



# PARKLET PROTOTYPES

Architectural Review Board Meeting  
Study Session

*Image Source: Feeney Inc*

**May 2, 2024**

[www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org)

# BACKGROUND

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## History of the Parklet Program

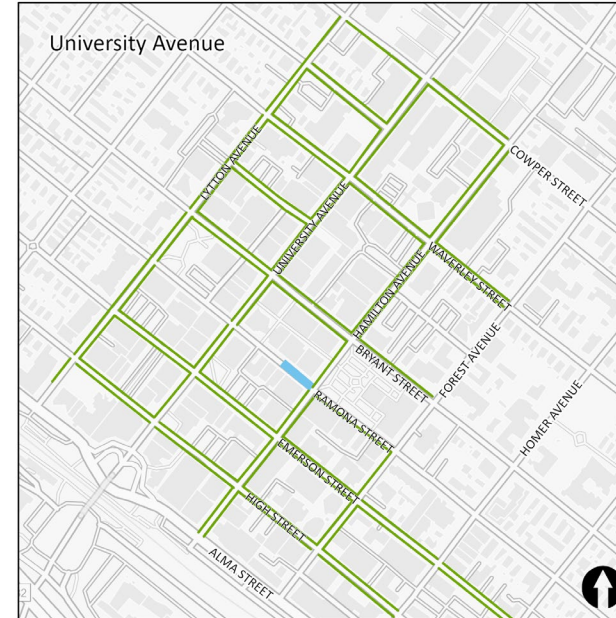
- 2020: Implemented a Pilot Program for parklets.
  - Multiple extensions have resulted in a continuation of the pilot program to date.
- 2021: Council directed staff to develop an ongoing parklet program with input from the Architectural Review Board.



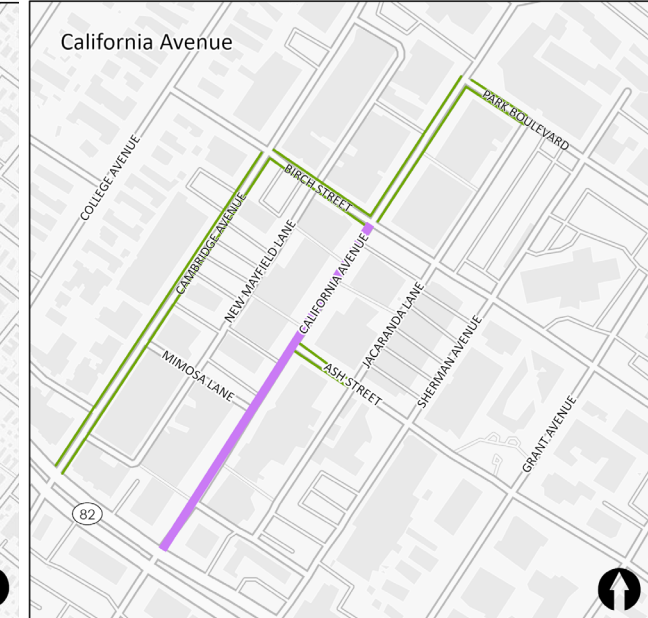
# BACKGROUND (contd.)

## Parklet Program Scope and Location

- University Ave Downtown & California Ave Business District
- Streets open to vehicular traffic
- Closed street portion of Ramona St
- Closed street portion of California Ave is not part of the program



— Closed Street and Parklets Allowed  
— Parklets Allowed



— Closed Streets  
— Parklets Allowed



# BACKGROUND (contd.)

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## ARB feedback

February 15, 2024: Introduced the pre-approved parklet project and received feedback on:

1. Ongoing parklet standards:
  - Gap between parklets
  - Emergency access
  - Setbacks
  - Enclosure height
  - Roof requirements
  - Planters
  - Furnishing regulations
2. Pre-approved designs: flexibility & customization



# BACKGROUND (contd.)

## ARB Ad-hoc Committee feedback

March 19, 2024: Received additional feedback on parklet design including:

1. Include pressure-treated wood for platform materials.
2. Continued support for lower enclosure height and including planters in parklet design.
3. Post-beam connections (angled brackets, and bolted brackets).
4. Roof design options: flat roof and shed roof.
5. Allow 12-inch roof overhang on the sidewalk and 6-inch roof overhang on other sides.
6. Prohibit the following roof materials: corrugated acrylic, and heavy materials such as clay or stone tile.





