

# A Community Based Plan

*How was the public involved in decision making for the Miller Avenue Streetscape Project?*

**2003** The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) provided City Council with a series of documents outlining existing characteristics of the street. Out of this process, a series of distinctive “rooms” were identified to represent and describe the characteristics of the street. The “room” concept has continued throughout the planning process, and is the foundation used to build on existing character of the street—identified by many community members as an important feature to maintain with any improvements made to the street.

**2007** A series of community workshops were held to obtain feedback on possible improvements along Miller Avenue. Many ideas and suggestions identified at these workshops became integral elements of the design direction and philosophy for the Streetscape Plan.

**2008** The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update was completed and accepted by City Council. This document highlights safety and access improvements as two main elements for creating a bicycle and pedestrian friendly community, and lays a foundation for further developing the network by eliminating gaps and barriers in the existing bicycle and pedestrian system. Miller Avenue is identified as one of three top priority bikeway segments to complete within the City. Improving crosswalk and pedestrian visibility at the intersections of Locust, Valley Circle, Reed and Almonte are also identified as top pedestrian projects within the City.

**2009** The Streetscape Task Force provided a series of recommendations on necessary functional components of the roadway including further investigating back-in diagonal parking through a pilot test; consider 1-lane of traffic in each direction from Sunnyside to Millwood to allow for bicycle and sidewalk access (while maintaining enough roadway width to allow for 2-lanes of traffic during emergencies); institute other traffic measures prior to considering a light at the La Goma/Montford intersection; and consider providing a multi-use pathway connection from Camino Alto to Almonte. City Council accepted all recommendations made by the Task Force (2009 Task Force Report).

A Design Advisory Committee (DAC) was assembled in 2009 to assist the design team in finalizing a conceptual streetscape design. The DAC was comprised of one liaison each from City Council and Planning Commission, and five citizens appointed for their particular professional expertise and knowledge of the community. Input and dialogue with the community was extensive during this phase of design development. Community involvement activities include:

**Miller Avenue Streetscape Task Force**  
The Task Force comprised of a representative from the City Council, Planning Commission, and 7 other community members and met 10 times between May 2008 and March 2009.

**Design Advisory Committee Meetings**  
Fourteen DAC meetings were held between 2009-2011.

### Workshop/Open Houses

Open houses were hosted by the design team to gather input from the community at two points in the process. An on-the-plaza open house showcased elements of the Streetscape Plan during Memorial Day celebrations.

### Focus Groups

Over the course of the project, focus group and coordination meetings were held with interested civic and stakeholder groups. These meetings provided an opportunity to share information about the project, gain feedback, and discuss specific information on critical topics of interest. Groups involved included:

- Various Mill Valley Departments (Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Police, Fire, Library)
- Miller Avenue merchants and property owners
- The Chamber of Commerce
- Tamalpais High School Safety Committee
- Marin County Bicycle Coalition and Transportation Alternatives for Marin
- Safe Routes to School
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Sustainable Mill Valley
- Mill Valley Neighborhood Associations
- Stream Keepers

## Stay Up to Date

**MVConnect:** The City’s twice-a-month email newsletter. Visit [cityofmillvalley.org](http://cityofmillvalley.org) and click on “Sign Up For eNews.”

**eNotifications:** Sign up for eNews and select the “Miller Avenue Streetscape Project” button.

**Twitter.com:** @Miller\_Ave

**Facebook.com/**  
**MillerAvenueStreetscapeProject**

**NextDoor.com** - Sign up for regular updates.

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- Mill Valley Historical Society
- Marin + Golden Gate Transit
- Transportation Authority of Marin

**2011** The Miller Avenue Streetscape Plan was adopted by the Council in 2011.

### 2015

**Design Elements Advisory Committee**  
Seven members of the Mill Valley community were appointed to advise the project design firm Wallace, Roberts & Todd (WRT) in developing a “design catalog” for the overhaul of Miller Avenue, focusing on detailed components of the project, such as trees and plantings, streetlights, median treatments, paving and crosswalk materials and types of street furnishings like benches, bike racks and trash bins.

### Businesses Community Meeting

This August 10, 2015 forum was designed to inform Miller Avenue business owners about timelines and plans to phase the project to minimize the impact on those businesses. It also gave business owners a chance to speak directly with project engineers about their needs in terms of parking and access during the proposed construction schedule.

### Miller Avenue Open House

This November 10, 2015 event was planned to update the community on the construction timeline and project goals.



## A Primer on the Miller Avenue Streetscape Project

After years of planning, budgeting and engineering, the City of Mill Valley is set to embark in 2016 on the Miller Avenue Streetscape Project, a complete overhaul of one of our town’s two primary arteries.

