Downtown Monterey

STREETSCAPE, PLAZAS AND URBAN DESIGN PLAN
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1 Introduction

Downtown Monterey has a proud history as the primary retail center for the Monterey Peninsula. For many years it was a healthy, vibrant commercial destination. However, over the past few decades customer shopping habits have changed, and new competitive retail opportunities have emerged. Both forces have pulled most shoppers away from Downtown.

This Streetscape, Plazas and Urban Design package has been developed to assist the City of Monterey in creating its vision for reactivating and reenergizing Downtown. Our goal is to help the City enhance the character of Downtown through both physical modifications and the development of a unique identity, including the story that is told through its buildings, plazas, and place-making features.

The successful implementation of this proposal requires the participation and cooperation of both public and private stakeholders. Our team has spent the past 18 months fully examining critical design, development, and operations issues facing Downtown, and meeting with many key stakeholders, including MCPOA, MCHA, and OMBA. With their input, we have created an urban plan that not only satisfies the desires and goals of the stakeholders, but is also realistic in its ability to be implemented.
DOWNTOWN AS A DESTINATION

The obstacles preventing Downtown Monterey from becoming a vibrant destination are identifiable. This proposal focuses on addressing four of these key issues.

More to Do – In addition to providing a sufficient amount of appropriate shopping and dining, there must be enough attractions and events to lure customers Downtown, keep them longer, and get them to return often.

Better Experience – Downtown Monterey should offer patrons excitement, charm, and discovery, yet feel safe, inviting, and comfortable. Some of these qualities that once existed Downtown have been tarnished, or have disappeared altogether.

New Identity – Almost every city and town in America has a downtown. *Downtown* is a generic term that, when applied to Downtown Monterey and the Alvarado Street experience, fails to telegraph the potential character, quality, and uniqueness of Downtown Monterey. The district needs a new, descriptive name.

Easier to Get To – Downtown Monterey is not easy to get to by car. City wayfinding signs direct visitors away from Downtown, to other destinations. Once visitors find Downtown, the one-way streets make it difficult to navigate. Even many local residents find driving Downtown difficult.

A successful Downtown will benefit business owners, property owners, residents, and visitors to Monterey by offering an active and attractive destination that not only supplies their retail demand but also enhances the community.
Defining Downtown

Downtown Monterey is a collection of smaller commercial and civic districts that together create a multi-faceted urban environment. Each district has its own functions, physical characteristics, and amenities. Also, each commercial district has its own tenant and customer profile.
Areas of Focus & Key Connections

Custom House Plaza – A
Portola Plaza – B
Simoneau Plaza/Munras Gateway – C
Del Monte Gateway – D

Heritage Plaza – 1
Sloat Plaza (Waterfront) – 2
Jack’s Plaza – 3
Adobe Plaza – 4
Larkin House Plaza – 5
To define and differentiate it from other downtowns and shopping districts in the area, Downtown Monterey needs to adopt a strong name and identity that all business owners can use to promote Downtown as a whole. Many downtowns and retail districts have successfully adopted names that are specific to, and descriptive of, their locations. This new Downtown name should at once define the area, communicate its uniqueness, and differentiate it from other neighboring downtowns and shopping districts.
District Identity

A downtown name should have historic significance, be specific to the location, and suggest a story. It should be familiar yet distinctive, easy to say, memorable, and not used elsewhere.

The current Old Monterey name is confusing to many visitors, who mistakenly believe it refers to Cannery Row. There are many alternate names that might work, however one name continues to offer the greatest appeal and achieve the objective: Alvarado Street. It defines the primary retail street, has historic significance, and is pleasing to the ear. Just as State Street in beautiful downtown Santa Barbara has been for many years synonymous with fine dining, shopping, and events, Alvarado Street could serve that same dynamic role in Monterey.

• Downtown Monterey
• Old Monterey
• Monterey Historic District
• Alvarado District
• Alvarado Street
Alvarado Street as a Primary Attraction

Advance vehicular directional signs provide initial wayfinding to Monterey destinations. They cue visitors to Monterey’s primary destinations. Adding Alvarado Street to this list will elevate the area’s importance.
SPIRIT OF MONTEREY

Downtown Monterey hosts many events and attractions, but there is limited coordinated marketing between them. Coordinating the promotion of these events would help shape Downtown’s brand and attract more visitors.