# BACKGROUND (contd.)

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## Stakeholder meeting

April 24, 2024: Provided update on changes to the ongoing parklet standards and received additional feedback including:

1. Considering limits on colors, materials, etc. for parklets.
2. Implementing planter maintenance requirements.
3. Consider high-quality vinyl shades between enclosure and roof.



# ANALYSIS: PROPOSED REVISIONS TO PARKLET STANDARDS

Topic	Current Adopted Standard	ARB Feedback	Proposed Standard
Gap between Parklets	8-ft gap required between parklets (4ft for each parklet)	Consider reducing the gap requirement.	8-ft gap between parallel pkg space parklets; 6-ft gap between angled pkg space parklets
3-ft Emergency Access every 20 ft	Fire <b>may</b> require parklets to implement a 3ft gap in their parklet every 20 ft for fire access	Clarify the 3-foot emergency access every 20 feet requirement.	Standard removed.
Roof Height	Min. 8' and max. 12'	Require min. 7'6" head clearance. Reduce the max. from 12' to 11'.	Min. head clearance: 7'6", max height 11'
Gutters/leaders	Gutters/leaders required.	Remove requirement for gutters and leaders.	Standard removed.
Furnishing Standards	Furnishings must be high-quality, durable, outdoor-rated, and nonreflective. Furniture shall be all-weather and high-quality material.	Remove furniture aesthetic standards.	Standards removed.
Planters	Planters not permitted	Include planters in parklet designs	Planters made of wood, steel, plastic, or fiberglass are permitted; maintenance requirements included in site maintenance section.

# ANALYSIS: PROGRAM STANDARD UPDATES

Following staff evaluation, there are some areas that deviate from ARB recommendations.

Topic	Current Adopted Standard	ARB Feedback	Staff recommendation	Proposed Standard
Roof overhangs	No overhang permitted	Allow 12” overhang along the sidewalk side and 6” overhang on all other sides.	Allow overhangs on the sidewalk and travel lane side of the parklets. However, do not recommend an overhang on the sides of parklets due to fire access.	Allow 6” overhang along the sidewalk side and 6” overhang over the travel lane side; no overhang on the sides of the parklet.
Setback from rear-edge of angled parking space	3-feet	Consider reducing to 2-feet, consistent with parallel parking space setback.	Maintain this standard due to traffic safety and sightlines for turning vehicles from driveways and alleyways.	3-feet Due to safety; preserving sightline from turning vehicles.
Enclosure Height	42-inches enclosure	Consider reducing height	Staff do not recommend changes to this standard due to safety concerns.	42-inches Due to safety considerations; material could be transparent if able to withstand 200lbs force



# ANALYSIS: PRE-APPROVED PARKLET DESIGNS

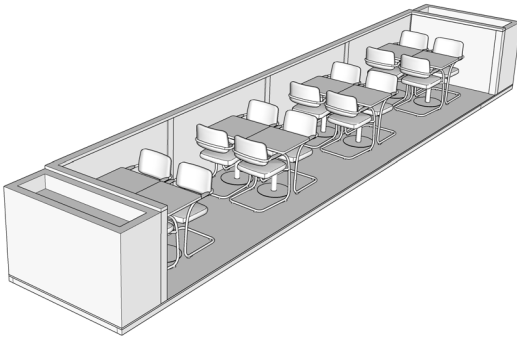
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- Pre-approved parklet designs
  - Can be scaled to any size
  - Includes options with roof and without roof
  - Allows for design flexibility and customization
- Pre-approved shop drawings
- User-Guide
  - Provides step-by-step instructions to design your parklets using pre-approved designs and submit your application.
- Expedited review and approval