This major project is far and away the biggest road renovation the City has undertaken in decades: an overhaul of approximately two miles of Miller Avenue. The project stretches from Almonte Boulevard near Tamalpais High School all the way to Sunnyside Avenue near Downtown.

At an August 10, 2015 event co-hosted by the Mill Valley Chamber of Commerce, City officials announced the timeline for the project.

“We’ve been working on the idea for this renovation project for many years,” City Manager Jim McCann told the audience of mostly Miller Avenue business owners. “Today is another step in that long process. There is no doubt that there will be some inconvenience during the construction of this project. We want to make sure that you understand the scope of the project, the timing for activities, and our plans to mitigate the difficulties caused by the construction activity.”

Last fall, utility and water companies such as PG&E, Marin Municipal Water District, AT&T and Comcast conducted underground work at select locations along the Miller Avenue corridor in advance of the City’s work. Scheduling that work allowed the City’s contractor – the project will go out to bid in March of this year – to move more nimbly without

multiple agencies to coordinate, City officials said.

In November 2015, the City Council reviewed a number of major components of the project, including the precise engineering design, the project’s funding strategy, and the final design catalog (a list of the project’s components like plantings, streetlights, medians, paving and crosswalk materials and street furnishings – benches, bike racks and trash bins).

The City Council also adopted an environmental study addressing all potential environmental impacts during and after construction of the project.

The project is built around the “Complete Streets” principles of design, addressing safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, providing better transit access and improving motorist safety, all while retaining and enhancing Miller Avenue’s distinct character. The approved Streetscape Plan will provide continuous bike lanes, improved sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, and comprehensive replacement and repairs to pavement, storm drains, and sanitary sewers along Miller Avenue.

The August 10 forum was designed to inform Miller Avenue business owners about the timeline and the plans to phase the project to minimize the impact on those businesses. It also gave business owners a chance to speak directly with project designers about their needs in terms of parking and access during construction.

Robert Stevens of BKF Engineers said the goal of the event was to get business owners’ input in the “creation of a set of requirements to be incorporated into the contract specifications to minimize the impact on your business as much as possible.”

Stevens said the work within the Main Street section would start on the outside edges of the street and its sidewalks, initially eliminating the parking in the medians to allow for space for one inbound and outbound lane of travel while the normal travel lanes are being reconstructed. Workers would then shift their attention to rebuilding the medians, and that one lane of traffic would be maintained throughout the reconstruction of the Main Street section.

“We want to complete the most disruptive work during summer when schools are out of session,” Stevens said.

Stevens said that access would be maintained to each business and that there would be signage promoting that businesses remain open during the road’s reconstruction.

He added that his firm was in the midst of creating a “parking management strategy” that will include identifying possible sources of off-street parking to be used while on-street parking is reduced. He said the City was open to suggestions for how best to manage the temporary loss of street parking during reconstruction.



## Parking

### During Construction:

A parking management plan will be in place to better regulate parking along Miller Avenue. The parking management plan will be integrated into the project to ensure the availability of parking to support the businesses in the area.

### On-Street Spaces:

Regulate Main Street parking spaces to prioritize merchant needs

- Set a 4-hour time limit at the Miller/Evergreen public lot with 50% of the spaces designated for employee parking.
- Set a 2-hour parking limit on all presently, unregulated on-street spaces.
- Require commuters to park on other portions of Miller Avenue.

### Commuter Lot Option

- Revise parking lot at Evergreen and create shared use with private owner properties.
- Adds 29 parking stalls

## Flooding

### Tidal Influence:

The project installs tide gates within the Marsh Room to limit tidal influence and reduce inundation during king tides at the intersection of Camino Alto.

- The project installs a bypass culvert to route storm water from the 2 AM Club area preventing flooding.
- The project reserves area along inbound Miller Avenue for the 4.5 feet deep by 26 feet wide Arroyo Corte-Madera Del Presidio Bypass culvert between Willow and La Goma Streets.
- Additional flood control features include: berms and drainage on Miller near Tamalpais High School and in the Marsh Room; and a site designed for a future pump near the Redwoods.

## Sea Level Rise

The project implements measures to reduce the influence of sea level rise but the ultimate solution requires a regional approach.

