



**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** 9/8/2020

**Time:** 5:00 p.m.

**Regular Meeting Location:** Joinwebinar.com – ID# 368-932-883

**Regular Meeting (Joinwebinar.com – ID# 368-932-883)**

**A. Call To Order**

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:12 p.m.

**B. Roll Call**

**Present:** Carlton, Combs, Nash, Mueller, Taylor (excused at 9:27 p.m.)

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson, Interim City Attorney Cara Silver, City Clerk Judi A. Herren

**C. Public Comment**

- Thomas Wong commented on concerns regarding water bill charges.
- Heyward Robinson spoke in support of the ordinance banning gas-powered leaf blowers on spare-the-air days.

[Web form public comment received on item C \(Attachment\).](#)

**D. Presentations and Proclamations**

**D1. Proclamation: National Preparedness Month September (Attachment)**

- Lynne Bramlett spoke in support of national preparedness month.

Mayor Taylor read the proclamation (Attachment).

**D2. Proclamation: National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month (Attachment)**

Mayor Taylor read the proclamation (Attachment).

**D3. Presentation: Fiscal year 2020-21 budget update**

Assistant Administrative Services Director Dan Jacobson made the presentation (Attachment).

The City Council received clarification on City property, former redevelopment agencies, transient occupancy taxes and grants for childcare.

## **E. Study Session**

- E1. Receive an update on Menlo Park Municipal Water operations including revenues, rates, capital projects and billing services; provide direction on water rates ([Staff Report #20-198-CC](#))

Assistant Public Works Director Chris Lamm made the presentation (Attachment).

- Victoria Robledo spoke on concerns regarding water billing discrepancies.
- Thomas Wong requested clarification on water meter charges, billing overages, and determination of tiers.
- Pamela Jones spoke on concerns related to the determination of tiers.

The City Council received clarification on outstanding payment amount totals, meter reading processes, tier applications, and the new water meter project installation. The City Council discussed the sale of the Menlo Park Municipal Water to Cal Water and how the proceeds of the sale could be utilized. The City Council received further clarification on the effects of the low-income program on the rate study and how it is funded. The City Council directed staff to proceed with rate study, researching low income programs and potential fund sources.

The City Council took a break at 7:40 p.m.

The City Council reconvened at 8:07 p.m.

## **F. Consent Calendar**

- F1. Accept the City Council meeting minutes for August 11 and 13, 2020 ([Attachment](#))

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Nash/ Carlton) to approve the consent calendar, passed unanimously.

## **G. Regular Business – no staff presentations**

- G1. Approve Resolution No. 6549 updating the City's conflict of interest code ([Staff Report #20-188-CC](#))
- G2. Authorize the Mayor to sign a comment letter on the California High Speed Rail Authority draft environmental impact report/environmental impact statement for the San Jose-San Francisco project section ([Staff Report #20-189-CC](#))

[Web form public comment received on item G2](#) (Attachment).

- Marcey Abramowitz spoke in opposition of the of the project before the grade separation environmental impact report is completed.
- G3. Adopt Resolution No. 6583 authorizing submittal of a Bureau of Reclamation water and energy efficiency grant application for the automated meter infrastructure project; authorize the public works director to execute the financial assistance agreement if awarded a grant ([Staff Report #20-191-CC](#))
- G4. Adopt Resolution No. 6584 supporting the Middle Avenue Pedestrian and bicycle rail crossing project and submitting an application for Measures A and W pedestrian and bicycle program funding ([Staff Report #20-192-CC](#))

[Web form public comment received on item G4](#) (Attachment).

- Jen Wolosin spoke in support of the Middle Avenue Pedestrian and bicycle rail crossing project.
- Adina Levin spoke in support of the Middle Avenue Pedestrian and bicycle rail crossing project.
- Katie Behroozi spoke in support of the Middle Avenue Pedestrian and bicycle rail crossing project.

G5. Authorize the city manager to execute funding agreements with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for grant funding for the Bedwell Bayfront Park entrance improvements project ([Staff Report #20-193-CC](#))

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Nash/ Carlton) to approve items G1. through G5., passed unanimously.

## H. Regular Business

H1. Update on and consideration of extension/modifications to the Downtown street closure and temporary outdoor use permit pilot program ([Staff Report #20-196-CC](#))

[Web form public comment received on item H1](#) (Attachment).

Assistant Community Development Director Deanna Chow made the presentation (Attachment).

- George Paplos spoke in support of options nos. 1 and 2.
- Katie Behroozi requested that the students traveling by bicycle in the area be taken into consideration.
- Adina Levin spoke in support of a street closure that assists the businesses and to consider children and multimodal transportation options.
- Fran Dehn spoke in support of the street closure and temporary outdoor use permits.
- Alex Beltramo spoke in support of the use of parklets and in opposition to the street closure.

The City Council discussed their experiences Downtown, suggested various alternatives for the street closure, expressed a desire to continue to support businesses with the permit process and provide barriers/barricades to merchants for their parklets.

Mayor Taylor exited the meeting.

**ACTION:** Motion and second (Carlton/ Combs) to adopt modified urgency ordinance to open the Northside (left side) of street to vehicular traffic, continue the street closure between Curtis Street and Doyle Street and Evelyn Street to Crane Street (Southside or right side), install temporary detour signage for bicycle traffic from Curtis Street to Doyle Street on Fridays from 4 p.m. through Sundays at 11:59 p.m., and to continue these changes and the outdoor use permit program through the end of February 2021, and to direct staff to work with businesses to create parklets and timing of commitment as needed, to complete the new configuration by October 1, 2020, and to return with bicycle traffic options, passed 4-0-1 (Taylor absent).

H2. Adopt Resolution No. 6585 authorizing the city manager to execute an amendment to the professional services agreement with Team Sheeper, Inc., to extend the term of the Belle Haven pool operations ([Staff Report #20-194-CC](#))

The City Council received clarification on service dates.

**ACTION:** By acclamation, the City Council continued item H2., passed 4-0-1 (Taylor absent).

- H3. Provide clarification on air quality monitoring sensor purchase, installation, and communication with SMCLabs ([Staff Report #20-197-CC](#))

Assistant City Manager Nick Pegueros made the presentation.

- Katie Behroozi spoke in support of purchasing Purple Air air quality monitors.

