



AARP Pop-Up Demonstration Tool Kit

Project: Pop-Up Parklet

LOCATION: Park Avenue, Anaconda, Montana

by the [WALC Institute](#), [AARP Livable Communities](#)

THE GOAL

Make downtown Anaconda, Montana, a desirable, pedestrian-friendly destination

BACKSTORY

[Anaconda-Deer Lodge County \(A-DLC\)](#) — population 9,329 — is a consolidated city-county government with Anaconda, Montana's ninth most populous city, at its heart.

Over the past several decades, life in the once-bustling downtown has greatly diminished, leaving behind a community characterized by a struggling economy, poor health record, and a vehicle-oriented, sedentary lifestyle. Among the city's challenges:

- Montana Highway 1, a fast-moving thoroughfare with non-stopping traffic run through Anaconda's commercial area via two separated, one-way avenues
- The lack of inviting and truly walkable or bikeable roadways
- Limited connectivity between the residential, commercial and recreational zones

An irony about the city's problems is that Anaconda was initially a walkable community. "It was built in 1894," noted [Connie Ternes-Daniels](#), the county's chief executive officer. "It developed into an automobile community. For a long time we've had this discussion to stop the pass through, to create the feeling to get out of the car."

In 2014, the A-DLC received a [Montana Building Active Communities Initiative](#) award, which gave rise to the [Building Active Anaconda Team \(BAAT\)](#).



The Park Avenue parklet attracts a crowd. — Photo courtesy Building Active Anaconda Team

THE PROJECT

The community outreach efforts of BAAT identified speed and the lack of pedestrian-friendly roadways as the primary reasons residents don't visit and walk around the downtown. The BAAT team worked with the nonprofit [America Walks](#) to run a community-based workshop in September 2014 with a focus on creating a walkable downtown. The groups decided to [repurpose a public parking space](#) to create a [parklet](#), which is typically a site that has been created from a small piece of land, such as a former parking space.

TIMING

The [temporary parklet](#) was ready for visitors on Sept. 23, 2014.

THE LOGISTICS

- The parklet project, which was built near Park and Oak streets, required outlining the parklet, crosswalks and curb extensions with white duct tape.
- Volunteers then brought in rugs and furniture, plants and art — including a pop-up mural.
- The organizers put up temporary “Walk Anaconda” signs to direct people to key destinations in the community.
- Initially, police and fire department representatives expressed concerns about the safety of the parklet installation, including the [curb extensions](#), with their main concern being about the turning capability of large trucks. This led to the fire department actually getting into their trucks and an ambulance to attempt to make the turn. By chance, a large motorhome also made the turn from another angle. Each vehicle was able to make the turns, although the fire truck did nick one of the white tapelines delineating the bulb-out.



A “before” and proposed “after” for Main Street. — Image from the Anaconda Downtown Master Plan (March 2016)

The [Anaconda Main Street Workshop](#) focused on understanding how people engage in main streets, specifically on shopping, dining and stopping. Approximately 30 workshop attendees then participated

Planning a Pop-Up



Tool Kit Home Page

1. [Getting Started](#)
2. [Engaging/Planning](#)
3. [Organizing/Marketing](#)
4. [Building/Launching](#)
5. [Next Steps](#)

Success Stories

- [Parklet](#)
- [Plaza](#)
- [Streetscape](#)
- [Protected bike lane](#)
- [Protected intersection](#)
- [Road diet and plaza](#)

in a [walk audit](#) and visited the parklet demonstration site, where the group stayed for about an hour and people purchased ice cream from a new shop located on the parklet's corner.

COSTS and CREW

The project had limited funding, but the Building Active Anaconda Team was able to utilize skilled volunteers and generous business donations to complete the installation.

OUTCOMES and NEXT STEPS

The success of the impromptu large trucks test proved helpful in moving the project forward. As a direct result of the Anaconda Main Street Workshop and parklet demonstration, a different, but overlapping, group called the [Accelerate Anaconda Committee](#) obtained county approval and funding for a parklet to be placed where the pilot pop-up project occurred. The local job corps' welding program helped with the construction.