Typically downtowns have two seasons: Christmas (Holidays) and the rest of the year. But given its geographic charms and year-round popularity, Downtown Monterey could have six seasons, each lasting approximately two months and highlighting a specific theme. These changing themes will create a more dynamic environment and draw customers back often and year-round to enjoy the events of each season.

Each season could feature programmed events and supporting decorations, with coordinated marketing of the entire production. A year-round Downtown “Seasons” marketing program could include changing banners, flags, posters, landscaping, and lighting, with additional marketing material and advertising to promote the seasonal themes and events. Some themes may include:

- **Exploration**: *Mid-January through Mid-March* Sailors, Navigators, and Scientists – Highlights the influence of the Bay on the community.

- **Inspiration**: *Mid-March through Mid-May* Leaders, Legends, and Heroes – Honors the tenacity of those who have advanced the area, from the world of civics to sports.

- **Foundation**: *Mid-May through Mid-July* Spanish, Mexican, and Native Peoples – Honors their contributions to the heritage, history, and culture of the area.

- **Imagination**: *Mid-July through Mid-September* Musicians, Writers, and Artists – Displays and showcases the talents of the many arts, from music to visual arts to performance arts.

- **Illumination**: *Mid-September through Mid-November* Sicilians, Genoans, Chinese, Japanese, and Others – Honors the influence, history, and culture of the many immigrants.

- **Celebration**: *Mid-November through Mid-January* Hospitality and Holidays – Captures the colors, traditions, sounds, and festivities of the holiday season and winter.
3 Easier To Get To

Improved wayfinding signs would direct visitors into, rather than away from, Downtown Monterey. In addition, the elimination of one-way streets would help both visitors and residents arrive at their destinations more easily.

Parking can also be difficult to find in Downtown. Auto entrances to the parking garages are uninviting and the structures do not help define Downtown’s historic character. Additionally, pedestrian access between the parking structures and Alvarado Street is both uninviting and confusing. The parking experience, from street to stall to store, and back, should be an easy and pleasant experience for the general public, as well as for the elderly and special-needs populations that would like to visit Downtown.
TRAFFIC

Simple and clear auto access into and around Downtown is important for its success. Current one-way traffic patterns create three problems:

- traffic moves too quickly
- vehicular circulation is confusing
- half of street parking is on the left side

A balance is needed between drivers destined for Downtown and those just passing through. Also critical to the balance are the needs of pedestrians.

The goals of improving Downtown access are to:

- slow traffic to engage drivers in the commercial experience
- improve pedestrian crossings for safety and enjoyment
- orient visitors and assist them in finding a convenient parking stall

The most effective way to achieve these goals is to change many of the one-way streets to two-way streets, and to redesign critical intersections.

Additionally, new road configurations and directional signage should reinforce optimum traffic patterns for retail patrons. The adjacent diagrams show these patterns for north and south access routes into Downtown.

Traffic into Downtown can be defined by two distinct patterns: The initial or direct visit (left diagrams) and return or indirect visits (right diagrams). The direct visit, which includes a drive down Alvarado Street, is made by new visitors or those looking for street parking. The indirect visit is defined by visitors going directly to a parking garage.
Traffic
One-Way – Red
Two-Way – Yellow
Limited Access – Orange
Gateway Experience

Reconfiguration of Del Monte Avenue will create an opportunity for a new and prominent gateway into Downtown Monterey. A gateway experience (visitors center) and a gateway feature, or landmark, will announce Downtown to visitors.
WAYFINDING

Downtown has a varied collection of signage systems that don’t always function as needed. Three different wayfinding systems direct drivers to various destinations, and yet another system is used to direct drivers to public parking. Two systems are used for pedestrian information, and another two systems are used for historic markers.

Downtown should have a comprehensive coordinated signage program to include: wayfinding, seasonal and event, and sponsorship. These systems should be unified and simplified to provide a more informative, easy-to-read signage program, and should be designed to complement the proposed street and plaza feature improvements as well.

The proposed new sign designs adopt some of the traditional design features of the existing streetlight standards. The destinations are organized by area to simplify the information, with each area having a designated color.

