

DOWNTOWN LIBRARY/MIXED-USE PROJECT

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH: Downtown Library Advisory Committee (DLAC) members were hand-picked by the City to approve a library/garage combination project.

FACT: The Library solicited applications from the community for membership on the DLAC. Over 20 applications were received. The committee was expanded from 8 to 10 members in order to ensure that families, business, tech, information professionals and people of diverse ages and cultures were represented on the committee. Membership was approved by the City Council and the DLAC participated in six months of a public process which included research, interviews, library visits, and public meetings.

MYTH: The Library will be buried under a parking garage.

FACT: Preliminary renderings of a new library building show the possibility of 18 foot ceilings, allowing for a library filled with natural light. There are lots of examples of mixed-use projects around the country with libraries, parking garages and/or affordable housing projects in the same building fscpl.org/mixed-use-projects/

MYTH: Measure S funds are being diverted to build a parking garage.

FACT: Measure S funds will only be used to build the library.

MYTH: The City hasn't done anything to get people to try transportation alternatives to cars (otherwise known as Transportation Demand Management or TDM,) and should try that before adding any new parking downtown.

FACT: The City has invested in TDM for decades, and has the second-highest rate of bicycle commuters in the state, behind Davis. The City is a Gold Award Winner for being a bicycle-friendly community, is a national leader in reducing drive-alone rates, and continues to invest millions of dollars into *GO Santa Cruz*, creating opportunities for residents and visitors to use alternative transportation. (cityofsantacruz.com/how-do-i/go-santa-cruz)

MYTH: The City will charge new fees to businesses to pay for the parking garage.

FACT: The City proposes to encourage less driving downtown by ending parking deficiency fees paid by businesses and increasing parking rates to drivers. There will be no new parking fees paid by businesses to pay for the construction of a new parking garage. The City's proposed new parking rates include increased meter rates (\$.1.50/hour), lot and garage rates (\$1.25/hour,) and monthly parking permit costs (maximum of \$75/month).

MYTH: If the City bought bus passes for all downtown workers they would use the bus and the City wouldn't need to provide parking downtown.

FACT: Many downtown workers live outside Santa Cruz, where bus service is too infrequent for their work schedules. A survey of downtown workers showed that using the bus ranked 6th in preference of all alternative commute modes proposed.

MYTH: The City proposes to build 630 parking spaces on five floors above a new library, which would produce 489 net new parking spaces that the city doesn't need.

FACT: The City is proposing to replace 369 parking spaces that will be lost once surface lots are developed for housing or other community needs. Two hundred and thirty-one spaces are proposed for consolidated parking in an effort to incentivize new affordable housing development downtown.

Even with new parking added to the garage component and increased use of Uber, Lyft, and self-driving vehicles, research models show a downtown parking deficit of 192 spaces in eight years and 745 spaces in less than 20 years.

MYTH: The existing library site can be renovated to provide what the community has asked for in a modern library.

FACT: After extensive public outreach, research, and tours of regional libraries, the citizen-led DLAC recommended that a new library be built rather than spending money to retrofit the current library building, built before modern seismic and building standards. A full renovation of the current library would cost nearly \$37 million - way beyond the \$23 million the Library has for a new downtown site.

MYTH: The City plans to tear down the old Library and put parking in that location.

FACT: There is no current plan for the existing Downtown Library building. It is a City-owned building and will include public input for ideas for new uses.

MYTH: We can use TDM to address any new parking demand.

FACT: TDM is an important tool and the City will continue to invest in existing and new TDM strategies (like improved bicycle commute routes and Bike Share.) TDM alone does not address the increase in parking demand from new residential and commercial development AND the loss of parking supply. The City is committed to finding alternative modes of transportation. The proposed new parking rates include funding incentives for employees to use alternative modes of transportation.

Myths vs. Facts: Mixed-Use Facility w/a Downtown Library

MYTH: The Farmers' Market wouldn't have to move if the Library Mixed Use Project wasn't happening.

FACT: The Santa Cruz Community Farmers' Market (SCCFM) has been eager to find a permanent home. Each year SCCFM must apply for a special events permit for use of their existing site. The Farmers' Market Board plans to pursue a move to a new permanent site regardless of whether a project happens on the current market parking lot at Cathcart, Cedar, and Lincoln.

MYTH: The parking garage is subsidizing the construction of the library.

FACT: Neither project is paying a premium for the other. Preliminary estimates are based on a cost distribution strategy where both projects carry their own costs.

MYTH: We are spending city tax dollars on building a parking garage.

FACT: City tax dollars do not support parking operations – parking fees from users fund parking operations. The parking fund is NOT subsidized by the General Fund.