# PRE-APPROVED PARKLET DESIGNS

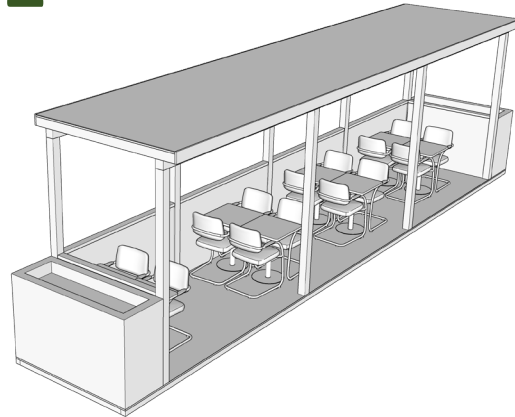
The parklet frame can be scaled up to any size and accommodate the following configurations:

1



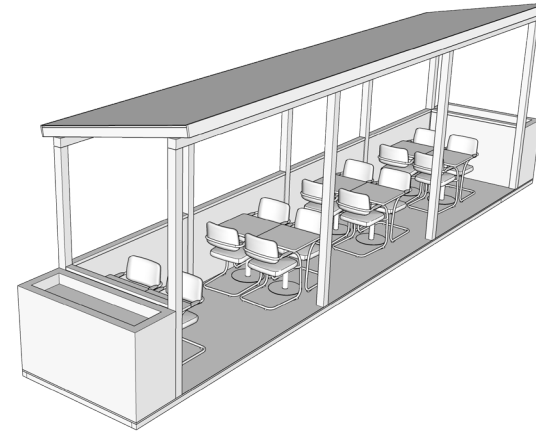
Parklet with no roof

2



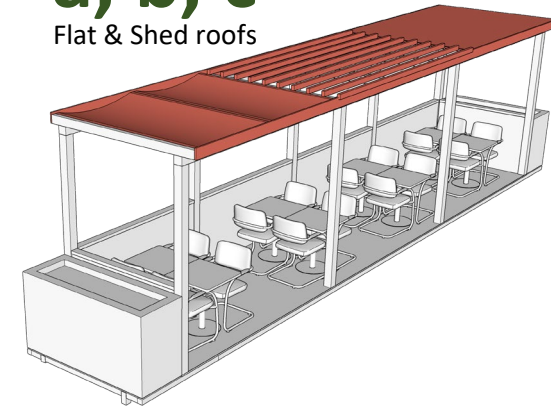
Parklet with flat roof

3



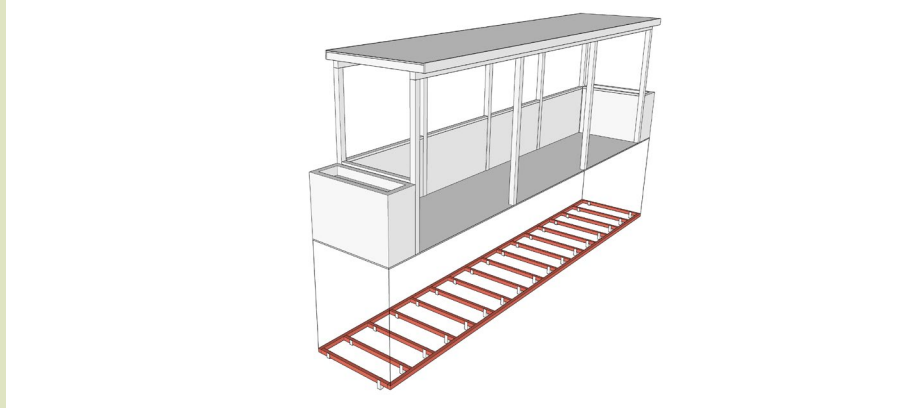
Parklet with shed roof

a, b, c  
Flat & Shed roofs

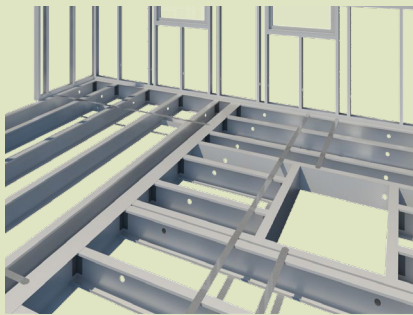


Solid Roof  
Lattice Roof  
Fabric Roof

# DESIGN OPTIONS – FRAMING



Options	Must meet minimum standards outlined in shop-drawings.
Materials	Hot-dipped galvanized light-gauge steel, pressure-treated wood with steel post-connections.
Notes	See considerations on next slide



