



City Manager’s Report
May 9, 2017 City Council Meeting
Prepared By: Pierre Rivas, Development Services Director

Item#: 12.1

Subject: Approve a request by the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency for the installation of a parklet to be located on Main Street occupying a single parking space within the public right-of-way; and direct staff to process and issue a special temporary use permit (TUP 17-01) and encroachment permit for the same.

Background:

El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency requesting approval of a special temporary use permit (TUP 17-01) and encroachment permit for installation of a demonstration parklet to be located on Main Street occupying a single parking space within the public right-of-way.

El Dorado County received a \$10,000 grant from the 2016 Health Officers Association of California Communications Award to fund what is known as “El Dorado County’s Healthy Living Parklet Design Competition” project.

Staff was approached by Kristin Tornincasa, Department Analyst with the County Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Division, about temporarily locating a parklet on Main Street as a demonstration project to showcase the public health benefits of a parklet by encouraging physical activity. As no formal process for the consideration of parklets currently exists in the City, staff proposed processing the parklet through the special temporary use permit (TUP) application process (Code Section 10-4-7) suggesting that the review would involve a discussion item before the Planning Commission with final consideration by the City Council with direction being given to staff to process and issue said permits. An encroachment permit in accordance with City Code Title 8, Chapter 3 *Encroachments Onto City Streets*, would be necessary since the parklet would be constructed and placed within the public right-of-way occupying one vehicle parking stall within Main Street.

To facilitate public and stakeholder involvement, Ms. Tornincasa made presentations to the Placerville Downtown Association (PDA) on October 6, 2016 and December 1, 2016; and to the Placerville Economic Advisory Committee on October 21, 2016. Following these presentations, staff placed a presentation item before the City Council at their regular meeting of October 25, 2016. Following Tornincasa’s presentation, the Council by consensus gave unanimous endorsement of the project.

To invite the participation in the design of the parklet by high school students, the County sponsored a “Design A Parklet Competition” which was open to all county high school students. Design application submittals were due by January 13, 2017. A total of 21 parklet conceptual designs were submitted which involved a total of 30 students participating from three high schools. The winning design would also receive a \$250 scholarship along with their winning design being constructed. The Healthy Living Parklet Committee selected the top three parklet designs based on an established set of criteria. The selection of the winning design was opened to the public from January 20 through January 29, 2017 via online voting. The winning design was selected on January 31, 2017.

The winning parklet conceptual design was submitted by Emily Bobrowsky, a student at Oak Ridge High School. Her Main Street Parklet description is as follows: *“I see people relaxing and socializing in my Parklet. It will support healthy living activities like running, walking, biking, socializing and getting outside to get fresh air. The Parklet will provide amenities like bike parking, seating, shade, electrical outlets for charging phones and lighting for extended hours. I used recycled/repurposed materials like recycled fences that have fallen after the storms and reused artificial AstroTurf from a sports complex or another sports field. I was also resourceful by incorporating an off-grid solar PVC with a battery pack so that it can use the sunlight to create electricity to run the lights and electrical outlets. I used the theme of “Healthy Living” to influence my Parklet design by adding bike racks, which encourages people to ride their bike. It also encourages people that are walking or running around Placerville to stop and take a break. By including electrical outlets, it allows people to sit and socialize, which increases mental health, while their phone is charging.”*

Ms. Bobrowsky captured the purpose and intent of the parklet in her parklet description. A parklet occupies a single or multiple vehicle parking spot transforming it into public space to allow people to sit, relax, and enjoy the city surroundings.

On March 7, 2017, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors formally authorized the Director of Health and Human Services Agency to submit an application for a special temporary use permit and encroachment permit for construction and installation of the parklet. The TUP application was received by the Planning Division on March 8, 2017.

Discussion:

Parklets were first introduced to the Planning Commission during the public workshop held on September 15, 2016. At that workshop both outdoor sidewalk dining and parklets were discussed as a preliminary step towards development of an ordinance to regulate these uses. Following the workshop, the Commission requested that staff confine the process to development of an ordinance to address sidewalk dining only. No further discussion at the Planning Commission level regarding Parklets has taken place.

