obstructions; e.g. fire hydrants, utility poles, street trees, etc.
3. A description of type(s) of elements proposed to be placed in the parklet; e.g. tables, chairs, benches, planters/landscaping, bicycle parking, etc.
4. A detailed description of safety elements that will be installed adjacent to travel lanes and open parking spaces.
5. City of San Marcos **License** and Maintenance Agreement, approved by the City Manager.
6. Proof of Insurance as required



## APPROVAL

Once City staff determines an application is complete and meets the standards set forth below, the Planning and Development Services Department will issue an administrative temporary parklet permit.

## DURATION

Approved parklets will be permitted from the date the permit is issued until August 14, 2020. All parklet installations must be removed no later than August 15, 2020 in preparation for the Fall Semester at Texas State University. The owner of any parklet not removed on or before August 15, 2020 will be subject to immediate enforcement action. **All** approved parklets are temporary installations and are subject to removal with any violation of the permit, maintenance, or general procedure.

## DESIGN





The parklet design and location shall conform to the following design guidelines, as well as any additional standards made part of the approval of the individual parklet. Additional requirements and further details can be found in **Ordinance 2020-XX**.

1. **LOCATIONS**

Parklets are allowed in parallel or angled parking spaces or within unused right-of-way. There shall be no more than two parklets per block. Each parklet shall be limited to utilizing no more than two parking spaces;

2. **CORNER LOCATIONS**

The proposed parklet site shall be located at least one parking spot from a corner or protected by a bollard, sidewalk bulb-out, or other similar feature, if located at the corner.

3. **SPEED LIMIT**

Parklets are permitted where the posted speed limit is 30 mph or less. Streets with higher speed limits may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4. **STREET SLOPE**

Parklets must be situated on streets with a running slope (grade) of five percent or less or provide a level surface to meet this grade..

5. **BUFFERS & SAFETY ELEMENTS**

Parklets shall be required to have a buffer to protect users from street traffic. Buffers can be either reflective tape, planters, durable seating, temporary railing/edging, or other visible, protective edging as approved by staff in the application process. Traffic cones are not recommended but may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. Parklets must be situated a minimum of 2 feet from the nearest edge of traveled way. Planters used as edging features are required to be large and durable. All edging and buffering mechanisms will require City approval.

6. **UTILITIES**

Parklets shall not be allowed in front of a fire hydrant, or over a manhole, public utility valve, or cover. Curb and roadside drainage shall not be impeded by the parklet. If decking is being constructed, the decking should allow for easy access underneath and curbside drainage shall not be impeded. A gap of 6" should be maintained between the body of the deck and the asphalt to facilitate the movement of water.

7. **ADA REQUIREMENTS**

All elements of Parklets shall be constructed and/or installed to conform to the applicable provisions, rules, regulations, and guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

8. **DESIGN FOR EASY REMOVAL**

Parklets are temporary in nature and must be designed for easy removal. All removable furniture must be locked or stowed each night.

9. **PARKLET DECKING**

Parklet decking must be flush with the curb and may not have more than ½" gap from the curb. If decking is installed, a minimum 36" ADA accessible entryway to the parklet must be maintained for all parklets. Platforms shall not exceed a 2% cross slope. Decking will need to be constructed of durable material capable of withstanding weather elements. Deck installation shall not damage the sidewalk, street, curb, or any aspect of the public right-of-way. Due to the temporary nature of the parklet, any proposed decking shall not be allowed to be bolted into the asphalt.

10. **EDGING**

All proposed edging shall be visually permeable. Due to the temporary nature of the parklets, all edging or railing shall not be bolted to the asphalt. Therefore, any edging or railing will need to be removed each day so as not to blow away or fall when the parklet is not in use. The temporary railing shall be durable enough to stand on its own and should have a sturdy base.

11. **VISUAL DESIGN**

Parklet designs must maintain a visual connection to the street and not obstruct sight lines to existing businesses or roadway signage. While not visible from the sidewalk, the parklet's back is highly visible from across the street. Large blank walls, therefore, are discouraged.

