

**City of Palo Alto  
PRE-APPROVED PARKLET  
USER GUIDE**

**DRAFT**



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

## ABOUT THE USER GUIDE

The Pre-Approved Parklet User Guide provides step-by-step instructions for business owners, parklet operators, and designers to create their own parklet using pre-approved designs.

This guide is tailored to help you navigate the process of constructing your pre-approved parklet by integrating essential steps directly into each section. Here's how to use it effectively:

- 1. Follow the Embedded Checklists:** Some pages include green checklists and checkboxes. Checklists ensure that you meet all necessary requirements and adhere to City regulations. Checkboxes prompt you to make design decisions to allow you to tailor the pre-approved designs to your needs and preferences.



Look out for the Green Checklists and Checkboxes



- 2. Document your parklet details in "My Parklet" Sections:** Alongside the checklists and decision points, you'll find "My Parklet" sections. Here, you can write the details of your choices and the specifications of your parklet design. This documentation will help you track your progress and ensure that every aspect of your parklet is planned and executed according to plan.

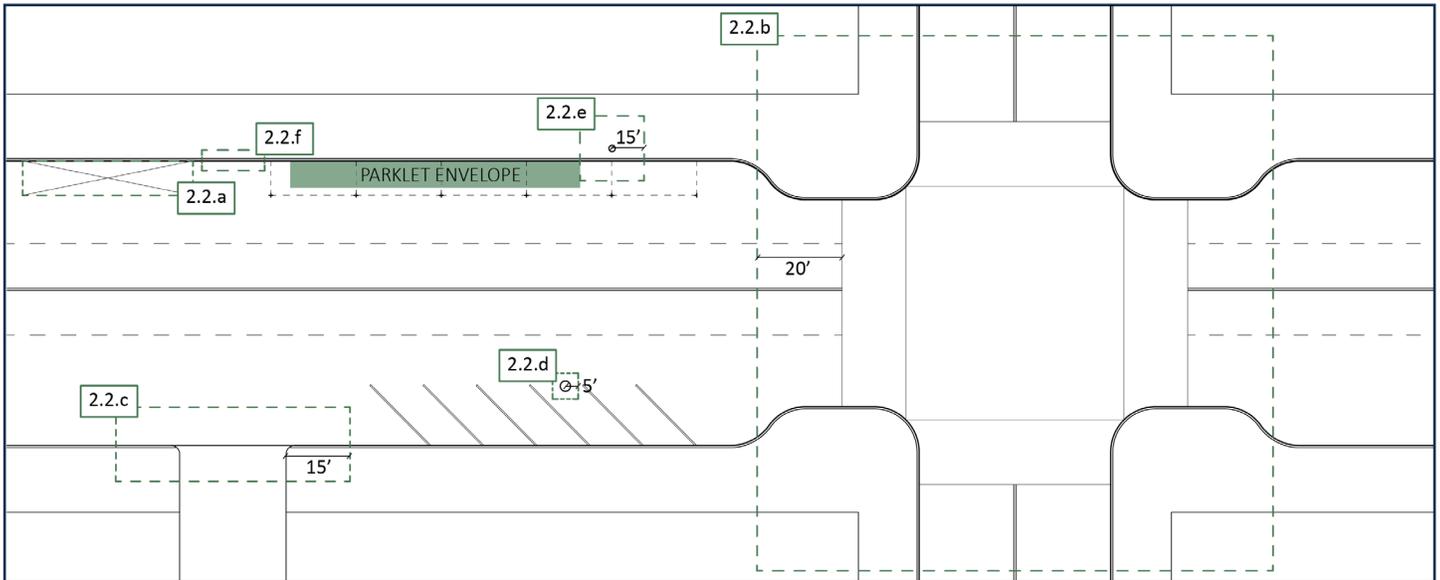
### My Parklet Design

Fill out the Green my parklet design boxes as you work through the guide



## 2.0 CAN YOU BUILD A PARKLET?

Confirm your parklet site meets the requirements below. These requirements ensure a safe streetscape for pedestrians, vehicles, and parklet patrons.



### 2.1 Applicable Locations

2.1.a The parklet is located in an eligible area within the University Avenue and California Downtown areas. See **1.0 Eligible Locations** for maps of the eligible areas.

### CHECKLIST

Y	N
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2.2 Site Requirements

2.2.a The parklet does not obstruct a restricted zone - loading zone, bus zone, no parking zone, public utilities, telecommunication vaults.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

2.2.b Crosswalk Clearance: minimum 20' setback from exterior edge of cross walk striping.

*Note: not applicable if there is a bulb-out between the parklet and crosswalk.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

2.2.c Driveway and alleyway clearance: minimum 15' setback from any driveways and alleyways.

*Note: Setback not needed if there is a bulb-out between the parklet and crosswalk.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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2.2.e Fire Hydrant Clearance: minimum 15' setback from a fire hydrant.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

2.2.d Manhole Cover: minimum 5' setback from a manhole cover.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

2.2.f Storm Drain Catch Basin: minimum 5' setback from a storm drain catch basin.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

