

# Parklet Program



*January 29, 2021 – REVISED January 1, 2025*

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the City of Cincinnati's Parklet Program is to facilitate repurposing street parking space(s) into neighborhood gathering spaces by extending the pedestrian realm and providing opportunities to expand business activities. Parklets can be creative spaces and allow for flexible uses, such as dining and public seating, which enhance the environment and benefit the public. Parklets are intended to be temporary or constructed in a way to be disassembled leaving no damage or impact on the street. For questions regarding the City's Parklet Program, please contact the City's Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) at [DTEParkletProgram@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:DTEParkletProgram@cincinnati-oh.gov) or 513-352-2366.

For parties seeking a permanent streetscape change, such as expanded concrete sidewalks, please contact DOTE to discuss your proposed project.

## OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION PROCESS AND APPROVAL

The Parklet Program is administered and managed by the DOTE, in coordination with other City Departments. Applications are submitted and approved through the City's Open Counter portal at the following link: <https://cincinnati.opencounter.com/permits/outdoor-street-dining>.

To expedite the City's approval, DOTE recommends discussing your plans with us before submission in order to address any issues in advance. Once approved, an applicant will be issued a permit allowing for the installation and providing a revocable street privilege for the parklet (additional details provided below in the General Terms and Conditions Section).

## PARKLET REQUIREMENTS

Designing, building, and operating a successful parklet requires consideration of many factors. The location must be selected by identifying an appropriate site and a willing community partner or sponsor. After selecting a site, a conceptual design is prepared that considers the surrounding land uses, size and configuration of the site, and the proposed duration of the installation. The parklet base, specifically the substructure and platform, should be designed or selected based on durability, cost, appearance, and ease of (dis)assembly. From the platform up, the rest of the parklet should be designed for safety, comfort, and user enjoyment.

The applicant must provide design plans that meet the following requirements:

- A design plan (site plan, elevation, cross-section, etc.) that shows the dimensions of the proposed parklet and fixed features (ex. planters, railings, etc.).
- Distance of the proposed parklet from (i) existing infrastructure (signs, traffic signals, lighting, tree wells, utilities, etc.) and (ii) from any applicable business frontage.
- Construction specifications for the proposed parklet.



## Location & Layout


Parklets should conform to the following criteria for their location and layout:

1. **General:** All locations are subject to review and approval by the City. (DOTE, CFD, CPD, SMU, MSD, etc.) Locations and design shall be in a manner that will not interfere with visibility, vehicular or pedestrian mobility, or access to City or public facilities and utilities. Locations shall not compromise the safe use of any public right-of-way or compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Commercial corridors and locations in front of businesses are suggested sites because foot traffic is critical to the successful function of a parklet. Conflicts with or impacts to existing sidewalk amenities, utilities, crosswalks, and other obstructions shall be avoided or mitigated.
2. **Street Characteristics:** Street characteristics should be suitable for parklet installation and safe usage. Typically, parklets are only appropriate for streets with low traffic speeds—25 miles per hour or less. For proposed parklet locations on streets with a high volume of vehicles per day and typical travel speeds in excess of 25 miles per hour, DOTE may require crash barriers or other infrastructure to ensure the safety of the parklet. Parklets may not be appropriate at all for some high-volume and high-speed streets.
3. **Location:** Parklets must be located in an existing parking curb lane. No locations in travel lanes are permitted.
4. **Physical Constraints:**
  - a) Parklets should not be located within ten feet of fire hydrants.
  - b) Adequate distance, as determined by DOTE, shall be maintained between parklets and driveways; crosswalks; alleys; and existing utility vaults, manholes, etc. Further, parklets should not materially interfere with 45-degree sight triangles from intersections.
  - c) Parklet locations must provide adequate distance, as determined by DOTE, away from marked bus stop locations to facilitate bus arrival and departure.
  - d) If the applicant is a business, the parklet shall be located entirely within the business frontage of the applicant.
  - e) Accessible conditions must be maintained along the adjacent sidewalk or curb ramps.
  - f) Traditionally, a parklet's length is one or two parking spaces.

