

Frequently Asked Questions:

Ukiah Downtown Streetscape Project – Phase 2

What is the Downtown Streetscape Improvement Project?

The streetscape project is designed to improve the way State Street looks and functions in our downtown corridor and will include improvements to the traffic circulation, sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings. This project is the result of numerous community workshops, extensive studies by traffic engineers, and lots of input from stakeholders. Phase 1 was completed in 2021; Phase 2 will begin in late spring, 2023.

Where will Phase 2 occur?

This phase of the project will be split into two sections, on the north and south sides of the downtown. On the north side, improvements will occur between Henry and Norton Streets, with some additional utility work on Scott Street. On the south side, improvements will occur from Mill to Cherry Street.

When will it happen?

Construction will begin roughly at the beginning of June 2023 and will continue, depending on weather conditions, for 12-18 months.

What does the project consist of?

- One of the most significant changes will be a “road diet.” Instead of State Street being four lanes—two in each direction—it will be three, one in each direction with a center turn lane. By giving turning vehicles a separate lane, modifying the traffic signals, and changing some of the east-west traffic patterns, travel along State Street will be more efficient and much safer. Parallel parking will still line both sides of the street.
- Sidewalks along State Street will be widened and/or improved to allow for better pedestrian access.
- Bulbouts and enhanced crosswalks will make it easier and safer for pedestrians to get across State Street by lessening the distance and time required to cross.

Won't reducing the number of travel lanes slow traffic down?

It may be counter-intuitive, but no. In fact, extensive studies of State Street traffic at peak times show that reducing the number of lanes and upgrading the traffic signals results in saving between one and three seconds at each major intersection.



Completed section of Phase One.

How does this project make downtown safer?

Statewide, the average collision rate for four-lane roads (like State Street is currently in most spots) is more than double that for a three-lane facility. Rear-end collisions, unsafe lane changes, and pedestrian impacts are far less likely to occur when the left-turning vehicles are in dedicated turn lanes instead of obstructing traffic.

For pedestrians, the combination of the road “diet” and the bulbouts at intersections make crossing State Street dramatically safer. There is a shorter distance to cross, better visibility, and improved ramps at the corners.

For those concerned about safety in the case of a natural disaster or mass evacuation, it is important to note that there are no significant barriers along State Street that would prevent or restrict vehicular (including public safety) access. Additionally, Ukiah is built on a grid system that offers multiple north-south and east-west thoroughfares, allowing traffic to select alternate routes.



Phase One, completed in 2022, completed transformed Downtown Ukiah. The former abandoned Highway 101 is now a vibrant, walkable corridor!

How will parking be impacted?

There will still be parallel (not diagonal) parking along both sides of State Street in most places. The addition of bulbouts will result in the loss of a few parking spaces. Compared to the benefits, however, this is a small trade-off.

What are other benefits of the project?

- More efficient traffic signals result in less idling at intersections, thereby helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fuel consumption.
- The combination of increased safety, efficiency, and user comfort has been found to have a positive impact on businesses located along corridors where road diets have been implemented. There is generally an increase in property values and a decrease in vacancies along these corridors.
- Part of the reconstruction of State Street will include replacement and upgrades of the water and sewer utilities—an important investment in our infrastructure.
- New pavement = smooth pavement.

Where can I get more information?

More information, including images and detailed traffic study data, can be found on the City of Ukiah’s website at www.UkiahStreetscape.com.