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Vancouver Gets Parklets

09/07/2011 by [asladirt](#)



San Francisco may have started something with its innovative [Pavement to Parks](#) or “parklet” program, which turns transportation infrastructure into public spaces. New York City is also a leader, given its recent decision to redesign sections of Broadway as permanent pedestrian malls. Now, Vancouver has gotten on board with its own [Viva Vancouver](#) program that features a set of [eight streets](#)

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that have become new mini-parks. Vancouver says these new spaces are “people places” designed to give residents “extra space to walk, bike, dance, skate, sit, hang out with friends and meet your neighbours.”

One brand new parklet, Parallel Park, which cost just \$18,000, features a new deck-like structure in place of two parking spots and includes built-in seats and wood-cubed tables. Designed by Travis Martin, Associate ASLA, currently employed with landscape architecture firm [van der Zalm + Associates](#), this pocket public space is made of clear cedar.



On the [Facebook site for Parallel Park](#), there are more details on how the space is designed: “There is a lean bench on the left. The benches along the back alternate between working and lounging heights. The box seats or tables are placed to provide seating for individuals, couples or groups of 4-8.”

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According to *The New York Times*, turning underused transportation infrastructure into new public spaces isn't just happening at the small scale either. With the success of the second phase of The High Line park (see [earlier post](#)), cities like Chicago, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and St. Louis are also now looking at how to reuse their own abandoned railways.

Learn more about the projects in [Viva Vancouver](#) and see more [photos](#). Explore San Francisco's [Pavement to Parks](#) initiative, which recently expanded.

Also, see a [Google Sketchup animation](#) focused on how to transform transportation infrastructure into public spaces.

Image credits: Parallel Park / BriteWeb and Viva Vancouver

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