Hot-dipped galvanized  
light-gauge steel



Pressure-treated wood  
with steel post-  
connections



# DESIGN OPTIONS – FRAMING CONSIDERATIONS

- ADA compliance is required; tall framing members cannot be used as the parklet floor must remain level with the sidewalk
- Street slopes may result in up to 3-4" of taper, making stable post attachments very difficult due to edge distance limitations
- Bolting into the roadbed is not permitted
- Curb heights vary; some may be only 4" tall to begin with resulting in even less space for framing members
- Without detailed surveys of all parking spaces, curbs, and street slopes, the designs must make certain assumptions to comply with all codes



# DESIGN OPTIONS – FRAMING CONSIDERATIONS

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## Pressure-treated Wood

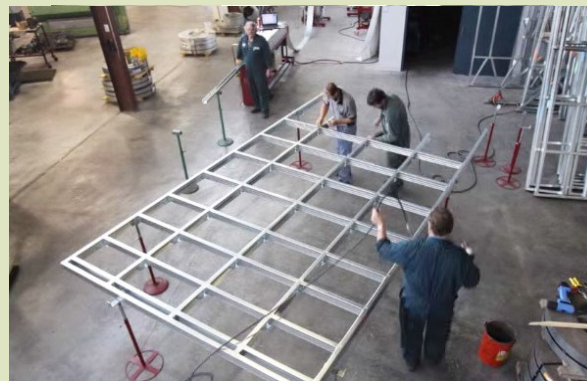
- Due to curb heights 4x6 framing, spaced closely would be required
- Tapering these wood members by 3" would result in only ½" at the outside edge of the parklet, making connections very challenging
- In conditions where the street slope results in a tapered wood member of less than 1.5", wood cannot be used. Evaluating this will create complexity for the business owners
- Where the wood is tapered to 1.5" heavy-duty steel angles would be required at post connections and may create a splitting condition over time



# DESIGN OPTIONS – FRAMING CONSIDERATIONS

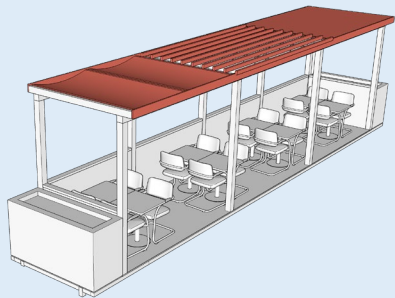
## Galvanized Light-Gauge Steel Framing

- Steel channels as small as 1.5" can be used with much higher strength than wood
- Post to joist connections can be done with smaller edge distance
- Slotted Steel angles can be used to level the framing assembly for the street slope
- Contractors may need to use a specialty sub-contractor for the framing, but no special inspections will be required for the connections
- Galvanizing the steel and detailing areas with penetrations will prevent the assemblies from rusting





# DESIGN OPTIONS – ROOF COVERINGS



Fabric Roof



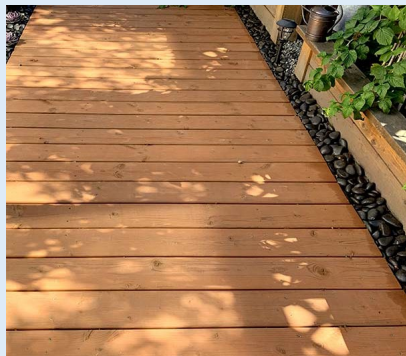
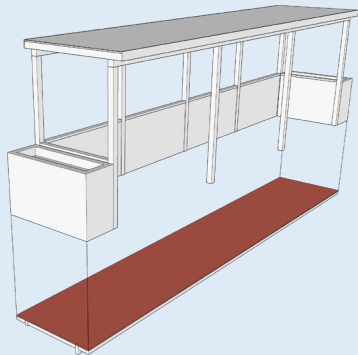
Open Framing



