

AS ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL NOVEMBER 14, 2017 AND  
CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION MARCH 8, 2018

**City of Santa Cruz**

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**DOWNTOWN  
PLAN**

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**September 1991**

**As Amended through November 14, 2017**



## **2000-2017 UPDATES OF DOWNTOWN RECOVERY PLAN**

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The Downtown Recovery Plan was originally adopted in 1991.

In the year 2000, the City undertook a review of the Downtown Recovery Plan and made adjustments based on a review of the projects constructed since the Plan's 1991 adoption.

On September 14, 2000, the City Council adopted the Santa Cruz Downtown Retail Strategic Plan by Resolution No. NS-25,084. This is attached as Appendix 4.

On October 23, 2001, the City Council adopted revisions to the City's Zoning Ordinance pertaining to Floor Area Ratio for residential uses in the High Density Overlay District. This is attached as Appendix 5.

On March 11, 2003, the City Council adopted revisions to Chapter 4 of the Downtown Recovery Plan, Development Standards and Design Guidelines, as Ordinance No. 2003-08. The Plan adjustments were limited to Chapter 4.

On December 14, 2004, the City Council adopted revisions to Chapter 4 of the Downtown Recovery Plan creating an Additional Height Zone C in the Cedar Street Village Corridor. This was attached as Appendix 6 (see revisions on November 14, 2017).

On November 22, 2005, the City Council adopted revisions to Chapter 4 of the Downtown Recovery Plan pertaining to live entertainment. This was attached as Appendix 7 (see revisions on November 14, 2017).

On October 24, 2009, the City Council adopted revisions to Chapter 4 of the Downtown Recovery Plan to allow ground floor offices as principally permitted uses in the North Pacific Subarea as Ordinance No. 2009-24.

On February 9, 2016, the City Council adopted Resolution NS-29,059 revisions to the Downtown Recovery Plan to relocate Sign Regulations from Appendix 3 to Chapter 24.12 Community Design, Part 4, Advertising Devices, Signs and Billboards of the Santa Cruz Municipal Code.

On November 14, 2017 the City Council adopted Resolution NS-29,328 revisions to the plan with specific emphasis on Chapter 4, Development Standards and Design Guidelines with Ordinance 2017-23, extending Additional Height Zone A to Laurel Street and modifying Additional Height Zone B for Front Street riverfront properties. These revisions deleted Appendix 5, Floor Area Ratio, as these standards had been incorporated in General Plan 2030; Appendix 6, Additional Height Zone C, as Zone C was incorporated into Zone A; and Appendix 7, Live Entertainment, which was relocated into Chapter 24.12 Community Design, Part 2, General Site Design Standards, 24.12.195, Live Entertainment of the Santa Cruz Municipal Code.



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The purpose of the original Downtown Recovery Plan was to provide a coherent framework for public and private actions related to the rebuilding of downtown Santa Cruz after the devastating Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989. The intent of the plan was to establish policies, standards, and guidelines to direct the recovery process toward the rebuilding of a downtown to meet the multiple objectives of the entire community. While the plan also provided longer-term recommendations, the primary focus was the shorter-term recovery of the downtown; as such, the Downtown Plan has been revised over the years to provide for refinements and elaborations.

The Downtown Plan is a synthesis of many ideas expressed and refined over the 15 months since October of 1989. Immediately after the earthquake, the City established a working group of broad representation, known as Vision Santa Cruz, whose aim was to "spearhead" the recovery process and to develop a plan that was expressive of the values of the community. One significant achievement of this group was the "First Principles" document, which established consensus over a broad spectrum of issues. This plan is directly descended from the "First Principles" and from direction provided by two steering committees: the City-appointed Streetscape Task Force and a subcommittee established by Vision Santa Cruz— the Technical Advisory Group (T.A.G.). The Downtown Plan is also the result of numerous public workshops involving Vision Santa Cruz, the Streetscape Task Force, the T.A.G., the Planning and Downtown Commissions, City Council and the public-at-large.

### **The Community's Vision**

(A portion of the full statement written by Vision Santa Cruz; full vision statement is provided in Appendix 1.)

Vibrant, vital and active, the central business district constitutes the primary retail, commercial, professional, and employment center for the City of Santa Cruz. This compact high-density area is home to unique businesses, offering residents and visitors a diverse and wholesome environment for commercial, cultural, civic, and social pursuits. Local, regional, and national businesses combine in a potent blend, making the downtown a major destination for the entire region.

The pedestrian-oriented environment is characterized by convenient access, a garden-like setting, and human-scale buildings. The visual and physical relationships to the San Lorenzo River, the surrounding natural landscape, and Monterey Bay make downtown Santa Cruz among the most beautiful urban places in California. The architecture captures the best of the City's past while integrating new buildings into a coherent and visually appealing downtown. As a result, the area strikes a balance between a successful modern business center and an environmentally attractive and active public place.

This effective combination is the focus of Santa Cruz public life and is a central element in the community's identity. Downtown is safe and clean. It is a multicultural place, attracting all sectors of the community, and serving as a meeting place for children, students, elderly, office workers, retailers, shoppers and visitors, as well as those living in the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. Restaurants, cultural events, and entertainment bring additional life to the area during the evening and nighttime hours.

A range of housing types is integrated into the downtown. This urban-density housing provides both market-rate and affordable units, and expands the immediate market for downtown goods, services, and public transportation.

The economic and social vitality of the downtown has a positive effect on the surrounding areas and the entire community. It has restored the heart and soul to an earthquake-shaken town, and once again provides a significant source of tax revenue for the City's general fund.