The City Council discussed the vendors, Clarity and Purple Air, air monitors. The City Council directed staff cancel the purchase of the Purple Air monitors and withdraw the request of sending County a letter regarding the Clarity air monitor installation project.

**ACTION:** By acclamation, the City Council continued item H3. to a future meeting, passed 4-0-1 (Taylor absent).

**ACTION:** By acclamation, the City Council continued the meeting past 11 p.m., passed 4-0-1 (Taylor absent).

- H4. Review and adopt the updated City Council procedures ([Staff Report #20-195-CC](#))

The City Council received clarification on what activates the opening of a cooling center. The City Council directed staff to gather and utilize County Health's input.

- Pamela Jones spoke in support of the cooling centers activation procedure decreasing the 105-degree to 100-degree activation and increase communication with residents.

## I. Informational Items

- I1. City Council agenda topics: September 2020 to November 2020 ([Staff Report #20-190-CC](#))

## J. City Manager's Report

None.

## K. City Councilmember Reports

City Councilmember Nash reported out on the Local Policy Group and Stanford Community Resource Group meetings.

City Councilmember Carlton reported on the Menlo Park Outdoor Art festival at Menlo College.

Vice Mayor Combs reported out on the Hometown Hero's event.

- K1. Confirm voting delegate for the League of California Cities annual conference ([Attachment](#))

**ACTION:** By acclamation, the City Council selected Mayor Taylor as the voting delegate and City Councilmember Carlton as the alternate, passed 4-0-1 (Taylor absent).

**L. City Councilmember Requests**

- L1. Refocus City Council 2020-21 priorities and direct specific land use planning work  
([Staff Report #20-199-CC](#))

**ACTION:** By acclamation, the City Council continued item L1., passed 4-0-1 (Taylor absent).

**M. Adjournment**

Vice Mayor Combs adjourned the meeting at 11:30 p.m.

Judi A. Herren, City Clerk

These minutes were approved at the City Council meeting of October 27, 2020.

## NOVEL CORONAVIRUS, COVID-19, EMERGENCY ADVISORY NOTICE

On March 19, 2020, the Governor ordered a statewide stay-at-home order calling on all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, the Governor has temporarily suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act. For the duration of the shelter in place order, the following public meeting protocols will apply.

Teleconference meeting: All members of the City Council, city staff, applicants, and members of the public will be participating by teleconference. To promote social distancing while allowing essential governmental functions to continue, the Governor has temporarily waived portions of the open meetings act and rules pertaining to teleconference meetings. This meeting is conducted in compliance with the Governor Executive Order N-25-20 issued March 12, 2020, and supplemental Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 17, 2020.

- How to participate in the meeting
  - Submit a written comment online:  
[menlopark.org/publiccommentSeptember8](https://menlopark.org/publiccommentSeptember8)\*
  - Record a comment or request a call-back when an agenda topic is under consideration:  
Dial 650-474-5071\*
  - Access the regular meeting real-time online at:  
[joinwebinar.com](https://joinwebinar.com) – Regular Meeting ID 368-932-883
  - Access the regular meeting real-time via telephone (listen only mode) at:  
(631) 992-3221  
Regular Meeting ID 450-642-829 (# – no audio pin)  
\*Written and recorded public comments and call-back requests are accepted up to 1-hour before the meeting start time. Written and recorded messages are provided to the City Council at the appropriate time in their meeting. Recorded messages may be transcribed using a voice-to-text tool.
- Watch special meeting:
  - Cable television subscriber in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Atherton, and Palo Alto:  
Channel 26
  - Online:  
[menlopark.org/streaming](https://menlopark.org/streaming)

Note: City Council closed sessions are not broadcast online or on television and public participation is limited to the beginning of closed session.

Subject to Change: Given the current public health emergency and the rapidly evolving federal, state, county and local orders, the format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be canceled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the City's website [www.menlopark.org](https://www.menlopark.org). The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information ([menlopark.org/agenda](https://menlopark.org/agenda)).

According to City Council policy, all regular meetings of the City Council are to end by midnight unless there is a super majority vote taken by 11:00 p.m. to extend the meeting and identify the items to be considered after 11:00 p.m.

Agenda item C  
Thomas Buch, resident

Due to the increasing number of days that have been declared "spare the air days" and the new normal for California in terms of wildfires and smoke, the issue of air pollution from gas powered leaf blowers and mowers is increasingly a problem for residents of Menlo Park. Other communities have recognized the health problems associated with the continued use of these machines. The comments on nextdoor.com are 100% against the use of these machines and most believe they should be banned completely. Merely relying on the current law of prohibiting them is not effective. For the past few months, violations of the MP ordinance is rampant. How do we, as homeowners, get a proposed ban introduced for the city council to consider? This is a long-standing issue.

Agenda item C  
Ann Diederich, resident

I am a resident of Linifled Oaks and the parent of a Hillview Middle School student. I would love to have sent her to school by bike but has been going by bus instead because the El Camino crossing and the necessity of driving in the road down Ravenswood make biking unduly stressful and risky. I would love it if the next generation of kids from this side of town could use an underpass at Middle Ave and dedicated bike lanes down Middle Ave to improve safety as well as reduce the bike traffic jam around the school that currently happens as all the kids merge together on Santa Cruz. It would also be nice for Burgess side residents to be able to walk to grocery shopping and the new plaza.



# PROCLAMATION

## National Preparedness Month September 2020

**WHEREAS**, the State of California is prone to major disasters; and

**WHEREAS**, California often suffers severe fires during the hot dry summer seasons and in a major fire, residents may only have minutes before they must evacuate. Power may also be shut down for extended periods to prevent a wildfire, and residents need to be prepared; and

**WHEREAS**, Menlo Park, and the surrounding County, is also subject to major floods and everyone lives in an area with some flood risk; and

**WHEREAS**, California has the highest risk from damaging earthquakes in the United States and scientific evidence indicates that the Bay area is overdue for a major earthquake. Secondary disasters may include numerous fires and numerous vehicle accidents; and

**WHEREAS**, when disaster strikes, the entire Bay Area may sustain catastrophic damage to buildings, roads and airports, and bridges and infrastructure may be down for days or weeks; and

**WHEREAS**, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a major disaster would compound the difficulty of socially safe distancing measures should residents need to evacuate or relocate; and

