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## Replies to Question Regarding Desired New Businesses in the Village

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You may recall in July we asked those receiving these E-mails what types of businesses you would like to see in Montclair Village. The responses were terrific! Thanks to all who took the time to share not only what they felt the Village needed in the way of new businesses but also what you felt the Village needs to be more appealing to shoppers. Some of the responses will give you a chuckle, some are pretty blunt, and some go into great detail, but all were helpful as we work with property owners and managers to make improvements to the Village.

For those of you who want a quick summary, here are the top suggestions received:

Summary based on Number of Responses

1. Hardware store
2. Bakery
3. Organic grocery store
4. Butcher/Fish store
5. Fun restaurant with music
6. Improved Village look and events

For those of you who want to read more, here are the responses as received:

There are too many realtor offices and banks and too few retail stores. I noticed the clothing store by the donut shop went under. :(It would be nice to have it more like Temescal or Rockridge like atmosphere. But Temescal is very proactive in their district and constantly improving and staying fresh. **Montclair is viewed as a stodgy old district that isn't willing to change.** I wish they would **block off the little area by Peets** and Grinders to make it more pedestrian friendly. Thanks for asking the questions, it really is nice to see an email where questions like these are asked.

I scratched my head about what to propose, asking myself, What do I go outside the Village to do/buy/eat? Ah, I've got it! A **casino!** How 'bout a **competitor to Pelago?** **Bring the hardware store back.** A **jazz club.**

I would love to have a **good organic grocery store** that sells organic produce and food goods. Sort of a small version of Berkeley Bowl.

I feel that the village would be best served by the following types of businesses (in no particular order) a **greengrocer**, a **butcher/fishmonger**, a **bakery**, a **hardware store**, oh, and **another bagel shop** - we only have two, you can never have enough. My customers say hardware store, greengrocer, bakery, fish and meat, cool, high end restaurant.

Please bring back a **hardware store!**

I think a **bakery** would be great. Also maybe a **ceramic/craft "do it yourself"** in store business. Any retail would be great.

Hi- we'd love to get a **hardware store** back in the village- also a **healthy eatery** that is **like**

Pluto's (<http://www.plutosfreshfood.com/>) where families can eat affordably and often. Thanks for putting out this survey.

I am very eager to see a more stimulating selection of businesses located in the village. I don't know how it was managed and many would agree, the selection of restaurants in the Village leaves a lot to be desired. It would be a wise idea to try and secure a **solid anchor restaurant** to inspire other quality restaurateurs to come up the hill e.g. Daniel Paterson from Plum and Coi, the guys from Dopo and Adesso, Sean Baker from Gather, just to name a few. The city has endless amounts of talent to source from as well. Also, a **great wine bar** would be fantastic!! Also, another Dry Cleaner or Title Company / Real Estate Office or Bank should be avoided at all costs. How about a **Whole Foods or Trader Joes?** Safeway and Lucky seem out of place these days given the shopping habits of many residents in the hills. Marc West-Teixeira Watch Temescal. They really moving forward. - a **'tumble and tea' kind of place** (kid play while adults can sit and watch) Also, **party places** are opening up where instead of having your kid's party at home, everyone goes to this place. I also think that the big concrete retaining walls near the post office desperately need **artwork - murals or tile** to create some village charm. **Temporary art galleries in vacant shops**, any existing restaurant or coffee shop that would have **regular live music** - one man gigs of guitar, piano, voice, karaoke even between 7-11 nights would draw folks. the "strolls" have been great.

Veggie restaurant, skate shop for the middle schoolers, **nice bar, lounge** for late night that serves local beer for 20s 30s or a brew pub. Thanks for asking.

I'd like to see a **Chinese Dim Sum take-out** place.

It would be nice to replace the lost **hardware and paint stores**. A more out-of-the box idea would be an **Apple Computer Store**, which would bring a lot of folks into the Village for training as well as purchases, which could lead to an increase in spill over purchases of all kinds. Not sure how you approach Apple, but there no such stores in Oakland now.

A high quality **bakery** such as Arizmendi/Cheese Board or Great Harvest.