### 2.3 Applicable Parking Stalls

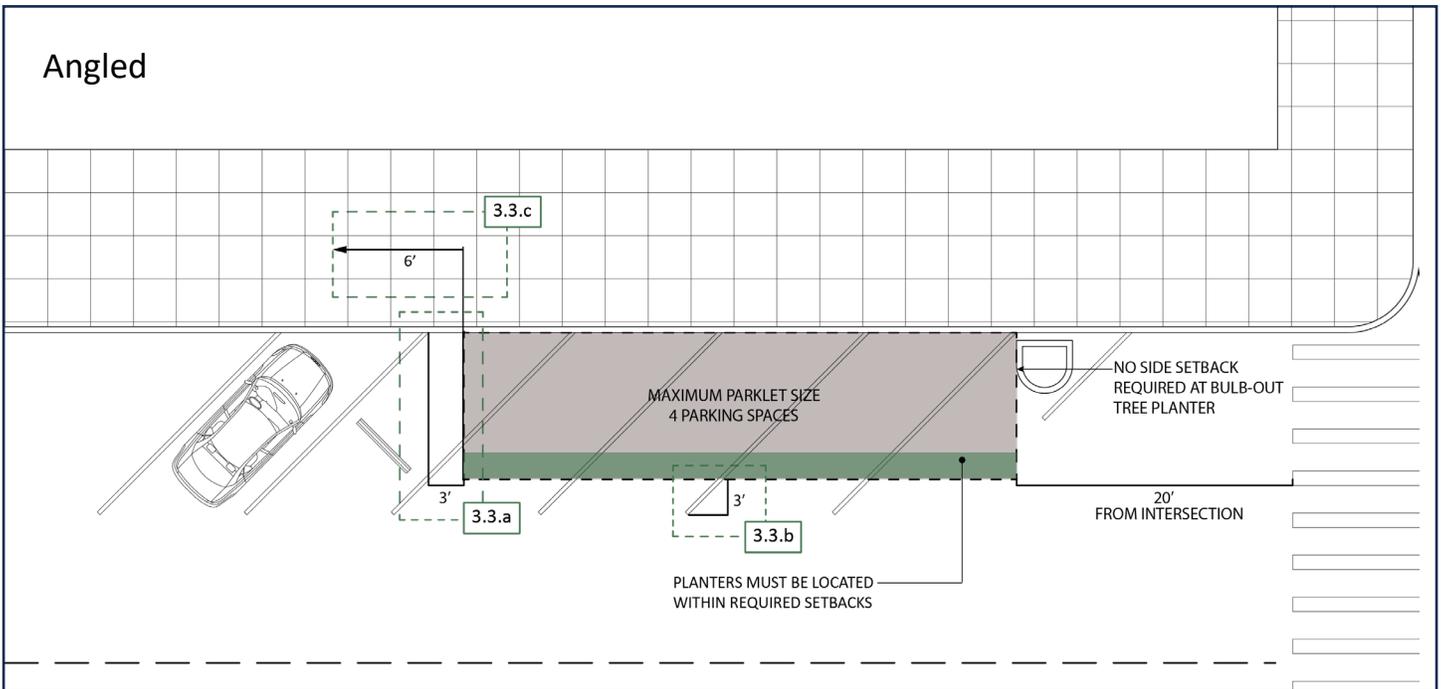
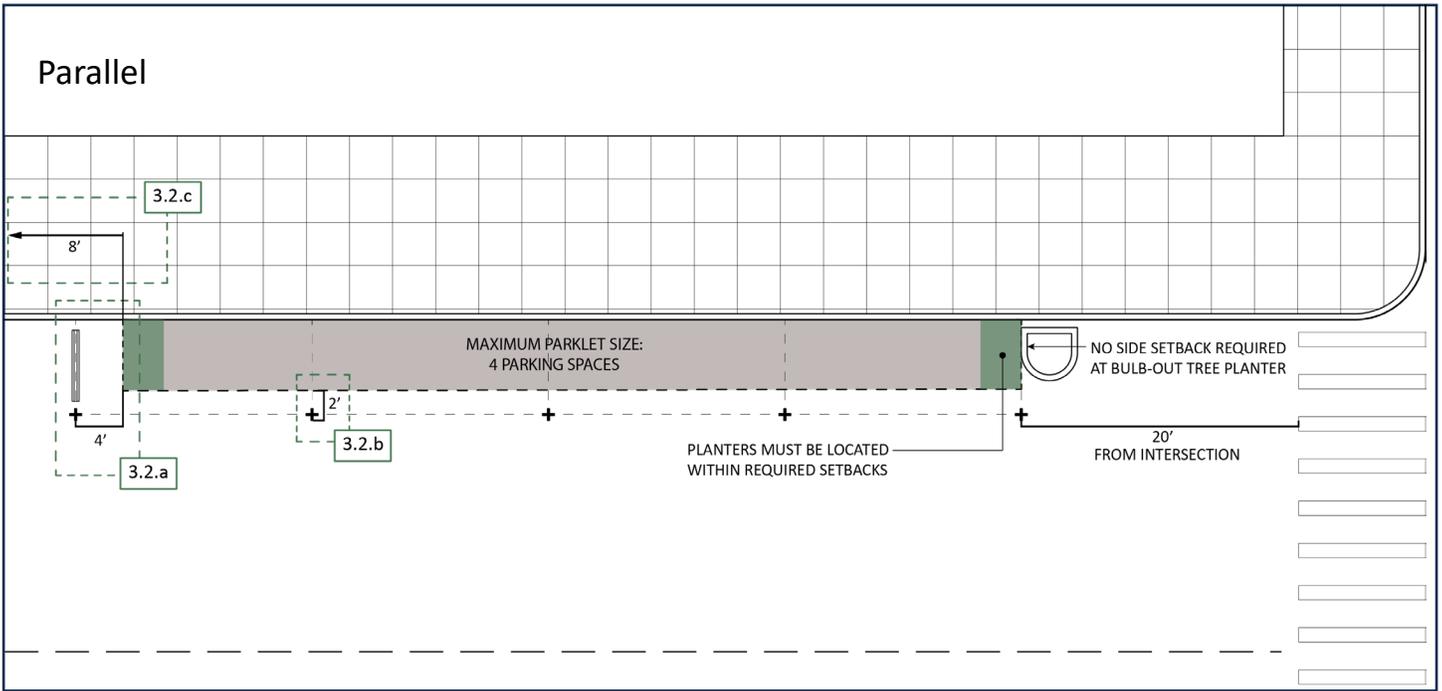
2.3.a The parklet is located in front of your business.

*Note: If you would like to construct a parklet that extends beyond your business frontage, you may need a letter of consent. See pg. xx for more information.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

# 3.0 DETERMINE THE SIZE OF YOUR PARKLET

Review the requirements below and on page 6. Confirm your parklet meets the requirements below and determine your parklet size using the worksheet on page 15.



## 3.0 DETERMINE THE SIZE OF YOUR PARKLET

Confirm your parklet meets the requirements below. Determine the maximum size of your parklet size using the worksheet on page 15.

### 3.1 Parklet Size

3.1.a Parklets *with a roof or trellis* can be a maximum of 350 square feet.

### 3.2 Parklets in Parallel Parking Spaces

3.2.a The parklet must be setback 4' from the adjacent marked parking space. This setback must be kept clear at all time for emergency access.

*Note: Setback not needed if there is a bulb-out between the parklet and crosswalk.*

3.2.b The parklet must be setback 2' from the outer edge of the parking space "T" along the travel lane. This setback must be kept clear at all times. The only objects permitted in this setback are reflective delineator posts.

3.2.c The distance between parklets in parallel parking spaces shall be minimum of 8'.

### 3.3 Parklets in Angled Parking Spaces

3.3.a The parklet must be setback 3' from the adjacent marked parking space. This setback must be kept clear at all time for emergency access.

*Note: Setback not needed if there is a bulb-out between the parklet and crosswalk.*

3.3.b The parklet must be setback 3' from the outer edge of the parking space along the travel lane. This setback must be kept clear at all times. The only objects permitted in this setback are reflective delineator posts.

3.3.c The setback between parklets in angled parking spaces shall be minimum of 6'.

### 3.4 Planters

Parklet planters are not required however you may choose to incorporate them into your design. Planter must be located within the required setback and will reduce the to total amount of seating space. (see example on page 5).

3.4.a Parklets in parallel parking spaces can locate planters on either side of the parklet. Parklets in angled parking spaces can locate planters along the outer edge; parallel to the travel lane. (see example on page 5).

