

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## PARKLET PROGRAM

Visit [weho.org/parklets](http://weho.org/parklets) for more information

### **What is the purpose of a parklet?**

We live in a city with a limited number of neighborhood parks and open spaces. Parklets provide valuable privately-funded and privately-maintained public spaces for people to read, sip a cup of coffee, enjoy a bite to eat, and socialize. Parklets convert on-street parking spaces into community gathering places, creating more vibrant commercial districts.

### **Are parklets open to the public?**

Parklets are free and open for everyone to enjoy. Each parklet will feature a sign indicating the hours of operation. Parklets are closed at nighttime.

### **Where can parklets be built?**

Parklets can be built on on-street parking spaces in commercial streets. Each parklet can take up to three on-street parking spaces.

### **How will the city select the winning parklet proposals?**

Parklet proposals will be selected based on the goals and evaluation criteria established in the Parklet Manual. The parklet location and quality and robustness of your outreach are weighed heavily by the City while evaluating your initial parklet application package.

### **The business next door is currently vacant. Can a parklet occupy parking spaces in front of adjacent buildings?**

A parklet may occupy parking spaces in front of any building as long as you can document the consent of the fronting property owner(s) and business operator(s).

### **Do parklets require community support for approval?**

Yes. As part of the parklet proposal form, you must provide at least three letters of community support and submit proof that you have notified the businesses in your block and the block across the street. We want the parklets to be loved by the community and will not likely approve a parklet proposal that is not supported by the neighboring business. We will consider all public feedback when making a final decision on a parklet proposal.

### **How many parklets will be chosen?**

In 2018, the City will select up to seven parklets to move forward to permitting and installation.

### **Is there a cap on the number of parklets allowed per neighborhood?**

For the call for parklet proposal cycle, the City will select the following number of parklet proposals to move forward to permitting and installation:

- Two on the Eastside
- Two on the Sunset Strip
- Three anywhere in the City

### **Are parklets permanent?**

Parklets are not permanently affixed to the roadway of sidewalk in any fashion. However, if well-maintained, the community partner may apply for a renewal of the encroachment permit. The City will carefully consider any community feedback when evaluating permit renewal applications, and may decide to not renew for any reason.

**Who can host a parklet?**

Parklets can be hosted by a local business, property owner and/or neighborhood group.

**What does an average parklet cost to build?**

Typically a parklet can cost between \$20,000 to \$100,000, depending on the complexity of the design and material selection.

**Does the City provide any financial assistance to businesses interested in installing a parklet?**

For the first year of the program in the 2018 call for proposals cycle, the City will provide \$25,000 grants to up to seven parklet proposals. The grant could help offset costs pertaining to design, installation and/or maintenance of a parklet.

**Can I drink in a parklet?**

Parklets are public open spaces, just like a plaza or park, so you can't drink alcohol in a parklet.

**Can I smoke in a parklet?**

No. Out of respect for other users, smoking is prohibited in parklets.

**Who maintains a parklet?**

The parklet is maintained by the business and/or neighborhood group who designed and constructed the parklet.

**I'm a business owner who loves my neighborhood and would really like to provide my community with a parklet, but the initial costs are kind of intimidating. Do businesses who sponsor parklets tend to see any benefits?**

While parklets are public open space, business owners see an economic benefit of having additional public open space fronting their business. In July and August 2014, Chicago's Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) and Sam Schwartz Engineering surveyed nine parklets in Chicago to learn more about usability and economic impact of their parklets. The survey recorded the activity of each parklet, on an average day, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. In addition, more than 100 people and 40 local business owners were interviewed. Conclusions from the study included:

- 80% of businesses found parklets brought more foot traffic and customers
- Some businesses reported a 10% to 20% increase in sales due to the parklet
- 34% of visitors made unplanned food and beverage purchases
- 33% of visitors would be at home if not for the parklet
- 43% of visitors traveled ¼ mile or less to the parklet
- 57% walked to the parklet

**Is the City of West Hollywood concerned about making parking worse?**

Balancing use of the right of way is always tricky, and parking availability is a factor we consider when reviewing parklet proposals. You are required to inform the city of the proposed parklet location prior to submitting a parklet proposal. This will ensure that the city has reviewed the parking data for the proposed location to help determine if a proposed parklet location is feasible.

**How does the City of West Hollywood ensure parklets are safe spaces?**

Safety is our highest priority when reviewing parklet applications. Every parklet is subject to specific design and siting standards to ensure that it will remain safe for its users and the traveling public. As standard features, every parklet is required to have wheel stops and flexible delineator posts on its outside edges to increase awareness of the space and prevent cars from hitting it. Parklet applications are also reviewed by the City Engineer to ensure that they will not obstruct sightlines or impact safety for other users of the street.