I'd like to see a **hardware store** and **more bars** and **another liquor store**. Thanks for asking.

Thanks for soliciting feedback on this topic. Montclair could be a destination as great as Mill Valley, 4th Street in Berkeley, Hartz Ave in Danville, or Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette (new downtown area) *but our standards will have to change*, in order to attract tenants willing to make the investment. Standards would include landscaping, signage, architectural design, sidewalk usage, ratio of retail to services, etc., none of which appear to exist today. First, some comments of a general overview....

Montclair Village is a 1970's shopping district. Period. If you're stuck in that period and okay with that kind of ambience/environment that's fine but it's not a draw and people today want an excuse to hang out and spend time where they shop and can socialize in a trendy setting.. Right now, in the village, there isn't a great ability to do that.....**more al frescoe dining, sidewalk bistro tables, art walks**, etc. would certainly encourage that. More specific comments.....

1) **Less services and more retail**....how many banks and real estate offices do we actually need? As well, who needs 2 drug stores across the street from one another.....CVS has become a disgrace and gives a bad name to "sidewalk sale" that seems be an ongoing marketing program for them.

2) **Less chains and more uniques**...that said, McCaulou's has been there for the shoppers when no other "Major" retailer has been interested in being here so enough about the "Monopoly on Mountain" other than he should have been required to change the frontage of the new "lifestyle" store....who relates the new lifestyle with a 1980's exterior?

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- Visit 4th Street, Hartz, Mill Valley, Mt. Diablo Blvd in Lafayette and Danville and you'll see many, many unique restaurants, wine bars, coffee bars, etc. that were willing to make the investment and it's paid off big time. The Village needs entertainment...check out Hartz Ave. for that!

Your first Thursday Stroll was a great idea....with a little fine tuning it could be a great destination.

3) **New Retailers need to be "Open Store" ready.** Wheels of Justice had that vinyl banner with the metal grommets as their only signage for years and then they moved to Raimondi's and the Raimondi's sign was there (is still there?) months later. The Yogurt store *still* has no signage on Medau but they have at least 25 "poster bills" in their window....if you can't afford signage you can't afford to be in business. Il Porcellino was destined to close...they never seemed ready to introduce new customers to their offering....untreated exterior wall paneling, plants that died quickly, inadequate signage. Again, it sounds like shop owners that are allowed to get in on a shoestring will do just that.

4) We need a **landscaping set of standards**....Crogan's is great but the 1970's wine barrels with the plants that have been dead for just as long need to be outlawed!

5) **Exterior architectural standards**... if someone puts up a canvass awning they get a break on something else, ie. dues, more sidewalk space for bistro tables and chairs..

6) Talk to Simon at Montclair Fitness about dressing up that huge area behind the gym....sub-letting it to a "unique" coffee vendor who would create "**Montclair Perk**"....a parklike, coffee park accessible from the Fitness Center or the back open lot of Rite Aids.

7) **Create an annual event unique to the area**, i.e. Hot August Nights like Hartz Avenue in Danville, a late summer Solano Stroll, a monthly antique "faire" in Montclair park....Events that play to the high end of the neighborhood and give people a reason to come and discover Montclair Village.....

8) **Obsolescence**.....Sorry, but the clothing stores in the village are really outdated...nothing is trendy, the stores smell musty, in fact they're almost consignment like and so matronly...(with the exception of McCaulou's). Just because there are tenants that can afford the rent doesn't mean they should be here....pharmacies, book stores.,many just don't have the draw to bring in shoppers.

9) **Need art galleries**....the framer is great but we need at least 2 art galleries and 2 high end gift stores (neither of which exist in the village right now)

That's it for now.....Good Luck with this - it's a great start.

I would enjoy having a **thrift shop** in the village.