**WHEREAS**, the loss of life and property, and injuries, can be greatly reduced if appropriate preparedness efforts are taking before a major emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, Menlo Park's residents must be prepared in their residences with the peace of mind that they and their families are prepared for major emergencies; and

**WHEREAS**, after a disaster our neighbors will be the first people that we will see. Getting to know them ahead of time, and having a plan to work together until outside help can arrive, helps to reduce emotional and physical pain and suffering, and the burden on our first responders; and

**WHEREAS**, the time it takes for our City to recover following a significant emergency will be greatly reduced by a well-prepared community; and

**WHEREAS**, the people of Menlo Park can hasten recovery from a major emergency by being prepared at work and home, and are thus strongly encouraged to make emergency preparedness efforts.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** I, Cecilia Taylor, Mayor of the City of Menlo Park, do hereby recognize September as the Menlo Park National Preparedness month and we urge our entire community to take tangible actions to prepare for emergencies to make our community safer for all people.

DocuSigned by:

*Cecilia Taylor*

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Cecilia Taylor, Mayor  
September 2020

# PROCLAMATION

## NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

**WHEREAS;** September is known around the United States as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month and is intended to help promote awareness surrounding each of the Suicide Prevention resources available to us and our community. The simple goal is to learn how to help those around us and how to talk about suicide without increasing the risk of harm; and

**WHEREAS;** Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, race, orientation, income level, religion, or background; and

**WHEREAS;** According to the CDC, each year more than 41,000 people die by suicide; and

**WHEREAS;** Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death among adults in the US, and the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-24; and

**WHEREAS;** the City of Menlo Park is no different than any other community in the country, but chooses to publicly state and place our full support behind local educators, mental health professionals, athletic coaches, pack leaders, police officers, and parents, as partners in supporting our community in simply being available to one another; and

**WHEREAS;** local organizations like the San Mateo County Health Suicide Prevention Department and national organizations like the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) are on the front lines of a battle that many still refuse to discuss in public, as suicide and mental illness remain too taboo a topic to speak on; and

**WHEREAS;** every member of our community should understand that throughout life's struggles we all need the occasional reminder that we are all silently fighting our own battles; and

**WHEREAS;** I encourage all residents to take the time to inquire as to the wellbeing of their family, friends, and neighbors over the next few days and to genuinely convey their appreciation for their existence by any gesture they deem appropriate. A simple phone call, message, or video chat can go a long way towards helping someone realize that suicide is not the answer.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** that I, Cecilia Taylor, Mayor of the City of Menlo Park, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2020, as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in the City of Menlo Park.

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Cecilia Taylor, Mayor  
September 2020



# FISCAL YEAR 2020-21 BUDGET UPDATE

September 8, 2020

ANNBERGA FAMILY  
GYMNASIUM



- Major revenue categories
- Program operations
- Planed clerical amendments
- Requested direction



## MAJOR TAX REVENUE CATEGORIES

- Property taxes
- Transient occupancy tax (TOT or hotel tax)
- Sales tax



## PROPERTY TAXES

- Assessed valuations
  - Rolls finalized July 2020
  - Timing lag in potential reductions
  - Uncertainty in actual collections
- Educational revenue augmentation fund (ERAF)
  - Department of Finance method review
  - Fiscal year 2020-21 1<sup>st</sup> half level with 2019-20
  - Uncertainty in 2<sup>nd</sup> half

Assessment area	2019-20	2020-21	Change
City	\$20.79 billion	\$22.71 billion	9.2%
Former RDA	\$3.09 billion	\$3.36 billion	8.9%



## TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX (TOT)

- Fiscal year 2019-20
  - Adopted: \$10.25 million
  - Amended: \$6.75 million
  - Actual: \$7.84 million
  - April-June occupancy average: 24 percent
- Fiscal year 2020-21
  - Adopted: \$4.72 million
  - Current confirmed non-operating facilities: 5



## CITYWIDE OPERATIONS

- Personnel expenditures
  - No budgeted vacancy factor
  - Currently 7 FTE vacant, including pending Public Works vacancy
- Regular operations
  - Police
  - Parks, fields, trees, fleet, and water operations
  - Building inspections
- Modified operations
  - Building permit processing
  - Child care services
  - Senior nutrition program
  - Library curbside pickup
  - Outdoor recreation / virtual classes
- Primarily remote operations
  - City Manager’s Office, Administrative Services, Planning, Engineering





## CHILDCARE OPERATIONS

- Area of focus for continued analysis
  - Enrollment
  - Trends and pandemic response
  - Site operations
- Informational staff report underway



## CLERICAL AMENDMENTS

- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) ongoing projects
  - Operating budget adopted June 23, 2020
  - CIP budget adopted July 28, 2020
  - Allocate carryover to CIP projects
- Recent appropriations
  - Short-term rental compliance: \$35,000
  - Telework policy implementation: \$50,000
  - Contract planning support: \$150,000



## REQUESTED DIRECTION

- Additional Q1 amendments
- Operational changes





**THANK YOU**



# MENLO PARK MUNICIPAL WATER

## Study Session





# AGENDA

- Menlo Park Municipal Water
- Water fund
- Water rates
- Billing services
- COVID-19 Impacts

## REQUESTED DIRECTION:

1. Confirm proceeding with the 2021 water rate study
2. Provide direction on whether to proceed with a low income rate program, identify alternate funding and when to implement

