

Playhouse District Colorado Blvd. Initiative

City Council

March 24, 2014

Department of Transportation





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April 2012, members of the Playhouse District Association (PDA) began looking for initiatives that would embrace Project for Public Spaces' principles for creating great community places, particularly the concepts of *have a vision* and *lighter, quicker, cheaper*.

One of the initiatives that surfaced was a pilot project for parklets on the north side of Colorado Boulevard in the block between Oakland and Madison Avenues.

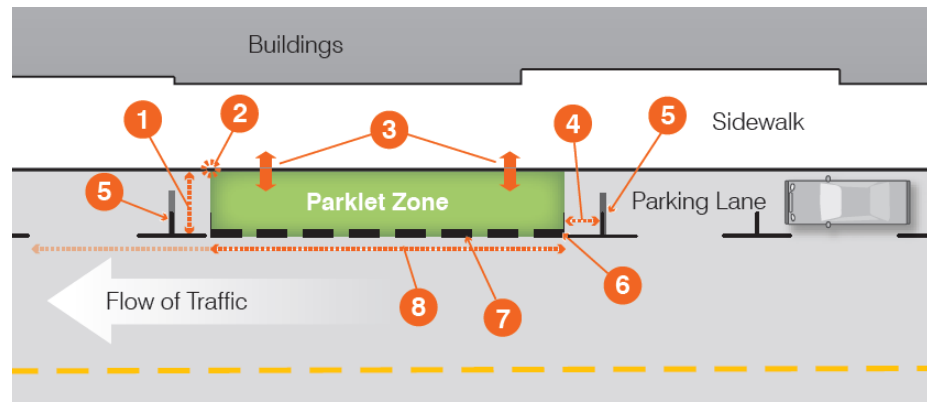




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- A parklet is a temporary sidewalk extension into the roadway.
- The installations typically create additional pedestrian-oriented public space by transforming space allocated to vehicle parking into an expanded sidewalk area with seating, landscaping and other amenities that are open to the public.



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- Parklets had previously seen limited deployment in Pasadena during PARK(ing) Day, an annual event in September that advocates for the creation of temporary parks in curb parking spaces.





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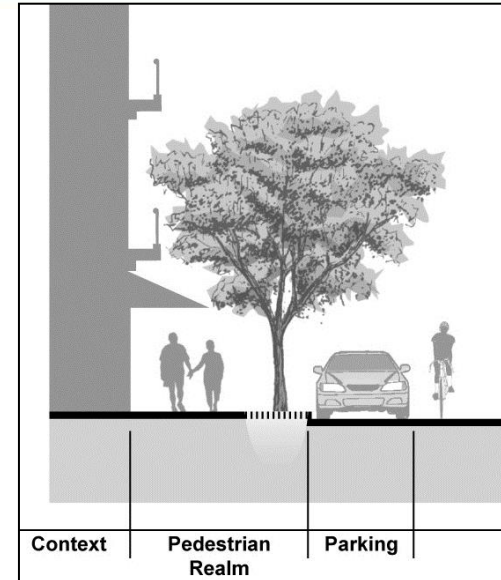
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The initiative on Colorado Boulevard proposed by the PDA supports the City Council strategic planning goals to:

- Improve mobility and accessibility throughout the City.
- Support and promote the quality of life and local economy.

The proposal supports the adopted Mobility Element Goals to:

- Support streetscape amenities
- Protected sidewalks and pedestrian zone
- Measures to protect pedestrians



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The initiative is also consistent with the following policies included in the Draft Mobility Element:

- Streets should reflect individual neighborhood character and needs, and support healthy activities such as walking and bicycling.
- Continue investing in pedestrian improvements to create safe and comfortable environment for walking. Improvements such as sidewalk repairs, providing more shade and street furniture.
- Integrate pedestrian improvements in traffic management programs to help reduce traffic noise, volumes and speeds that make it unpleasant and unsafe to walk.



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The Department of Transportation commissioned a brief analysis of parklet deployment in San Francisco.

How might parklets fit into Pasadena's Complete Streets planning, particularly from the standpoint of improving the pedestrian crossing of Colorado Boulevard.





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- The PDA continued to pursue the parklet concept and formed a subcommittee to explore the initiative in 2012.
- The Department of Transportation met periodically with that subcommittee to both understand the directions that the subcommittee wanted to go and to provide technical support related to transportation issues.
- The Department of Transportation is interested in the PDA initiative because it provides an alternative model for improving pedestrian conditions, including the crossings of Colorado Boulevard, in this portion of the Central District.

