

**From:**  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 27, 2022 2:56 PM  
**To:** TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
**Subject:** Public Comment on item 5-1, Long-Term Parklet Program of 1/27 Transportation Commission Meeting

To members of the Transportation Commission and City Staff

I was gratified to see the overwhelmingly positive response by community members, visitors and local businesses in the Long-Term Parklet survey recently conducted. Most people, including a majority of non-restaurant business owners, share my enthusiasm for the ambiance and liveliness that this use of outdoor space has brought to Solano Avenue. The majority of community survey respondents indicate they spend more money on Solano Avenue than they previously had, which is a great reflection of what Parklets bring to our city.

As a user of and believer in active transportation, I was also excited to see the numbers in Slide 11. 83.68% of survey takers walk to Solano, 17.91% bike to Solano, and 2.61% take transit. So almost 1 of 5 of the 1375 survey takers ride their bikes to do business on Albany's "Main Street." That's why I was dismayed to see that Slide 23 stated "Parklets currently occupy 22% of the parking spaces on Lower Solano." That percentage refers solely to automobile parking spaces, which do not comprise all existing parking spaces. Since almost 1 in 5 survey takers ride their bikes to access Solano Avenue, parking space counts and surveys must include bicycle parking. **I did a count of bicycle parking on Lower Solano Avenue and counted 112 bicycle parking spaces on Solano between Masonic and San Pablo Avenues.** Every parklet either has a Bike Bike Rack associated with the restaurant, one or more within its block, or is part of Albany Strollers & Rollers' most recent order of Bike Bike Racks (Suzette Crêpe Café & Oaktown Spice Shop cosponsored one, as did Chez Mansour & Surowitz Immigration Law.) The fact that Albany will soon have 74 Bike Bike Racks is extremely significant, as those businesses invest in customer/client/patient/student/staff bike parking by sharing the cost with Albany Strollers & Rollers. Businesses investing in bike parking include restaurants & cafes, retail shops, gyms, realtors, law & architecture firms, art studio, bars, medical & dental offices, educational facilities and florist shops - all types of businesses value bicycle parking!



It is clear from the survey and from living here in Albany that many people access businesses by bicycle. Please direct City Staff to include bicycle parking going forward in any parking survey or study, including as this Long-Term Parklet item moves forward. I would be happy to assist with any such research and count.

Thanks for your consideration.



**From:**  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 2, 2022 9:51 PM  
**To:** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Agenda Item 6-1 of EDC Meeting February 3, 2022

To the Economic Development Committee and City Staff:

When your advisory body paved the way for Albany's Parklets in June of 2020, I don't think anyone anticipated the positive impact they would have on our Community and Business District! City Staff's recent Community Survey (Agenda Item 6-1) has shown that the parklets bring more than just a vibrant and lively atmosphere – they bring business. 1375 community members and visitors and 125 businesses completed the survey, an amazing job of outreach by Staff.

The numbers show overwhelming support among the community and businesses: Slide 5 shows almost 70% of the Community in "Strong Support" and 18% in "Support" of the parklets. Slide 13 shows almost 50% of Businesses in "Strong Support" and 23% in "Support" of the parklets. In perhaps the most salient figures to your advisory body, Slide 6 shows **57.12% of people spend more time and/or money on Solano Avenue than they had previously, and 34.29% report no change. So people who may plan to have lunch outside will stay, stroll, and spend their dollars at other businesses. That's a great reflection of the clear economic positive that the parklets bring to our City.**

The numbers in Slide 11 tell the tale of a walkable, bikeable Albany business district. 83.68% of survey takers walk to Solano, 17.91% bike to Solano, and 2.61% take transit. So almost 1 of 5 of the 1375 survey takers ride their bikes to do business on Albany's "Main Street." Slide 26 elaborates by stating that "about 15% of respondents only drive to Solano" (meaning they use multiple modes) and that the majority of active transportation users and drivers are spending more time on Solano Avenue than previously! That shows that in addition to the car parking spaces on Solano and on side streets, the 70+ bike racks (2-4 bikes per rack) on and within a block of Albany's portion of Solano fill the need for people to find convenient parking.



If the parklets are to become permanent, many people feel that ADA compliance and robustness of some structures will need to be improved and we agree. During these challenging Covid times, businesses themselves have invested their own money in parklets at the same time they've been trying to survive and pay staff. Some have been helped by volunteer run GoFundMe campaigns and grant/loan programs. To improve ADA accessibility and strength of Parklets, the City should invest financially, as other Cities, such as Berkeley, have.