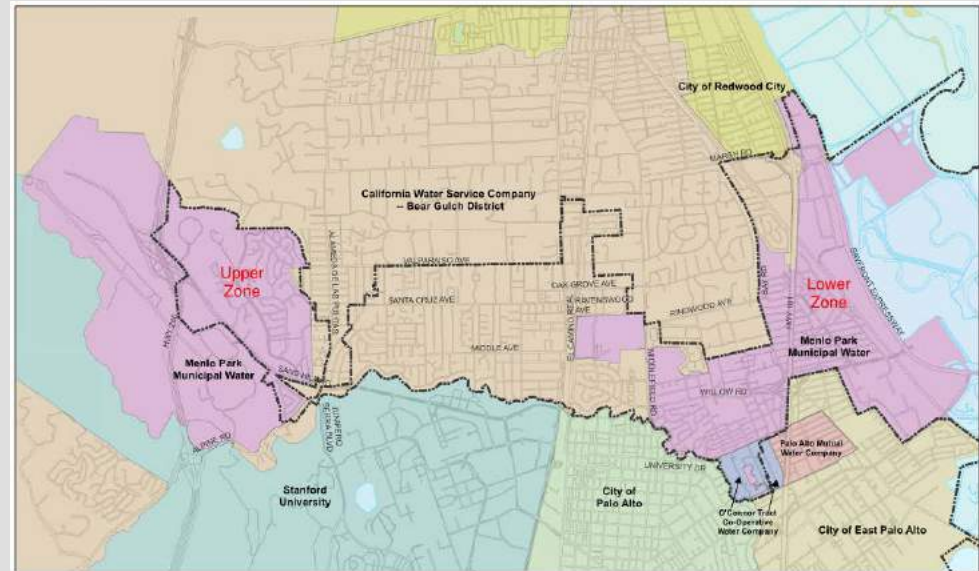




# MENLO PARK MUNICIPAL WATER



- 100% purchased from San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC)
- ~4,400 service connections
- Water service for half of the City
- SFPUC supply guarantee 4.456 MGD



## WATER FUND

- \$12 million operating and capital budget this fiscal year
  - \$10M Operating (Largest expense – purchase of water from SFPUC)
  - \$2M Capital
- Self-sustaining, rate revenues pay for all water system expenditures both
  - 9.325 FTEs directly funded through Water Fund
  - Annual transfer to City's General Fund for shared expenses (IT, Finance, City Attorney, etc.), \$500,000 for fiscal year 2020-21
  - Pays fair share into participation of City's insurance policies







# WATER FUND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN



- Minimum target reserves for unanticipated emergencies
  - 4 months of operating expenses (\$3.3 million in 2019-20)
  - \$1 million for capital
- 2018 Water Master Plan recommended \$90 million over the next 20 years to upgrade aging infrastructure and improve system deficiencies
- 5-year CIP adopted July 25<sup>th</sup>
- Fiscal year 2020-21 projects were scaled to match projected revenues

Project Description	Carryover	Adopted	Forecast			
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>TOTAL Water Capital Projects</b>	<b>\$11,819,098</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,334,527</b>	<b>\$ 7,385,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,919,500</b>	<b>\$ 6,199,100</b>



# WATER RATES

- Rate revenues pay for all water system expenditures
- Last five-year rate study in 2015
  - Last rate increase on July 1, 2019
- Rate elements
  - Meter charge
  - 2-tier consumption rates, Tier 1 for 0-6 CCF, Tier 2 above 6 CCF
  - Capital facility surcharge
  - Drought surcharge, currently stage 1 (no drought)
  - Capital charges, a one-time charge for new/upgraded connections to the system

	Sept 1 2015	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017	July 1, 2018	July 1, 2019
<b>MONTHLY FIXED METER CHARGE - All Customers</b>					
<u>Meter Size</u>					
5/8"	\$17.93	\$20.08	\$22.49	\$25.19	\$28.21
3/4"	\$17.93	\$20.08	\$22.49	\$25.19	\$28.21
1"	\$29.88	\$33.47	\$37.49	\$41.99	\$47.03
1-1/2"	\$59.77	\$66.94	\$74.97	\$83.97	\$94.05
2"	\$95.63	\$107.10	\$119.95	\$134.34	\$150.46
3"	\$179.30	\$200.82	\$224.92	\$251.91	\$282.14
4"	\$299.43	\$335.36	\$375.60	\$420.67	\$471.15
6"	\$597.67	\$669.39	\$749.72	\$839.69	\$940.45
8"	\$956.27	\$1,071.02	\$1,199.54	\$1,343.48	\$1,504.70
10"	\$1,374.63	\$1,539.59	\$1,724.34	\$1,931.26	\$2,163.01
<b>MONTHLY UNMETERED FIRE FIXED CHARGES</b>					
<u>Meter Size</u>					
1-1/2"	\$10.76	\$12.05	\$13.49	\$15.11	\$16.93
2"	\$17.21	\$19.28	\$21.59	\$24.18	\$27.08
3"	\$32.27	\$36.15	\$40.49	\$45.34	\$50.79
4"	\$53.90	\$60.36	\$67.61	\$75.72	\$84.81
6"	\$107.58	\$120.49	\$134.95	\$151.14	\$169.28
8"	\$172.13	\$192.78	\$215.92	\$241.83	\$270.85
10"	\$247.43	\$277.13	\$310.38	\$347.63	\$389.34
12"	\$462.59	\$518.10	\$580.28	\$649.91	\$727.90
<b>WATER CONSUMPTION CHARGE - All Customers, Rate per ccf*</b>					
Tier 1: 0 - 6 ccf **	\$4.51	\$4.75	\$5.01	\$5.28	\$5.57
Tier 2: Over 6 ccf	\$4.64	\$5.32	\$6.09	\$6.97	\$7.98
<b>WATER CAPITAL SURCHARGE - All Customers, Rate per ccf*</b>					
All Usage	\$0.63	\$0.78	\$0.97	\$1.21	\$1.50
<b>DROUGHT SURCHARGES - All Customers, Rate per ccf*</b>					
<b>Water Shortage Contingency Plan (adopted by City Council 5/24/16)</b>					
<b>Required Water Cutback %</b>					
Stage 2: Up to 10%	\$0.11	\$0.18	\$0.26	\$0.30	\$0.36
Stage 3: Up to 20%	\$0.29	\$0.44	\$0.63	\$0.71	\$0.85
Stage 4: Up to 30%	\$0.52	\$0.79	\$1.11	\$1.24	\$1.48
Stage 5: Up to 50%	\$1.25	\$1.88	\$2.63	\$2.94	\$3.50



# WATER RATES

## WATER RATE STUDY



- Water Rates subject to Proposition 218, requires the development of a water rate study
- Sept 2019 - City hired a consultant to develop a 2020 water rate study to evaluate annual revenues needed to fund operating and capital expenses over the next five years
- April 14 - City Council informational item to continue existing rates as-is for fiscal year 2020-21 and return with an update on possible next steps



# WATER RATES

## WATER RATE STUDY



- Need to adjust rates for fiscal year 2021-22 to ensure sufficient revenue for future expenditures
- Amend consultant agreement, which expires on Sept 30, and add additional funding to complete the 2021 water rate study
- Complete in spring 2021, new rates begin July 1, 2021