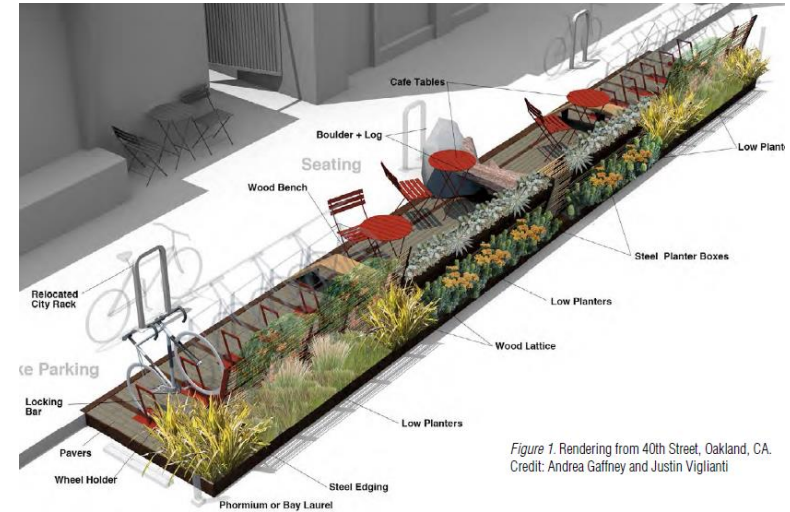


Figure 1. Rendering from 40th Street, Oakland, CA. Credit: Andrea Gaffney and Justin Vigilanti

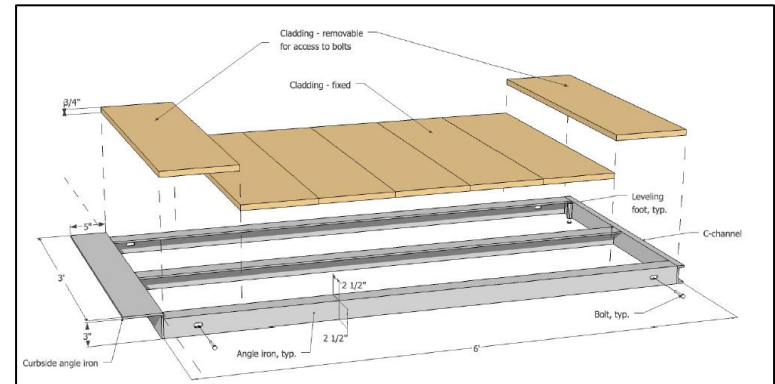


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The initiative developed by the PDA involves two components:

- The first of which is a series of parklets at selected locations on Colorado Boulevard between Los Robles and Hudson Avenues. The parklets could be temporary platforms designed to City standards and removable so as not to interfere with the Rose Parade.
- The change to angled parking is the second component of the initiative since it would require reconfiguration of Colorado Boulevard from a five-lane roadway to a three-lane roadway to make room for the added dimension of angled parking.



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- Staff from the City Manager's Office, Planning and Community Development Department, City Attorney's Office and the Public Works Department joined the Transportation Department with assessing the feasibility of the parklets concept and determining what role the City would play if the initiative advances.
 - > Locations
 - > Design/Construction
 - > Regulation
 - > Colorado Reconfiguration



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- In the interest of providing for the continued use of Colorado Boulevard as a main thoroughfare through Pasadena, the suggestion was made to use reverse-angled parking rather than head-in angled parking. Deployments around the US have shown that the effect of reverse-angled parking on traffic flow is similar to that imposed by parallel parking with the added benefit that the improved driver's view of the roadway results in easier entry into traffic and fewer conflicts with transit or bicycles.