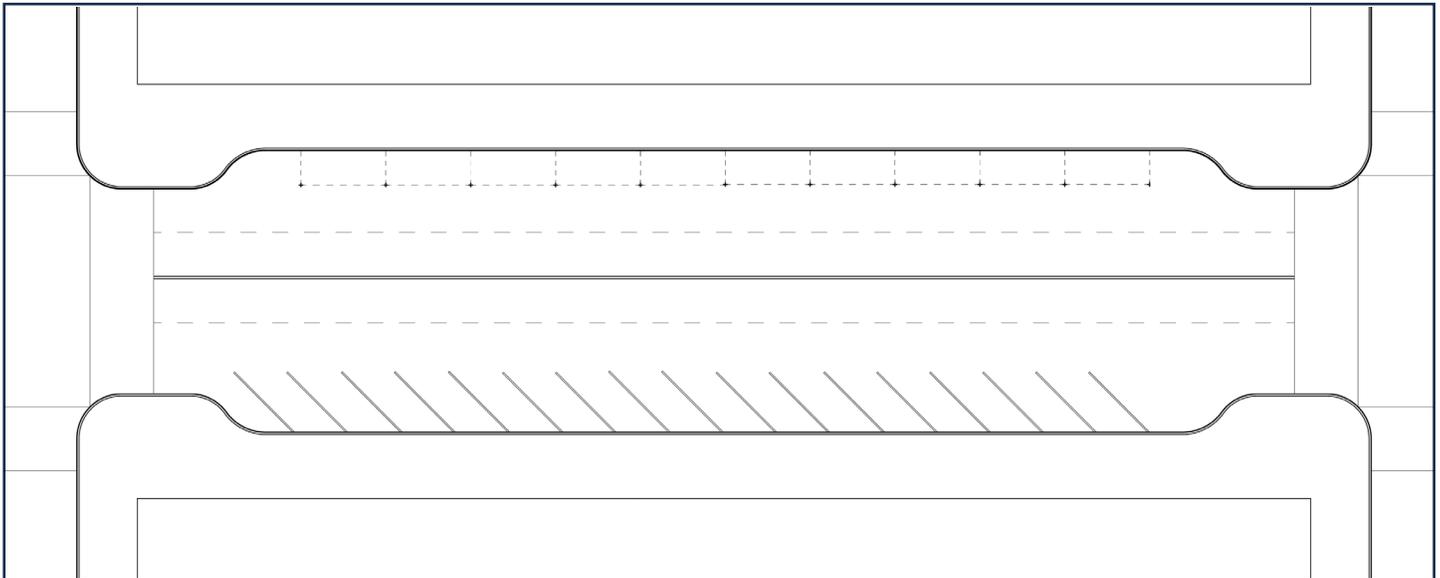
### 3.5 Letter of Consent Requirement

Parklet applicants must obtain a letter of consent from adjacent ground-floor tenant(s) to extend a roof, trellis, or sidewall, beyond their own storefront. Parklets without a roof, trellis, or sidewalls, may extend in front of a neighbor without a letter of consent.

See Appendix A for more information

## 4.0 SKETCH YOUR SITE

To get started, make a rough sketch of your parklet using the template below (See example in Appendix B). This will help you make design selections in the following sections of the guide. Your contractor will verify all dimensions and prepare a more detailed site plan for your parklet application.



### My Parklet Site Conditions

- Identify Parking Space type (circle one):      Angled      Parallel
- Take note of the parking “T”s and striping in front of your business and locate your frontage in relation to the parking spaces.
- Mark any of obstructions and their setbacks from Section 2.0 above. Ensure you have enough unrestricted space to construct a parklet.
- How many parking spaces will you use: \_\_\_\_\_

### My Parklet Size

- Mark the required setbacks from Section 3.0 above. What is your parklet’s size after the setbacks:

Length (feet): \_\_\_\_\_ Width (feet): \_\_\_\_\_ Area (square feet): \_\_\_\_\_

### My Parklet Design considerations

- Will you include Planters: Yes    No
- Select Roof type:    Covered    Uncovered
- Will the proposed parklet extend beyond your building: Yes    No

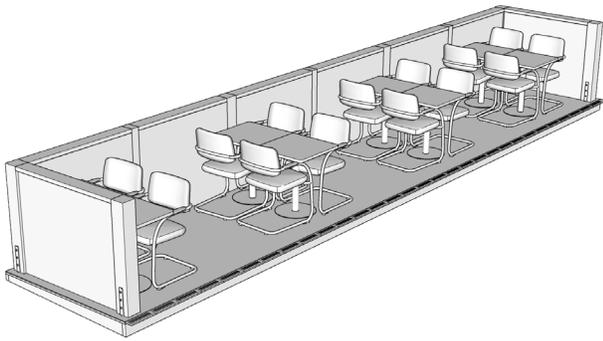
**Note:** If the proposed parklet is covered and extends beyond your building frontage, you will need a Letter of consent . See Appendix A for more information.

## 5.0 SELECT YOUR DESIGN FEATURES *ROOF STYLES*

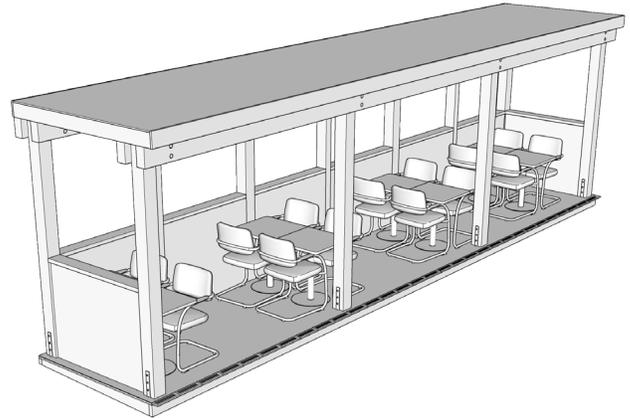
Choose what type of parklet you want to build.