### REQUESTED DIRECTION:

**Confirm proceeding with the 2021 water rate study**



## WATER RATES LOW-INCOME RATES



- Discount could be a percent discount or a set dollar amount each month
- Could use PG&E's California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) program as a basis for enrollment
- Staff estimates 1,335 possible enrollees in MPMW
- \$11,960 to \$35,880 needed for 10% to 30% discount, based on an average single-family bill using 8 CCF per month (\$89.59 bill)
- Identify alternate funding as Proposition 218 requires that one group of customers cannot subsidize another group of customers

### REQUESTED DIRECTION:

**Provide direction on whether to proceed with a low income rate program, identify alternate funding and when to implement**



## BILLING SERVICES

- 6 components
- Fathom went out of business in November
- New agreements in December
- Minol provides all components except meter reading
- First Response Metering (FRM) provides meter reading

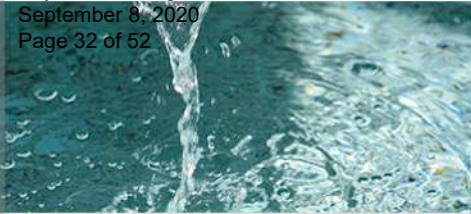
Billing components		FRM	<u>Minol</u>
1	Meter reading	✓	
2	Billing & collecting payments		✓
3	Customer service		✓
4	Work order system		✓
5	Collections process for overdue bills		✓
6	Customer and utility portals		✓



## BILLING SERVICES

- Fathom issued their last bills on November 15, 2019
- Since mid-Nov 2019, MPMW has not charged penalties for late payments and has not disconnected any water service due to nonpayment
- Minol issued their first bills between February 19 – March 11
  - Customers received much larger bills than normal covering 3-4 months of water use
- Increase in customer calls
  - As expected with any billing transition
  - Onset of COVID-19
  - Rebalance meter read cycles
- Minol increased customer service support and utilizes a customer service tracking system, calls have decreased

	No. of calls answered	Average wait time (sec)
<b>Feb</b>	136	68
<b>Mar</b>	718	40
<b>Apr</b>	820	45
<b>May</b>	596	23
<b>June</b>	569	29



## BILLING SERVICES STATUS OF CURRENT AGREEMENTS



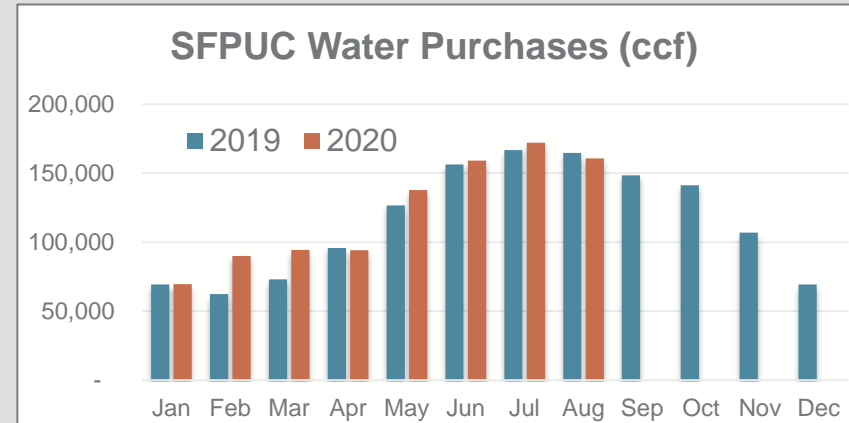
- Minol's contract expires December 31 with option to extend for three additional one-year terms
- Staff will continue to evaluate Minol, prior to deciding whether to extend their agreement for another year
- FRM's contract, up to the City Manager's signing authority, will provide meter reading services through February 2021
- Staff will return to City Council in November to amend FRM's agreement
- Automated meter reading will eliminate the need for manual meter reading in the future



# COVID-19 IMPACTS

## WATER USE AND REVENUES

- Since mid-Nov 2019, MPMW has not charged penalties for late payments and has not disconnected any water service due to nonpayment
  - Both due to change in billing contractor and COVID-19
  - As reference, in fiscal year 2018-19, the City collected approximately \$51,000 in penalties
- Comparing March to June, 2019 vs. 2020
  - Overall use increased 3%
  - Residential use increased 21% (single-family 17%, multi-family 32%)
  - Commercial use decreased 38%
  - Industrial use decreased 13%
  - Irrigation use (separate meters for com/ind and large HOA accts) increased 42%





# COVID-19 IMPACTS

## WATER USE AND REVENUES



- Seven times more customers on payment arrangements since Dec 2019
- As of mid-Aug, there were 638 accounts with outstanding payments 30+ days late or more totaling \$640,832
- Sent 198 closed accounts to a collection agency
- Proactively reaching out to customers with outstanding payments (email, phone calls) to sign up for payment plans

### Conclusion:

A rate study is needed to ensure sufficient revenues to deliver capital projects in order to maintain system reliability.



# REQUESTED DIRECTION



1. Confirm proceeding with the 2021 water rate study
2. Provide direction on whether to proceed with a low income rate program, identify alternate funding and when to implement

# WATER FUND

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN



5-year CIP adopted July 25<sup>th</sup>

Line No.	Project Description	Carryover	Adopted	Forecast			
			2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
1	Automated water meter reading	1,086,584		1,045,000	1,535,000		
2	Belle Haven Community Center & Library		800,000				
3	Calwater Alma Interconnection			140,000	1,500,000		
4	Emergency Water Storage/Supply	3,606,894		800,000	2,550,000	3,060,000	
5	Fire Flow Capacity Improvements		600,000	1,092,727			1,779,100
6	Lower Zone 10" Check Valve for SRI for Burgess SFPUC Turnout					98,600	
7	Lower Zone 12" Check Valves (2) for Hill SFPUC Turnout					195,900	
8	Palo Alto Pope Chaucer Interconnection			344,300			
9	Post Earthquake Operational Plan			58,500			
10	Reservoir #2 Roof Replacement and Seismic Evaluation, #1 & #2 Mixers	4,180,082	600,000				
11	Water Main Replacement Project	2,945,538		1,854,000	1,800,000	2,565,000	4,420,000
12	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,819,098</b>	<b>\$ 2,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,334,527</b>	<b>\$ 7,385,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,919,500</b>	<b>\$ 6,199,100</b>

Agenda item G2  
Marcy Abramowitz, resident

The CHSR EIR assumes that the Caltrain line is "as is" when it projects \$6.5M in noise mitigation efforts. In other words, impacts, such as noise and vibration assume that rail will remain at grade.

