

## City of Laramie

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## LARAMIE PARKLET PROGRAM - RFQ

The City of Laramie, in partnership with Laramie Main Street, has undertaken the creation of Laramie's first parklet. The hope is that this parklet will create new public space and encourage businesses to invest in their own parklet to enhance commerce and our Downtown District.

You may be asking yourself, what is a parklet? A parklet is essentially a micro park that takes over a parking space or multiple spaces, repurposing part of the street next to the sidewalk into a public space for people. These parklets can provide amenities for pedestrians, consumers and business owners as well as provide space for the public to relax, converse, sit, read, etc. For business owners, parklets have been found to boost sales and generally returning the investment after 2 seasons. A space that used to only cater to 1 or 2 parked cars is now a space that can cater to 10, 15 or 20+ people. The main idea behind a parklet, is that it is completely open to the public. Even though it may be in front of a business, anyone from the public can occupy it as it is located within the right-of-way and not on private property. Ultimately, the concept is that the business will pay for the space and benefit from the increased foot traffic in front of their property.

With that thought, parklets tend to be located on commercial and residential blocks, making them a part of daily routines like grabbing a morning coffee, or picking up the kids from school. Residents rarely go out of their way to visit a parklet, it's generally part of their daily path, or a path to a destination that they regularly visit.

The design of a parklet can vary. At its simplest form, a parklet could be barricades with tables on pavement that offer benefits such as more seating, increased foot traffic, greening the space and others to the surrounding businesses and a place to sit for pedestrians. At its wildest concept, a parklet could offer, WIFI, an art gallery, skatepark, climbing wall, board games, jungle gym, etc. For the City of Laramie's first parklet, we are looking for a simple and affordable design that does not rely on any mechanical systems or utilities. The design criteria is listed below.

### SUMMARY

Below we will highlight case studies and concepts created by a University of Wyoming Senior Industrial Design class, design criteria, budget, and the submittal process:

## UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING INDUSTRIAL DESIGN CONCEPTS

The City approached a senior design class at the University of Wyoming to create concepts for parklets with few parameters and no budget identified. The City gave certain parameters around the design, such as ADA compliance, size, engineering constraints, mobility, etc., which allowed the students to create some very imaginative concepts. The hope was not to necessarily pick one design concept, but rather incorporate design elements from each concept to create one design and provide inspiration for other ideas. Below are some images from the different concepts. While many of these designs may not be able to be constructed due to budget constraints, the important factor to remember is that a parklet can be so much more than just tables and chairs, it can truly be a great amenity for a street or community.