5. Grade: Parklets should not be located on street segments with a grade of 5% or more.
6. Pending Construction: Parklets should not be installed on street segments where utility or street construction is planned during that construction season.
7. Duration: Due to the potential need for snow plowing, the applicant may be required to remove the parklet when not in use during the winter months. The parklet must be moved off site. Parklet components may not be stored in the right of way, including the sidewalk.

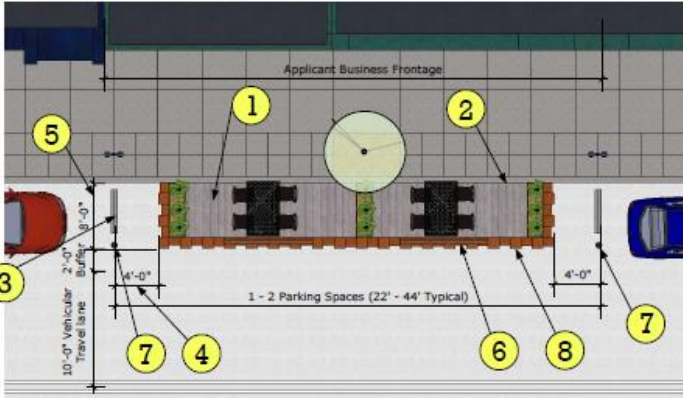
## Design & Construction


Parklets should conform to the following design guidelines and criteria:



### ● Design Guidelines

- 1...Parklet decking flush with curb, 1/2" gap max.
- 2...Maintain curblin drainage
- 3...Wheel stop
- 4...4'-0" distance from parklet to wheel stop
- 5...Max. 8'-0" width
- 6...Vertical elements, railing or wall must be at least 50% open or visually permeable.
- 7...Flexible bollards at each corner angled with the platform
- 8...Wheel bump edge beam





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11/12/2020

1. Size: Parklets should be no greater than eight feet in width at the widest point (including rails, planters, and other vertical construction) and no longer than any applicable business frontage. The width of a parklet is dependent on location but must maintain a ten-foot minimum vehicular travel lane adjacent to it, including a two-foot shy away or buffer between the edge of the active vehicular travel lane and the useable space of the parklet. Multiple parklets must be a consistent width within a roadway corridor.
2. Surface: The parklet platform surface must be slip resistant and flush with the adjacent curb and sidewalk, with a maximum gap of 1/2" between platform and curb. The parklet should be easily accessible from the sidewalk, shall comply with ADA requirements, and should orient the entrance on the sidewalk-facing side to avoid tree wells. Platform materials can vary, including but not limited to concrete or wood.
3. Drainage: Parklets should permit access underneath the platform structure and allow unimpeded curbside drainage in the gutter space.

4. Structural loads: The parklet platform must be designed to support a minimum live load of 100 lbs per square foot. Vertical construction must be designed to resist a wind load of 25 lbs per square foot.
5. Vertical construction: Parklets must have some vertical element to improve its visibility to vehicles. All parklets must have a wall, railing, planter, or similar restraining edge adjacent to traffic. Any railing or wall must be at least 50% open or visually permeable. The maximum height of any railing shall be three feet. Any proposed vertical elements must be within the boundary of the parklet, without overhang into the travel lane, and provide adequate clearance for overhead utilities.
6. Color: The parklet should avoid the use of colors and shapes that may be confused with traffic signs and other traffic control devices.
7. Electrical connections and lighting: Generally, electrical lighting is easiest and most inexpensive if self-contained within the parklet, utilizing battery power or be self-generating like solar lighting. Extension cords shall not run over the pedestrian sidewalk to supply electricity to a parklet. Any proposed installation of electrical infrastructure to connect to existing electric service must be permitted through the City's Department of Buildings and Inspections and approved by DOTE. Please contact DOTE with questions on electrical service to a proposed parklet.
8. Wheel stops: Where located within and adjacent to on-street parking and/or enclosed in curb extensions or bump outs, parklets must have wheel stops or temporary curbs placed to deter vehicles from hitting the parklet. Wheel stops or temporary curbs should be located four feet from the edge of the parklet. The parklet applicant or contractor is responsible for providing these stops or curbs. The applicant shall be responsible for roadway pavement repairs when removed.
9. Flexible bollards: In order to improve the visibility of parklets and to diminish any ambiguity regarding the vehicular travel area of the street, reflective flexible bollards are required. The flexible bollards should be located at each corner and in-line with the parklet structure.
10. Safety: Given the parklet location within the street, safety is of paramount importance. Parklet applicants and designers should carefully consider the intended use of the parklet, the age of the users, the location, and the intensity of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. DOTE will review and coordinate the design for the safety of both pedestrians and vehicles, considering pedestrian and vehicular visibility, geometric limitation (turning movements for vehicles), and other issues specific to each location.
11. Construction Process: The applicant shall construct the parklet structure off-site as much as possible to reduce disruption and use of the general public during installation.