With Option C being the City's "preferred option," grade separation option, we are looking at elevated tracks through much of the City. This will translate to substantially more noise, vibration and visual impacts from HSR to areas adjacent to the tracks, especially to residents of multi-dwelling units and single family homes.

We request that the City go on record that additional resources will be needed to address the significantly greater impacts of HSR on our city once grade separation is enacted.

Thank you.

Agenda item G4  
Meg Crocker, resident

As a Linfield Oaks resident, I am excited to see the Middle Ave crossing project move forward.

A crossing here will make it easier to access more shops and offices on foot or bicycle with less need to drive or bike on Ravenswood or El Camino. I bike and walk to Safeway, CVS, and other destinations in that area and beyond, but the existing routes aren't great especially for bicycles and sometimes it makes more sense just to drive.

For me Palo Alto's Homer Ave undercrossing is an example that is attractive and feels safe and convenient both on foot and bike. Something of that order it would be a great asset for Menlo Park.

Agenda item G4  
Tara Moran, resident

I am a proud Menlo Park and love so many aspects of living in this community. There are three critical pieces that continues to keep us in Menlo Park 1) the amazing community and 2) access to amazing facilities and 3) the fact that we can access all of these facilities by bike. However, I live in West Menlo park and find it challenging to access many of the facilities that we love by bike because navigating down and crossing El Camino are so intimidating by bike. I strongly urge you to continue pursuing the railroad underpass and bike lanes along Middle avenue to accompany it. Thank you so much!

Tara

Agenda item G4  
Angela Evans, resident

Dear City Council,

Thank you for all of the work you are doing to keep our city healthy and safe during these difficult times. I wanted to reiterate my support for the Middle Avenue Bike Cross infrastructure that you are discussing this evening. My family lives in West Menlo. The ability to bike directly to the library/Burgess without having to cross El Camino or go through downtown would be a game changer for so many families who criss-cross our town many times a day to get to and from Burgess. This infrastructure will go a long way in keeping cars off the roads during peak hours, helping with commute times and reducing CO2 outputs. Thank you very much for this consideration.

Sincerely, Angela Evans, West Menlo Park resident



## Agenda item G4 Camille Kennedy, resident

I want to reiterate how great it would be to be able to access Burgess/Pool/Library with family without having to ride through downtown. As more families are staying local and working/schooling and playing from home, bike shops have seen a renewed interest in cycling at all levels. Personally I have seen dozens more families riding together ( my own included) all throughout town. Specifically my kids have found Some new freedom biking from our home in allied arts over to Burgess and beyond. The bike bridge is a necessity For our community!!

Agenda item H1  
Petrice Espinosa, resident

Dear Menlo Park City Council Members:

I am writing to express my support for extending the Downtown Street Closure and Temporary Outdoor Use Permit beyond Sept 17. Our community has positively embraced the changes that have been made. Several businesses have made major investments in creating a welcoming environment for downtown shop and restaurant patrons. We will not be eating inside again for a while due to COVID-19 and September-November are typically the best weather months in our region. Let's give these businesses a chance to continue to coax people downtown to enjoy a meal out and shopping. Also, Menlo Park needs to be able to compete with other local cities, namely Palo Alto's University Ave, California Ave, and DT Redwood City, when it comes to attracting patrons.

Let's keep downtown Menlo Park a desirable place to visit during the pandemic - and beyond.

Thank you,  
Petrica Espinosa

## Agenda item H1 Barry Moring

### To the Council

I have worked in Menlo Park and lived in unincorporated Menlo Park for over forty years. During that time the vast majority of our dining-out, grocery, drugs, and hardware shopping has occurred within Menlo Park. I do believe in supporting the local business that keep our town alive.

I was very pleased to see Menlo attempt to support the downtown businesses during the Corona shut-down with the partial closure of Santa Cruz Avenue. I find my self visiting downtown more than ever. I would strongly encourage the council to maintain and improve the closer to help our local businesses survive during these difficult times- and maybe beyond. A vibrant downtown is critical to our community.



# SANTA CRUZ AVE CLOSURE PILOT REVIEW

City Council Meeting – September 8, 2020

ARRIENGA FAMILY  
GYMNASIUM

## PROGRAM REVIEW

- Adopted urgency ordinance – June 19, 2020
  - Santa Cruz Avenue closure
  - Established Temporary Outdoor Use Permit
  - Allocated \$300,000
  - Expires September 17
  
- 18 total applications for outdoor use
  - 9 dining
  - 3 retail
  - 5 personal services
  - 1 fitness studio
  
- Feedback
  - Retail businesses have lost volume
  - Pedestrian traffic has not offset loss of vehicular traffic yet
  - Support for expanded business operations
  - Chamber of Commerce Survey



