



CITY OF MILL VALLEY
26 Corte Madera Ave.
Mill Valley, CA 94941
www.cityofmillvalley.org



Mill Valley
Downtown
Project

Mill Valley Downtown Project Phase III

Public Meeting #2

Mill Valley City Hall - January 23, 2023 | 4-5pm

Meeting Objectives

- An update on Phase 3 of the Downtown Project that will: upgrading infrastructure below and above ground in the Downtown area; make drainage improvements; provide ADA compliance; and improve pedestrian safety
- Overview of the construction timeline and potential impacts
- Opportunity for members of the public to ask questions and provide input

Meeting Format – In-person in the Council Chambers at City Hall

Project Team in Attendance

City Staff

- Ahmed A. Aly – Project Manager, Public Works

Consultant Team

- Luella Gabriel – Harris + Associates
- John Collins – Mark Thomas
- Dave Javid and Rachael Sharkland – Plan to Place

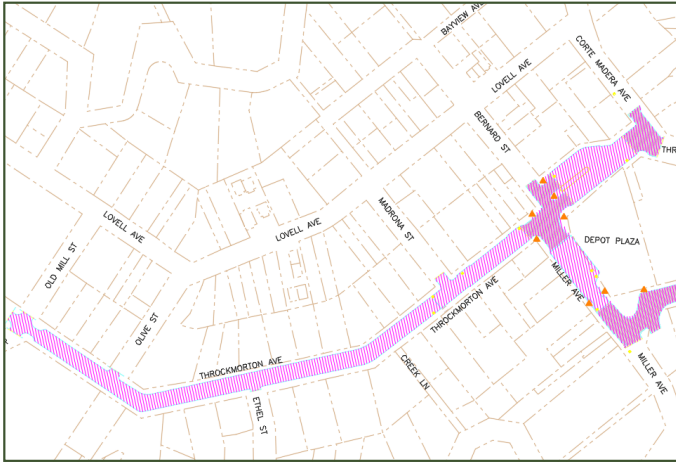
Members of the Public in Attendance - 32



**Mill Valley
Downtown
Project**

SAVE THE DATE!

PHASE III PROJECT LIMIT:



WHAT IS THE DOWNTOWN PROJECT?

The Downtown Project is focused on upgrading the infrastructure - below and above ground - in the Downtown area, including repaving roadways, repairing sanitary sewer systems, making drainage improvements and improve crosswalks at the intersections for pedestrian safety and ADA compliance.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Please join us for a Community Meeting on Thursday, January 26th at 4:30pm to learn more about the project objectives, timeline and update. This is the third community workshop that is planned for this effort.

COMMUNITY MEETING
Thursday, January 26, 2023 - 4:30-5:30pm
 Mill Valley Council Chambers
 26 Corte Madera Avenue



CONTACT:
Ahmed A. Aly, Project Manager
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FOR MORE INFORMATION:
cityofmillvalley.org/downtownproject



Postcard distributed to advertise community meeting

Meeting Summary

A public meeting for the Downtown Mill Valley project was held in the council chambers at Mill Valley City Hall from 4-5pm on January 26, 2023. Upon arrival participants were asked to sign in and were given a copy of the project FAQs and the presentation slides.

Ahmed Aly introduced the project and the project team, and handed it off to Luella Gabriel who presented an overview of the street and sidewalk improvements associated with the project. Following Luella, John Collins presented the construction timeline (estimated from February – May 2023) and the sequence of the construction phasing. Collins also spoke to expected construction impacts. Ahmed closed the presentation with an overview of the community outreach plan as well as the project team's contact information. After the presentation, the floor was open to members of the public for questions and comments. Dave Javid facilitated the conversation, and City staff offered responses.

Public Comments & Questions

Below is a summary of the major themes that emerged from the questions and comment portion of the public meeting. The response to questions is *italicized*. A record of all questions is provided in the appendix.