Dear Neighbors, I clicked on the MVA website link below and was shocked to see the vacancies - but I was shocked just walking around the village last Friday. I don't know what business I would like to see in the Village that would be realistic. If you do, please respond. I do wish we had **better grocery stores**, like the family-owned United Market in San Rafael and Mollie Stone's which began in Sausalito but the vacant spaces are too small and parking nonexistent for that wish to come true. How about you? When you drive to Lafayette, Walnut Creek, Emeryville, etc., what are you shopping for? Respond to montclairvillage@sbcglobal.net

I remember reading about **Pop Up Stores** in San Francisco last Christmas. To draw shoppers to Village, how about a six month trial of pop up stores in high visibility location? **Sept - UC Berkeley merchandise**, to coincide with start of football season - (games will be in SF this year) **Oct - Halloween store** (upscale) **Nov** - maybe a short stay by a **cold weather type of retailer**, such as Warm Things (College Avenue comforter store) **Nov - Dec - Apple store** - a few of their top sellers, boxed and ready to go **Feb - See's Candy** - just boxes to go, an expanded version of what they have at airport I believe I read that **Best Buy and Target both have had small Pop Up stores** in the past, focusing on a few best sellers, ready to go. Specialty stores: **MAC Cosmetics** (there is one on Fourth St in Berkeley) and **Sephora The Walk Shop** (shoes - stores in Berkeley and Walnut Creek) Wildest Idea and Probably Impossible: McCalous leases their "hidden" store property to a **fine grocery store** and McCalous takes over several vacant

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stores with high visibility.

I'd love it if we had a **little theater/movie house** here in the village -- something like The Elmwood.

I think brick and mortar hardware has a lot of challenges. Why not create a "**gourmet village**". There's nothing like this in the East Bay, yet there are a lot of people driving from Contra Costa County every night to go out to dinner.

Yarn and textiles (fabric), Hardware Store, Furniture or home accessories (lamps, decorative items, pictures, mirrors, dried flowers), **mens clothing boutique, hobby shop, dance studio, bath shop** (with linen and all accessories and furniture for the bathroom) **tutoring and study center** for middle and high school aged students.

Hardware store.

We need a **hardware store!!!** We have lost TWO! Three, if you include Raimondi's. I'm not going to drive down to Redwood Road - it's just not where I shop. Why did they leave? High rents, I'll bet. Commercial property owners in Montclair are damaging the retail scene in the village, and inconveniencing those who shop there, by making **rents too high for the market**, considering we are only just starting to climb out of this recession. This is not the time for "my way or the highway" lease negotiations. Just look at the very large number of vacancies, and how long they have been vacant; this proves the imbalance of the market. There needs to be more communication, and more sharing of market risk between owners and tenants. Owners who fail to see this are cutting off their nose to spite their face, and making things more difficult for the rest of us in the process. I would much rather shop locally than drive all the way to Home Depot.

I would like to see a shop that is for **gardeners...gadgets, some plants, seeds, fertilizer, yard art** etc.

We have a need for **kid friendly restaurants**.

Ace or true value hardware, trader joe's, pizza my heart, karate dojo, dance school, la farine bakery, ice cream shoppe w/some character-- a real gathering space like fenton's, bikram yoga studio.

I think a **more popular shoe store** would be a value added business.

I think we'd all like to see a **hardware store** in the village. (It's a shame that the only one left relocated after a rent-hike.) And I know I'm not the only one who misses having a **decent Italian restaurant** in town. And, as long as I'm dreaming out loud, a **women's clothing and shoe store like Earthly Goods** in Berkeley would be great.

A **salad bar type restaurant** would be so welcomed! There is a chain (I know we are all opposed to them, but Subway just slipped in) called **Pluto's**. It's a healthy type of restaurant. There is also **Pacific Catch** in SF- they serve wonderful seafood, salads, and other things too. My vote is for **better restaurants** and it looks like we are in transition with that. J Keep up the great work.

Any business that is **family owned** is a great addition, versus chain restaurants and stores. I think a **bakery** would be a great addition to our village, and I would LOVE to see an **organic grocery**, no matter how small! Thanks for taking the time ask!

Microbrewery, Bakery, See's candy, Apple computer store, And a true to life new York

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DELI.