Staff agendaized the County application with the Planning Commission as a discussion item for consideration at their regular meeting on April 4, 2017 and requested that the Planning

Commission consider the proposed temporary parklet as a “demonstration” project to facilitate comments, suggestions, and recommendations regarding the same for consideration by staff and the City Council.

Concerns expressed by the public and Commissioners included:

- *Parklet Location: Suggestions included locating the parklet on the upper end of Main Street near Town Hall or on Broadway. Bell Tower is not considered a good location due to traffic congestion and speeds. Locate next to a bulb out – protects one end from vehicles. Consider moving the parklet to different locations.*
- *Safety: Concerns were expressed about vehicles hitting the parklet, persons “hanging out” in the parklet at night, users of the parklet tripping over the parked bikes - re-design the parklet allowing for the bicycle parking to be oriented towards the bulb-out.*
- *Parking: Loss of a parking space.*
- *Other: Parklet could become an “attractive” nuisance. Prefer benches to parklets. The parklet will significantly alter the historic character of Main Street. The process for consideration of the parklet is flawed. Artificial turf is not permitted by City Code.*

A petition, signed by 43 individuals opposed to the parklet demonstration project, was submitted to the Planning Commission by Kirk Smith (Attachment 2).

Note: Many comments were directed at the design of the parklet. Final design of the parklet itself is on-going between the original designer Emily Bobrowsky-Oak Ridge High School student, Max Foreman-Oak Ridge High School Teacher, and Charlie Downs-Licensed Architect. The construction and installation of the parklet will require a building permit issued by the City Building Division and an encroachment permit issued by the Engineering Division.

As a demonstration project, the location is being proposed to be located in the downtown Main Street area. Originally, the parklet was proposed to be located in the vicinity of the Bell Tower at 433 Main Street which is an area of lower traffic and traffic speeds; and in proximity to the Farmer’s Market. Other locations include adjacent to the bulb-outs at 447 and 451 Main Street (see Attachment 1, TUP application). Following comments received from business owners and the general public, the proposed location of the parklet is recommended by staff to be at either 447 Main (Kelsey’s Needle Craft/Main Street Yoga) or 451 Main (Creekside Place) adjacent to the existing bulb-out. Staff has received requests from a number of the businesses located in Creekside Place (Timmy’s Brown Bag, Bell Towner Bakery, and Delloree’s Confections) to locate the parklet at 451 Main Street directly in front of Creekside Place. Staff agrees that the placement of the parklet at Creekside Place represents the optimum location which allows for observation of the demonstration parklet usage.

The parklet is only temporary and would be in placed from May through September of 2017. During this time, the parklet would be monitored. Oversight and maintenance of the parklet would be performed by the Healthy Living Parklet Committee. Following its removal and

relocation to the Public Health facility at 931 Spring Street, the parklet will be evaluated by the Committee to determine its value to the community.

Following the term of the parklet, the City may desire to consider an ordinance for the permitting process and regulation of parklets which, typically, are requested by adjoining business owners such as cafes and restaurants to encourage business. The City Council may also want to consider changes to its encroachment permitting regulations and process to differentiate between “durable” encroachments versus temporary construction encroachments.

Options:

1. Authorize staff to issue the TUP and Encroachment Permit as recommended.
2. Do not authorize/direct staff to issue a temporary use permit and encroachment permit for the parklet.
3. Direct staff to work with applicant to find alternative location(s) than those proposed.

Cost: Costs related to issuance and processing of the temporary use permit and encroachment permit are negligible.

Budget Impact: None.

Recommendation: Approve a request by the El Dorado County Health and Human Services Agency for the installation of a parklet to be located on Main Street occupying a single parking space within the public right-of-way; and direct staff to process and issue a special temporary use permit (TUP 17-01) and encroachment permit for the same.



M. Cleve Morris, City Manager



Pierre Rivas, Development Services Director

Attachments:

1. Special Temporary Use Permit 2017-01 application
2. *El Dorado County's Healthy Living Parklet Design Competition* information, Sep. 2016
3. Healthy Living Parklet Factsheet
4. “No Parklet Petition” submitted by Kirk Smith to Planning Commission April 4, 2017
5. *El Dorado County's Healthy Living Parklet Design Competition* PowerPoint presentation