## The First Principles

The First Principles document establishes recommended directions for a wide range of issues and topics, including:

- ***Form and Character.*** New buildings should be allowed to develop individual character while retaining qualities of the historic townscape. Issues of articulation, materials, signage, setbacks, scale, massing, form, bulk, solar access and height are critical.
- ***Building Height.*** Buildings should maintain the scale and character of the existing downtown, with explicit criteria for additional height up to seven stories and provisions to ensure that buildings do not shade key public open spaces. Since this First Principle was established in 1991, the downtown development pattern has largely respected the existing two to three story development pattern with several taller buildings spaced throughout the Pacific Avenue Retail District, providing architectural variation. The 2017 update recognizes these taller buildings also contribute greatly to the architectural fabric of the City and can provide significant opportunities to plan for environmentally sound infill development without damaging the character of the City. The 2017 modifications to the Additional Height Zones have been carefully written to recognize the City's successful recovery from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake; preserving and enhancing the urban form of the City, without sacrificing the special human scale and character of downtown. New development will not be required to strictly adhere to a 2 and 3 story scale.
- ***Housing.*** Significant new housing opportunities should be targeted throughout the downtown, including Pacific Avenue, the San Lorenzo riverfront, and South of Laurel. Housing should be comprised of a mix of apartments and condominiums. SRO housing should be replaced and dispersed throughout the downtown area.
- ***Accessibility.*** A downtown that aesthetically integrates access as a primary design criterion for all improvements to ensure increased opportunities for the public to participate in commercial, governmental, residential, social and cultural activities.
- ***Open Space and Streetscape.*** A strong network of public and private open spaces (streets, sidewalks, public parks, plazas, passageways and courtyards) that creates a socially active and pedestrian-oriented downtown core should be emphasized.
- ***Circulation.*** Downtown should be predominantly pedestrian in nature; movement should be carefully structured to reinforce the character of the place. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to the downtown should be enhanced.
- ***Parking.*** Parking in the downtown core should continue to be provided by the Parking District in a centralized fashion, to maximize shared use and minimize the quantity of stored vehicles.

## The Basis for Change

This vision for the downtown is one that must evolve in a gradual way. Rather than a static plan or a fixed picture of an end-state condition, the Downtown Plan is intended as a creative framework that will guide the ingenuity and efforts of a wide range of participants – public policymakers, architects, developers, merchants and residents – over an extended period of time. The Plan, therefore, is structured to be definitive where specific approaches are necessary to achieve public objectives and more general where multiple approaches can be considered.

Before embarking upon the description of the Plan, it is important to emphasize that the downtown is not a "blank slate" upon which change will occur. Although the 1989 earthquake was devastating, it did not erase the underlying structure and form of the downtown. In addition to the community's vision and the specific principles outlined in this plan, the following factors provide a strong basis for future change:

- *The Pattern of Downtown Streets and Blocks*, which provide the principal organizing structure for public life and private activities within the downtown.
- *The Pattern of Public and Private Ownership*, which establishes the texture and "grain" of the downtown fabric, and the boundaries within which public and private sector participation will take place.
- *Buildings of Architectural Significance*, which provide for a strong continuity with the past and a context for future development; and
- *The Opportunity Sites*, which include earthquake-damaged or demolished sites, and vacant and built sites which may be redeveloped in the future, and upon which the Plan can exert influence.

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### **Planning Principles and Strategies**

The success of downtown Santa Cruz's recovery has been dependent upon the ability to recreate the unique characteristics of the original downtown while providing a clear framework for the future. As recognized by the "First Principles," the downtown must continue to function as a place of commerce, culture, and recreation: a place that people choose to go to meet friends; a place that naturally and spontaneously accommodates civic events as well as informal gatherings; and a place where people live and work. The creation of a rich environment and a balanced mixture of land uses that are mutually reinforcing will be critical in achieving such a place. The following planning principles expand upon the First Principles and provide the basic strategies and recommendations for the Plan.

#### ***Strengthen Downtown Santa Cruz as a Vital Retailing District***

The land use component most critical to the success of the downtown is retail. In order for downtown Santa Cruz to continue to thrive as an active and meaningful place, it must offer residents, students, employees, and visitors a purpose to be there and an attractive alternative to other retailing options in the region. Without a strong and diverse retail base, the downtown area cannot function as a viable center for the community. Clearly, a major strength of the downtown is its unique retailing personality, which has evolved as a result of strong local merchants and a loyal customer base. This should be built upon further.

#### ***A Centralized Retail Management Program***

The quality and mix of retailers within the downtown significantly contributes to the diversity and number of people who will come to downtown Santa Cruz. There is a unique opportunity to retain a coordinated approach to the recruitment of tenants and the ongoing management of retailing within the downtown. Such an approach can encourage: the clustering and concentration of companion retail uses that will promote multiple visitation; the coordination of business hours; the marketing of the downtown as a single destination; and the programming of special events. A discussion of the recommended centralized retail management program is provided in the Implementation chapter of this plan.

#### ***A Physical Environment that Reinforces Retailing***

In order to remain competitive with outlying shopping areas, Pacific Avenue needs to be perceived as a unique destination that is convenient and comfortable to pedestrians, motorists, and bicyclists. From the pedestrian's standpoint, it is imperative to create a street environment that is hospitable and non-threatening. A good retail street offers a strong sense of continuity and visibility. Ground-level uses along Pacific Avenue should be controlled to ensure that retail continuity is maintained. People need to be encouraged to continue walking along the street, drawn on by nodes of activity such as cafes, stimulating signage, interesting and eye-catching window displays, and other elements that are visually exciting. Views down the length of Pacific Avenue should be maintained to give the

pedestrian, motorist and bicyclist a strong sense of the street as a place; views to retailing establishments should also be maintained to allow the expression of individual merchants to provide the street with its unique identity and personality. Access routes to the downtown should be clearly understandable, naturally directing vehicles and bicycles to their destinations and to convenient parking facilities. To this end, the original Downtown Recovery Plan recommended a reorientation of traffic on Pacific Avenue to allow autos to enter the downtown from both the north and south ends of the avenue, so that the motorist can become oriented to the activities of the street before reaching the off-site parking facilities on Cedar and Front Streets. In addition, the Downtown Plan strongly recommends that on-street curbside parking be maintained to the maximum extent practicable throughout the downtown, to reinforce the overall feeling of convenience and access. Finally, the Downtown Plan recommends strengthening bicycle safety, access and parking as an important means of improving shopper convenience.