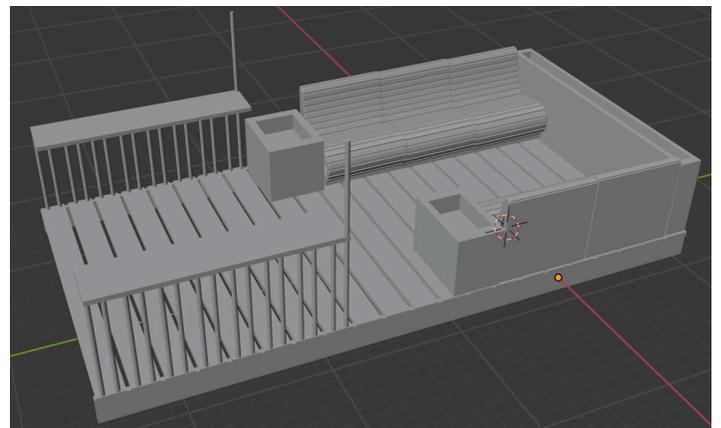
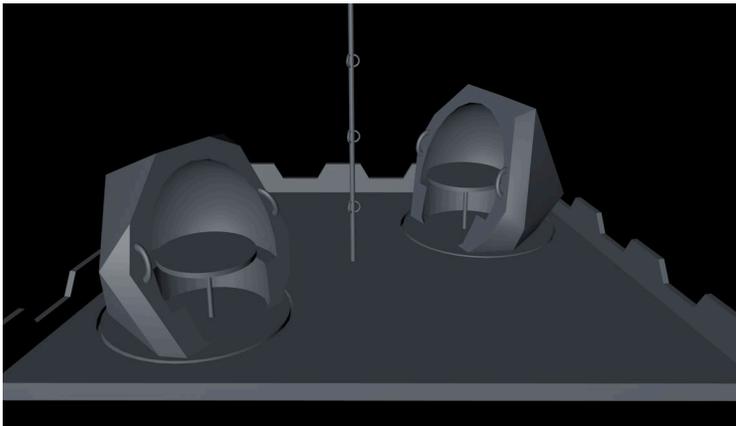
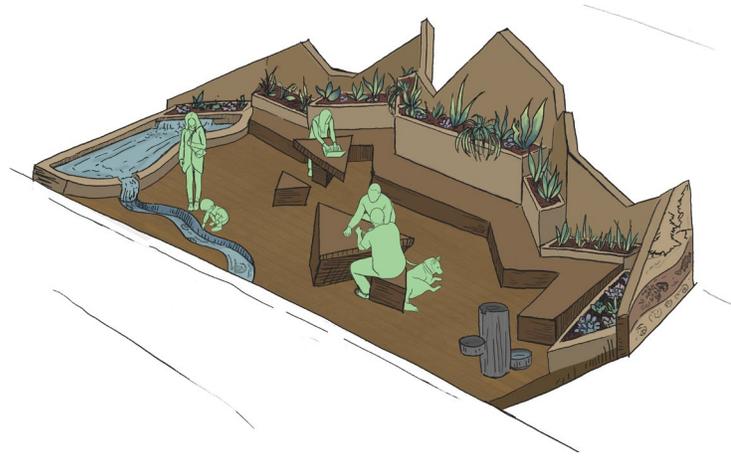
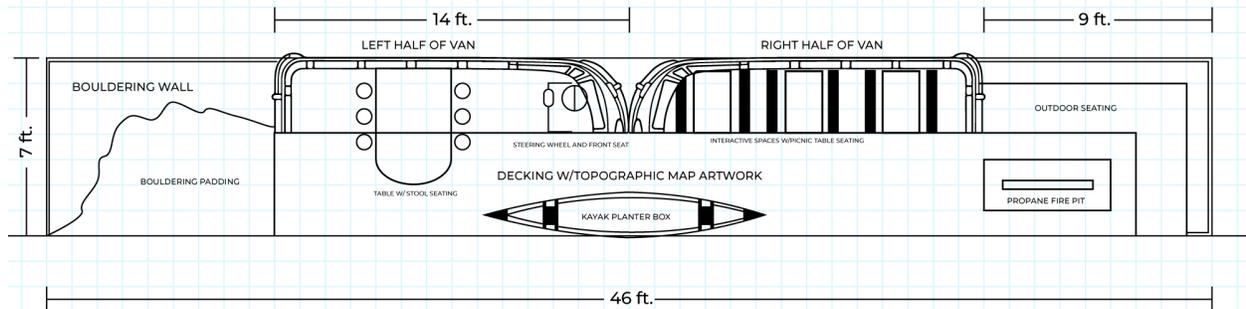


Figure 1: Top down view



As shown in these designs, there are multiple ways to design a parklet. Some were simpler than others, while others were complicated and required a much larger budget, however, they all accomplished the creation of a beneficial communal space. Most interesting was that all the parklets were designed in such a way that none relied on being placed in front of a specific business, instead any location would be interesting, even if it was in front of a vacant building

## DESIGN CRITERIA

The parklet will be installed within the city right-of-way, there are still certain design requirements that must be met for safety, functionality, ADA compliance, mobility and other important elements common to any structure that will be used by the public. The following requirements shall be included within the design of the parklet:

### Requirements:

- **Mobility:** The structure must be able to be moved with relative ease. This means that it can be moved through human power or basic equipment such as a truck or forklift. Mobility may also include the ability for the parklet to easily be rolled or broken down like a puzzle.
- **Size:** The parklet can be no larger than two diagonal parking spaces or one parallel space.
- **Parking Spaces = 10 feet x 20 feet**
- **Budget:** The design and construction must all be done within the budget that is provided below.
- **Vehicle Safety:** The outside edge of the parklet or side facing the street must allow for safe vehicle passage adjacent to it and should not have any protruding features that may be a safety concern for a vehicle.
- **Curb:** All parklet designs must be flush with the curb to ensure ADA compliance or provide ADA access in some fashion.
- **Drainage:** Drainage along the street and curb must not be impeded. A raised design or preservation of the curb flow line to allow water to flow freely through will be required.

- Codes: Parklet design shall conform to any code, including Laramie Municipal Code, Building Codes and City of Laramie Engineering Design Regulations.
- All contractors shall meet minimum Insurance requirements for the City of Laramie.

## Recommendations:

In addition to the requirements for this parklet, a parklet that includes or incorporates these recommended design elements found below will be considered more favorable than those designs that do not include these elements. It should be noted that designs do not need to encompass all of these to be considered a successful submission.