### 1 Parklet Type: Choose One

Parklet with no Roof

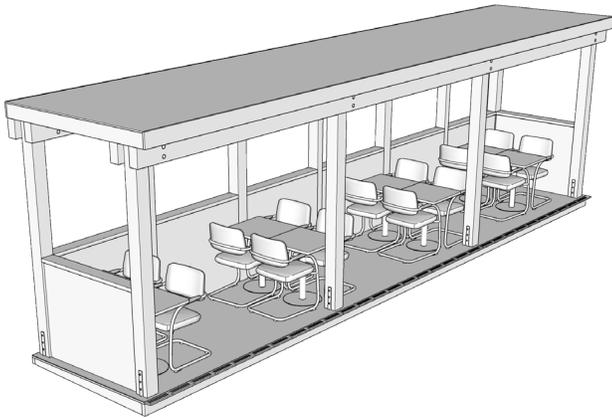


Parklet with a Roof

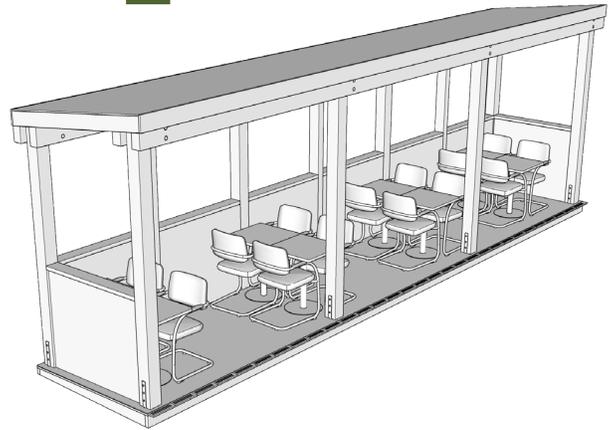


### 2 Roof Shape: Choose One

Flat Roof

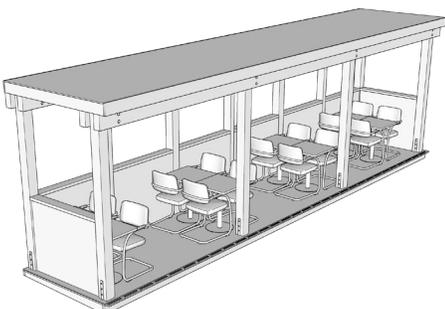


Shed Roof

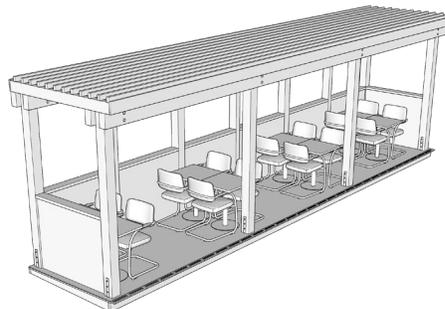


### 3 Roof Type: Choose One

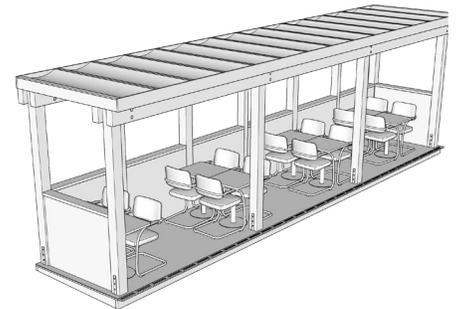
Solid Roof



Lattice Roof



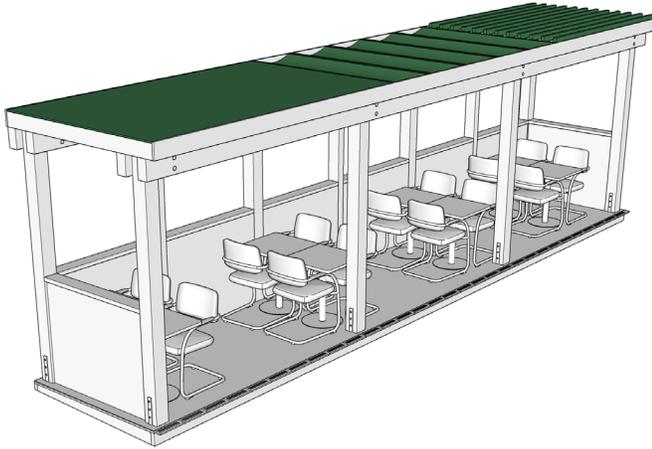
Fabric Roof



## 6.0 SELECT YOUR DESIGN FEATURES *ROOF COVERINGS*

If your parklet will have a roof, select the roof covering and designs for your parklet roof. Roof coverings will be affixed to your roof frame.

Parklet Roof Covering Requirements (for parklets with a roof)



### 6.1 Design

6.1.a The parklet roof design shall be one of the following: solid roof, open framing, fabric shades.

### 6.2 Materials

6.2.a The following materials are permitted for roof coverings: pressure-treated wood, exterior-grade wood, steel, fabric (flame retardant), corrugated metal, plywood (with treatment), asphalt tiles, wood shingles.

6.2.b The roof material shall be maximum 20psf in weight.

6.2.c The following materials are prohibited: clay, porcelain tile, acrylic corrugated plastic, vinyl, soft plastic, tarps.

### Roof Covering Examples (for parklets with or a roof)

You may select any roof covering provided it meets the requirements above. Include the product specifications for your desired roof covering in your permit submittal



Canavas



Corrugated Metal



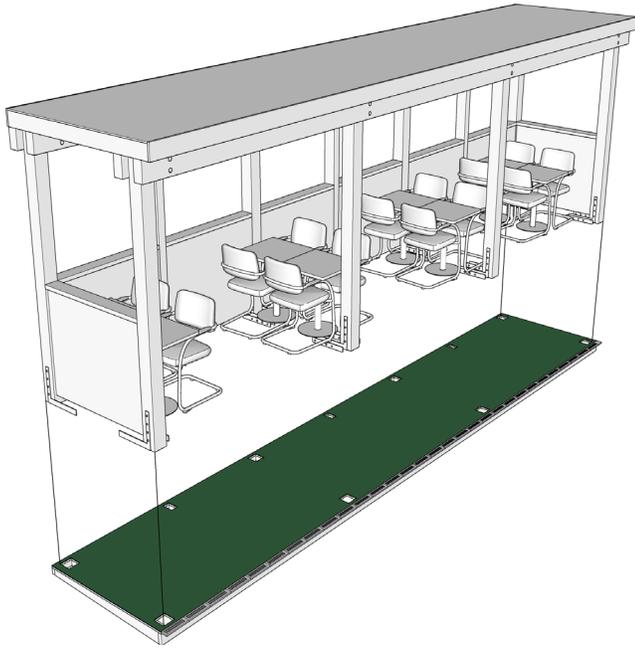
Asphalt Tiles

*\*Fill out the worksheet on pg. 15 with your selections*

## 7.0: SELECT YOUR DESIGN FEATURES **FLOORING**

Select a flooring product for your parklet. The flooring product will be installed overtop the parklet platform frame and will be flush with the sidewalk.

**Parklet Flooring Requirements** *(for parklets with or without a roof)*



### 7.1 **Materials**

- 7.1.a The parklet flooring shall be an exterior-grade material.
- 7.1.b The parklet flooring shall not be one of the following prohibited materials: metal, glass, materials designed for interior use.

### 7.2 **Safety**

- 7.2.c The parklet flooring has a finishing & slip resistance of BH minimum 0.6 Coefficient of Friction.

### **Flooring Examples** *(for parklets with or without a roof)*

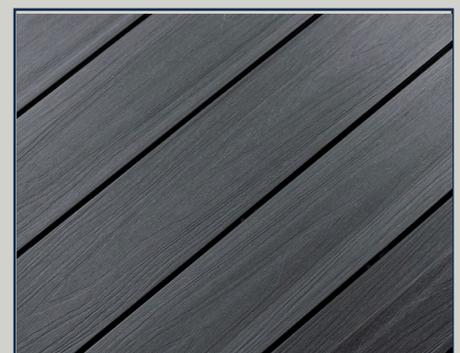
You may select any flooring material provided it meets the requirements above. Include the product specifications for your desired flooring in your permit submittal



Wood Decking



Exterior Tile



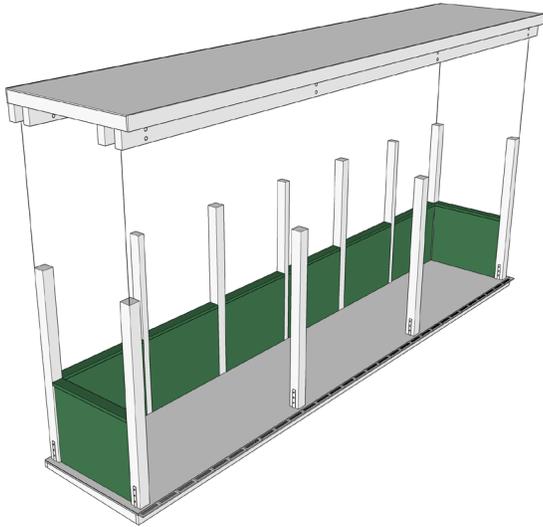
Composite Decking

*\*Fill out the worksheet on pg. 15 with your selections*

## 8.0 SELECT YOUR DESIGN FEATURES *RAILING*

Select a rail and enclosure finish for your parklet. The complete railing is made up : 1) the horizontal rail that extends between posts, and 2) the enclosure, which connects to the rail

**Parklet Enclosure Requirements** *(for parklets with or without a roof)*



### Material

#### 8.1

##### 8.1.a

The parklet enclosure shall **not** be one of the following prohibited materials: particle board, vinyl, soft plastic or tarps.