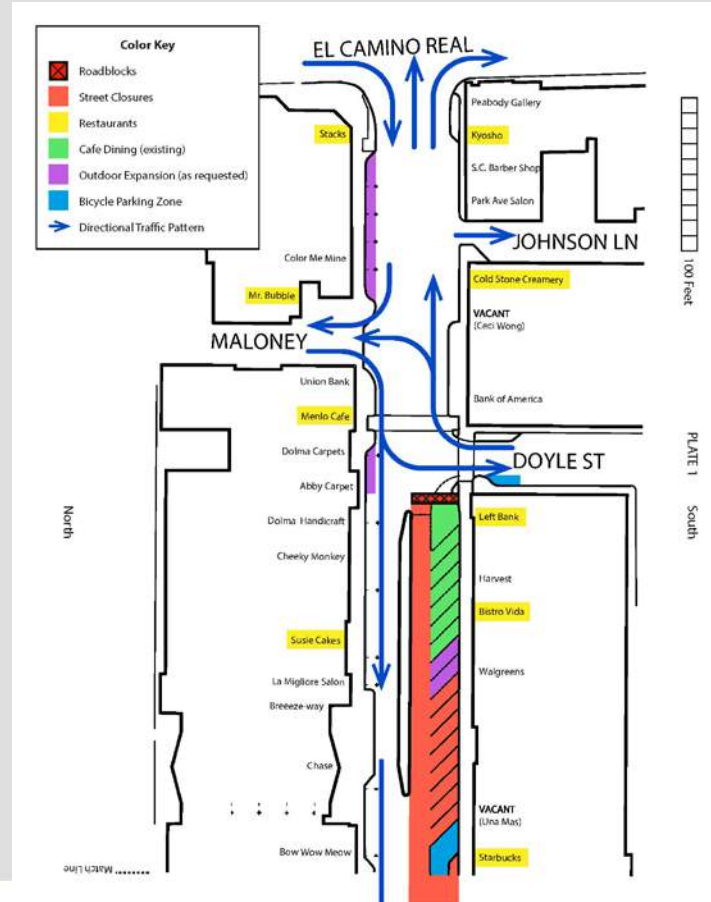
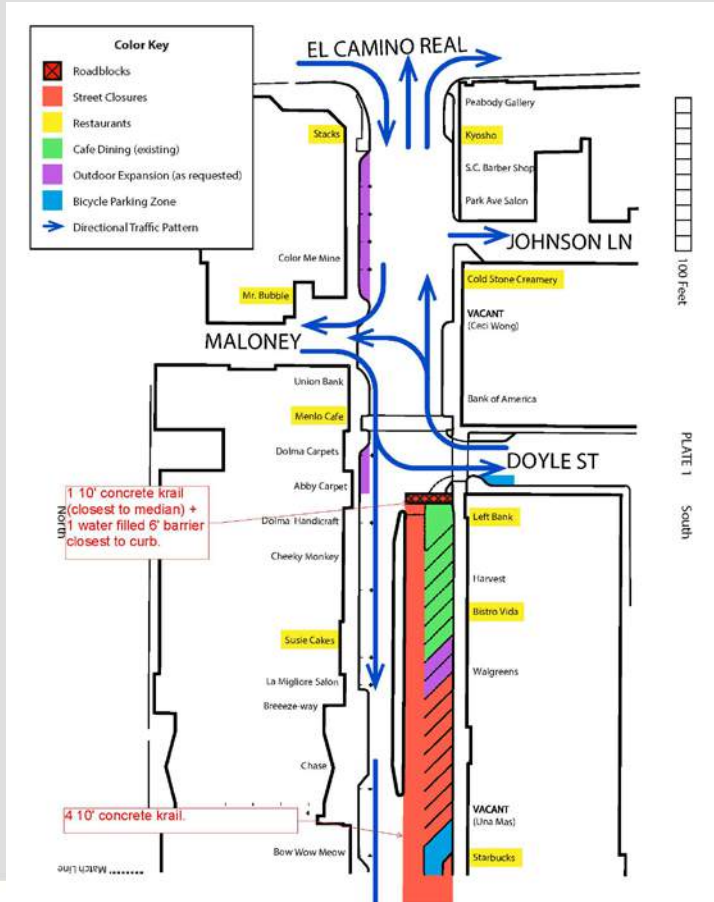
## STREET CLOSURE MODIFICATION OPTIONS

- Option 1 – No change to current closure configuration
- Option 2 – Reopen travel lanes along Santa Cruz Avenue
  - Reopen both Santa Cruz Avenue travel lanes
  - Reopen on-street parking, except as requested for expanded operations
  - Continue to allow expanded operations in Downtown parking plazas and private parking lots
- Option 3 – Modify Santa Cruz Avenue closure
  - Reevaluate and open select portions of Santa Cruz and on-street parking spaces on each block



