



Pedestrian Plaza

City of San Diego
Development Services Department

INFORMATION
BULLETIN
565

August 2020

This information bulletin describes the approval process and submittal requirements for a Pedestrian Plaza with a platform or deck. To temporarily expand a business due to COVID-19 into a street parking space using a Pedestrian Plaza without a platform or deck please visit www.sandiego.gov/tob.

I. WHAT IS A PEDESTRIAN PLAZA?

Pedestrian Plazas are sometimes referred to as Parklets.

A Pedestrian Plaza is the temporary use of space in the dedicated public right-of-way (parking spaces, unused bus stops, or other vehicular areas) for public use as seating or bicycle racks. Pedestrian Plazas are publicly accessible to all and are intended to provide a space for enjoyable public interaction. Pedestrian Plaza construction and maintenance is privately funded. It is envisioned that Pedestrian Plazas will be located in areas with heavy pedestrian activity, where there is a desire the street. Once the platform is installed, benches, tables, chairs, landscaping, and bike parking can all be placed on top of the platform to create the Pedestrian Plaza.

Pedestrian Plazas must remain publicly accessible and require signage to this effect. Table service is not permitted at a Pedestrian Plaza. In order to designate a Pedestrian Plaza for exclusive commercial use, to provide table service, or to not provide public signage a separate [Temporary Outdoor Business Operation Traffic Control Permit](#) is also required.

Pedestrian Plazas foster a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment, and offer additional seating areas for pedestrians and patrons of the surrounding businesses.

Pedestrian Plazas are intended to be seen as an aesthetic enhancement to the overall streetscape and reflect the creativity of those who design and sponsor them. On-street parking areas are used to accommodate a platform that extends the sur-face grade of the sidewalk into structure that is designed to be easily removable and the design must allow access below for cleaning and drain-age.

The City Engineer may require removal of a Pedestrian Plaza if a Pedestrian Plaza is not used or maintained as intended, if it is determined to be a public safety hazard or public nuisance, or if use of the space is needed for another purpose.

II. PLACEMAKING PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMIT

Pedestrian Plazas are permitted as placemaking. Please see [Information Bulletin 568](#) for additional information concerning placemaking. Placemaking projects in the public right-of-way are subject to the regulations contained in SDMC §129.070. A Public Right-of-Way Permit is required for placemaking within public rights-of-way. This Public Right-of-Way Permit is a Process One decision (ministerial). Please label and title your application and plans as a "Placemaking Pedestrian Plaza" in order to benefit from the placemaking regulations.

III. APPLICATION PROCESS

An application for a Public Right-of-Way Permit must be approved prior to installation. To apply for a Public Right-of-Way Permit, submit the following completed items:

A. General Application (DS-3032)

B. Storm Water Requirements
Applicability Checklist (DS-560)

C. Record Owner Permission

Letter or similar proof of written permission from the record owner of the adjacent property.

D. Encroachment Exhibit

An 8-1/2" x 11" exhibit drawn to scale, detailing the encroachment area, detailing the encroachment area, including the following minimum details:

1. Vicinity Map
2. The right-of-way lines completely labeled and dimensioned
3. The location and type of encroachment, clearly identified
4. Existing and proposed right-of-way improvements, such as driveways, sidewalks, trees, light posts, fire hydrants, water meters, etc.
5. Elevation views with heights dimensioned for above ground structures
6. North arrow and scale

E. Construction Plan (DS-3179)

The plan shall include the following information:

1. Development Summary

Provide, in a table format, the following information on the first page of the plans:

- a. A bullet point narrative that details the project's complete scope of work, including all existing and proposed improvements. Please include the words "Placemaking Pedestrian Plaza" in the scope of work.
- b. The Project Team. List the name and phone number of all consultants including engineers, architects, designers and contractors.
- c. Legal description and Assessor Parcel Number for the property fronting the proposed Pedestrian Plaza.
- d. Owner's name and address.
- e. Total square footage of the Pedestrian Plaza area.

2. Vicinity Map

A vicinity map specifies the location of a proposed project in relation to major streets in the area. It is not required to have this map drawn to scale but it should be proportional. Show at least two major cross streets and all other roadways leading to the site.

3. Site Plan

The plans must be fully dimensioned and include the following information:

- a. Show the adjacent street-level business owner's name, address and name of business.
- b. Show the legal description and Assessor's Parcel Number for the adjacent property.
- c. Street, curb, sidewalk, property lines and all existing/proposed improvements in the sidewalk area within 15 feet of the proposed Pedestrian Plaza.
- d. The right-of-way lines completely labeled and dimensioned.
- e. The location and dimensions of the Pedestrian Plaza.
- f. Existing right-of-way improvements, such as curb, sidewalks, trees, light posts, fire hydrants, water meters, vaults, etc.
- g. Dimensions of the distance between any obstruction (parking meters, lights, signs, mailboxes, fire hydrants, trees, tree grates, etc.) in the sidewalk area to the entrance of the Pedestrian Plaza. A minimum distance of 5'-0" is required for pedestrian traffic.
- h. North arrow and scale.

