

**INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL CONFERENCE**  
on the theme "Architecture is the Abode of Time" which will be held at  
Samarkand State Architecture and Construction University

**THE MEANING OF PARKS AND THE CREATION OF COMFORTABLE  
ENVIRONMENT IN MODERN URBAN ARCHITECTURE**

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**Abstract:** The article is devoted to solving the problems of modern urban improvement by organizing a new architectural form - parklets. The role, advantages and principles of designing parklets in an urban environment are also considered. Information is provided on the history of parklets and existing examples on a global scale.

**Keywords:** improvement, parklet, gardening, parking, art project, garden park.

Currently, due to the rapid development of urbanization, the problem of urban improvement is becoming particularly acute. In many settlements, especially old ones, organizing landscaping and park areas becomes a difficult task for architects, since dense urban development does not allow enough space to be allocated for comfortable stay and recreation.

Streets are not just for travel and parking, but also for leisure, architecture and street activity. And it so happens that even recently reconstructed streets do not always have wide sidewalks due to objective circumstances. If this is not a problem in winter, then in summer many more people come out onto the streets and they need more space.

One of the ways to solve this problem in modern cities can be considered the organization of parklets. A parklet is an extension of the sidewalk that provides more space and options for passersby. Typically, parklets are placed in parking lots at the same level as the sidewalk and occupy several parking spaces (Picture 1)



**Picture 1. Parklet in a modern city**

Parklets are for people, a place of rest in the middle of a busy street where everyone can stop, sit and relax, and also take part in street activities.

Sometimes the parquet has a bicycle parking area, and sometimes the parquet is used for landscaping the city by planting trees or shrubs on them. (Picture 2)



**Picture 2. Parklets with bicycle parking**

#### **Advantages of installing parklets:**

- Expansion of pedestrian space: Parklets increase the width of sidewalks, creating a more comfortable and safe space for pedestrians.
- Street landscaping: Parklets often include vegetation such as trees, shrubs and flowers, which improve air quality and make streets more attractive.
- Improved comfort: Parklets provide places to relax, socialize and enjoy fresh air, creating a more pleasant and welcoming urban environment.
- Stimulate local commerce: Parklets can attract people to nearby businesses such as cafes, restaurants and shops.
- Improved traffic safety: Parklets can serve as physical barriers between pedestrians and moving vehicles, increasing safety for pedestrians.

Typologically, parklets can be classified as small architectural forms as structures used to organize open spaces and complement the architectural, urban planning or gardening composition.[1] The parklet can be considered a permanent element of the urban environment, but it must be designed to be quickly and easily dismantled in the event of an emergency or other reasons. As originally intended, the parklet is always open to any passerby. However, in some cities there are restaurants or cafes with their own parking lots for visitors to the institution, such as the parking lot near the Mojo Bicycle Shop and Cafe at 639 Divisadero Street in San Francisco

Parklets appeared not so long ago, but they are already very popular in many countries of the world. The first parklet was created in California, USA, namely in San Francisco. Designer Suzie Bolognese, together with Sb Design Studio, realized this idea in 2010.

In the USA and Europe, parklets have become the subject of research. In 2013, the impact of parklets on improving urban infrastructure was studied. The organization of parklets, according to research, can have a beneficial effect on urban small businesses. For example, next to a cafe, even a small parklet will increase the percentage of attendance of the establishment.

In September 2010, the Great Streets of San Francisco Project published a study, "Divisadero Floorboard Impact Report," on one of the first eight floorboards built in San Francisco. [2] This study was conducted in January 2012, the "Parquet Flooring Impact Study," which analyzed three corridors in San Francisco. [3]

From October 2012 to March 2013 in Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Parklet Streets Collaborative Task Force developed and conducted a one-year study of Parklets in Downtown Los Angeles. The final report was released in March 2013. In the United States, San Francisco has more parking lots than any other city. [4] The Sidewalk for Parks program was created to install parklets as long-

term, yet temporary, facilities. Since 2011, the program has received more than 50 applications from sponsors throughout the city. In 2011, the Union Square Business Improvement District installed its most ambitious parklet yet, a two-block long installation along Powell Street near Union Square, financed by a corporate donation from Audi. [5]

Parklets are already loved by residents of many countries, for example, in Brazil, namely in the city of Sao Paulo, a law came into force that allows parklets to operate constantly, and not just during events or festivals. This means that new places to relax here will begin to appear constantly and everywhere. In London, the city authorities, together with the design firm WMBstudio, installed a parklet on one of the busy streets (Picture 3).

Nowadays, seasonal parklets are used, for example, in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. Currently, the majority of such zones are being created in the United States.



**Picture 3. Parklet on one of the streets of London**

The design of parklets should take into account the following key elements:

**Functionality:**

- Provide comfortable seating: Parklets should have comfortable benches, chairs or other seating that allows people to relax and socialize.
- Accessibility: Parklets must be accessible to people with disabilities, including ramps and tactile tiles.
- Weather protection: Parklets should be designed to provide protection from sun, rain and wind, such as canopies, umbrellas or tarps.

**Aesthetics:**

- Consistency with the environment: The design of parklets should be consistent with the architectural style and character of the environment.
- Visual Appeal: Parklets should be aesthetically pleasing and enhance the visual appeal of the street.
- Use of natural elements: Vegetation such as trees, shrubs and flowers can add natural elements to parklets and improve air quality

**Stability:**

- Use of environmentally friendly materials: Parklets should be made from environmentally friendly and recyclable materials such as wood, metal and concrete.
- Durability: Parklets must be designed to withstand use and weather conditions.
- Minimize waste: The design of parklets should minimize waste and environmental impact.

**Social aspects:**

- Encouraging Community Interaction: Parklets should be designed to encourage interaction among community members, creating spaces for meeting and socializing.

- Security and Lighting: Parklets should be well lit at night and have clear paths to ensure user safety.
- Responsive to local culture and traditions: Parklet design should be sensitive to local culture and traditions, reflecting the unique character of the community.

Installing parklets on city streets can solve a number of problems at once:

1. The problem of sidewalks occupied by cars
2. The problem of lack of places for pedestrians to rest.
3. The problem of the lack of aesthetically attractive areas.
4. The problem of greening city streets.

Thus, the organization of parklets in modern cities is an extremely effective and rational way to solve many problems of a modern metropolis, as well as a way to aesthetically transform urban space.

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