Parking directional signs clearly identify routes to the entrances of the public parking garages throughout Downtown. In addition, the signs display the number of available parking stalls in each garage.
Information and Sponsorship Sign Kiosks

existing banner program (right)
Advanced Directional Vehicular Signage

New sign designs adopt the traditional design of the existing streetlight standards. The destinations are organized by area, each a different color to simplify the information.

Lane Directional Vehicular Signage
Parking Directional Signage

Parking directional signs clearly identify routes to Downtown public parking garage entrances, while displaying the number of available parking stalls in each.

Pedestrian Directional and Information Signage
GUEST EXPERIENCE

By not reflecting Monterey’s historic character, the current City-owned parking garages miss an opportunity to brand Downtown for visitors’ first impression.

Adequate and convenient parking is critical for the success of Alvarado Street retail. Drivers must be able to easily find parking, be it street, surface, or structured. Pedestrian access to Alvarado Street from these parking venues must be a visually inviting and clearly directed experience. In order for the Alvarado Street parking strategy to succeed, parking costs, metering, and payment methods should not be deterrents.

Facade elements at the vehicular and pedestrian entrances should be updated in order to make them inviting to drivers, while complementing the visual character of Downtown. Pedestrian access points should be rebuilt – including stair towers, elevators, and street-level entrances – to improve critical accessibility, visibility, and safety. Combining the East and West Garages into a single parking center could further simplify and improve the parking experience. In addition, changing the names of the garages would assist drivers in both finding parking and remembering where they’re parked.

The pedestrian connections between the garages and Downtown shops, restaurants, and attractions need significant improvements to make them safe, inviting, and engaging experiences.
West Garage

Rebuilding West Garage facades will help reflect the historic character of Downtown and better define vehicular and pedestrian access points.
Pedestrian Connections
Between Parking Garages and Alvarado Street

The existing garage connections are physically and visually very poor. Rebuilding pedestrian access points will improve access and safety. Combining the East and West Garages will simplify pedestrian and vehicular access.
West Garage Passage

The passage from the West Garage to Alvarado Street feels more like an alley than a gateway. The West Garage Passage should be a primary entrance for Alvarado Street patrons who park in the West Garage. It should be an inviting entrance for pedestrians as they approach Alvarado Street, and it should announce itself so shoppers can find their way back to the garage.

Upgrades could include quality outdoor seating, improved landscaping, decorative lighting, heraldic signage, canopies, and umbrellas.
East Garage

Rebuilding East Garage facades will help reflect the historic character of Downtown and better define vehicular and pedestrian access points.
Bonifacio Plaza – Calle Principal Garage Passage

The pedestrian connection to the Calle Principal garage should be inviting and memorable, with new canopies, outdoor seating, heraldic signage, and landscaping.
Bonifacio Plaza Courtyard

Bonifacio Plaza, including the courtyard, lacks character, is less than inviting, and does not direct pedestrians to the parking. The plaza should reflect the streetscape of Alvarado Street and reinforce the pedestrian link between Alvarado Street and Calle Principal. New passage and plaza elements should include:

- outdoor seating
- improved landscaping
- amenities (fountains)
- decorative lighting
- heraldic signage
- canopies and umbrellas
Calle Principal Garage

The Bonifacio Plaza extends to Calle Principal and the Calle Principal garage. The entrance to the garage should be a focal point that can be seen through the plaza to assist shoppers when returning to their cars.
Alternative Access

Bike lanes and protected bike parking can make a visit to the district much more safe and pleasant. Electric car-recharging stations are suggested amenities.

Legend:
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Bicycle Boulevard
- Existing Class I Bicycle Path
- Proposed Class II Bike Lane

diagram by Fehr and Peers
Washington Street Transit Hub

A new Washington Street transit station should be more than a bus stop. It should be a gateway to Downtown for those who travel by bus. It should be safe, welcoming, and comfortable. Its design should reflect the identity of Downtown and project its character.

Relocation of the transit hub will improve operational efficiencies, provide an opportunity to create a new welcoming facility, and transform Simoneau Plaza into a functioning urban plaza.
In addition to a sufficient amount of shopping and dining, there must be other attractions and events to lure customers Downtown, keep them longer, and get them to return more often. Museums, historic buildings, the Conference Center, the Farmers Market, and Custom House Plaza events all help to attract people Downtown.