### Safety

#### 8.2

##### 8.2.a

The rail shall be 42" in height, as measured from the surface of the platform.

##### 8.2.b

The rail shall withstand at least 200 lbs of horizontal force.

##### 8.2.c

Any gaps in the enclosure shall be smaller than 4" sphere.

**My Parklet Enclosure** *(for parklets with or without a roof)*

**STEP 1: Select a rail material** (see specifications attached)



Wood



Light-gauge Steel

**STEP 2: Select an enclosure finish** (see examples below)

You may select any enclosure materials provided they meets the requirements above. Include the product specifications for your desired flooring in your permit submittal



Wood Siding



Plywood - Painted



Steel Cables

## 9.0 SELECT YOUR DESIGN FEATURES *SIDEWALLS*

*If your parklet will have sidewalls, select the design from the options below. Sidewalls will be affixed to your posts.*

**Parklet Sidewall Requirements** *(for parklets with or without a roof)*



### 9.1 Design

9.1.a Parklets may include either a solid transparent and un-tinted sidewall or an open semi-transparent sidewall.

### 9.2 Materials

9.2.a The following material is permitted for solid sidewalls: un-tinted plexiglass.

9.2.b The following materials are permitted for open sidewalls: pressure-treated wood (stained or painted), exterior grade wood.

9.2.c The following materials are prohibited: vinyl, soft plastic, glass, or tarps.

### Sidewall Examples *(for parklets with or without a roof)*

Sidewalls are an optional feature. You may select any sidewall material provided it meets the requirements above. Include the product specifications for your desired flooring in your permit submittal.



Plexiglass



Pressure-treated Wood



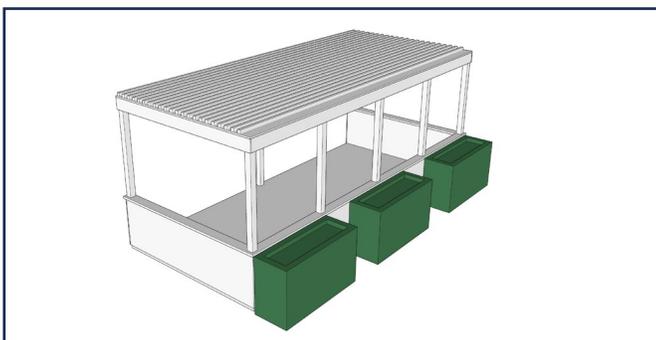
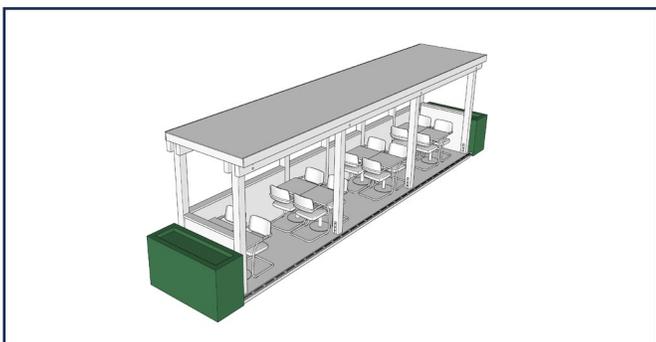
Open

*\*Fill out the worksheet on pg. 15 with your selections*

## 10.0 SELECT YOUR DESIGN FEATURES *PLANTERS*

*If your parklet will include planters, Select planter designs for your parklet. Parklets in parallel parking spaces can locate planters on either side of the parklet. Parklets in angled parking spaces can locate planters along the outer edge; parallel to the travel lane. Planter must be located within the required setbacks and will reduce the total seating space within the parklet*

### Parklet Planter Requirements *(for parklets with or without a roof)*



#### 10.1 Material

10.1.a The parklet planter shall be constructed of wood, steel, cold form fiberglass, or plastic materials.

10.1.b The following materials are prohibited: clay, porcelain, and concrete.

**Note:** Planters must be within the setback and therefore will reduce the total seating space within a parklet. See Section 3.0 for more details.

### Planter Examples *(for parklets with or without a roof)*

You may select any planter material from the list above. Include the product specifications for your desired planters in your permit submittal



Wood



Steel



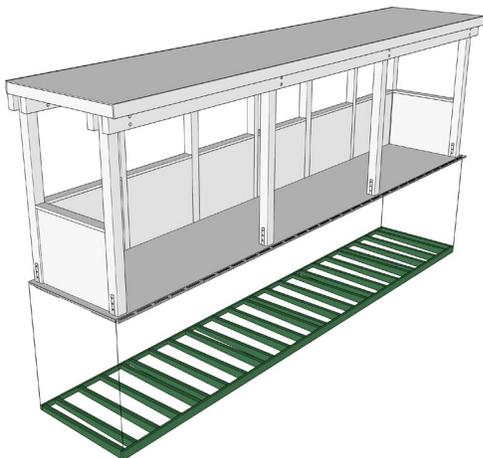
Fiberglass

*\*Fill out the Worksheet on pg. 15 with your selections*

## 11.0 STRUCTURAL OPTIONS: *PLATFORM*

Consult your contractor and review your site plan and the specification sheets with them to determine your parklet platform, posts and roof framing materials.

### Parklet Platform Requirements *(for parklets with or without a roof)*



#### 11.1 Materials

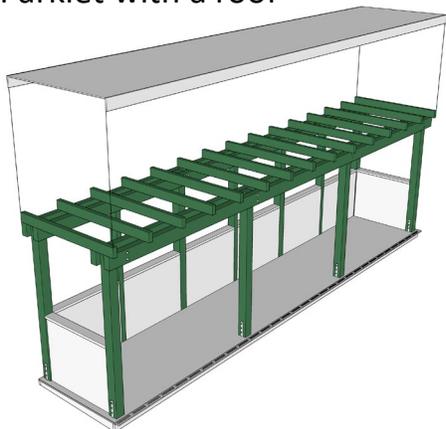
- 11.1.a The parklet platform shall be constructed of light-gauge steel or pressure-treated wood.
- 11.1.b A 4" minimum curb height is required for installation of a pressure-treated wood platform

**Note:** The permitted platform material will depend on site conditions including curb height and street slope. Consult your contractor to determine which material is best suited to your parklet design.

