



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation, Energy, & Utilities Committee

FROM: Elizabeth Ross, Planner, DPW
Caleb Manna, Excavation Inspector, DPW

DATE: November 23, 2021

RE: Street Seat & Parklet Program: Updates to Guide 2022

Recommendations

No action is requested at this time.

Street Seat & Parklet Program: 2019 Pilot, Guide Development, & 2020 Making Space

The Department of Public Works' (DPW) and the Community and Economic Development Office's (CEDO) Parklet Pilot Program was introduced to the Public Works Commission and the Transportation, Energy, and Utilities Commission (TEUC) at their February 2019 meetings. Three locations were successfully permitted and installed in the summer of 2019.

Based on the pilot's success and the generally positive responses from the surveys, staff created a Street Seats/Parklet Program Guide to continue the program. The pilot helped inform the policies and processes to have in place for a successful Street Seat/Parklet Program. In November 2019, staff returned to the Public Works Commission, TEUC, and License Committee and received their endorsement for the expansion of the pilot into a permanent program, outlined in the Street Seat & Parklet Program Guide.

The purpose of the Street Seat and Parklet Program Guide is to streamline all of the information needed to apply for, permit, and construct a Parklet or Street Seat into one document. The guide consists of six sections: Introduction, Site Selection, Applying, Design, Permits, and Post-Installation. The technical requirements found in the Site Selection and Design sections were taken from Great Streets BTV Design Standards.

The Street Seat and Parklet Program Guide was paused in 2020 and 2021 to advance the Making Space program, a multi-department initiative to develop expedited, low-cost strategies for businesses and residents to enjoy getting outside and recover during the pandemic. The Making Space initiative was a streamlined version of the Streets Seats & Parklet program. Key changes included scaling back the public outreach requirements, waiving the fees, and allowing permitting directly through staff.

Street Seat & Parklet Program 2022: Next Steps, Program Guide, & Policy Direction

In 2022, the program will be returning to the more traditional format originally developed at the end of 2019. A summary of updates to the 2019 version, as well as changes from the pandemic version of 2020/2021, are listed below:

- Applicants will receive an Encumbrance Permit through approval by the License Committee, whose meetings are open to the public.
- The applicant will be required to post the proposed Encumbrance Permit in a conspicuous location at least 10 days prior to the License Committee meeting, rather than requiring staff to flyer the surrounding area.
- The Encumbrance application requires proof of public outreach to demonstrate that the applicant has support from neighbors.
- All businesses will need to apply for a new encumbrance permit for the 2022 season, regardless of whether they have participated in the past or not.
- Following the expanded demand and general support for Parklets & Street Seats during the pandemic,
 - The original limit of 1 parklet / block or 10 metered spaces in the city has been updated to a new limit of no more than 30% of parking spaces per block to be occupied by street seats or parklets. This limit was in place during the Making Space initiative and has received wide interdepartmental support (DPW, CEDO, Fire, Church Street Marketplace).
 - The selection committee and scoring process for applicants previously in place under the 2019 version has been removed.
- A platform will be required.
- Outside of business hours, seating must be available to the public.
- DPW will provide signage regarding public availability outside of business hours.
- The use of tents will continue to be allowed, provided the applicant obtains necessary permits. Any tent over 200 sq ft will require a permit from the Fire Department.

Feedback

We welcome your comments and feedback. Please reach out to Elizabeth Ross (Transportation Planner, eross@burlingtonvt.gov, 802-391-6808) if you have feedback in advance of the November 23, 2021 TEUC meeting. Any comments/suggestions/edits from the TEUC will be taken under consideration before the Program updates are taken to the License Committee at their December 2021 meeting.

Key staff points of contact

- Caleb Manna - issues the Encumbrance Permits for DPW (cmanna@burlingtonvt.gov)
- Elizabeth Ross - policy and program guide for Street Seats and Parklets for DPW (ERoss@burlingtonvt.gov)
- Will Clavelle - business-related programs in CEDO; often the first point of contact for businesses entering this program (wclavelle@burlingtonvt.gov)

Attachments

- Attachment 1: Street Seat & Parklet Program Guide (2022 Version)