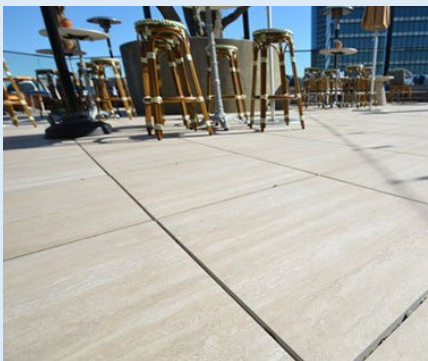
Solid roof

Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open framing</li><li>• Fabric shades</li><li>• Solid roof</li></ul>
Materials	<p>Permitted: pressure-treated wood, exterior-grade wood, steel, fabric (flame retardant), corrugated metal, plywood (with treatment), asphalt tiles, wood shingles.</p> <p>Prohibited: clay, porcelain tile, acrylic corrugated plastic, vinyl, soft plastic, tarps</p>

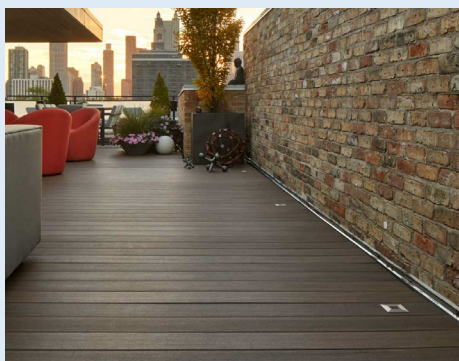
# DESIGN OPTIONS - FLOORING



Wood decking



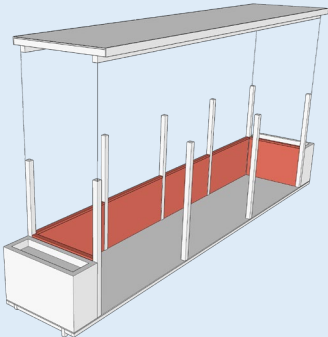
Tile/Concrete pavers



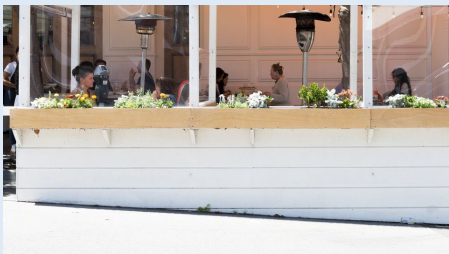
PVC (no wood fibers)

Options	Must meet minimum standards below
Material	Permitted: Exterior-rated materials  Prohibited: metal, glass, interior materials
Minimum Standard	Finishing & slip resistance (BH is min. 0.6 Coefficient of Friction)