### ***More Than a Place to Shop***

The downtown must be more than a place to conduct business; it should also be a place where Santa Cruzans naturally gather to meet, to see live theater and movies, to hear music, to enjoy museums, to be entertained, and to eat. The perception of downtown in general, and Pacific Avenue in particular, should be a place of diverse activity. If carefully orchestrated, this diversity will contribute significantly to the success of the retail activities within the downtown. The land use pattern and street design should accommodate these activities and be made visually prominent. To this end, the Downtown Plan recommends that Pacific Avenue and the east-west streets be designed to maximize opportunities for outdoor eating, to give the area a strong identity as an active and festive place. In addition, entertainment and cultural uses (theaters, galleries, nightclubs) are encouraged to provide a richer and more diverse experience to the visitor, and to allow the downtown to be the principal "stage" for the artistic expression of the community. Pacific Avenue is the "main street" of Santa Cruz, and serves not only as the principal retail spine of the city, but also as its central social gathering space. Therefore, it must be attractive to all sectors of the community and allow for spontaneous gatherings and public seating.

### ***A Performing Arts Center***

Much interest has been expressed by the community for a Performing Arts Center in the downtown area. The Downtown Plan strongly supports this concept as one that would reinforce the diversity of experiences in the downtown and contribute to its overall revitalization. If the City chooses to pursue the proposed San Lorenzo Park site for the new facility as recommended by the County Cultural Council, consideration should be given to the enhancement of the existing pedestrian bridge across the river and the linkage to Cooper Street and Pacific Avenue.

### ***Enhance the Open Space and Pedestrian Network of Downtown***

Nestled at the foot of the Santa Cruz Mountains, on the coast of Monterey Bay and at the mouth of the San Lorenzo River, the City of Santa Cruz has a powerful relationship with its physical environment. The downtown itself is defined by natural features, including Mission and Beach Hills to the north and south and the river to the east. The Downtown Plan calls for the creation of a

strong and varied network of active and meaningful urban spaces that reinforce the unique pedestrian environment of the area, and that link the downtown with its natural setting.

### ***Creating Meaningful Open Space in Downtown***

Open spaces within downtown Santa Cruz should have value and meaning; they should be carefully located where people want to be and in locations that take advantage of the unique resources, heritage, and traditions of the community. They should not be contrived or created from "leftover" space. The most meaningful open spaces within cities have emerged out of natural features (e.g., the hilltop parks of San Francisco) and from places that have a historic cultural and/or civic significance (e.g., the church, the market, the crossroads). Downtown Santa Cruz has a meaningful system of such open spaces that should be built upon; these include the San Lorenzo River, the Post Office and Town Clock intersection at Pacific Avenue and Water Streets; the Civic Center; and the downtown streets themselves.

### ***San Lorenzo River as a Major Downtown Open Space***

San Lorenzo River is only two blocks from the heart of downtown, and as such offers great potential as a naturalistic open space, wildlife habitat, and recreational amenity: a "garden promenade" that can provide a more contemplative and reflective experience to the hustle and bustle of Pacific Avenue. However, the river has served primarily as a flood control channel and the downtown has largely turned its back on it. In evaluating open space opportunities and potentials for the downtown, the Downtown Plan recommends that the City give the improvement of the riverfront and the creation of linkages to the downtown top priority. The creation of a riverfront park at the foot of Cathcart Street and the enhancement of that street as a strong pedestrian and visual linkage between Pacific Avenue and the river would significantly enhance the open space network of the downtown and is strongly recommended as an action to be pursued as part of the Riverfront Plan. The pedestrian linkage between the river and downtown can also be strengthened along Cooper Street through the Galleria to the existing pedestrian bridge leading to San Lorenzo Park; in the longer term, the Downtown Plan recommends that a stronger pedestrian linkage be established to the river through the parking lot at the northeast corner of Soquel Avenue and Front Street, leading to a significantly expanded pedestrian/bicycle bridge with retailing uses alongside. A third pedestrian linkage to the river can be established between Cathcart Street and Laurel Street, where a new pedestrian bridge could provide direct linkage to the east side neighborhoods across the river.

### ***Open Space of Historic and Civic Significance***

Downtown Santa Cruz also has open spaces with historic and civic meaning. The Post Office plaza, Town Clock Park, Scope Park, Adobe Park and Mission Plaza Park form a series of public places that have a unique significance to the community. The Downtown Plan recommends that each of these spaces be enhanced and that a stronger pedestrian linkage be created between them. To this end, the Downtown Plan recommends, as a future action, the creation of a prominent stair and terraced park at Water Street and North Pacific Avenue, connecting Scope Park with Adobe Park and Mission Park. In this way, the historic origins of the City on Mission Hill can be more strongly integrated with the downtown experience. The Downtown Plan also identifies the opportunity to

strengthen the civic significance of the Town Clock Plaza and Post Office Plaza as part of the immediate-term improvements planned for Pacific Avenue. The Downtown Plan recommends that these improvements create a more visually cohesive and pedestrian-friendly open space at the northern tip of Pacific Avenue, that ties the Post Office and Town Clock together, creates a strong visual gateway to the downtown and, through periodic street closures, provides a major opportunity for large public gatherings and civic events.