Women's clothing boutique targeting 30-40 yr old range - so you don't have to go over to piedmont to shop

We would love to see a really **nice shoe store like Rabat.**

A **decent restaurant** and not a mini-chain/small lunch type place. One like the Equinox used to be, and not Italian food...A good **bakery** combined with an **English style tea room** where the ladies can lunch and/or have a nice afternoon tea. (Like Pascal's in Danville). And if only we had another **Jim Coop for the men**, combined with a **wine tasting room / tapas bar/ and even geisha girls....**And a **coffee shop with NO INTERNET/WIFI connection!**

How about a **Sees candy store?** I think that would be an asset to the village. We also need some kind of a **hardware store** , maybe in a smaller space than we had. That might not be possible.

I'd love to see a **Produce Shop, Pet Store, Shoe/watch repair.** I know chains are not so popular with the association, but a **Sephora** or other **chain beauty store** would be nice. And I'm all for **Cold Stone.** I promise to go to the Malt Shop too!

More really **good restaurants** (not just sushi :) with a great bar! **More clothing stores** for all ages and sizes. No more nail salons, sandwich shops or coffee shops. An upscale restaurant with great food, a **bar with LIVE Jazz!**

Greengrocer, a fish/meat store and a hardware store.

Hardware & Paint

Shopping is not the issue. **Make Montclair a destination via an outdoor seating area** (we all know the location needed) along with **parking holidays.** Has MVA ever figured out how much the City takes in on one day of parking meters? Cut a deal with Libby, pick a **Saturday and promote free 2 hour parking** for the entire district. With that promotion alone you should be able to draw shoppers that normally would not come up to Montclair. Also there are plenty of **musical acts** that would play free over the **lunchtime** period too! Montclair is competing with aggressive districts like Temescal, Jack London and Lakeshore....you have to offer something special and different to draw shoppers.

I'd LOVE to see a **cool hip bar/tapas (outdoor) place** that would play some **live jazz music** (after all that scene is struggling)!! At night it's like a ghost town so it would be cool to have another lively place besides the old-man/boring Crogan's. Not everyone that lives in Montclair is over 50 ;). And then maybe some **cool clothing boutiques** could open....the clothing shops now are either old or kiddie. Also a **hip/modern home furnishing store** would be a cool idea too! Also attracting a younger demo for the swanky bar/restaurant!

A **restaurant that is hip, cool, great for a happy hour...**fun cocktails, yummy appetizers, etc. (with some **outdoor seating** too if possible)

Anything like that brings people to the village and they may buy other things too. **Ti Couz** closed in SF (rent increase I believe). Wouldn't it be great if she re-located to Montclair? Mark Nemeth **Good kosher fun place, greengrocer, bakery, fish and meat.** Maybe the **Montclair Bakery can move into the village** as well as that great grocery/ produce market that use to exist up there near Italian Colors.

Wedding dresses, accessories and lingerie. Tea & Cupcakes with retail and tea party seating.

Free/low-cost meeting space for a nonprofit to have weekend and an occasional week day workshop for 10-25 + people. A **Neighborhood Exchange Crawl** might work, e.g., agree to bus people to different neighborhoods to check out places in other neighborhoods each quarter and they do the same. Another tie-in would be some sort of **low-key venue**, either a Friday or late Saturday afternoon/early evening event. A **theme--get-to-know the history, get-to-know your city neighbors** would be needed. Maybe we could have **sports event and/or music in the Park with walking to the Village**. Perhaps the vacant spaces could be places to hold **age-banded poetry slams, open microphones, book readings, etc. Thursday night out.**

A **good bakery (like La Farine, or the one over by Peets/Rick and Ann's)**, a **men's clothing store (not suits, but casual wear)** - not many of these around - lots for women, a **tween-teen-young adult clothing store** - too bad about the demise of Magpie - concept was good, delivery and price points not quite, but market is there we think.

I mourn the loss of Village Hardware. We need a **hardware store** in the village!

We've lived near Montclair Village for four years and shop here as often as we can. We've been asking our neighbors what stores they'd like to see fill the many vacancies in the Village, and their first choices are a **hardware store, butcher shop, and fish market**. There were several other suggestions but these received more than ten votes from people in our area.