Currently, however, these and other attractions aren't realizing their potential for maximum use and enjoyment. The History Walk is overwhelming for most visitors; the museums receive few visitors; and the Custom House Plaza events are isolated from Alvarado Street retail.

Downtown needs to be a destination of choice for local residents and for tourists. They should have many reasons to visit, so that Downtown becomes an ongoing destination.
RETAIL AND ATTRACTIONS

The primary reason for visiting downtown areas is shopping. However, there are currently few national or regional tenants to bring people to Downtown Monterey. Most of Downtown’s retail tenants are local, independent retailers who do not form a retail destination that generates the substantial foot traffic necessary to produce solid retail revenue.

With only several exceptions, the food service tenants in Downtown are also not strong enough operators to collectively make Downtown a food service destination. As a result Downtown does not rank with other strong visitor destinations in Monterey County as a distinct “place.”

Several nightclubs and restaurants create an active atmosphere during weekend evenings. This activity, however, has been detrimental to the overall customer experience for those not inclined to frequent pubs and clubs, and has contributed to a negative image that deters some customers from visiting Downtown at night.

Residents and daytime employees appear to use the retail and food service tenants as conveniences. Very little additional customer traffic is drawn from outside the narrow definition of the Downtown core to support strong retail sales. Along Alvarado Street, specialty retail and quality food service (restaurants and cafés) are overshadowed by a great number of service retail stores (hair salons and drugstores), quick service restaurants (fast food), and banks, as well as a visibly high number of vacancies.

To attract a significant number of national and regional tenants, Downtown needs additional leasable space of the appropriate size and quality. To expand the retail opportunities for potential tenants, this lease space needs to be contiguous to the existing primary Alvarado Street retail. There are opportunities to recapture existing lease space north of Del Monte and around Simoneau Plaza, as well as along Bonifacio Place. Infill development will add additional leasable retail and restaurant area Downtown while filling gaps in the continuity of storefronts.
Expanding Retail Opportunities

Achieving Critical Mass
- re-connect Alvarado Mall retail
- engage retail surrounding Simoneau Plaza
- encourage new development along Bonifacio Place
Mixed-Use Infill Development

Good pedestrian circulation in a retail environment requires a consistent rhythm of storefronts. Major gaps in the rhythm, such as a large empty lot, disrupt and discourage pedestrian circulation. This sort of "missing tooth" in the streetscape also detracts from the ambience of the street. Infill development should be encouraged.
Bonifacio
Restaurant District

Downtown Monterey could benefit from a strong collection of quality restaurant tenants grouped together to create a dining destination to compete with others on the Peninsula, such as downtown Carmel.

If Alvarado Street, with its limited available leasable space, were to focus on new retail tenants, then Bonifacio Place is an excellent location for a restaurant zone. Capitalizing on existing restaurants and cafes, as well as the potential for new development (with additional water credits), Bonifacio could mature into a successful restaurant zone.
Bonifacio Place

Bonifacio Place is a unifying street that weaves together various components of the Alvarado District. It should be designed to be traffic-free during dining hours to allow the placement of tables and chairs in a new streetscape.
Path of History

The existing path, while quite interesting, is too overwhelming for most visitors and novice historians. To see all 40 historic buildings requires a significant amount of time. By offering an alternate, shorter path, visitors could see 20 historic buildings, including some of the most significant, in one-third the time and distance. This shorter adventure should attract many more people to the experience.
Active Attractions

In addition to its many historic buildings, Downtown Monterey has other attractions which can – and do – draw people to Alvarado Street, including:

Fisherman’s Wharf – 1
Maritime Museum – 2
Monterey Conference Center – 3
The Golden State Theater – 4
Jack’s Park – 5
Monterey Museum of Art – 6

Other important Downtown destinations include the Sports Center and MIIS.
PATH OF LANTERNS

In addition to the retail, attractions, and historic buildings, another layer of interest can be added to Downtown - a Path of Lanterns, created to express the Spirit of Monterey, using the region’s key motifs. The path would connect seven existing or modified plazas with a lantern feature as their centerpiece. Each plaza and lantern will highlight one aspect of the Spirit of Monterey, which includes:

Inspiration: Leaders, Legends, and Heroes – Honors the tenacity of those who have advanced the area, from the world of civics to sports.