Project Scope

- Request for street trees to be evaluated.
 - *This is not part of the current project scope. We are not considering adding more trees, we have evaluated the redwoods and we do have a report.*
- Request for public square to be completed as per the General Plan.
 - *This is not part of the current project scope. This may be part of future work, but is unscheduled and unbudgeted.*
- Request to consider bump outs or parklets for local restaurants.
 - *This is not part of the current project scope.*
- Request to provide a pedestrian crossing at Throckmorton Theater.
 - *This is not part of the current project scope.*
- Request to assist businesses with outreach to ensure patrons know that businesses are open and accessible during construction, eg for the City to partner with local and county-wide Chamber of commerce and local papers to create incentives and ads to drive shoppers to Mill Valley.
 - *We will work with you. We collaborate with the Marin County Chamber of Commerce.*

Parking

- Concerns about how parking on Miller Avenue will be impacted.
 - *This project is different from East Blithedale, there is no undergrounding so this project will happen more quickly. We will try to control parking impacts as much as*

possible. During the flatwork, we should only be taking 1-2 parking spaces adjacent to the work. After work hours parking will be back for residents.

- Request by business owners to have parking relief offered now through project duration to incentivize shoppers.
- Concern about the impact on handicap parking.
 - *Shouldn't be impacted.*

Impacts on businesses in the Downtown area

- Concern that the project will aggravate existing challenges getting local and regional residents and tourists to shop in Mill Valley.
- Request to partner with local businesses to ameliorate negative impacts to business (eg coordinate pouring of concrete that may block entry, keep business owners up to date of project progress).
 - *We will give 72 hours notice about parking impacts, but we will talk to you a couple of weeks prior to discuss the schedule with you. There may be a 3-4 hour window when we are pouring concrete to the threshold of your facade. We can coordinate so it's during hours when businesses are not operating.*
- Request to increase communication through LED signage and other means so that local and regional residents and tourists understand project duration and are kept abreast of project progress.
 - *Regarding communication, there is a plan to use a message board and we can add more information.*
- Request that future construction be scheduled in coordination with local businesses and potentially be completed at night.

APPENDIX

Below is a full list of questions and responses by City staff in *italics*.

Is parking removed on the right side of Miller Ave?

No.

Has there been a study of the impact of getting out of residential neighborhoods and into the downtown at Olive and Madrone where they intersect with Throckmorton? Has a stop at these locations been considered? This would allow people coming from Lovell to get downtown, especially during the school day.

We will take traffic counts again to study Throckmorton and Lovell.

At East Blithedale, I was under the assumption that the whole project would be done much more quickly; today at 11:30am, which is not peak time, I had to wait for 5 redlights and it took nearly 20 minutes. How are residents expected to get to and from their houses? Also, my husband is disabled and we live on Lovell. Will parking be displaced? Is there anything I can do?

This project is different from East Blithedale, there is no undergrounding so this project will happen more quickly. We will try to control parking impacts as much as possible.

During the flatwork, we should only be taking 1-2 parking spaces adjacent to the work. After work hours parking will be back for residents.

As a business we've lost a lot of local residents coming into Mill Valley, because they don't want to deal with the 25-minute back up. Will Miller also get backed-up? There's a perception that it's difficult to get into Mill Valley to go shopping; if this is only a week here and there, please make the communications on the LED sign and elsewhere more explicit. More signage would be appreciated, especially along Camino Alto. We would appreciate adding a message that says "Please support local."

During flatwork there shouldn't be too much of a problem with parking and congestion, because we will be localized. During paving there will be 2 weeks when there will be one-way traffic control.

Regarding communication, there is a plan to use a message board and we can add more information.

It's not just local residents we've lost, it's also our clients coming from further out (Novato, Fairfax, Tiburon). We need to flip the construction so it happens at night. Or we need a break from construction. Could we complete construction in July and August, it's very quiet here in the summer. We are all rebuilding our businesses.

This project is already awarded and notified to proceed, there will be more paving this summer. We are putting together a schedule. We are looking to do a comprehensive schedule.

What does community funding for the project mean?

Business people that might contribute to widening on Miller.

I saw the street widening at Miller, but didn't notice any street tree additions. With this project there is an opportunity to look at the current condition of existing trees, and replace those that are in poor shape.

We are not considering adding more trees, we have evaluated the redwoods and we do have a report.

Is all of the underground work done?

Yes, that is why we phased it over 3 or 4 years.

