



FOURTH STREET PARKING GARAGE

FOURTH STREET, BETWEEN MONTEREY AND DEPOT STREETS, MORGAN HILL



COURTESY PHOTOS

KEY PLAYERS

DEVELOPER
City of Morgan Hill

ARCHITECT AND ENGINEER
F&H Construction

SUBCONTRACTOR
Gordon Huether Studio

A parking garage — yes, a garage — stimulates downtown

To some, the Fourth Street Parking Garage in downtown Morgan Hill is that quirky building adorned with a giant tarantula sculpture, seemingly crawling up the side of the structure. To the city of Morgan Hill, however, it's one of the catalysts that helped bring major development to the area.

Within a quarter-mile walk of the newly constructed parking structure, the development community has invested \$80 million in new projects. This includes six restaurants, a new boutique hotel, a fine-art gallery and three housing projects.

Several developers have credited this new parking garage as being instrumental in attracting interest to bring new projects to nearby sites. Parking was previously an issue in the surrounding area, but thanks to the new garage (and, ironically, its tarantula), new businesses and their patrons seem to be less scared to venture downtown.

Background: The parking lot is a crucial part of the city's larger \$25 million investment in improving Morgan Hill's

downtown. The investment also went toward two parks, a public trail, a public plaza and more. The structure is also meant to offset the parking spaces that would be lost from the city eventually selling all four of its nearby sites up for redevelopment.

Size: 101,000 square feet, 273 parking stalls

Cost: \$12 million

Features: Attached retail includes OrangeTheory Fitness and a coffee shop called Coffee Guys. The building also has Wi-Fi access for the Third Street Plaza, six EV charging stations, two downtown Morgan Hill maps and that sculpture of a giant tarantula.

Artwork: Napa-based Gordon Huether Studio provided the public art for the parking structure. The 12-foot-wide sculpture, aptly named "Tarantula," has a body (or cephalothorax and abdomen, to be technical) that is made from hundreds of functional, vintage-style headlights that light up in the evening. The tarantula is also symbolic since the eight-legged critters are native to Morgan Hill, which hosts an annual tarantula festival in October. The vibrant reds, oranges and yellows of Morgan Hill's common gemstone poppy jasper was the inspiration for the translucent glass enclosure that wraps around the parking structure's stairwell. Both the poppy jasper installation and the tarantula cost the city \$450,000. The city is also putting an additional \$300,000 on "placemaking" and art projects. So far, at least 12 additional grants have been approved to fund murals, sculptures, street furniture and bike fix-it stations.

— Branden Largent