Foundation: Spanish, Mexican, and Native Peoples – Honors their contributions to the heritage, history, and culture of the area.

Imagination: Musicians, Writers, and Artists – Displays and showcases the arts, from music to visual to performance arts.

Illumination: Sicilians, Genoans, Chinese, Japanese, and Others – Honors the influence, history, and culture of the many immigrants.

Celebration: Hospitality and Holidays – Captures the colors, traditions, sounds, and festivities of the holiday season and winter.

Exploration: Sailors, Navigators, and Scientists – Highlights the influence of the Bay on the community.

Together the plazas and their themed lanterns will enhance the Downtown path that defines the Spirit of Monterey.
Lantern Plazas

Heritage Plaza: Foundation – 1
Sloat Plaza: Exploration – 2
Jack’s Plaza: Inspiration – 3
Larkin House Plaza: Illumination – 4
Adobe Plaza: Imagination – 5
Simoneau Plaza: Celebration – 6
and
Portola Plaza – 7
Lantern Design

Each plaza and lantern communicates one aspect of the Spirit of Monterey through the use of thoughtful, historic, or whimsical features. With their fanciful lighting, the lanterns become nighttime beacons.
**Portola Plaza Lantern**

The Portola lantern displays dramatic lighting effects that change throughout the evening.
Polk Street
Conversion of Polk Street to a pedestrian zone will visually echo the historic nature of the Islands of Adobes.

Larkin House Plaza
The realignment of Calle Principal will allow for the creation of a new plaza, providing a gathering spot for visitors to the Larkin House.
Spirit of Monterey Path

The Spirit of Monterey becomes an inviting path unifying downtown retail, plazas, historic buildings, attractions, and the new lanterns.
The success of the Tuesday evening Farmers Market indicates that Downtown might support additional street markets and festivals. Scheduling markets and festivals around times of the week with low visits (Saturday or Sunday mornings), and finding markets and events that complement the character of Downtown and Alvarado Street, could draw many additional patrons. Potential markets and events could include: pet parades, street-painting festivals and an antiques and book market.
Downtown Monterey should offer visitors excitement, surprise, and discovery, yet feel safe, inviting, and comfortable. Downtown once had these qualities, but it has suffered in recent years due to the lack of commitment and know-how needed to maintain the highest-quality shopper experience. It is fine for Downtown to look old and historic; it should not, however, look tired and neglected.

With the right adjustments, Downtown and Alvarado Street can once again offer both local residents and visitors a world-class destination not found elsewhere in Monterey County – a symphony of unique sights, sounds, and experiences.
ALVARADO STREETSCAPE

Much of the Alvarado Street streetscape, from street furniture to sidewalk paving, is due for an upgrade. Street furnishings provide important amenities for pedestrians by adding functionality and visual detail. Street furnishings announce that pedestrians are welcome and that the street is a comfortable place to be.

The street furniture elements that would be included in a coordinated street furniture program include benches and seating, bicycle racks, bollards, flower stands, kiosks, news racks, parking meters, public art, sidewalk restrooms, trash/recycling receptacles, lamp posts, bus shelters, information/wayfinding structures, and tree grates and skirts.

Current trees and other street landscaping should receive additional attention to ensure a consistent level of quality. Street and sidewalk cleaning should be more consistent as well.

Current Alvarado Street sidewalk paving represents a significant investment in the Downtown infrastructure. Though the current paving pattern is unremarkable, the paving color and texture does add some character to the street. A complete replacement of the paving would therefore not be the most cost-effective use of improvement funds. However, replacement of selected pavers with a complementary infill paving would create rhythms and patterns that energize the current flat design. New paving infill can include new materials, color, and textures. Inset tiles could indicate the revised "Path of History" route, as well as other historic information.
Sidewalk Seating
Sidewalk seating can bring more activity and energy to Alvarado Street. Rebuilding the sidewalks over parking stalls can provide permanent outdoor seating areas.
Street Furniture

Street furniture upgrades will help enhance the character of Alvarado Street.
Improved Storefronts

A storefront and facade upgrade and replacement program can both improve a building’s value and also significantly add to the building’s leaseability, and to the overall character of Alvarado Street.

