



MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Bloomington Board of Public Works

FROM: Kaisa Goodman, Special Projects Manager Economic & Sustainable Development

DATE: July 30, 2020

RE: Parklets in the Downtown Corridor

Introduction:

COVID has unfolded differently than originally anticipated, and as a result the City must make adjustments to initial plans in order to best serve residents and local businesses. This proposal is one of a number, such as the PUDO zone implementation, which will serve to help small businesses generate economic activity in spite of the current and potential spikes in cases.

In order to meet the needs of customers, comply with local and state health guidelines, and stimulate the local economy, we must be creative with ways to expand outdoor seating options for downtown restaurants. While the intermittent closing of Kirkwood Ave. from Indiana Ave. to Grant St. is helpful, closing the street is not an option in many other parts of the downtown area. ESD recommends installing parklets in the downtown corridor, on a trial basis. Parklets would allow some downtown restaurants to expand their outdoor seating without closing any lanes of traffic, in a temporary and easily-adjustable manner.

Objectives:

- Objectives
- Stimulate the local economy
- Meet local and state health and safety guidelines relating to COVID-19
- Expand outdoor dining space for health and safety
- Help meet customer demand for restaurant space
- Increase aesthetic appeal of downtown

Overview of Plan:

Timeline:

- The first parklets (on N. College Ave.--see below) would be implemented on 8/5

- Additional parklets would be considered on a case-by-case basis and would require the restaurant to submit an application to ESD
- Like the PUDO zones and intermittent Kirkwood closures, the parklets would run through September 30 as a trial period
- In order to increase speed to market, the parklets would be implemented through a 180-day temporary order by the Department of Public Works

Locations:

- The west side of N. College Ave. between 5th and 6th (west side of the courthouse square)
 - The two north-most parking spaces on N. College between 5th and 6th (outside Social Cantina and SmokeWorks). Meter numbers:
 - COLN113-A
 - COLN113-B
 - The four south-most parking spaces on N. College between 5th and 6th (outside Orbit Room, The Inkwell, and The Tap). Meter numbers:
 - COLN101-A
 - COLN103-A
 - COLN103-B
 - COLN105-A
 - The five spaces between these two areas—one of which is the ADA spot for the block—would remain as regular metered parking spaces (outside of JL Waters and Goods for Cooks)
- As requested by downtown restaurants and approved by ESD and Public Works (see implementation section for details)

Implementation:

- Restaurants interested in having a parklet in parking spaces adjacent to their restaurant would submit an [application](#) online.
 - Submitted applications would go to Kaisa Goodman in ESD
 - Kaisa would share with other City employees in ESD, Public Works, BFD, BPD, or other departments deemed appropriate
- ESD and Planning would review parklet applications on a case-by-case basis, taking several factors into consideration, including:
 - Availability of parking in the area.
 - Parking needs vs. outdoor seating needs
 - Safety for patrons seated in the parklets
 - Feasibility of implementation
 - Other considerations deemed necessary by the City
- Approved parklets would be installed at the next implementation date.
 - Applications would need to be submitted by the Friday before the next implementation date to be considered for that date.
 - Implementation dates:
 - Wednesday, August 19
 - Wednesday, September 2
 - Wednesday, September 16

- Additional dates as needed, should the parklets continue past the end of September

Responsibilities:

- City of Bloomington
 - Initially sweeping the street in the parklet area, prior to implementation of the parklets
 - Providing the orange, water-filled barriers for between the parklet and the street
- Restaurants using the parklets
 - Determining if they can serve alcoholic beverages in the parklets and following all ATC guidelines and rules
 - Confirming and/or acquiring all necessary permits or licenses, including but not limited to business liability insurance that extends to the parklets
 - Ongoing cleaning of the parklet area
 - Providing furniture, decorations, and/or any other fixtures to be put in the parklet
 - Maintaining compliance with ADA guidelines, both in the parklets themselves and on the sidewalk between the restaurants and the parklets
 - If multiple restaurants are using the same dining space, coordinating between establishments (who is using the space at what times, clean up, etc.) is the restaurants' responsibility

Other Considerations

- Any block in which parklets take up more than one third of its total parking spaces will have any PUDO zones in that block removed.