4. Elevation Plan

This is a dimensioned drawing of the Pedestrian Plaza as seen from the sidewalk.

Include the following information on the elevation drawing:

- a. Height of the Pedestrian Plaza.
- b. Height of any enclosure (maximum height of three (3) feet). A sight distance analysis will be required for any enclosure greater than three (3) feet in height.
- c. Description of furniture to be used in the Pedestrian Plaza.

5. Details

Provide connection details representative of the framing and support elements used in the engineering of the structural system of the project. The connection details should include connection for all structural elements such as platform, benches, umbrella, and barrier. The platform structure and permanently attached structures shall be designed by a licensed Architect or Engineer.

IV. Locational Criteria**A. Visibility**

Pedestrian Plazas may not be located within the visibility area of an intersection or driveway in accordance with Municipal Code Section §113.0273.

B. Types of Streets

Pedestrian Plazas cannot be located along a street with a speed limit of more than 30 mph.

C. Street Grade

Pedestrian Plazas should not be located on streets where the grade along the street exceeds a maximum running slope of 5% or a maximum cross slope of 2%. Any grade greater than a 5% running slope or 2% cross slope will require a more in-depth evaluation which may include additional requirements.

D. Parking Spaces

Cumulative removal of over 25 percent of the spaces in a street segment is prohibited.

E. Fire Hydrants and Utilities

Pedestrian Plazas are not permitted to be placed in front of a fire hydrant or in a way that restricts access to any private or public utility.

F. Storm Water Facilities

Pedestrian Plazas shall not be placed in any manner that blocks a storm water drainage structure or hinders access to the drainage structure.

G. Conflicts

Pedestrian Plazas shall not interfere with the use of designated disabled parking spaces; curb ramps; Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) stops or other access features of the public right-of-way.

H. Parking Meters

If a Pedestrian Plaza will be placed where an existing parking meter is located, the applicant will be required to pay the costs for the City to remove the parking meter. When the pedestrian plaza is removed, the applicant will then be required to pay for the reinstallation of the parking meter.

V. Design Criteria

Pedestrian Plazas are intended to be aesthetic improvements to the streetscape.

A. Materials

Materials must be of a high quality, durable, and attractive.

B. Permanent Seating

Pedestrian Plazas must contain some permanent seating and be inviting even when temporary seating/tables are removed.

C. Landscape

The use of plants in Pedestrian Plaza design is encouraged.

D. Width

The width of the Pedestrian Plaza must not extend within 2 feet of the edge of a vehicle travel lane.

E. Separation Distance from Adjacent Parking

The Pedestrian Plaza shall provide a setback of at least 4 feet from adjacent parking spaces.

F. Live Load

Pedestrian Plazas that are elevated to be level with the sidewalk will have to meet the minimum distributed live loads in the 2019 California Building Code table 1607.1 (100 pounds per square foot).

G. Accessibility

All Pedestrian Plazas must maintain accessibility to individuals with disabilities per the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). People in wheelchairs must be able to enter into and access all the primary features of the Pedestrian Plaza.

H. Safety

1. Safe hit posts, wheel stops, or approved equals, are required.
2. A visible edge to the Pedestrian Plaza is required, which may consist of planters, railing, or cabling.
3. Pedestrian Plazas should be visually permeable or "see-through" to encourage and enable people to rest and experience the street.

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4. Pedestrian Plazas must have retro reflectors installed facing all oncoming traffic.

J. Access Panels

Access panels must be included in order to maintain the gutter and area underneath the Pedestrian Plaza and the design must allow for drainage along the gutter to pass underneath the Pedestrian Plaza.

K. Signage

A sign shall be posted that indicates that the Pedestrian Plaza is for public use. The sign shall state: “Pedestrian Plaza- All seating open to the public.” In order to designate a Pedestrian Plaza for exclusive commercial use, to provide table service, or to not provide public signage a separate [Temporary Outdoor Business Operation Traffic Control Permit](#) is also required.