## General Terms and Conditions

Applicants must comply with these General Terms and Conditions and additional terms for a permit issued approving a parklet. Each approved applicant that receives a permit is referred to below as a “Permittee.”

1. City’s Right to Revoke: Each permit issued for installation of a parklet includes a revocable license authorizing the installation and operation of a parklet in the public right-of-way. This license does not create a private right to occupy the public right-of-way or diminish the City Manager’s authority to oversee and manage the use of the public right-of-way in the City’s best interests, such as for roadway work, utilities, etc. **A revocable street privilege for a parklet is subject to modification or revocation in the City’s sole discretion, for any reason and at any time. Please note, this may require removal of the parklet.** Generally, the City will provide 30 days’ prior written notice of revocation.
2. Expenses: All expenses associated with the design, construction, installation, removal, and operation of a parklet shall be borne by and are the sole responsibility of the Permittee and in no circumstances shall the City be responsible for any such expenses. Further, a Permittee is solely responsible at his/her expense for repair of any damaged public infrastructure resulting from a parklet. If removal is on a temporary basis, such as for a winter season or for a construction project, a Permittee is responsible for storage of the parklet components offsite until permission is granted for re-installation.
3. Maintenance: Permittee is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and operations of the Parklet. Permittee shall maintain the area in good, clean, and safe condition and repair and in accordance with applicable City rules and regulations. The City may require Permittee to take immediate action as necessary to rectify any condition or hazard, to the City’s satisfaction. Permittee shall take all reasonable efforts to avoid adverse impacts to adjacent properties and their operation. Permittee is solely responsible for keeping the existing curbside gutter drainage clear at all times.
4. Public Infrastructure and Utilities: Permittee shall not cause damage or alterations to existing curbs, sidewalks, streets, or other public infrastructure or utilities unless otherwise explicitly approved by the City as part of an issued permit. Any required restoration shall be completed by Permittee at Permittee’s expense and to the City’s standards and satisfaction.
5. City’s Right to Enter upon Right-of-Way Property: The City and its authorized representatives and utility companies have an unlimited right to enter a parklet at any time for operational needs.

6. Waivers, Variances, or Deviations from Guidelines: The City maintains and reserves the ability to grant waivers or variances or otherwise deviate from the requirements set forth in these guidelines based on individual circumstances.
7. Insurance and Indemnification: Permittee shall maintain a General Liability insurance of not less than \$1 million, naming the City as an additional insured. Permittee shall indemnify and hold harmless the City and all its agents from liabilities of every kind associated with a parklet.
8. Damages to Parklets: The City shall have no responsibility for loss or damage to any parklet improvements, no matter how caused.
9. Compliance: In installing and operating a parklet, a permittee shall maintain compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and other rules.
10. Yearly Renewal: To ensure the Parklets are used and maintained, a permittee shall renew the revocable street privilege on a yearly basis, including the payment of all fees and costs. If a permittee fails to renew the parklet revocable street privilege, then the parklet will be removed at the permittee's cost and expense.
11. Lost Parking Recovery Fee: When a parklet occupies an on-street parking space, the permittee shall pay the costs and fees for the lost parking revenue as determined by the City. The permittee shall pay the lost parking revenue on a yearly basis prior to the issuance of a revocable street privilege and prior to each yearly renewal.