### ***Civic Center***

While the Civic Center is a highly appropriate location for spontaneous or formal public gatherings, there is little provision for such activity. Although the majority of the Civic Center is beyond the boundaries of the Downtown Plan, the potential for this area to be reinforced as a civic gathering place should not be ignored. Currently, the City Hall has an attractively landscaped garden and court facing Center Street that is largely passive in nature. Modifications to this landscaped area could be considered to allow for larger formal and informal gatherings, while maintaining the unique scale, character, and garden-like qualities of the City Hall. In addition, or alternatively, the Church Street frontage adjacent to City Hall and the Civic Auditorium could be redesigned to create a stronger visual and civic identity and, with the periodic closure of Church Street, allow for major gatherings.

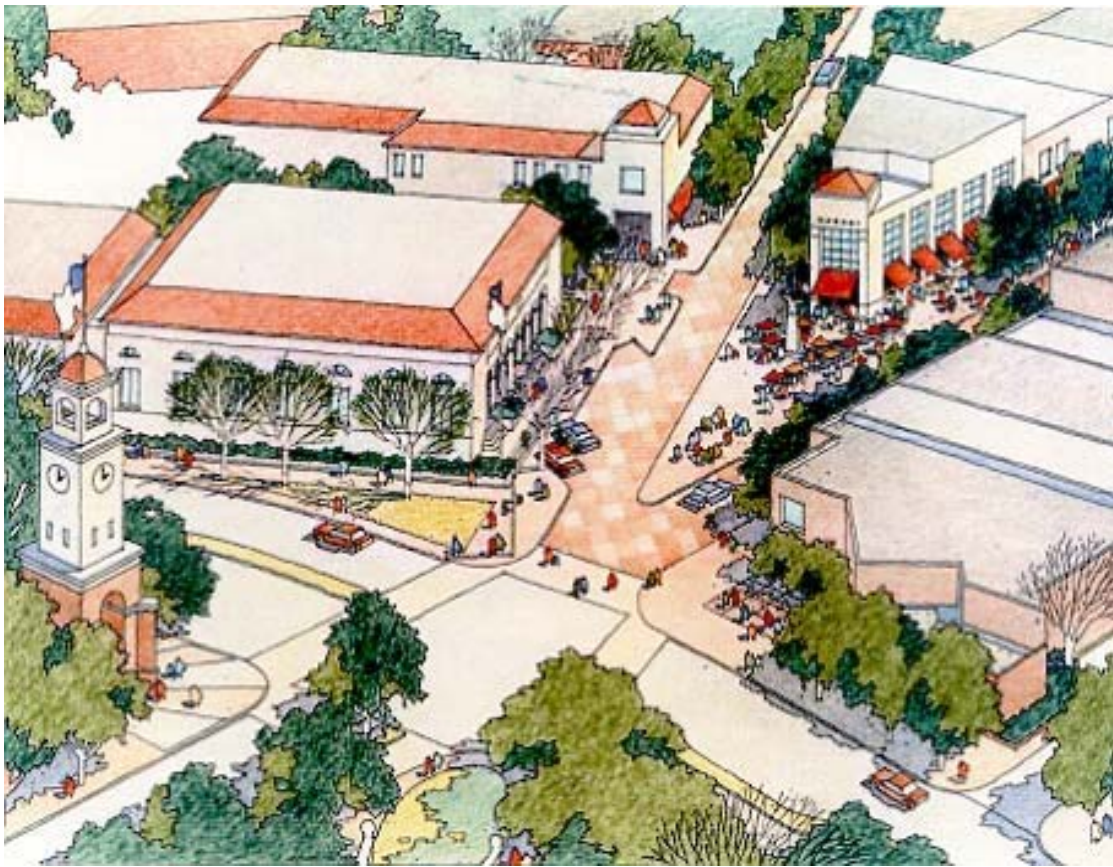
### ***Cedar Street Park.***

The Downtown Plan also identifies the opportunity to create a park and public space of approximately 15,000 square feet immediately north of the Locust Street parking garage along Cedar Street. This park, which would enjoy sun throughout most of the day, would gain significance because of the heritage walnut tree on the site and its linkage to Pacific Avenue by way of Plaza Lane.