Development of Alvarado Street design guidelines for buildings, storefronts, and signage can encourage a level of quality and style standards.
**Alvarado Street – Typical Block**

The addition of new paving, sidewalk seating, and street furniture will significantly improve the character of Alvarado Street.
Street Profile

The change of traffic direction and the replacement of selected parking stalls with sidewalk seating will work within the existing street profile.
PORTOLA PLAZA

Portola Plaza is visually and symbolically the center of Downtown. In many ways it represents the soul of the city. Currently that soul is perceived as uninviting, tired, and uninspiring.

The Plaza should be a “postcard spot” for Monterey – an iconic place that visually identifies and represents Downtown and the city. As a world-class plaza – a destination for every visitor to Monterey, and a gathering spot for all Downtown customers – it should have a dramatic feature as its centerpiece.

In addition Portola Plaza is a key plaza along the Spirit of Monterey Path. The Plaza's lantern should be iconic as well, reinforcing the theme and identity of Downtown.

Portola Plaza is the key nexus joining Downtown's primary retail – the Alvarado Street District – with the Portola District, including Fisherman’s Wharf and any future Waterfront development. Pedestrian circulation from Alvarado Street should flow smoothly through the Plaza to the Alvarado Mall. The current Plaza design discourages this flow.

As well as reinforcing Alvarado Street, the Plaza should embrace its outlining facades (north, south, east, and west) and the streets and sidewalks between them.

The plaza must function as a welcoming public space as well as a vehicular drop-off for the Portola Hotel and Monterey Conference Center. In addition, it must provide a truck-loading location for the Conference Center. It must be both inviting and accessible to pedestrians from all four corners of the plaza.
Portola Plaza

The Plaza fountain becomes a dynamic feature, formed of elegant materials and lighting, to complement the renovated Conference Center.
Portola Plaza

Moveable planters, kiosks, and street furniture allow for functional flexibility on Del Monte Terrace.
**Plaza Edges**

The edges of the Plaza should reflect and enhance the character of the Plaza.
Alvarado Mall

Alvarado Mall should feel like a continuation of Alvarado Street – changing the name "Alvarado Mall" back to "Alvarado Street" will reinforce this connection. And though Alvarado Mall should remain a pedestrian thoroughfare (except for trolleys and horse carriages), it can have street elements. Pedestrians enjoy walking in "streets," so adding a "curb" will make the pedestrian mall feel more street-like.
Limited Access Street

While remaining a pedestrian environment, Alvarado Street beyond Portola Plaza can accommodate MST trolleys, horse-drawn carriages, parades, and street events.
CUSTOM HOUSE PLAZA

Custom House Plaza is Monterey’s "living room." It’s where festivals and other key events are held – the primary gathering spot in Downtown. It’s also a key connection between Fisherman’s Wharf and the rest of Downtown, including Alvarado Street. Unfortunately, in its current configuration it does not serve either of these functions very well.

The Plaza is uninviting and discourages pedestrians from entering or strolling through from either side. This is even more difficult during events. In addition, the space is less than ideal for many of the events that are held there.

By reusing the Plaza’s existing infrastructure and framework and redesigning the space to meet the functional needs of both pedestrians and events, the Plaza can be efficiently resuscitated and transformed into an integral part of the Downtown experience for locals and visitors.

When complete, the Plaza should be more inviting to those who enter from either Alvarado Street or Fisherman’s Wharf. It should guide them on a dramatic stroll through the Plaza to their destination. A few key changes, including the addition of several new walls and ramps, a redesigned fountain and new paving, as well as an upgrade to the landscape and street furniture, can revitalize the entire plaza. Replacing the south and north steps with a gradual ramp will make it a continuation of the new Alvarado Street (Mall) design. Reestablishing a physical connection to Scott Street will further encourage circulation through the plaza.