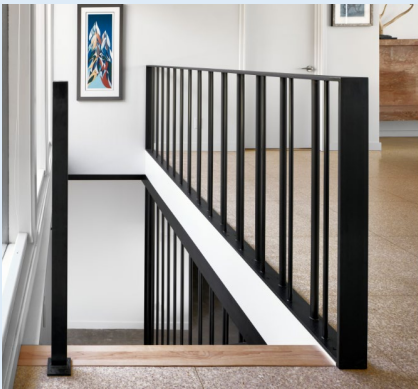
# DESIGN OPTIONS – ENCLOSURE



Horizontal - Wood



Solid – wood

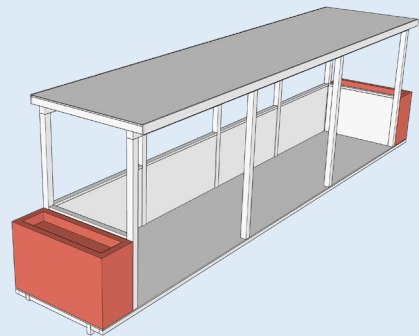


Vertical - Steel

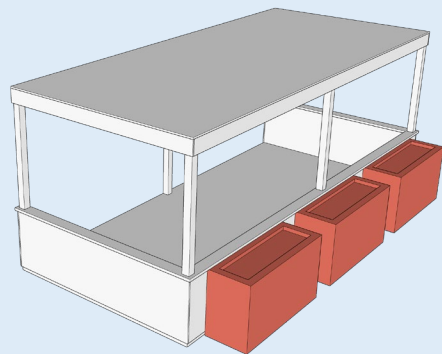
Options	Must meet material and min standards below.
Allowed Material(s)	Not permitted: particle board, vinyl, soft plastic or tarps.
Minimum Standard	Enclosure rail connection specifications will be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42” height</li> <li>• 200lb force</li> </ul> Enclosure finishes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any gaps shall be smaller than 4” sphere</li> </ul>



# DESIGN OPTIONS - PLANTERS



Parallel parklet



Angled parklet

Options	Must meet min standards below
Materials	Permitted: wood, steel, fiberglass or plastic
Minimum Standard	Ongoing maintenance required



Metal



Wood



Fiberglass

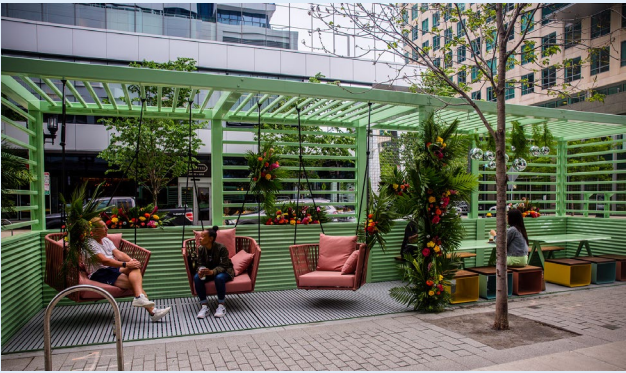
# DESIGN OPTIONS - SIDEWALLS



Solid – full - plexiglass



Solid – half - plexiglass



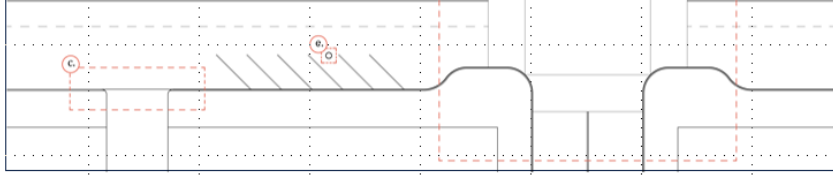
Open – full - wood



Options	1. Solid transparent sidewall 2. Open semi-transparent sidewall Must meet standards below
Materials	Solid: plexiglass Open: Pressure-Treated Wood (stained or painted) or Exterior grade wood

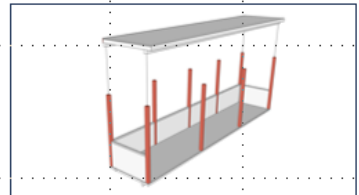
# ANALYSIS: USER GUIDE

- Provides businesses step-by-step instructions for planning and designing a parklet using the pre-approved designs.
- Includes:
  - **Embedded checklists** to ensure compliance with requirements.
  - **Decision-making prompts** for critical design components.
  - **“My Parklet”** sections to record parklet details and specifications



1.1 Applicable Locations		CHECKLIST
1.1.a	The parklet is located in an eligible area within the University Avenue and California Downtown areas. See <b>Appendix A</b> for maps of the eligible areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2 Site Requirements		
1.2.a	The parklet does not obstruct a restricted zone - loading zone, bus zone, no parking zone, public utilities, telecommunication vaults	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.b	Crosswalk Clearance: minimum 20' setback from a crosswalk <i>Note: not applicable if there is a bulb-out between the parklet and crosswalk</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2.c	Driveway and alleyway clearance: minimum 15' setback from any driveways and alleyways <i>Note: not applicable if there is a bulb-out between the parklet and crosswalk</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Parklets With or Without a Roof**