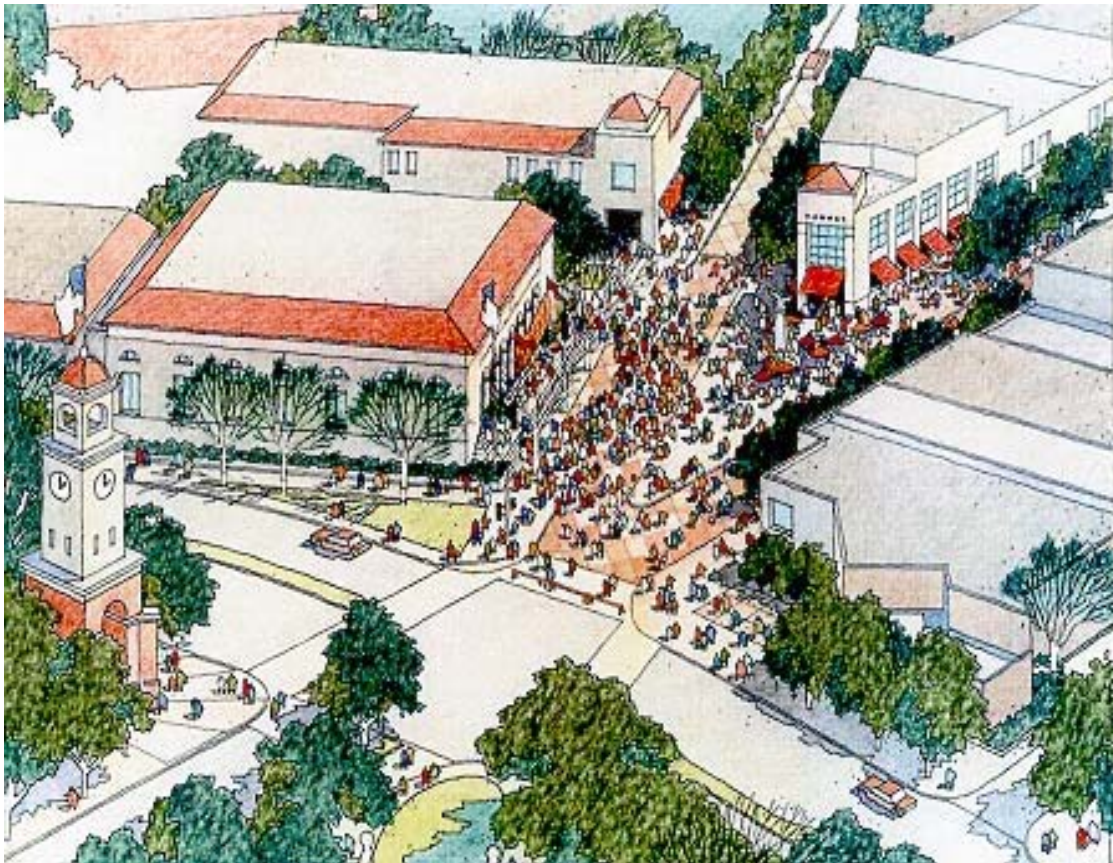
### ***The Streets as Public Open Space***

In reinforcing a strong open space network, it must be emphasized that the streets and sidewalks provide the principal public space opportunity within the downtown. The streets function as an extension of the larger open space system, providing key linkages to the river, the beach, and the surrounding neighborhoods; they also reinforce the commercial function of the downtown and accommodate much of the activities that make it a vital and memorable place to be. As such, the design of the streets needs to maximize their contribution to the overall open space system. Pacific Avenue, as the city's "main street," should be designed to allow for periodic closures to accommodate major civic events; on an everyday basis, the street should continue to serve as a comfortable and active public place for a wide range of people, including students, residents, employees, and visitors. Other streets, including Cooper Street, Cathcart Street, and Front Street between River and Water Streets, should also be designed as key open space resources, capable of being closed for special occasions and events and providing direct visual and pedestrian linkages to the downtown. The use of sidewalk extension zones (e.g., outdoor cafes, markets, etc.), setbacks at key points, courtyards, and passages will also reinforce and enrich the overall open space network of the downtown.