## 12.0 STRUCTURAL OPTIONS: *POSTS AND ROOF FRAMING*

### Parklet Post and Roof Requirements *(for parklets with or without a roof)*

Parklet with a roof



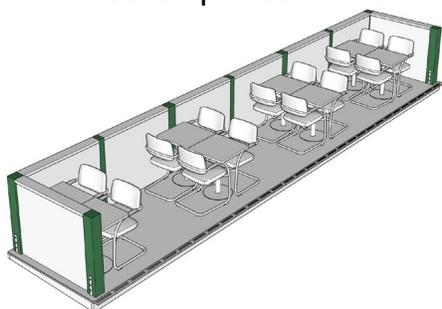
#### 12.1 Material

- 12.1.a The parklet posts and roof framing shall be constructed of light-gauge steel or pressure-treated wood

#### 12.2 Design

- 12.2.a Light-gauge steel shall be painted
- 12.2.b Pressure-treated wood shall be stained or painted

Uncovered parklet



Wood



Light-gauge Steel

## 13.0 MY PARKLET DESIGN FEATURES WORKSHEET

Fill out the following worksheet based on the design options from the previous sections. Include this page along with product specifications with your permit submittal.

### 5.0 Roof Styles

Parklet Type (circle one):                      Covered      Uncovered

Roof Type (circle one):                      Solid      Lattice      Fabric

Roof Shape (circle one):                      Flat      Shed

### 6.0 Roof Covering(s)

Roofing Product(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spec Sheet(s) Attached:

### 7.0 Flooring

Flooring Product Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spec Sheet Attached:

### 8.0 Railing

Railing Material (circle one):                      Wood      Light-Gauge Steel

Enclosure Product Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spec Sheet Attached:

### 9.0 Sidewalls

Include Sidewalls (circle one ):                      Yes      No

Sidewall Product Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spec Sheet Attached:

### 10.0 Planters

Include Planters (circle one):                      Yes      No

Planter Product Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spec Sheet Attached:

### 11.0 Platform

Choose Material (circle one):                      Wood      Light-Gauge Steel

### 12.0 Posts/ Roof Framing

Choose Material (circle one):                      Wood      Light-Gauge Steel

## 14.0 HEATING

Heaters are not required but are permitted in parklets in accordance with Section IV.D.4 of the Parklet Standards. Review the requirements below and indicate your selection.

### Heating Devices *(for parklets with or without a roof)*

Heating devices are not required for operation, however, if a parklet wishes to include heating in conjunction with their parklet, they shall comply with the requirements below:

	CHECKLIST
<b>14.1 Electric Heaters</b>	
14.1.a Electric heaters must be an outdoor approved type.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.2.b Electric heaters must be located in accordance with manufacturing instructions and placed at least 3 feet away from any combustible materials or as required by manufacturer's instruction, whichever is more restrictive.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.2.c A fire extinguisher is required to be mounted within sight and have appropriate signage per the Fire Code.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.2.d Use of electric heaters must comply with the power supply requirements in section IV.D.2 of the parklet standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.2.e Any electrical equipment must be listed and carry a product certificate for its intended use by a recognized electrical testing laboratory.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>14.2 Propane Heaters</b>	
14.2.a Propane heaters are permitted with a valid HAZMAT permit from the Palo Alto Fire Department and CERS submittal.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.2.b Propane heaters are prohibited in parklets with a roof or trellis.	<input type="checkbox"/>

### My Parklet

Parklet heater and type:

- No heaters
- Electric heaters
- Propane heaters (if yes, see section below)

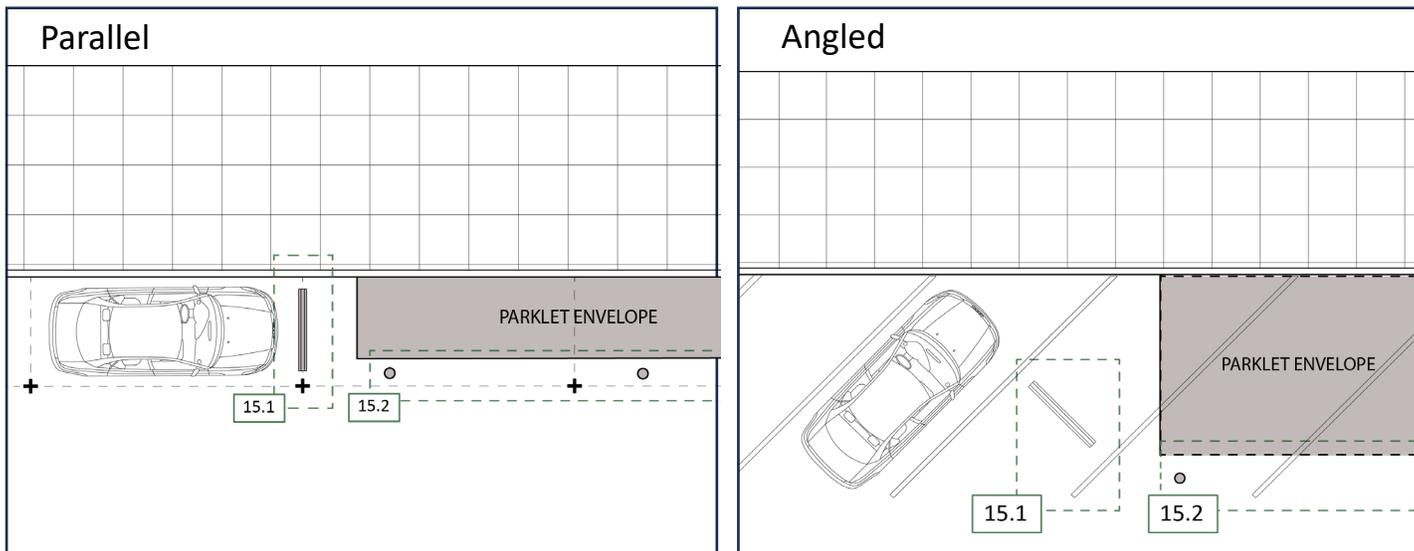
If using propane:

- Your parklet will not have a roof
- You will obtain a HAZMAT permit

**IMPORTANT:** If using propane heaters, parklet applications will not be approved until a valid HAZMAT permit is provided.

# 15.0 TRAFFIC SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Review the requirements below for parklet traffic safety. These measures will apply to all parklets following parklet design, approval, and construction.



