

**Downtown Monterey Road Traffic Calming  
Working Group Meeting #2  
October 1, 2021**

**Meeting Purpose**

The purpose of the October 1<sup>st</sup> Working Group is to focus on the Place-Branding and Beautification aspect of the Downtown Complete Streets project. Within this project, we assume that existing parklets will remain and additional parklets will be added to support other businesses and create new community space. The Place-Branding and Beautification project intends to propose specific design solutions and aesthetic standards for the Monterey Rd. corridor and the greater downtown district.

The goals for the Place-Branding/Beatification project include to:

- Support vision of making Downtown a destination
- Provide space between cars and people
- Create opportunity for programming and activation
- Support business recovery
- Create gathering spaces for community
- Add interest and can create culture and placemaking

**Meeting Objectives**

- A. Review and discuss outcomes & feedback from Meeting #1
- B. Review & understand existing Parklet and AI Fresco Programs
- C. Discuss policy considerations
- D. Review Preliminary AP&I Design Alternatives
- E. Discuss and provide feedback

**City of Morgan Hill Parklet Program**

In 2018, the city launched a two-year [Parklet Pilot Program](#) encouraging the creation of restaurant and retail parklets in the Downtown Corridor. This allowed businesses an opportunity to extend their operations onto the street in the form of a parklet, repurposing on street parking spaces to create a more activated streetscape for both restaurants and retails operations. The program requires the business to acquire and pay for an encroachment permit and provide insurance, in addition of the costs of building the parklet.

In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and as part of the City's [Business Recovery Plan](#), the City of Morgan Hill created an [AI Fresco Program](#), providing businesses the opportunity to operate outdoors; similar to the Parklet program but with less requirements. With the AI Fresco Program, the City provided temporary traffic safety barricades (orange, water-fillable barricades), waived the Encroachment Permit fee, and streamlined the application process. This allowed many businesses to operate during the pandemic, while meeting the County's health safety protocols.

Prior to the Pandemic, the City had not received applications for parklets. This could be due to the costs associated with the parklet requirements. However, during the Pandemic, the Parklet and the AI Fresco Programs have been very successful in helping businesses survive while making Downtown an interesting and vibrant district.

### **Post COVID-19 Business Recovery**

The Al Fresco program is scheduled to end December 31, 2021. When this occurs, the City would be removing temporary water barricades, reinstating Encroachment Permit Fees, and reviewing its current application and permitting process.

As this date is approaches, and regardless of a lane reduction or not, City staff intends to develop recommendations for a long-term, sustainable parklet program that will support the business communities continued need and desire for outdoor dining and shopping options, create community space for temporary activations, while implementing consistency in the design and permit standards. This could potentially create new burdens on business, some of which are still struggling to operate.

Here are some of the policy considerations that staff must reconcile in the coming weeks.

#### **Policy Considerations:**

- Do we extend the temporary Al Fresco Program? If so, for how long?
- When does the City reinstitute [encroachment fees](#)?
- When does the City require [temporary use permits](#)?
- How does the City support businesses who do not have the ability to pay for a new parklet that conforms to the new design standard and aesthetics?
- Does the City create a financing program to help businesses or community organizations pay for parklets?
- How does the City make parklets work to support retail businesses?
- Does the City want to invest in community parklets for gathering and/or pop-up retail?
  - If so, how does the City pay for them?
- How does the City ensure all future Parklets meet accessibility standards?
- How does the City maintain Parklets?

### **Parking**

The Downtown Specific Plan, adopted in 2009, provides the vision and framework for a walkable, bike-friendly, urban, family-oriented, and transit oriented downtown. The downtown encompasses 18-blocks with the downtown core encompassing 14-blocks defined by Maine Avenue, the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks, Dunne Avenue and Del Monte Avenue. The street network provides pedestrian friendly access with a 5-minute to 10-minute walk throughout downtown. SPUR completed a report in 2017 that evaluated the walkability of downtowns and ranked Morgan Hill downtown as one of the most walkable downtowns reaching a high score of 86 out of 100. Downtown includes both private lots and public parking lots with approximately 2,575 parking spaces total, or approximately 1,837-stalls if we do not include the VTA parking lot and Courthouse Parking. While on-street parking is not required per the Downtown Plan or Municipal Code, currently the downtown core encompasses approximately 426-parking stalls.

To assist with the execution of the downtown vision, the City Council adopted a resolution exempting parking requirements for new commercial construction and provided an in-lieu fee option for new office space. This parking exemption and in-lieu fee option is to remain in place until the Downtown parking supply reaches approximately 85% capacity. The City hired Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. to analysis and prepare the Parking Conditions Study in 2016. Staff has presented updates to the Council in 2017 and in 2018 with the adoption of the [Station Area Master Plan](#), both concluding adequate capacity of parking supply at those times. There was discussion on adding additional ADA accessible parking

stalls to ensure accessibility for all blocks in downtown and to explore areas for future consolidated parking. For the latest parking information, you can read the Station Area Master Plan Transportation Context chapter which includes a parking section that discusses parking supply on page 25. You will also note in this section that the plan suggests planning for future parking at the north end of downtown and identifies Monterey Road between Main Street and East Dunne as a Boulevard that should be treated differently than other streets within downtown and should provide flexibility within the layout assist in activation in downtown. Since the updates to City Council, the City has purchased property at Depot Street and 1st Street to provide additional temporary parking and incorporated new ADA stalls in central downtown (5-minute walk) on Block-3 and in the Parking Structure on Block-4.