When i was in Srbija former Jugoslavija, I would take my kids to a snack place(actually "they" serve alcohol and coffee too..hahha) that had internet and media stuff on one side for the parents to work, or catch up on some adult time, with a thick glass that divided that area from a padded **room full of jumpers for toddlers/preschool age** and plenty of other activities, also employees/babysitters that took care of them..mom or dad still there, kids could see them, but the parents could not hear them... our winters are rainy..I think something like that would work in Montclair.. it would really be nice if someone opened up a **spot for teenagers** too..cheaper food, arcade, interactive games..what ever they're into now.

Your timely query came just a day after I was pondering what a disaster the Lucky store has become. They have had what looks like the same pile of sweet corn sitting in there since July 4. They are hardly the "low price leader" or the "Threes a crowd" store they used to be. I don't know anybody that works there and they used to know me by name! When I moved here in the 1980s Montclair was really a quaint little village. I have heard local merchants complain about the Lucky store as well. Montclair has gone downhill over the years.. I may be laughed out of town but my preference would be to make an effort to get things back to what they used to be. A **hardware store** would be nice, one or two realtors (if any) would be more than enough, as would a bank or two (at most). No chain stores would be wonderful if they all could be replaced with the type of mom and pop stores that used to thrive here. **Bring back "Freeway Variety"** and a **decent grocery store**. Since the **CVS on Broadway and 51st** is closing down perhaps something like that **could come to Montclair** as that place has been a staple to the community for many many years and a lot of us are sad to see it go. Nothing around here can replace it. There aren't any stores quite like it anywhere I can think of. Montclair has lost it's charm to me. Parking is horrendous and enforcement is over-zealous and selective. I can go to Piedmont Avenue and have a similar or even better experience. I used to enjoy a trip to Montclair and now find I dread it and wait until I have several stops to make there before venturing off in that direction. I do my grocery shopping elsewhere. Hope that is of some help.

La Boulange come to the village! They have one in Lafayette and a dozen in SF. We need a

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high quality boulangerie which can serve light faire during the day time. A place to buy lovely cakes and morning breads! It would be a slam dunk for a good quality outfit!

I have been thinking about this since you sent it out. Also last evening I was sitting outside enjoying some truck food and beers with other Montclair friends who are all here in Truckee (more on that later)...we brain stormed this question. Generally we represent the parents of kids (K-12), local dollars and customers willing and wanting to spend locally. Here is some feedback. **Existing businesses:** If all the stores ran their business like Great Good Place and The Cycle shop they would all be more successful. Why? Because these **owners consciously reach into the community to serve our needs and they are our friends.** Oddly, Grinders fits this category too. **Refresh your stores!** I have lived in Montclair as a renter and a home owner for over 18 years. Hey shop keepers, for those of you here that long, most of your offerings are the same as they were 15-18 years ago. It is time to update, re-fresh, re-assort. Don't lose your core model, but please offer us new items. Even our beloved Pelago...there is nothing to purchase because I already have...new merch. is needed.

New Business ideas: I started by thinking of other shopping neighborhoods and what they offer that is fun, enhances the neighborhood, etc. I also thought about the dollars I take out of Montclair to other places like Emeryville and Berkeley. Food: Can we possibly lose one of the supermarkets and get a great store like **Whole Foods, TJ's or Berkeley Bowl?** Every Mom I talk to is majorly bummed that we have to travel elsewhere to get proper food at the stores we desire. If you want to talk about lots of revenue and taxable sales, this is first on our list. We buy food every week, if not several times a week. **Butcher:** Absolutely needed...and **Fishmonger. Bakery:** We love Colonial Donuts and Noah's, but a full service bakery would be an awesome addition. We all love **Montclair Baking**, but often forget about it (location, location, location). Instead of pursuing La Farnne or Katrina Roselle, what about trying to convince Leanne to **open a small outlet in the village proper?**

Restaurants: Oakland is on fire opening new **spectacular restaurants**...but not in Montclair. Kakui is the closest to better end. The rest are mostly on the level of snooze, average, or boring. We take most of our dining dollars outside Montclair. Where is our Commis, Comino, Encuentro, Chop House? What about local greats like Boot and Shoe, Rudie's Can't Fail Cafe, Cesar, Dupo and Bakesale Betty's? We could have outlets of these or maybe a new Bakesale Betty's just waiting to be launched....How about a **bar we actually want to go to, maybe even with music?** (Crogan's certainly has a core group, but none of my friends want to go there).