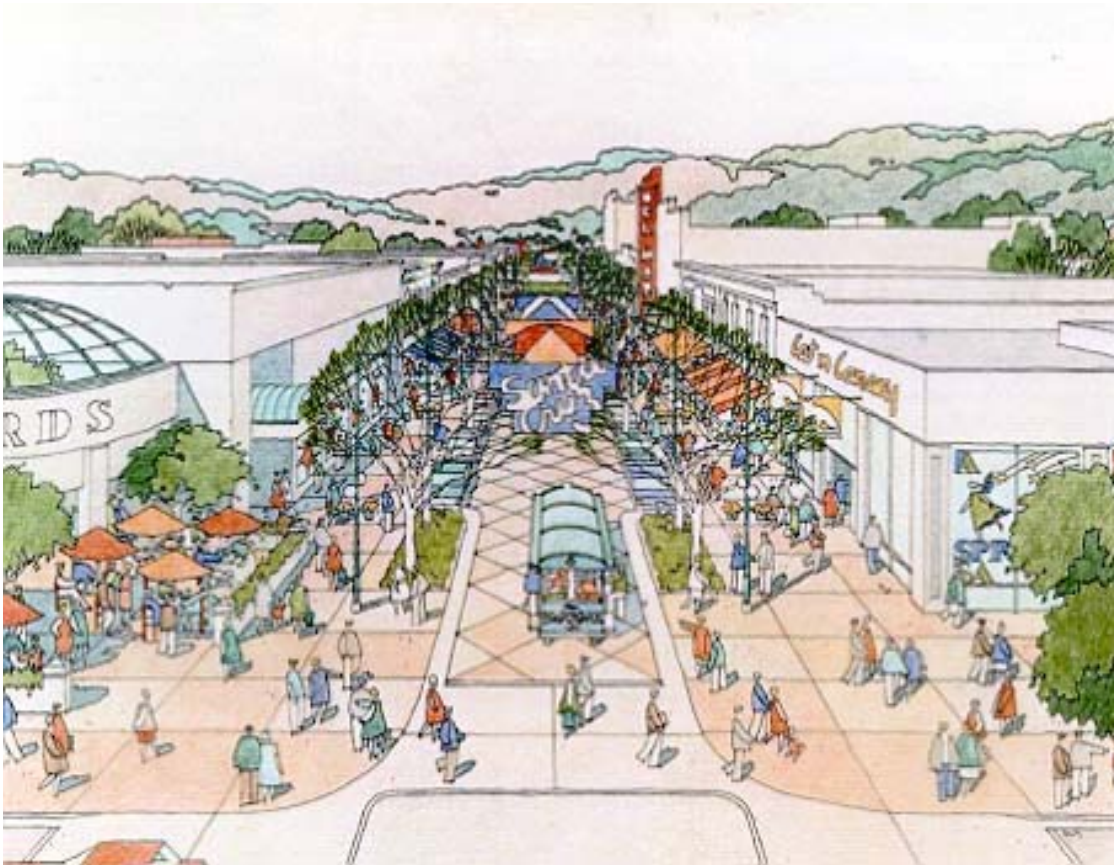




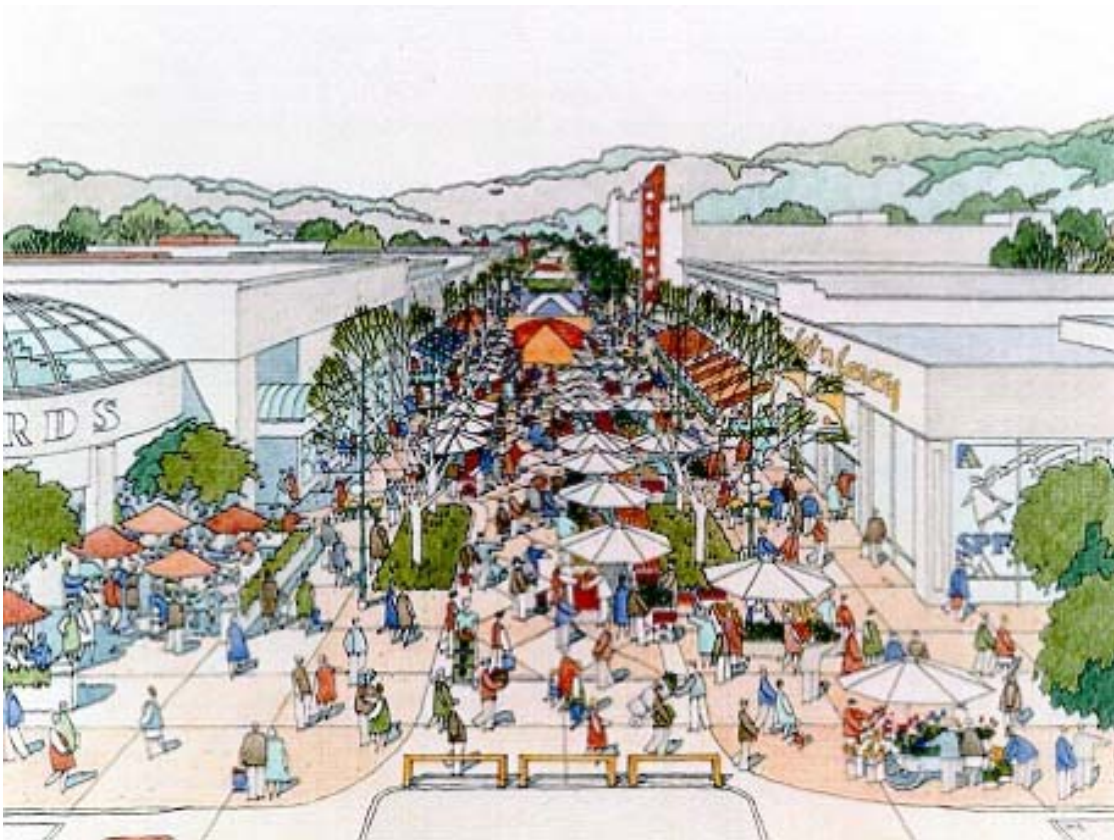
*A new plaza at Pacific Avenue and Water Street will create a distinctive entry to the downtown...*



*...and a major gathering space framed by the Clock Tower and post office.*



*Pacific Avenue between Cathcart and Lincoln...*



*... will be transformed once a week into a Farmers Market.*

### ***Reinforcing the Pedestrian-Oriented Environment***

Downtown Santa Cruz should be a place where pedestrians feel comfortable throughout the day and nighttime hours. Great pedestrian places are those that always feel full and active, with people promenading, window shopping or watching other people, people sitting in cafes with friends, people passing by on bicycles, or people enjoying a spontaneous street performance. The public spaces and streets of downtown Santa Cruz must be appropriately scaled to ensure that a comfortable pedestrian environment is created. As the major open space within the downtown, streets should be designed to respond to the cyclical nature and needs of the community. The ability to have larger pedestrian spaces when they are needed and more intimate and active places at other times will give the streets a life and character of their own. For instance, an annual parade or festival may warrant the temporary closure of all of Pacific Avenue to automobiles, whereas a weekly farmer's market could be accommodated on a particular street segment (e.g., between Cathcart and Lincoln). Similarly, traffic could be closed on other streets within the downtown (e.g., Cooper Street between Pacific and Front or Front Street between Water and River Streets) for special events.

### ***A Balance Between Pedestrians and Automobiles***

It is important that streets and sidewalks be correctly sized and programmed to accommodate pedestrian activity and movement. Pedestrian spaces that are too big can evoke a sense of inactivity, emptiness, and insecurity, and as a result discourage pedestrian use. A careful balance needs to be established between the automobile, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The complete elimination of the automobile is not desirable because it can result in pedestrian spaces that are too big and inaccessible. This has been proven in small and medium-sized cities throughout the country, where pedestrian malls have failed to create the desired pedestrian or commercial environment. On the other hand, streets should not be dominated by the automobile to the point where pedestrians and bicyclists feel secondary. The correct balance should include: wide sidewalks for promenading and pedestrian-oriented activities; narrow roadways with slow-moving traffic; continuous, safe bicycle routes; ample accessible, at-grade pedestrian crossings or ramps, and appropriately textured surfaces for access and safe movement of persons using mobility aids and devices; and curbside parking or bike lanes to offer a separation between pedestrians and moving cars and to slow traffic further. Trees should be used to reinforce the pedestrian environment by giving scale and definition to the public walkways and by promoting a visually attractive and comfortable street.

