



CITY OF MCKINNEY, TEXAS

Legislation Text

File #: 20-0012M2, **Version:** 1

Consider/Discuss/Act on an Ordinance Amending Chapter 87, "Special Events," of the City's Code of Ordinances by Adding New Provisions Permitting Parklets Within Certain Areas of the Corporate Limits of the City of McKinney and Providing Minimum Requirements Thereof; Repealing Conflicting Ordinances; Providing a Savings Clause; Providing a Severability Clause; Providing for Publication of the Caption of this Ordinance; and Providing for an Effective and Termination Date.

COUNCIL GOAL: Enhance the Quality of Life in McKinney
5D: Promote reinvestment activities in McKinney's historic downtown that balance preservation of historic character and current market needs

MEETING DATE: December 15, 2020

DEPARTMENT: Development Services - Planning Department

CONTACT: Alek Miller, AICP, Planner II
Mark Doty, Assistant Director of Planning
Kim Flom, AICP/PLA, Assistant City Manager
Amy Rosenthal, Director, Main Street / McKinney Performing Arts Center

RECOMMENDED CITY COUNCIL ACTION: Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendments.

ITEM SUMMARY: In order to support Downtown McKinney businesses that have been affected by limited occupancy and social distancing requirements, the City Council directed staff to pursue a parklet program. Parklets would be located in on-street parallel parking spaces on blocks outside the Courthouse Square and would provide stores and restaurants with the ability to expand their operations outside while maintaining a clear path of travel on the sidewalk.

Cities around the country and in Texas have addressed this need by allowing use of on-street parking spaces for expansion of dining space, sometimes called "parklets." This approach creates additional dining space and allows for greater physical distance between people. Allowing this type of expansion would support downtown businesses, while testing out a new strategy for improving the pedestrian environment.

BACKGROUND:

The McKinney Restaurant Council raised the idea of allowing dining in on-street parking spaces at the November 10, 2020 City Council Special Meeting. Members of the Restaurant Council noted that their businesses have been challenged by the reduced capacity and social distancing requirements that have occurred as a result of the ongoing pandemic. The McKinney Restaurant Council has provided responses to a survey about business support for a parklet program in downtown, which

received 61 responses. In a multiple-choice question regarding whether they would be interested in a parklet, 24 respondents replied “Yes”; 27 respondents replied “No”; and 13 responded, “I’m not sure. I need more information.” The attachments to this report include the full set of responses and comments to the survey.

Staff presented information on a parklet program to last through the end of the state of emergency orders related to the pandemic at the City Council Work Session on December 1, 2020. Based on direction provided by the Council, an ordinance is attached that amends the City’s Code of Ordinances to allow for a parklet program.

Since the meeting on December 1, staff has made two modifications to the requirements of the ordinance: First, the maximum height of the parklet has been increased from 36 inches to 42 inches to improve the comfort and safety of users; Second, the minimum area of the parklet has been decreased from two parking spaces to one parking space because in order to allow for smaller structures.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

Chapter 87 (Special Events):

The proposed amendments would add “Article VII - Parklets” to the Special Events Chapter of the Code of Ordinances. The proposed amendments will codify the requirements of the parklet program, including location and design requirements. The proposed ordinance is attached.

CITY-OWNED PARKLET FUNDING

In addition to initiating amendments to create a program to allow private businesses to create their own parklets, the city is pursuing the acquisition of up to two parklets that could be leased to interested businesses. At the Work Session meeting on December 1, the City Council expressed interest in using existing funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to sponsor the construction of a parklet. In order to comply with CARES Act requirements, the parklets need to be installed prior to the end of the calendar year. The City is working with four restaurants that submitted applications to utilize the parklets. These parklets will be in place from late December until July 2, 2021 or the end of the pandemic occupancy restrictions, per the ordinance. Staff will return to City Council for a discussion of future use of the city-owned parklet when the end of the pandemic nears.

OPPOSITION TO OR SUPPORT OF REQUEST: Staff has received no emails or phone calls in support of or opposition to the proposed amendments.