# CURRENT STREET CLOSURE

# MODIFIED OPTION



# CURRENT STREET CLOSURE

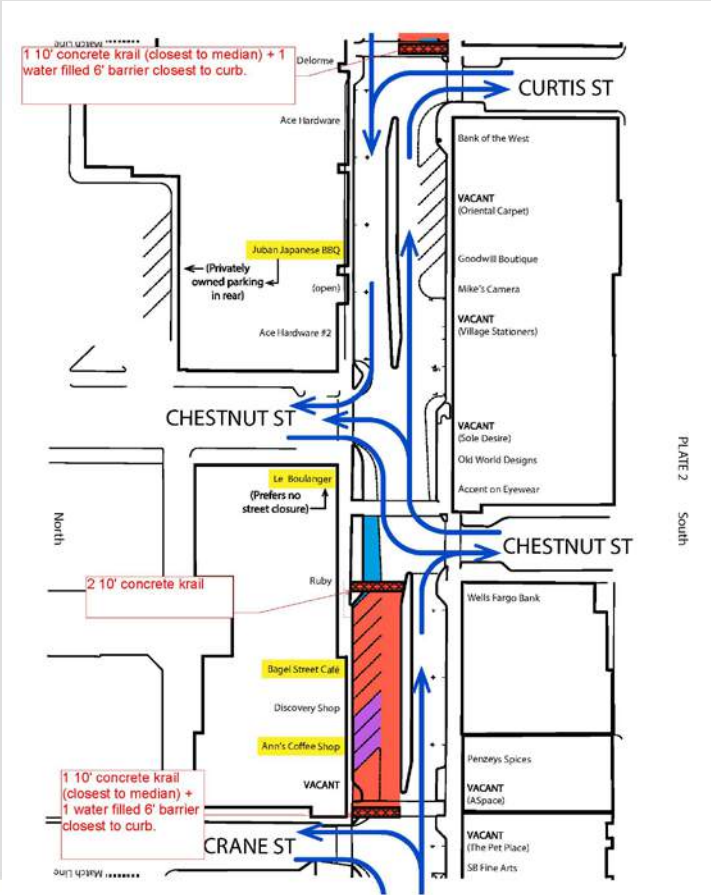


PLATE 2 South

# MODIFIED OPTION

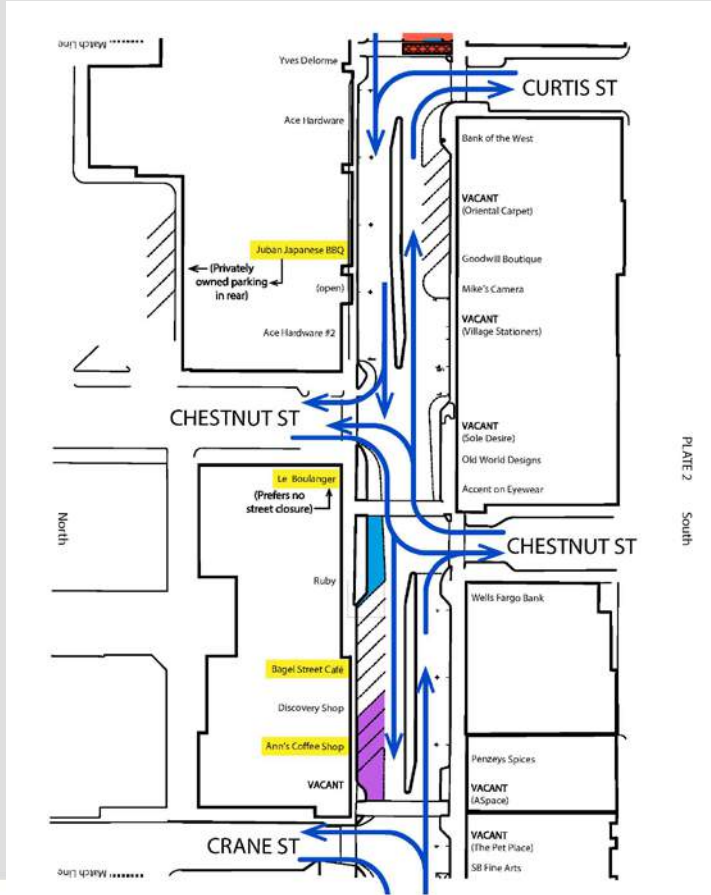
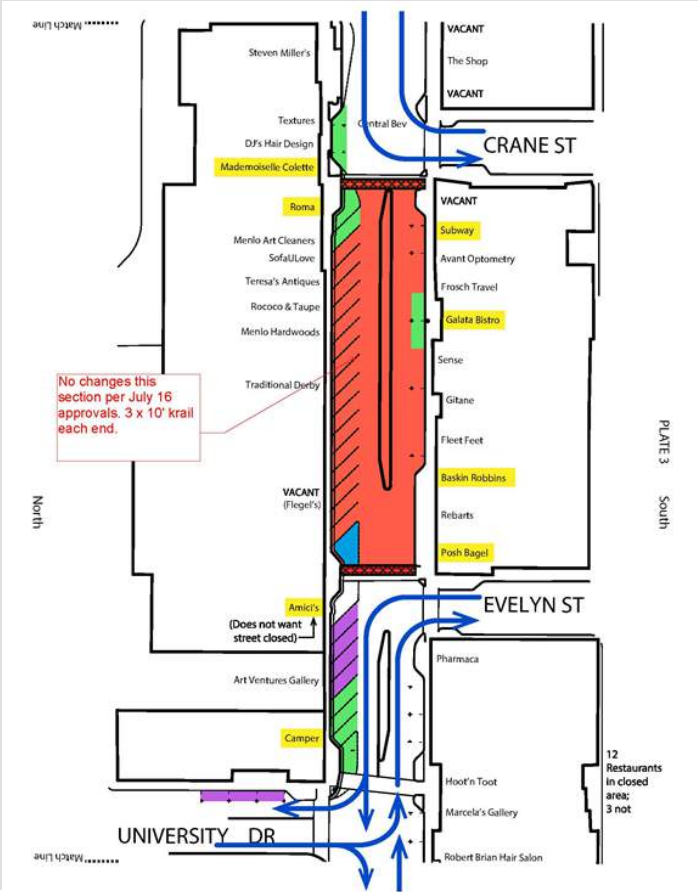


PLATE 2 South

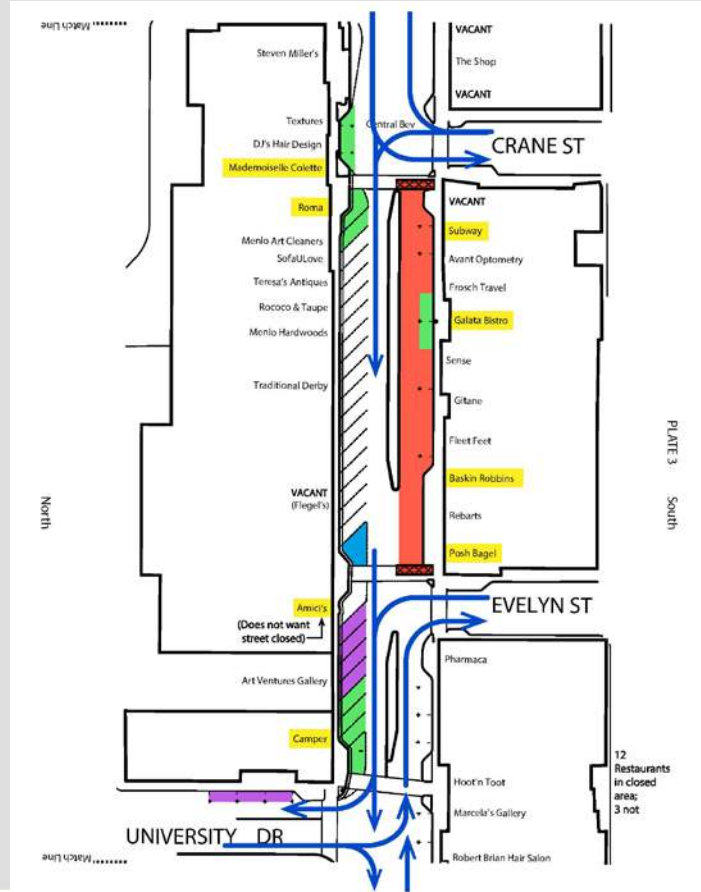




# CURRENT STREET CLOSURE



# MODIFIED OPTION





## TEMPORARY OUTDOOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION OPTIONS

- Allow uses other than retail, dining, personal services and fitness studios
  
- Extend permit expiration
  - Staff recommends extension through January 18, 2021
  - Reevaluate at first meeting in January 2021



## POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- Adopt updated urgency ordinance
  - Consider options for street closure configuration
  - Consider extending program beyond September 17



**THANK YOU**