### ***The Relationship of the Public and Private Realm***

A downtown pedestrian district like Santa Cruz need not establish a hard edge between public and private uses. Activities should flow back and forth between the public and private realms. The extension of the pedestrian environment into private parcels is encouraged by means of passages and courtyards that have a strong tradition in Santa Cruz. Conversely, retailing activities (e.g., cafes, flower stands, produce markets) are encouraged (within carefully prescribed limits) to "spill out" into the public right-of-way to reinforce the life and vitality of the street.

## ***Preserve and Enhance the Distinctive Scale and Character of Downtown***

The image of downtown Santa Cruz is rich and complex, distinctive and memorable. Within the central city, new and rehabilitated buildings have developed individual character while retaining qualities of an historic townscape. The underlying cadence and structure of the built environment continues to express the scale and texture of a pedestrian-oriented downtown.

### ***The Character of Downtown Buildings***

Much of the character of downtown Santa Cruz has come from its incremental development and the individual stylistic expressions that have occurred over an extended period of time. As a result of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, much of downtown has been rebuilt in a single generation. This puts a particular burden on the Downtown Plan and its design guidelines to maintain the unique townscape character and to avoid the creation of monolithic "projects" that destroy the human scale and pedestrian quality of the downtown. The design guidelines call for buildings that respect the incremental pattern of development in the downtown and that are reflective of the charm and lifestyle of Santa Cruz: buildings that have a unique rhythm and variation created by elements including balconies, loggias, trellises, and bay windows; buildings that extend and enhance the public realm with courtyards, setbacks, extension areas, and passages; and buildings that are not hermetically sealed, but reflect the environment and are energy efficient. The Downtown Plan does not recommend a single architectural style as a predominant theme, but rather emphasizes a humanistic scale and warmth that provides a common vocabulary.

### ***The Opportunity to Intensify***

The Downtown Plan recognizes that it is desirable for downtown Santa Cruz to intensify, in order to bring more people and activities to the area. However, this intensification must be achieved in a way that respects the townscape of the downtown and its relationship with the surrounding area. The Downtown Plan includes an Additional Height Zone A along the Pacific Avenue corridor between Laurel and Water Streets; and the west side of Front Street between Laurel Street and Soquel Avenue, where taller buildings can be created when key criteria are met. An Additional Height Zone B along Front Street is also included in the plan allowing for taller buildings when key criteria are met.

### ***Strengthen Downtown Santa Cruz as a Place to Live***

Throughout the country, cities are striving to reestablish old residential neighborhoods or to introduce new ones within their downtowns. Santa Cruz is fortunate to have attractive and viable downtown neighborhoods that serve to reinforce the city center not only as a place to shop or work, but as a place to live...a place that has a life beyond its business hours. In planning for change within the downtown, it is critical that such change be designed to preserve the character and qualities of the adjacent neighborhoods, and encourage new residential development that is compatible in scale. In this regard, land use, urban design, and circulation policies within the Downtown Plan are aimed at ensuring compatibility of scale and use with, and the avoidance of, through-traffic within adjacent neighborhoods.

To further reinforce the city center as a place to live and to extend the residential pattern of the surrounding single-family neighborhoods to the downtown, the Downtown Plan encourages residential development as a second floor and above use throughout the downtown area. Some office space has been constructed for upper floors within the Downtown Plan area on a project specific basis, with emphasis on market balance for housing and jobs. The potential redevelopment of the east side of Front Street also provides opportunities for non-residential uses suitable for the Riverwalk side of these properties; but the overarching policy for promoting additional housing in the downtown area is of primary importance with the 2017 Downtown Plan update.

### ***Open Space and Pedestrian Linkages to the Adjacent Neighborhoods***

The Downtown Plan calls for the reinforcement of pedestrian linkages between the downtown and its adjacent residential neighborhoods. The original Downtown Recovery Plan recommended widened sidewalks and improved streetscapes along Church and Cathcart Streets to provide residents of the neighborhood immediately to the west of downtown with enhanced access to the downtown and the San Lorenzo River corridor. Many of these improvements have been completed, but need to continuously be reinforced and enhanced. The Downtown Plan continues to suggest enhanced linkages between the downtown and the Mission Hill neighborhood to the north through the expansion of Scope Park at Water Street and Pacific Avenue, providing direct pedestrian access to Mission Plaza and the historic Mission Hill district. As the South of Laurel district redevelops, it is also suggested that the pedestrian qualities of Pacific Avenue be extended southward to create stronger pedestrian linkages with the Beach Hill neighborhood.

### ***Riverfront Residential***

Along Front Street, between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street, the Downtown Plan promotes upper-level residential uses, while encouraging commercial uses at the ground level facing Front Street and a mix of commercial and residential uses at the Riverwalk level and above. Housing in this location provides a strong support use to the downtown and creates an attractive linkage to the recreational resource and amenity of the riverfront. In addition, the parking lot and adjacent commercial properties on the north east corner of Soquel Avenue and Front Street adjacent to River Street South is identified as a potential site for future mixed-use redevelopment, with residential as the upper-level use oriented to the river.

### ***SRO Housing***

SRO housing provides an important resource to a wide range of people who require proximity to the services and transit facilities of the downtown. In this regard, the replacement and maintenance of SRO housing has been encouraged throughout the downtown. Upon the completion of four projects (St. George Hotel, Palomar Hotel, El Centro, Colonial Hotel) along Pacific Avenue, the number of pre-earthquake SRO housing units has been exceeded. The Plan recommends that additional projects be dispersed throughout the downtown and that individual SRO developments not exceed 60 units without City Council approval, to avoid the creation of a single district that will dominate other critical activities within the area.

