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Pop-Up Site Invites Public To Take a Seat



The car had been parked on the northeast corner of 13th Street and 5th Avenue for the entire week, taking up space and collecting neon orange tickets. Students at [Parsons School of Design](#) had a more egalitarian vision for the space. But first, they had to get the car towed and out of the way. The 240 square foot parking spot is now the site of sleek wooden platform adorned with seats and tables—a project designed and constructed by Parsons students for the public to “rest, to read, and communicate,” according to Mark Rakhmanov, one of the Parsons

students behind the project. “Seeing our design come to fruition was an incredible experience,” Rakhmanov added. “We worked on it from the initial idea, to the drawing board, to the models, to the completed space. It was also entirely built by hand, working within Parsons’ very own facilities. This humble sense of ownership of the design truly makes us proud of its existence.” The creation of ten students from Parsons’ [Architectural Design](#), [Interior Design](#) and [Product Design](#) programs, the pop-up space was constructed using sustainably harvested Ipe wood for the tiles and lumber and aluminum for the edge guardrails. It is one of the sites of [Street Seats](#), a program of the Department of Transportation that enables the creation of seasonal public open spaces at locations where sidewalk seating is not normally available. “Before this was a parking spot; now, it’s a public space,” said Nick Brinen, assistant professor of Interior Design and the faculty member leading the project. “We provided something that slows down traffic—a place where people can have impromptu meetings and conversations, lunch or coffee, or simply to rest and relax.”

This article originally appeared on [The New School News](#). Photo courtesy of The New School.