Thank you for helping get this valuable program off the ground in 2020, and for your part in helping the parklets become a permanent feature of Albany's dynamic business district.

Sincerely,  
Vonnie Davidson  
Amy Smolens  
Albany Inside Out

**From:**  
**To:** [ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE](#)  
**Subject:** parklet meeting 6-1  
**Date:** Thursday, May 5, 2022 10:36:31 AM

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We have been in business on Solano Ave. for 45 years and are hoping to stay here. The parklet in our block has more than the allowed number of spaces, parks the same car on the opposite side of the parklet most days and is often closed from 2:30-4:30 during the week. After calling the city before and after the holidays more than a dozen times, I gave up and I'm still without any parking in front of my store on Solano. My customers have small children and will shop where they can park! One of my sons is a chef and has worked on Solano, so I'm not against the idea of outdoor space for restaurants. However I want regulations for them to be upheld, location and size to be determined with input from other businesses that are not food related.

As things are now I am totally against the parklets remaining, because it is impacting my business not to have any close parking.

-Lastly, a huge thank you to Kate Miller who reached out and then connected us to Brennen Brown who has helped greatly and listened to all our complaints, thanks to you as well.-

**Toy-Go-Round**



1361 Solano Ave.  
Albany, CA 94706  
(510) 527-1363

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**From:**  
**To:** [ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE](#)  
**Subject:** Economic Development Committee - Item 6-1  
**Date:** Thursday, May 5, 2022 2:05:14 PM

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Hi there ,

My name is Izat Eliyan . I'm one of the owners of Zaytoon Restaurant. I'm writing this e mail in support of the outdoor seating on Solano . The out door seating helped our restaurant survive the pandemic during the past 2 years . I believe that the outdoor seating on Solano made the neighborhood more vibrant. The feedback that we are getting from the community is very positive. Most if not all our guests love the outdoor seating. Thus I encourage the city of Albany make the Parklets on Solano permanent.

Izat

**From:**  
**To:** [ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Agenda Item 6-1 of EDC Meeting May 5, 2022  
**Date:** Thursday, May 5, 2022 4:12:38 PM

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To the Economic Development Committee and City Staff:

When your advisory body paved the way for Albany's Parklets in June of 2020, I don't think anyone fully anticipated the positive impact they would have on our Community, Business District and economy!

City Staff's comprehensive Community Survey numbers show overwhelming support among 1375 community members and 125 businesses: **Almost 70% of the Community is in "Strong Support" and 18% in "Support"(SO 88% SUPPORT) of the parklets. Almost 50% of Businesses are in "Strong Support" and 23% in "Support"(SO 73% OF ALL BUSINESSES SUPPORT) of the parklets.** In perhaps the most salient figures to your advisory body, Slide 6 shows **57.12% of people SPEND MORE TIME AN/OR MONEY ON SOLANO AVENUE than they had previously, and 34.29% report no change. So people who may plan to have lunch outside will stay, stroll, and spend their dollars at other businesses. - THE VERY DEFINITION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.** These numbers reflect a clear economic positive that the parklets bring to our City. In addition, over the past two years, your body and other appointed and elected bodies have received hundreds of letters from community members and business owners in support of the parklets. Your Economic Development Committee should do what it can to make it easy and affordable for businesses to keep the parklets.

If the parklets are to become permanent, clearly ADA compliance and robustness of some structures will need to be improved. However, we think that the requirement for a full platform at every location is excessive and may be financially difficult - many cities require an ADA ramp for accessibility as well as a percentage of accessible seating, which Staff proposes to require. **Some restaurants may opt for a full platform, but please make that an option, as long as proper ADA access is provided.**

During the challenging Covid times, businesses themselves invested their own money in parklets at the same time they were trying to survive and pay staff. Some have been helped by volunteer run GoFundMe campaigns and grant/loan programs. To improve ADA accessibility and robustness of Parklets, the City should invest financially, as other cities, such as Berkeley, have. **With these increased requirements please request from Council that the City of Albany help fund the parklet improvements that are energizing our business district.**

As Albany's Economic Development Committee, please continue to do your part in helping the parklets become a permanent feature of Albany's dynamic business district and approve these guidelines with the above requested changes.

Sincerely,  
Vonnie Davidson  
Amy Smolens  
Albany Inside Out