- | 15.1 Wheel Stops (see section IV.C of the parklet standards for full details)  | <b>CHECKLIST</b>         |
|--|--------------------------|
| 15.1.a When a parklet is adjacent to active <i>parallel</i> parking spaces, a wheel stop must be installed to delineate the 4-foot setback from adjacent parking spaces. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15.1.b When a parklet is adjacent to an active angled parking space, a wheel stop must be installed in the center of the parking space next to the parklet structure.    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15.1.c The wheel stop shall measure 3 feet long by 4 inches high. It shall be constructed of concrete or rubber.   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15.1.d Parklets extending the length between two in-street tree wells, as on University Avenue, may omit wheel stops.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15.1.e Wheel stops are not required between two adjacent parklets with no active parking stalls between them.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>15.2 Reflective Delineator</b>  |                          |
| 15.2.a The parklet shall include installation of the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) approved delineator posts or flexible bollards.        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15.2.b Delineator posts shall be surface mounted to the roadway via epoxy and/or glue down methods.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15.2.c Reflective delineators must be installed at the outside corners of the parklet. Additional delineators must be placed at least every 10 feet.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

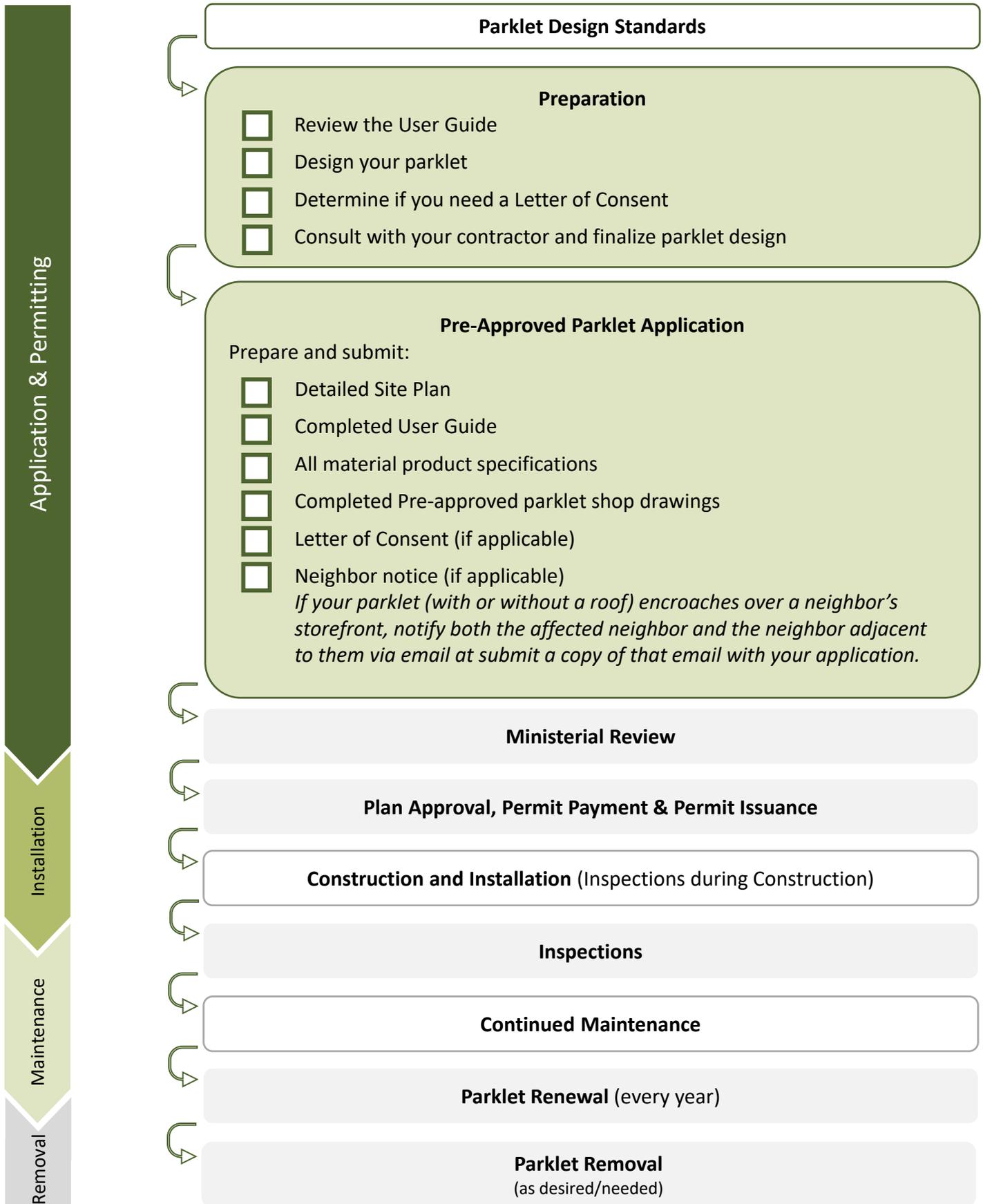
## 16.0 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Review the requirements below for parklet operations and maintenance. These measures will apply to all parklets following parklet design, approval, and construction.

	CHECKLIST
<b>16.1 Site Maintenance</b>	
16.1.a Parklets and the adjacent sidewalk shall be kept clean and litter free. Any food or drink stain shall be cleaned up immediately. Power washing is required monthly.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.1.b The drainage grates at the side of the parklet shall be maintained and kept clean and clear at all times to allow free flow of water. Any debris and leaves shall be removed immediately by the permittee.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.1.c Planters on parklets shall be kept clean and free of litter at all times. Plants should be well-maintained with regular watering and pruning, and weeds promptly removed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>16.2 Hours of Operation</b>	
16.2.a The parklet shall adhere to the same approved hours of operation as the associated business.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.2.b In the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) or Service Commercial (CS) zone districts, a CUP is needed to operate between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and approval conditions for operations during these hours are to ensure the operation is compatible with the abutting (or within 50 feet of) residential property.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>16.3 Amplified Sound</b>	
16.3.a Amplified sound and speakers are not permitted on parklets. Any ambient sound may only originate from the interior of the business's occupied building.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>16.4 Alcohol Service</b>	
16.4.a Businesses with parklets that serve alcoholic beverages on the parklet shall include appropriate fencing or other barriers to delineate the space and adhere to Department of Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.4.b All physical requirements of ABC should be reflected in the design submitted.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.4.c A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is required to allow alcohol service at a parklet.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>16.5 Parklet Removal</b>	
16.5.a If a business with a parklet decides they no longer want a parklet, the business is responsible for notifying the City and removing it at the business's own expense.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.5.b Immediately upon removal, the parklet area shall be cleaned and restored to its previous condition to the satisfaction of the City.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.5.c In instances of advanced notice (such as street repaving, planned maintenance, etc.), a business may need to remove and reinstall the parklet at their sole expense. If the sponsor cannot remove the parklet, the City will remove the parklet.	<input type="checkbox"/>

# PERMITTING PROCESS CHECKLIST

Review and confirm your parklet design. Compile your application documents.