Other stores: **Hardware:** We need it for local DIY and contractor convenience. Westminster is out of the way. **Emergency Preparedness:** We do live on a fault. I think this would draw to a much larger market since we can't think of one in the area. **Hobbies and Crafts:** (not to complete with the Toy Shop). Model plane and car kits, girls crafts....we all currently take all this money to Emeryville. **Boutiques that are fun:** think Juniper Tree, College Ave shops. Better end, but accessible. A **really nice, full scale salon/spa.** These exist in Walnut Creek, but that is a 20 minute drive. Polish on Piedmont Ave is the closest we have, but even there the services are limited. Our salons and nail spas are dinky, quick and less expensive (which serves a purpose too), but the addition of an up-scale, full service offering would be welcome. **Home furnishings/Interior Design.** I know a few have come and gone (PS Home and D Squared come to mind), but I still think this is viable. This could cover antiques to contemporary. Look how people love to wander in Montclair Antiques. **Art Collective** like Pro Arts or ACCI on Shattuck. Don't let Uptown have all the fun with art. A place for local artists to showcase and sell their works would be great. Other thoughts:

Let me jump back to the event in Truckee I mentioned at the beginning of this missive. Three years ago the downtown Truckee Merchants were crying the blues about business. One idea they had was to capitalize on the summer traffic, create a reason for people both local and tourist to come out at a time they normally don't. Thus was the birth of **Truckee Thursdays, 5-9:00 every Thursday evening in the summer.** Three summers later it is hot, bustling with activities, people and money being spent. The restaurants offer quick boxed dinners (sushi prepackaged and

quick, not ordered, then prepared). The great trucks come in offering crepes, Indian, Eclectic, cupcakes, sandwiches, on and on. All are different and don't compete directly. The street is closed off and the center is lined with tents offering crafts, arts, clothing, messages, information about the area, environment, green lifestyles, and more. There are kids events like bounce house, face painting, games with prizes. The hula hoop vendor is very popular. There is an area for beer and wine with a love band playing. Hundreds, if not a thousand, people come out every Thursday to enjoy the event. The merchants are all open and welcoming (except a few of course). People are having fun and spending money. It took time to build up to this. I believe consistency and a short window (8 weeks) are key factors to the wild success of this event. Our **Montclair Farmer's Market** is similar, but **most of our merchants are closed on Sunday. Why?** Don't they know an open door, table on the sidewalk with Sunday only specials is enticing? The **restaurant walk** was fun the first time, but **boring** the second because it was the same thing. We needed something different the next time.

I think it's wonderful that Montclair Village has been able to maintain the excellent variety of businesses that it has. Sorry that the hardware store moved - but its close enough in Woodminster and we will continue to give them our business. I would like to have a Macy's in the Village - but that's way too large. A **good clothing store** would be nice - I miss the Little Daisy that we once had. Thanks for asking.

Our village has a lot of potential but not a lot of great places to shop. I have often wished that we had a **bakery specializing in breads**, such as La Farine or The Bread Garden. I would also enjoy a **casual family type restaurant** such as Chow in Lafayette or a similar cafe with outdoor seating, decent breakfasts, and good take out food. How about a **week day farmers market?** Other than Sundays, good produce is difficult to find. Thank you for listening to my ideas!

I would like to see a **small medical marijuana outlet** who is open to Montclair village residents only..I understand that's a controversial retail outlet to be put into the village, but that's my wish.

I'd love to see more of the types of stores one finds in the Elmwood and Rockridge areas come to Montclair - especially **fresh, family-friendly dining** in the style of Cactus Taqueria or Crepevine, a **cafe that stays open late** in the style of Elmwood Cafe or Cafe Roma, **interesting boutiques** and maybe a **bakery or butcher**. (In fact, I think every time I walk through the deserted Montclair Plaza building that it would make a great spot for a **Market Hall-type setup**, with fresh pasta, seafood, butcher, bakery, produce, etc.) Just more variety in general would be great.