## 12. MATERIALS

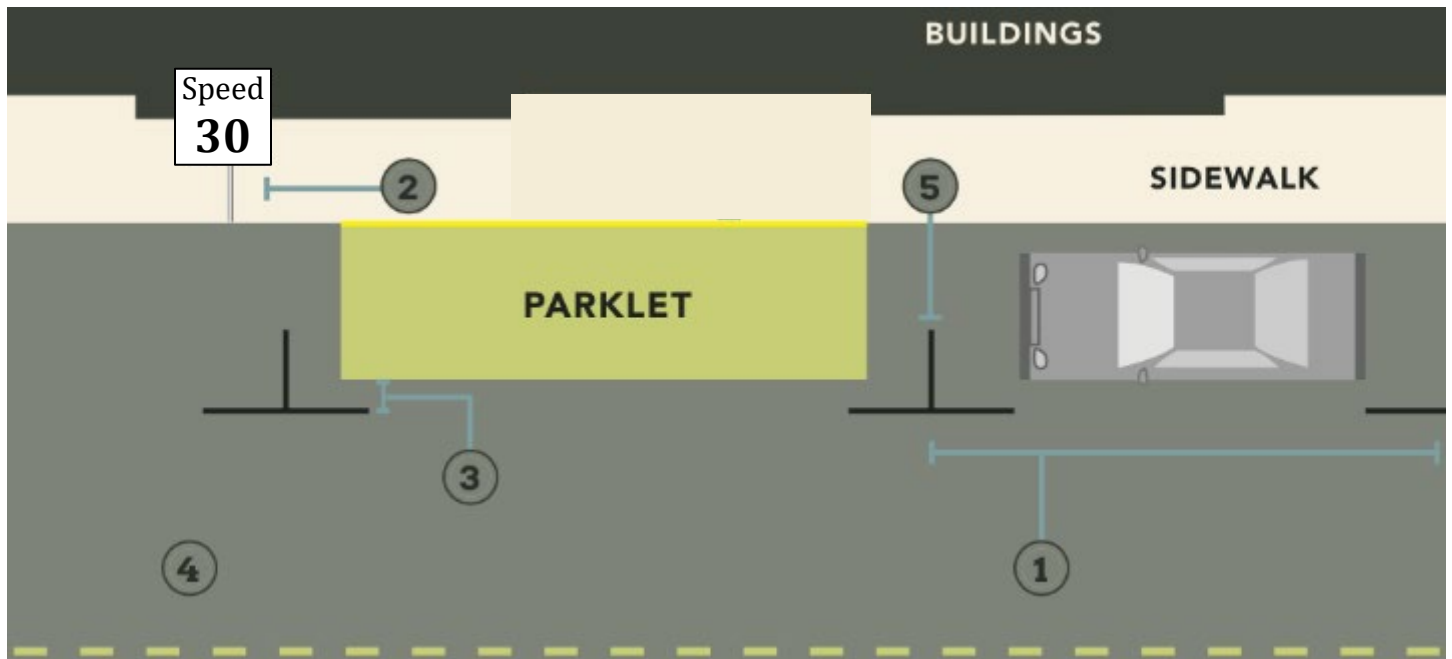
Materials should be high quality, durable, waterproof, and capable of withstanding heavy use and exposure to the elements. Loose particles such as sand or loose stone are not permitted within the parklet area. All furniture must be designed for outdoor use. The following images outline allowed material and furniture types. Sofas as parklet furniture is prohibited.