- Fixed seating, such as benches woven into the perimeter of the parklet or bolted seating in the interior.
- Accommodate both group and individual use; allow for conversations, lounging or just a space to catch up on your favorite book.
- Vibrant colors to match the murals, bike racks and other art installations around downtown.
- Mixture of Materials so that it's not defined by a pure wooden structure or an intense steel, industrial style.
- The implementation of vertical or dimensional elements that would allow for the structure to be seen as interesting from all street viewpoints, such as hanging plants, or a lofted seating area accessed by a ladder or slide.
- Designs that include murals, sculptures or any artistic element that would preferably be added by a local artist.
- Interactive Components could include board games, tic tac toe, chalk boards or anything else that may bring people for the simple pleasure of hanging and having something to do at the parklet.
- Sustainability Elements that may include recycled materials, raised garden beds, dog bowls, etc.
- Innovative Designs such as geometrical patterns, pieces that can be used for multiple functions, materials that work with the weather, sturdy or vandal resistant materials or overall design that allows for the parklet to remain outside throughout the year.

## PARKLET CASE STUDIES:

### University City District, Philadelphia, PA

<https://www.universitycity.org/parklets>

University City District has been implementing parklets into West Philadelphia since 2011 in partnership with the City of Philadelphia. The reason for the implementation of these parklets was to create more vibrant, safe, and healthy public spaces within Philadelphia. After putting in multiple parklets since 2011, in 2013, University City District set out to answer some questions. These questions revolved around the parklets ability to attract and retain users, the diversity of their users and uses, their impact on sales at adjacent businesses and the micro-scale environmental factors contributing to their success or failure.



The study showed that sales at businesses rose quickly, generally right away after a parklet construction. The uses of these parklets varied as well, generally based on the type of business that was adjacent to them. The highlight was that the parklets were used for more than just eating or drinking. People also would gather there to have conversations, play board games, to just sit in isolation or reading and writing. This shows that a parklet can attract users of all kinds, not just those associated with the business they are adjacent too. The interesting aspect of University City's parklet

program is that it was initiated through a single organization, partnering with local businesses. In Laramie, we're hoping that this first parklet inspires private businesses to invest in their own parklet through an existing process with the City's Engineering Division.

### GroundsPlay, San Francisco, California

<https://groundplaysf.org/>

Groundsplay is an organization that works with everyday citizens in San Francisco to improve public spaces through temporary installations, such as parklets. They have outlined the process that it takes to install a parklet and the costs to expect.



In a 2015 study, Groundsplay found that 26% of the San Francisco residents lived within a 5 minute walk of a parklet. They are a neighborhood amenity, but not a destination. Similar to University City District, Groundsplay has found economic benefits of parklets as well, showing that business license turnover was less, showing that businesses are lasting longer when a parklet is nearby, as well as land value tends to rise after a parklet has been introduced.

As parklets are generally carried out by private citizens and businesses, the designs end up feeling intimate and familiar. Due to these designs and that they are part of a person's daily routine, a sense of community starts to be developed within these spaces.

## BUDGET

The Planning Department, Laramie Main Street and the Musser Fund have provided funding for the parklet. This budget will encompass materials, construction and the design fee, the total budget for the parklet project will be \$13,500.

## SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Each applicant will be required to turn in a design submittal packet. The design submittal packet shall include:

1. Letter of Qualification
  - a. Detailing the applicants experience and previous projects or work that speak to the skills needed to construct a parklet.
2. Proposed design of parklet
  - a. Sketch or sketches that includes features of the parklet, dimensions, mobility and materials.
3. Budget
  - a. Itemized budget shall be provided. Budget will be used to ensure that it will meet the required budget.

One physical (hard copy) and one electronic file of the packet shall be submitted to the Planning Division for review.

## TIMELINE

- RFQ Published: [March 7<sup>th</sup> 2021](#)
- Final Submittal Date and Time: [May 14<sup>th</sup> 2021 by 4:00 PM MST](#) (All application shall be mailed to Planning Division, PO BOX C, Laramie, WY, 82073; physical address is 405 Grand Avenue); digital copies emailed to [planning@cityoflaramie.org](mailto:planning@cityoflaramie.org)
- Review Completed by: [May 21<sup>st</sup> 2021](#)

## REVIEW PROCESS

Once the submittal period has closed, an internal review of the Submittals will be completed by selected City Staff and Laramie Main Street. The City may choose to hold interviews if it is determined that they are needed in order to select an applicant. Once an applicant has been selected the applicant will be required to enter into a contract for the work and it shall be approved prior to any work commencing.

## CONTACT

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