Background:

Parklet Implementations in Other Cities:

- Lawrence, KS
 - COVID downtown planning response report
here: https://assets.lawrenceks.org/assets/agendas/cc/052220-downtown-lawrence_DLI-recommendation.pdf
 - “People need space...and businesses need people.”
 - Discussed parklets as COVID response in May
 - Switched parking in some downtown areas from angled to parallel and used the difference for parklets
 - Kept ADA parking spots the same
 - These parallel parking spaces are 15-min PUDZ
 - Moved the “sidewalk” area outside the parklet (building-clear path-parklet-walking zone-parallel parking)
 - All permitting fees have been waived
 - Considering special event use where entire street is repurposed

- Syracuse, NY
 - Released parklet plan on 7/15
 - <https://www.syracuse.com/restaurants/2020/07/whats-a-parklet-the-latest-idea-for-expanded-outdoor-dining-in-syracuse.html>
 - Local entrepreneur seems to be spearheading/using GoFundMe
 - City is helping with permits and guidelines
 - Permitting fee of \$75 plus \$200/month for each parking spot
 - Businesses that implemented parklets would have to pay the parking meter for the full day
 - There's a need for outdoor space in downtown areas, for safety reasons
- Green Bay, WI
 - City Council approved parklet plan on 6/29
 - More centralized, large parklet
 - Takes a line of parking spaces from a parking lot
 - Group space where patrons of all restaurants can sit and eat
- San Marcos, TX
 - Parklet plan approved in May
 - Up to 4 parklets per block (two on each side of the street)
 - Food sales allowed, but not alcohol
 - All permitting fees waived

Parklet Application for Outdoor Dining

Parklet Pilot Program in Downtown Bloomington

The City of Bloomington is implementing parklets in the downtown corridor on a trial basis through September 30, 2020. Any restaurant that wishes to convert parking spaces to outdoor dining must submit this Parklet Application for Outdoor Dining, for consideration by the City of Bloomington.

Parklet Example (Image shows a similar parklet in Cincinnati and is property of the "The Counter" website.)



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Parklet Application for Outdoor Dining

Implementation

Approval Process

City of Bloomington staff will review each parklet application on a case-by-case basis. Factors taken into consideration for approval are:

- Availability of parking in the area
- Parking needs vs. outdoor seating needs
- Safety for patrons seated in the parklets
- Feasibility of implementation
- Other considerations deemed necessary by the City of Bloomington

Timeline

For efficiency and feasibility of implementing multiple parklets across downtown Bloomington, new parklets will be implemented biweekly instead of on a rolling basis. The implementation dates are when the City of Bloomington will be setting up the barriers that go between the parklet and the street. In this application, we ask that you specify which implementation date is most convenient for your restaurant. Please note that applications must be submitted by the Friday prior to the next implementation date to be considered for that date.

Implementation dates for parklets are:

- Wednesday, August 19
- Wednesday, September 2
- Wednesday, September 16

(At this time, the parklet program is in a pilot phase through September 30th, 2020.)

[Back](#)

[Next](#)

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Parklet Application for Outdoor Dining

Responsibilities Associated with the Parklet

The City of Bloomington will provide:

- Water-filled barriers between the parklet and the street
- Initial street sweeping of the area, prior to the implementation of the parklet

Applicant businesses are responsible for:

- Seating and any other amenities for your parklet area
- Ongoing cleaning of your parklet area
- All requirements necessary to legally serve food and/or alcoholic beverages in the parklet. This includes, but is not limited to: business insurance that extends to the parklet and ATC permission to serve alcohol in the parklet (if applicable). The City of Bloomington is not responsible for making sure that your business has acquired the necessary permits and/or licenses.
- Compliance with ADA guidelines, both in the parklets themselves and on the sidewalk between the restaurants and the parklets
- If multiple restaurants are using the same dining space, coordination between establishments (who is using the space at what times, clean up, etc.) is the restaurants' responsibility

[Back](#)

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