## Protecting Our Creeks

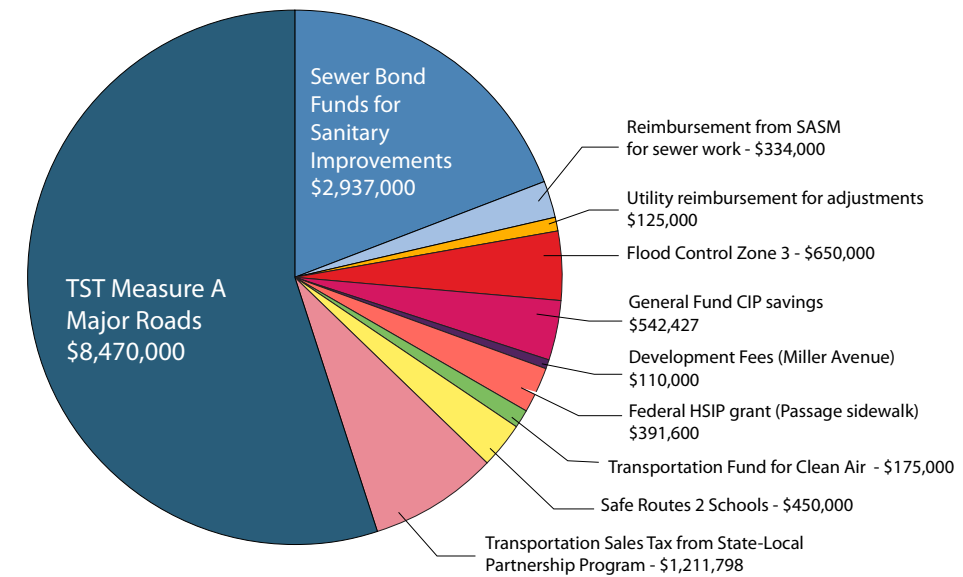
### Storm Water Quality During Construction

To ensure storm water quality during the streetscape's construction adherence to stringent state-of-the-art Storm Water Pollution and Prevention Plan conditions will be required of project contractors.

### Storm Water Quality After Construction

The project includes low impact development strategies to reduce the rate of runoff and improve the quality including rain gardens, bio filters, drop inlets, energy dissipators, and pervious pavements.

## Budget: \$15,406,825 (estimated)



## Construction of the Project

### Lane Closures

- Will be restricted to avoid closures during peak travel times.

### Work Hours on Main Street

- Work hour restrictions lifted after last day of school in June until prior to the first day of school in August for Tamalpais High, Mill Valley Middle, and Elementary Schools
- Extended Weekday Work Hours

### Strategies to Reduce Impacts

- Maintain one travel lane inbound and one outbound at all times
- Provide pedestrian and vehicle access to properties and businesses
- Develop signage program promoting businesses are open
- Implement a construction parking management strategy
- Complete most disruptive work during summer when schools are out of session
- Continuous outreach to inform the community of progress, coming activities, and to address site specific concerns
- Clearly defined expectations for the contractor with performance measures.



## What does this project accomplish?

- Improve multimodal circulation, access and safety
- Provide continuous bicycle facilities throughout the corridor.
- Enhance crosswalks providing safer crossing of Miller Avenue.
- Repair damaged sidewalks ensuring conformance with accessibility requirements.
- Reconstructing and rehabilitating pavement to provide a smooth surface and limit further deterioration.
- Repair the sanitary sewer system, including identifying and addressing direct storm water connections that contribute inflow to the system during peak-wet weather.
- Provide drainage improvements to minimize the frequency of localized inundation resulting from significant winter storms.
- Replace trees and understory planting the project impacts with appropriate species to Mill Valley's climate and character.

## A Timeline of Recent Project Activity

### July 2011

City Council approves the Miller Avenue Streetscape Plan.

### March 2013

City Council authorization of contract for design services, financing plan and phasing plan services. Present interim improvement plan.

### February 2014

Progress report on design refinement, construction cost estimates, phasing and project options presented to City Council. Formation of Streetscape Project committee (Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Manager, Director of DPW, Finance Director and Design Consultant).

### July 2014

Authorized design work for interim improvements along Miller corridor. City Council approval of streetscape components, financing, and phasing plan.

### Fall 2014

Financing and phasing plan to City Council for update and direction. Interim improvements on Miller Avenue completed with bike facility improvements and test back-in angle parking.

### Fall/Winter 2014

Coordination with public utility companies for relocation and upgrades of infrastructure.

### February 2015

City Council appointed the Design Elements Advisory Committee to guide the development of design details of the project.

### Spring 2015

Contract authorized.

### Summer 2015

Develop Design Catalog and provide outreach to residents and businesses to gather input on proposed phasing of streetscape construction. City held Design Elements Open House. Over 50 community members attended and commented on the design features.

### Summer/Fall 2015

CEQA Document and Design Catalog – Draft CEQA document has been prepared and available for public review and comment, and City Council adoption.

### Fall/Winter 2015/2016

Public utility construction.

### Winter 2015/2016

Final Miller Avenue Streetscape Design plans and contract specifications completed.

### June 2016

City Council ground breaking ceremony. Begin Miller Avenue Streetscape Improvements.

### Late 2017

Improvements complete.