6.1 Parklet Post Material		CHECKLIST
6.1.a	The parklet post shall be constructed the following approved materials. Please select one of the following:	
	• Light-Gauge Steel	<input type="checkbox"/>
	• Pressure-treated wood	<input type="checkbox"/>

**My Parklet**

What is your parking space type (circle one):      Parallel      Angled

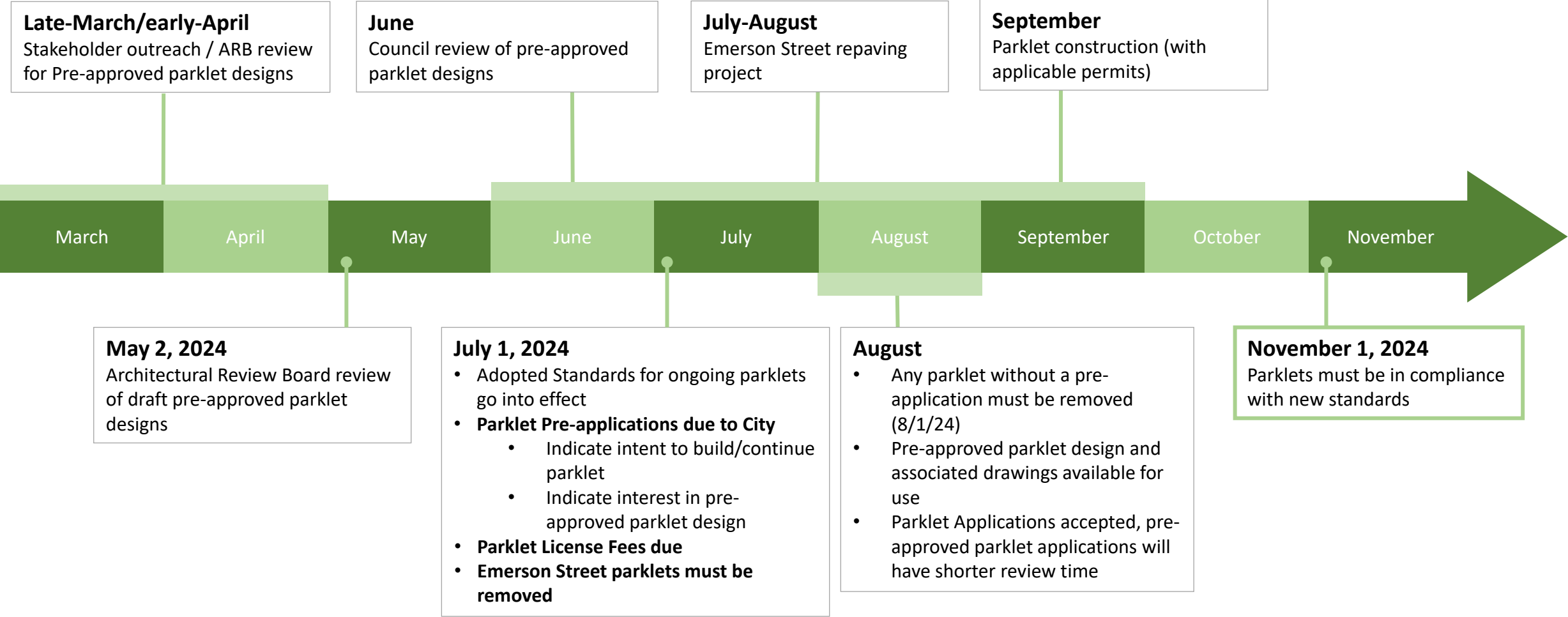
How many parking spaces will you use? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your parklet's approximate size after the setbacks: \_\_\_\_\_ square feet

- Length (feet): \_\_\_\_\_
- Width (feet): \_\_\_\_\_



# PROGRAM TIMELINE



# DISCUSSION

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1. Feedback on the Pre-approved designs
  - Platform frame
2. Feedback on the User Guide







## Questions & Discussion



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