The Plaza will also need a convenient bypass to allow pedestrian flow during events. Subdividing the large plaza into smaller areas that can function independently or together will facilitate more types of public and private events. Adding plaza venues for private events can generate additional revenue to offset maintenance costs. In addition, having more venues for break-out events will make the nearby Conference Center a more attractive choice for conference operators.
Custom House Plaza – Existing
Custom House Plaza – Proposed
Custom House Plaza

Custom House Plaza becomes a set of large and smaller terraces that can function independently or together, providing maximum flexibility.
Moveable planters, kiosks, and street furniture allow for functional flexibility on all terraces.
Custom House Plaza

The dynamic center fountain can be turned off to expand the usable space.
Large Tent over Fountain Circle

A custom tent utilizing light standards for quick installation can be used during various Plaza events.
Fountain Circle

A new dynamic fountain becomes the centerpiece for Custom House Plaza.
Plaza Features

- moveable planter bollards
- amenities
- public art
- food kiosks
- traditional lighting
- street furniture
- stone walls
- temporary event fencing
If Custom House Plaza is Monterey’s "living room," then Simoneau Plaza is its "family room." It is a more intimate setting for local resident-oriented events. The relocation of the transit station will free up this prime Downtown location to become a more functional and attractive destination.

The Plaza should have the capacity for multiple civic functions. These can include lunchtime concerts, seating for "pop-up" food vendors, tables for an evening wine and beer garden, and a winter ice rink, among many options.

The current Plaza is elevated above street level, but should be lowered to a point halfway between the Munras Avenue high point and the Pearl and Tyler intersection low-point. Mid-block would now be at Plaza level and provide service vehicle access. This creates easier access to and better visibility into the Plaza.

The focal point of the Plaza can be a dynamic fountain at its center, with dazzling lighting throughout. The Plaza can also provide a performance stage, concession kiosk, and public restrooms to support the many functions that will fill the Plaza.

The Alvarado corner of the Plaza is illuminated with Celebration lanterns while the Munras-Tyler corner features a Downtown gateway element.

To complement the new Downtown bicycle network, the proposed plan converts Pearl Street between Alvarado Street and Tyler Street into a bicycle boulevard.
Simoneau Plaza – Proposed
**Simoneau Plaza**

Moveable planters, kiosks, and street furniture allow for functional flexibility on the Plaza.
Simoneau Plaza
The dynamic center fountain can be turned off to expand the useable space.
Plaza Features

- tables and chairs
- stone walls
- traditional and decorative lighting
- food kiosks
6 Summary

By successfully addressing and overcoming the obstacles that have prevented Downtown Monterey from achieving its potential as a retail and entertainment destination, stakeholders now have a collaborative plan to achieve renewed success. By giving Downtown a stronger brand – an identity, providing more to do, and making it easier to get to with a better overall experience – the heart of Monterey can once again be a vibrant destination for locals, tourists, and visitors.

Everyone will benefit from the implementation of this Streetscape, Plazas and Urban Design plan. Business owners will benefit from greater sales. Property owners should see increased rents and property values. The City should experience greater tax revenues and fees that can be reinvested in the City and its vital programs. And finally, Monterey residents will enjoy a greater quality of life through enhanced shopping and dining opportunities, as well as more attractions and events, resulting in greater community participation and pride in their Downtown.
Implementation

Improvements to Downtown streets and plazas can be implemented in phases. Each phase is tied to the overall Downtown plan, and each involves different stakeholders, with different implementation requirements. Phasing allows for immediate implementation of some recommendations; others will require longer timeframes. The order of the phasing is adjustable to meet site conditions (including traffic reorientation), stakeholder needs and funding opportunities.

To ensure a efficient and thorough coordination of the many diverse aspects of the improvement process, as well as the many stakeholder vested in Downtown, a joint-venture between property owners, business owners and the City could create a property-based business assessment district. This PBAD would be responsible for most aspects of Downtown operations, including public area development, retail leasing, marketing, and regular and special events.

Phases (order of implementation will vary)

- Conversion of Alvarado Street parking to outdoor seating – 1
- Upgrade of Alvarado Street hardscape, signage, and amenities – 2
- Renovation of East/West Garages and transit station addition – 3
- Renovation of Calle Principal Garage and access – 4
- Renovation of Custom House Plaza and Portola Plaza – 5
- Renovation of Simoneau Plaza and bike boulevard – 6
- Creation of Larkin House Plaza and Polk Street pedestrian way – 7
- Upgrade of Bonifacio Place streetscape – 8
- Creation of a gateway to Downtown along Del Monte Avenue – 9
- Installation of additional lanterns and plazas – 10
- Development of a comprehensive Downtown signage program – 11