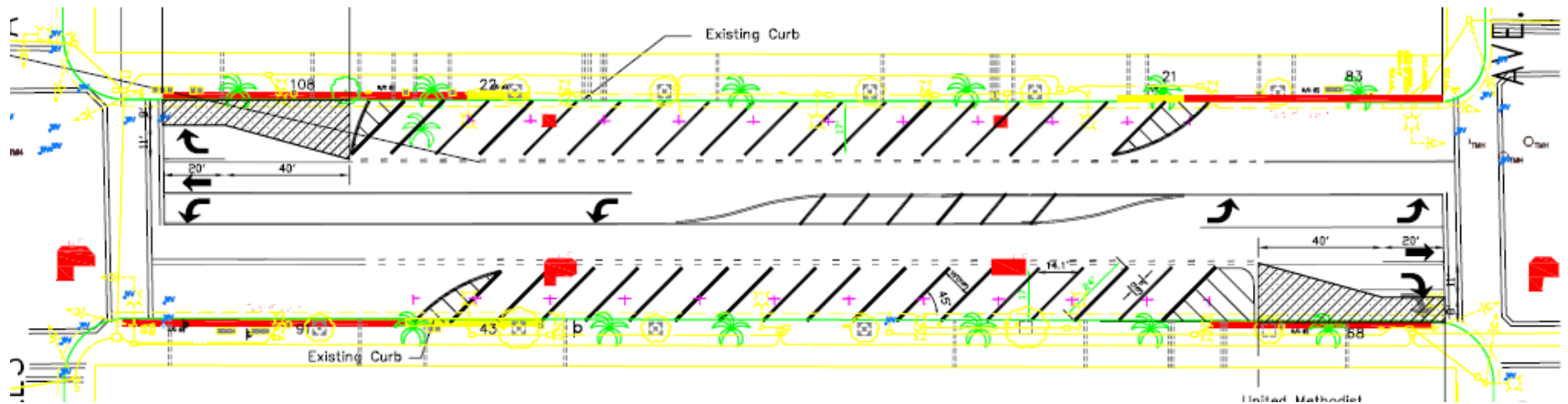
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This analysis evaluated the potential level of traffic diversion that might occur if a lane in each direction is removed from Colorado Boulevard between Hudson and Los Robles Avenues and has looked at intersections to determine how operations might be affected with fewer lanes on Colorado Boulevard and potentially more traffic on Green and Union Streets.

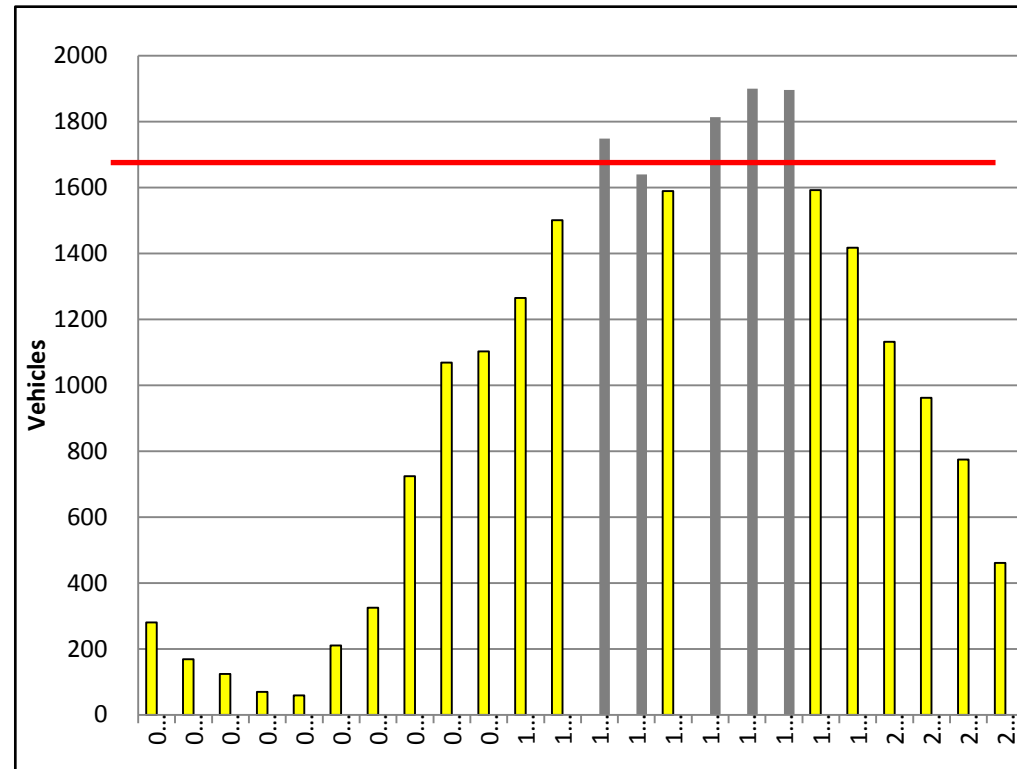




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- The simulation indicates that evening peak period conditions would be maintained at or near existing levels on Colorado Boulevard if roughly ten percent of the existing traffic volumes on Colorado Boulevard were to divert to Union and Green Streets.
- This level of diversion is approximately 200 vehicles per hour (about 100 vehicles per hour per direction).
- The diverted traffic would represent about a one percent increase in the traffic volume on Union and Green Streets.



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- **Next Steps**
 - > Continue to participate with the PDA in investigating the feasibility of implementing parklets on Colorado Blvd.