**Allowed materials:** metals, sturdy plastic chairs, wood, sturdy recycled materials



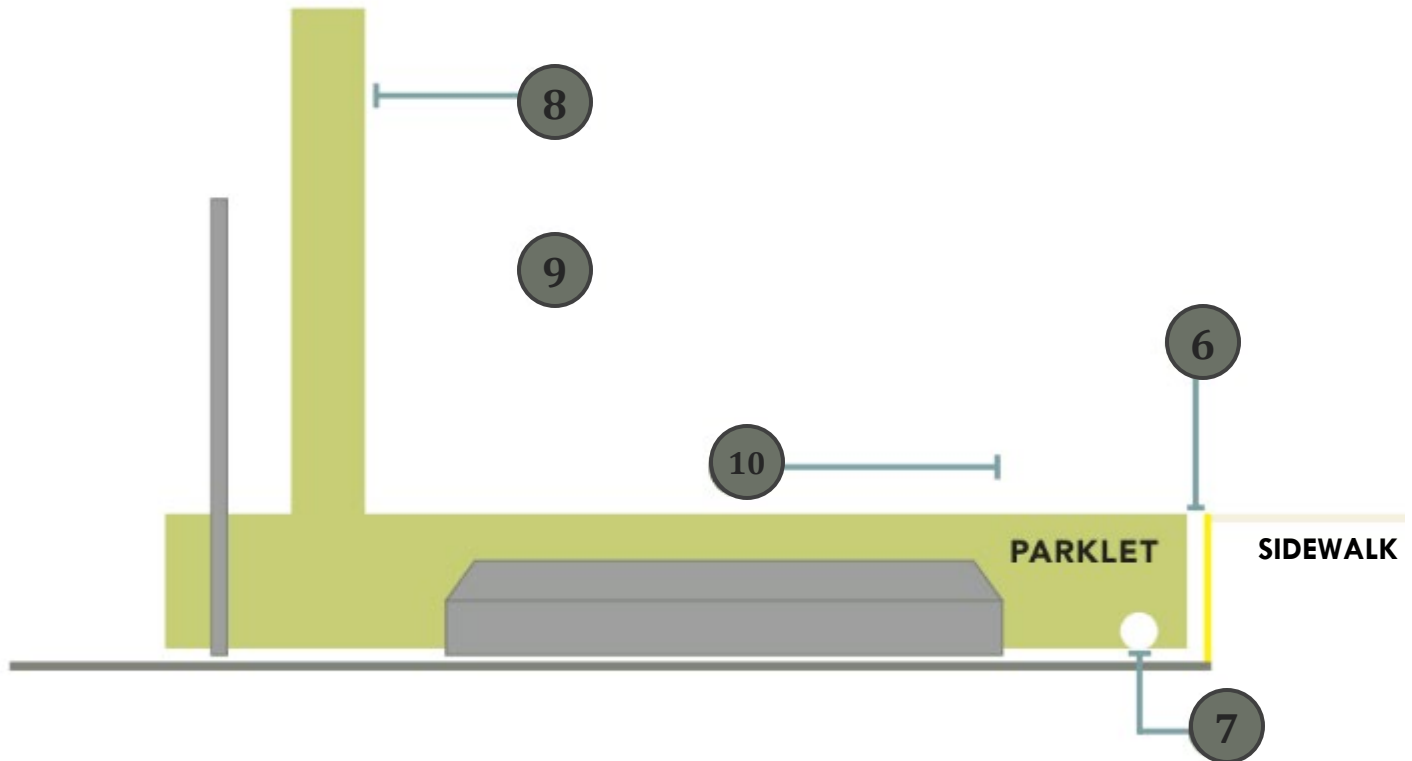


## PLACEMENT GUIDELINES



1. Located at least one parking stall from a corner (*If located at corner, parklet must be protected by a bollard, sidewalk bulb-out, or other similar feature*).
2. In an area with a posted speed limit of 30mph or slower.
3. Minimum of 2 feet from the nearest edge of traveled way.
4. Street has a grade of no greater than 5%.
5. Buffer to protect users from street traffic.

## DESIGN, cont.



6. If decking is installed, decking must be flush with the curb and may not have more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ " gap from the curb. If this is impossible, the parklet must be ADA accessible. A minimum 36" ADA accessible entryway to the parklet must be maintained for all parklets.
7. The platform should allow for easy access underneath the platform and curbside drainage may not be impeded. A gap of 6" should be maintained between the body of the deck and the asphalt to facilitate the movement of water.
8. All edging shall be visually permeable.
9. The temporary railing shall be durable enough to stand on its own and should have a sturdy base.

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERMIT HOLDERS

Parklets permit holders are responsible for the following. Additional requirements and further details can be found in *Ordinance 2020-xx*

- Keep parklet well maintained and in good repair with daily cleaning.
- Keep parklet free of debris, grime, and graffiti.
- Water and maintain all parklet vegetation.
- Provide pest control as needed.
- No Alcohol is allowed in the parklet.
- No smoking is allowed in the parklet.
- Amplified music is prohibited in the parklet.
- The City will provide each parklet with signage advertising the sponsoring business in order to be placed in the parklet. No advertising signage is allowed in or on the parklet. The parklet may include informational signs such as “no smoking” or “no alcoholic beverages”.
- If food service is proposed within the parklet:
  - The kitchen facilities must be a permitted Food Service Establishment in good standing.
  - Food trays, carts, receptacles for dirty dishes, etc. shall not be placed or stored on any portion of the sidewalk or parklet.
  - Non-disposable dishes, silverware, and linens must be used to prevent items from blowing off tables.
  - Cooking appurtenances are prohibited within the parklet.
- Any proposed removable tables, chairs, planters or other appurtenances that should be locked or stowed nightly according to City standards and best methods. Bolting of fence/barrier is allowed with City approval.
- The permit holder must provide for at least one trash receptacle and one recycle bin that is emptied during the day and every night.

## TRASH & RECYCLING REQUIREMENTS

The permit holder is required to provide trash and recycling receptacles sufficient for the proposed use and is subject to the following requirements:

- Food service establishments must provide both receptacles which shall be no smaller than 10 gallons.
- Retail or other non-food service establishments must provide both receptacles, however a minimum size is not required.
- Receptacles must be emptied by the permit holder at any time they are visibly full.
- All waste and recycling generated within the parklet is the responsibility of the permit holder. This includes items that are blown from the parklet.
- Bin covers are encouraged.
- Black trash and blue recycling receptacles are encouraged.
- If the permit older does not currently have access to recycling facilities, the permit holder will need to work with city staff to find an accessible recycling facility.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information on parklet origins, design, and inspiration from other cities, please view the San Francisco Parklet Manual V.2, <http://pavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/parklets.html>.