Thank you to the business owners. I'd like to see the completion of the town square as has been outlined in General Plan.

That is the plan to think about overarching plans that are in place.

Our restaurant on Throckmorton uses a narrow portion of the sidewalk, would it be possible to have a bump out considered so we can put some chairs and tables out, or can we apply for a parklet? Is there an opportunity to apply for a widened sidewalk?

Public works and planning can look into it, but there are no current plans in this project. But the problem is Throckmorton is much narrower and you would lose parking. It works out on Miller because the existing road is wide. Typically, this would go through the planning department so you should follow-up with them.

Will we have two way traffic from the Miller lot parking lot in the future?

That will be cleared up by the end of March because that is part of the downtown plan.

Regarding communication, will it be week to week about which sections are being worked on? We know there are likely to be delays. In terms of actual expansion, will we have access to the front door for our customers? I do suggest looking at the condition of trees on Miller.

There will be a weekly update and a look ahead, and if anything changes we will put it on Twitter. We will knock on your door and make sure the impacts will be as minimal as possible. Sidewalks will be demoed in sections with a temporary ramp to accommodate pedestrians.

Has there been any thought about providing a crossing where the Throckmorton Theater in front of La Ginestra, there is a crossing on the other side of the block

No plan to change but we will look into it.

I understand that during construction parking will be free, this is very generous, but is it possible to have that begin now? Parking tickets are \$40 now. Our businesses are really impacted right now, and there is plenty of parking downtown.

If there is free parking, there is the chance that people will stay parked all day.

On slide 13 on pg. 10, the presentation says we are continuing to work with the Chamber of Commerce on communications and informing local residents and businesses of the work. We are having a hard time as businesses, so the request is how can the Chamber get funds to reach outside the downtown community to tourists and residents of the greater Bay Area? We are also having a lack of visitors because folks are seeing the construction. With Miller landscaping 4 years ago there was outreach to concierges and other chambers to bring people in. We need a strategic plan that offers some creative support for businesses; I would suggest that the Town do a campaign in one of the local magazines or newspapers. How can business people help?

Great point. We are in communication with the Marin County Chamber.

What about phase 4? Is that why it says Feb-August?

No, we are looking at a shorter time frame. There is no phase 4. Phase 4 is unknown, there is plaza expansion that would include an expansion of the park, but that is unbudgeted and unscheduled.

Summers are really slow, half of the residents vacate, that is an ideal time to get the work done.

Is it possible to split the project in half?

It's already under contract and scheduled. We don't want construction to run into the fall.

Going forward can you please consult with local business about the best time to have construction.

Last year, we asked for a 5 day respite, and the answer was no and we had the worst December we've seen in 7 years. Sounds like this project ends in May/ June, but if this is on the record and we have the City Manager, Mayor, Vice Mayor here now, there needs to be a concerted effort to support businesses. Business owners are 35-60% down, people are going to break their leases. We aren't going to have a Town to come shopping in. We (businesses) create the culture and a reason for people to come say hi and support the restaurants.

We are under contract and we are dealing with public funds. Blithdale will be gorgeous. I guarantee we will work with you. We do give money to the Marin County Chamber of Commerce. Construction costs are huge. We are listening to you.

How much advance notice will business get?

Parking is 72 hours, but we will talk to you a couple of weeks prior to discuss the schedule with you. Please also take down the contact information on the slide. There may be a 3-4 hour window

when we are pouring concrete to the threshold of your facade. We can coordinate so it's during hours when businesses are not operating.

Post Meeting comment

I wanted to thank you for this notice and let you know that bike traffic on Throckmorton Ave from Cascade to Miller is a very important accommodation need. Cars go too fast on this section. People are parking and opening doors. And, sidewalks need to be kept for pedestrians. As a resident and local business owner, I bike on this route daily and have been honked at, buzzed, flipped off and otherwise threatened with bodily harm. I am also familiar with the traffic delays and frustrations driving from my house. At the end of the day, we must work together to protect bicyclists on this stretch of road. Old Mill School, Old Mill park, churches and homes need to be accessible by bicycle. For most people, they currently are not. This must be fixed.

Please consider this comment and let me know what else if anything you need from me in designing Phase III.