The Accelerate Anaconda Committee also secured nearly \$33,000 to develop a [downtown master plan](#) for Anaconda. Funding sources included community development block grants, the [Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation](#), the [Anaconda Community Foundation](#), the [Anaconda Local Development Corporation](#) and private community funders.

The assorted groups were also successful in petitioning the [Montana Department of Transportation \(MDT\)](#) to paint bike lanes west of town and sharrows (shared vehicle and bicycle lanes) east and through the downtown. As of early 2016, the groups have not secured pedestrian curb extensions from the MDT, but the Accelerate Anaconda Committee reports that it "will not stop working for them."

The temporary parklet was permanently installed in 2016.

OTHER SOLUTIONS

The following efforts would also be helpful to Anaconda:

- Increasing streetscape amenities
- Incorporating traffic calming devices (bulb-outs, island refuges and parklets)
- Increasing crosswalk functionality
- Establishing bike routes or access
- Increasing safety and connectivity between residences, downtown and recreational areas
- Encouraging new uses for vacant or demolished lots
- Building support from the MDT to execute streetscape amenities, since much of Anaconda's downtown is along an MDT right-of-way

LEARN MORE

Read the [Downtown Anaconda Master Plan](#)

Project: Pop-Up Parklet (Website Links)

Parklet: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-parklet.html>

WALC Institute: <http://www.walklive.org/>

AARP Livable Communities: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/>

Anaconda-Deer Lodge County: <https://adlc.us/>

Connie Ternes-Daniels, the county's chief executive officer: <https://adlc.us/departments/ceo/>

Montana Building Active Communities Initiative: <http://www.umt.edu/sell/cps/baci/>

Building Active Anaconda Team: <http://anacondadevelopment.org/events/building-active-anaconda-team-baat-citywide-sidewalk-cleanup-day/>

America Walks: <http://americawalks.org/>

repurpose a public parking space: http://mtstandard.com/news/local/walker-friendly-anaconda-explores-measure-to-make-city-more-vibrant/article_dd922d99-0914-501e-9950-3b655e0e1e42.html

Parklet: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-in-action/info-2015/how-to-create-a-parklet.html>

temporary parklet: http://mtstandard.com/news/local/walker-friendly-anaconda-explores-measure-to-make-city-more-vibrant/article_dd922d99-0914-501e-9950-3b655e0e1e42.html

curb extensions: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2015/13-short-range-livability-solutions.html>

Anaconda Main Street Workshop: <http://anacondadevelopment.org/events/anaconda-main-street-workshop/>

walk audit: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/info-2014/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit.html>

Accelerate Anaconda Committee: <http://anacondadevelopment.org/events/accelerate-anaconda-2/>

a downtown master plan: <http://anacondadevelopment.org/downtown-master-plan/>

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/>

Anaconda Community Foundation: <http://www.anacondacommunityfoundation.org/>

Anaconda Local Development Corporation: <http://anacondadevelopment.org/>

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT): <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/>

sharrows: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/info-2016/bike-walk-alliance-2016-benchmark-report.html>

Downtown Anaconda Master Plan: <http://adlc.us/departments/planning/planning-documents/>

Planning a Pop-Up (Box):

Tool Kit Home Page: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-demonstration-tool-kit.html>

- 1. Getting Started:** <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/getting-started-pop-up-demonstration-tool-kit.html>
- 2. Engaging the Community and Making a Plan:** <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-tool-kit-engaging-the-community-making-plans.html>
- 3. Organizing and Marketing the Project or Event:** <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-tool-kit-organizing-and-marketing.html>
- 4. Building and Launching the Project or Event:** <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-tool-kit-build-and-launch.html>
- 5. Next Steps and Maintaining the Momentum:** <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-momentum.html>

Success Stories

Parklet: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-parklet.html>

Plaza: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-plaza.html>

Streetscape: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-streetscape.html>

Protected Bike Lane: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-protected-bike-lane.html>

Protected Intersection: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-protected-intersection.html>

Road Diet and Plaza: <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/pop-up-road-diet-and-plaza.html>