# APPENDIX A: LETTER OF CONSENT (LOC) REQUIREMENT

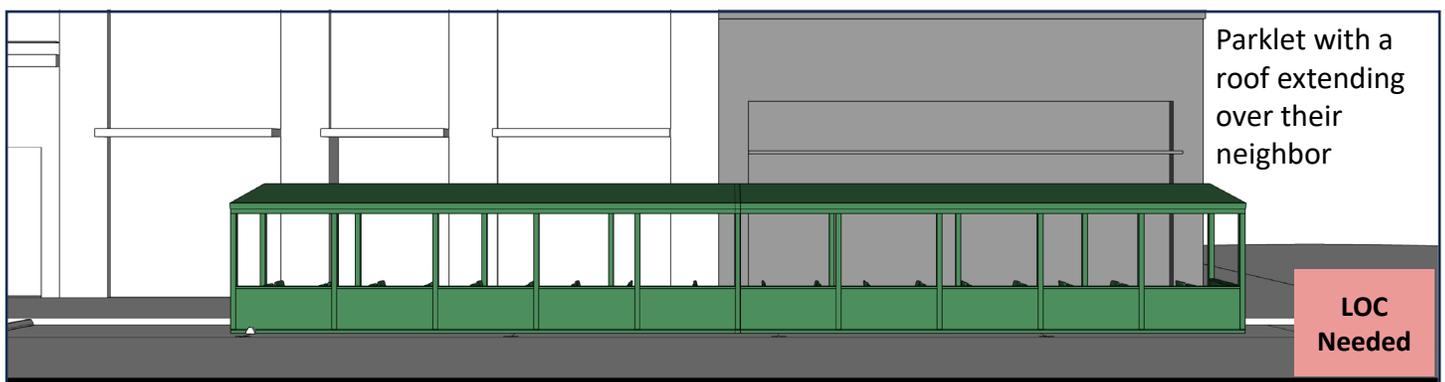
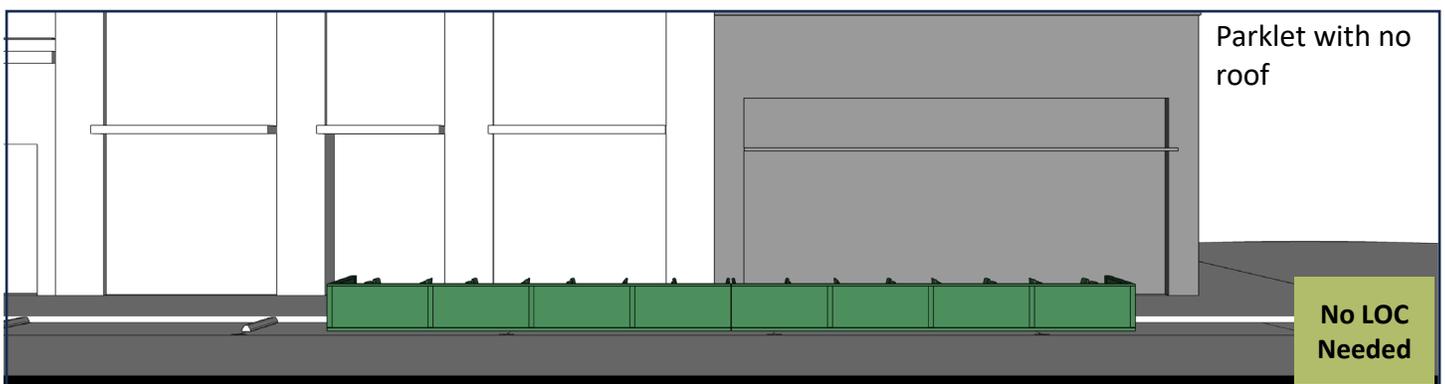
Parklet applicants must obtain a letter of consent from adjacent ground-floor tenant(s) to extend a roof, trellis, or sidewall, beyond their own storefront. Parklets without a roof, trellis, or sidewalls, may extend in front of a neighbor without a letter of consent.

## 2.1 Letter of Consent Requirement

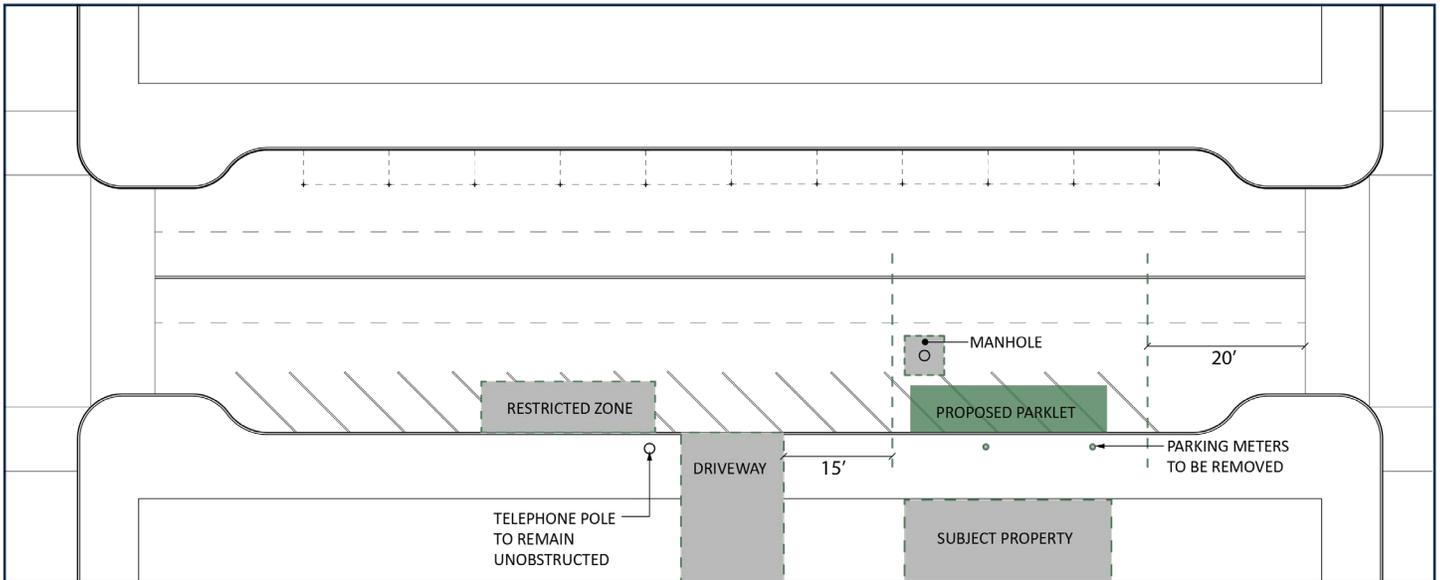
2.1.a Parklet does not have a roof or sidewalls: letter of consent not required.

2.1.b Parklet does have a roof or sidewalls:

- Does not extend beyond applicant's storefront: letter of consent not required.
- Does extend beyond applicant's storefront: letter of consent is required.



# APPENDIX B: SITE SKETCH EXAMPLE



# Other Resources and Links

City's webpage on parklets at [www.cityofpaloalto.org/Parklets](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Parklets)

Ongoing Parklet Design Standards (link to be updated)

[Parklet Cleanliness Standards](#)

[Hazmat Permit application \(section D\)](#)

[Electrical Permit application](#)

## Project Team

Architectural Review Board

City Manager Office

Public Works Department

Fire Department

Transportation Department

Planning & Development Department

Planning Team – Urban Planning Partners

Architect – Syncopated Architecture

Structural Engineer – REI BuildUp