VI. Maintenance

Prior to the issuance of a right-of-way permit to construct the Pedestrian Plaza an encroachment, maintenance, and removal agreement will be required to be entered into with the City of San Diego that requires the Permit Holder to do the following:

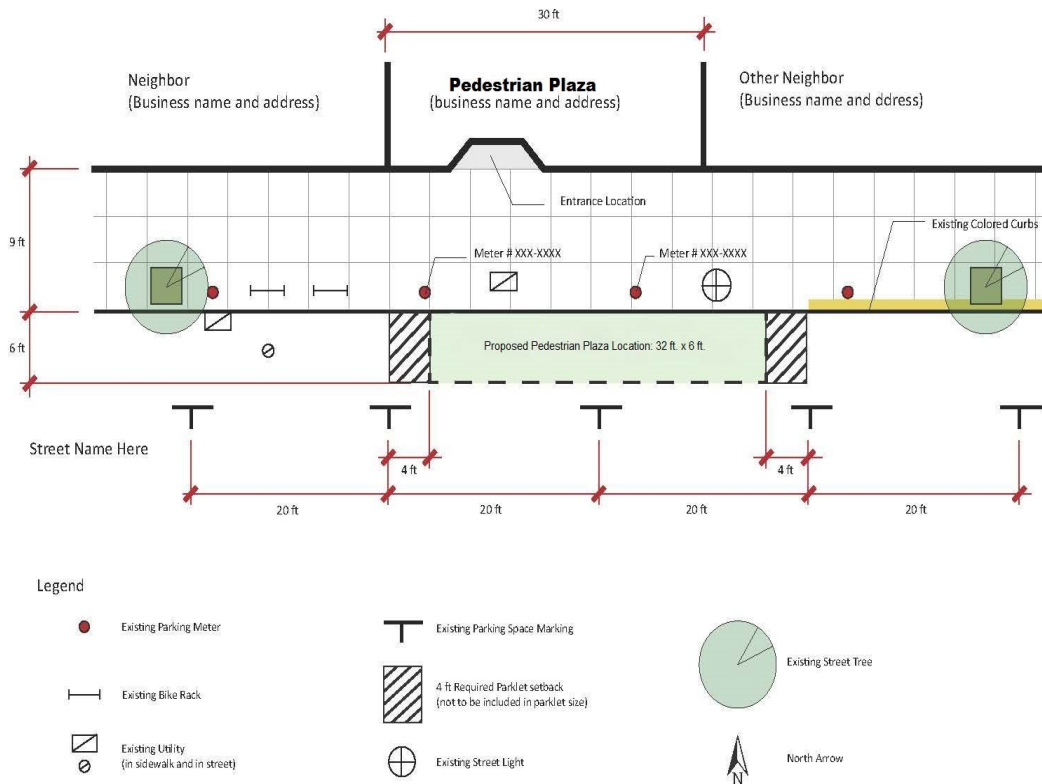
1. Keep all plants in good health.
2. Keep the Pedestrian Plaza free of debris and grime and prevent debris, pollution and contaminants from entering the adjacent Storm Water conveyance system.
3. Adequately maintain the surface of the Pedestrian Plaza.
4. Control any non-storm water discharges from the Pedestrian Plaza in accordance in accordance with Chapter 4, Article 3, Division 3 of the San Diego Municipal Code.
5. Sweep out debris from under the Pedestrian Plaza to keep it free and clear of all debris at all times.
6. Remove unsecured furniture as required by the Maintenance Agreement. Unsecured furniture is not permitted after business hours if the Permit Holder is a business.
7. Upon 30 day notice by the City Engineer, remove the Pedestrian Plaza from the street for any planned City overlay, slurry seal or other maintenance or construction project. Removal will be at the Pedestrian Plaza owner’s expense.
8. Evidence of at least \$1 million in general liability insurance naming the City of San Diego as additional insured will be required.

VII. Historical Review - Designated Historic. If the project involves any parcel containing designated historical resource, or is located within the boundaries of an adopted historic district, plans will be required and shall be submitted for Historical Review. Please refer to [Information Bulletin 581](#), “Designated Historical Resource Review” for additional Historic Review information.

VIII. Fees

Fees are required at the time of project submittal. See [Information Bulletin 502](#), “Fee Schedule for Construction Permits - Grading and Public Right-of-Way.” Fees are nonrefundable, regardless of whether a permit is approved or denied.

Figure 1/Site Plan Example



Documents Referenced in this Information Bulletin

- California Building Code, (CBC)
- San Diego Municipal Code, ([SDMC](#))
- [Information Bulletin 502](#), Fee/Deposit Schedule for Construction Permits Grading and Public Right-of-Way
- General Application, [DS-3032](#)
- Construction Plan, [DS-3179](#)
- [Information Bulletin 568](#), Placemaking
- Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist, [DS-560](#)
- [Information Bulletin 581](#), Designated Historical Resource Review