

DOWNTOWN COMPLETE STREETS PLAN

Frequently Asked Questions

PROJECT BACKGROUND

1. What are Complete Streets?

Complete Streets are roadways that are designed to be accessible by everyone: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, AND motorists. Complete Streets are designed to be useable by anyone and everyone of all abilities, whether they're 8 years old or 80 years old (or somewhere in between!). *(click here for link to National Complete Streets Coalition <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/>)*

2. Why are Complete Streets being considered for Downtown Watsonville?

Like many cities throughout the country, Watsonville's streets were originally designed with the primary goal of moving vehicles. This Plan would establish a vision for changing Downtown Watsonville from its historically car-centric design into a more walkable, bike-able, inviting, and vibrant neighborhood that would continue to serve as Watsonville's social hub. By implementing Complete Streets principles, pedestrian and bicycle safety can be improved.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3. Was the community consulted on the plan?

Yes – there has been extensive outreach to encourage community participation. Since April 2018, over 35 outreach events, informational booths, input booths, and presentations have been held to give the community a chance to help shape the plan. For those who could not attend any of the events, written and on-line surveys were made available at each phase of the project to provide input. *(click here for link to [outreach summary](#))*

4. How was the community notified of the project?

A wide range of methods were used to notify the community. These included things such as: informational posters, notices on the City's website, announcements at Council meetings, presentations at Downtown Business meetings and other local meetings, booths at a variety of public events, Instagram posts, etc. *(click here for link to [outreach summary](#))*

5. Who has been responding to the surveys and providing input?

To date, the majority of respondents have been Watsonville residents. About a third of respondents live outside of the City, but almost all report visiting Downtown regularly.

DESIGN

6. What design alternatives were developed?

Three alternatives were developed and presented to the community in 2018:

- 1) a vehicular-oriented alternative, which kept the existing number of travel lanes
- 2) a bicycle-oriented alternative, which added new or widened existing bike lanes
- 3) a pedestrian-oriented alternative, which included widening sidewalks

7. Why does the preferred plan show a road diet on Main Street?

The preferred plan directly reflects the input received from the community from information gathered from August through September 2018. The input indicated a preference to improve options for cyclists and pedestrians in the Downtown. [\(click here for link to Infographic #2\)](#)

8. Was a traffic study completed for the Main Street road diet?

There was a traffic study prepared in 2012 that generally concluded that a four to two lane reduction or “road diet” on Main Street would be viable. The traffic study included suggestions to mitigate or reduce the impacts that a lane reduction would produce.

As Main Street is part of State Route 152 and the study was conducted over 7 years ago, a new Traffic Study will be required should the Road Diet be approved as part of the final Downtown Complete Streets Plan. The City would be required to obtain Caltrans approval and permits for any changes proposed on the State Route.

NEXT STEPS

9. What happens after the Plan is approved?

The Downtown Complete Streets Plan is a document that establishes the vision for the transportation network in the Downtown; it is the first step. Once approved, this Plan will **allow the City to apply for grant funding** for the required next steps. These would generally include items such as preparing traffic and any other required studies; preparation of design documents; and ultimately building improvements.

10. How much will this cost and how long will it take to build the proposed improvements?

Projects of this magnitude can cost approximately \$25 M to \$30 M. A rough cost estimate will be included in the final Plan and will also be broken down by streets or phases. Once funding and required permits are secured, construction time would be dependent upon how the various items of work are phased – but it is likely that the overall project would take over 10 years to build.