### ***Infill Residential on City-Controlled Sites***

The original Downtown Recovery Plan considered City-controlled sites (such as parking lots) as being very important opportunity sites to provide additional housing. City-controlled properties remain extremely important twenty-five years after the Loma Prieta earthquake. This updated Downtown Plan continues to promote mixed-use opportunities within downtown and rather than highlighting site-specific properties, the Downtown Plan encourages flexibility in targeting potential development projects based on changing market conditions and the City's financial priorities and capacity. There may be opportunities downtown to participate in public/private partnerships and the Downtown Plan encourages exploration of creative development options that will continue to achieve the objectives of this Downtown Plan to positively enhance the residential community of downtown.

### ***New Residential Development in the South of Laurel Area***

It has been recognized that the South of Laurel area offers additional potential for the creation of a mixed-use/residential neighborhood that will serve to reinforce the diversity and vitality of downtown Santa Cruz. It will be important for "South of Laurel" to evolve, not as a series of independent projects, but as a well-planned and integrated neighborhood with many of the same qualities that make the city's existing neighborhoods unique and attractive places to live. Planning for this area should strive to create a cohesive and pedestrian-oriented residential "fabric" with well-landscaped streets, parks and community amenities, which may include a permanent event arena, and buildings that are carefully scaled and oriented to reinforce the pedestrian environment.

### ***Housing Feasibility and Affordability***

A comprehensive housing implementation strategy should be developed by the City to establish a feasible program for the creation of market-rate and affordable housing, including developer incentives, land write-downs, public participation in financing, parking reductions, etc. The Downtown Plan does not recommend the imposition of exactions on commercial developers for the creation of residential development.

### ***Strengthen Downtown as a Place of Local and Regional Employment***

Historically, downtown Santa Cruz has served as the principal government, business, and service center for North County. This role has reinforced the significance of the downtown as an important destination and has provided direct support to retailing uses. The Downtown Plan strongly encourages the concentration of office uses within the downtown, where employees can best take advantage of existing and future transit service, where broader environmental objectives related to the improvement of air quality and transportation can be best served, where additional employees can contribute to the creation of an active and viable urban center, and where they can be best served by downtown retail activities. In terms of supporting the viability of the downtown as a retail district, upper-level office uses are considered primary. While it is recognized that the regional office market is somewhat limited, the Downtown Plan acknowledges the opportunity to attract office users to newly available and assembled sites within the downtown; these uses offer an important opportunity to intensify the downtown district and enhance its role as a regional office center. The policies of this Downtown Plan also allow for the flexibility and

opportunities for office and technology-related companies to locate within the downtown, acknowledging the dynamic nature of the current technological industry can greatly contribute to the success and vibrancy of the downtown.

### ***Opportunity Sites for Commercial Development***

Several significant sites between Cathcart and Water Streets along Pacific Avenue provide good opportunities for upper-level office uses. The Downtown Plan encourages the most intensive development along Pacific Avenue and the Front Street/Riverfront corridor, where it can most benefit from shared parking and convenient transit, and where higher-density development is most appropriate. There continue to be opportunities for redevelopment of existing structures along lower Pacific Avenue, as well as along Front Street.

### ***Concentrate Commercial Development Within Downtown Core***

Land use planning policy for the City served well to support the enormous challenge that property owners, developers, and retailers faced in the rebuilding of the downtown district. Efforts should continue to be made to locate large-scale office and destination-oriented retail uses within the downtown, where they establish an economic vitality that will secure the downtown's role as the principal commercial center of the region. This Downtown Plan continues to promote concentration of mixed use development within the downtown core. As the City's downtown develops with more mid-rise construction (up to 6 or 7 floors), the transit system and alternative transportation methods will become more important for maintaining the quality of life in the downtown area. The corridor connections between the beach and downtown will provide more opportunities for residents and tourism, but the focus of higher-density development and commercial/office uses in the downtown core remains foremost in the Plan.

### ***Create a Stronger Relationship Between Downtown and the Beach***

Each summer season, thousands of visitors come to Santa Cruz to enjoy the boardwalk amusements and the sandy beach facing Monterey Bay. Less than one mile to the south, the beach is separated from the downtown by topography (Beach Hill) and a road pattern that is indirect and confusing. As a result, many beach visitors have little knowledge that downtown Santa Cruz exists, and when the sun subsides, look elsewhere for their after-beach entertainment. While downtown Santa Cruz must continue to depend primarily on local residents for its economic health, increased patronage from beach visitors will only help to reinforce the commercial vitality of the area. The strong local character or "personality" of Pacific Avenue can be an attractive draw to visitors who, in a recreational mode, are looking for unfamiliar diversions that provide new experiences. Conversely, the revitalization of the Beach could introduce new activities that would be more attractive to the local resident or patron of the downtown. The creation of complementary activities in both the downtown and the beach area would provide the strongest linkages between the two areas. Specific strategies for strengthening these linkages are outlined in Appendix 2 of the Plan.





## Summary of the Original 1991 Plan Recommendations

	Medium to
Immediate	Long Term
Action	(More than
(0-5 Years)	5 Years)

### LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN

**1. Intensify downtown Santa Cruz as the principal retail, restaurant, and commercial district of the city and region.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a. Require continuity of active ground-level uses (retail, restaurant, cultural, etc.) along Pacific Avenue.                              | ✓ |
| b. Create a distinctive and active pedestrian environment that supports the downtown retail district as a unique destination.             | ✓ |
| c. Maximize opportunities for outdoor eating to reinforce the downtown as a food and entertainment destination.                           | ✓ |
| d. Maintain and encourage local-serving support retail uses along Cedar and Front streets.  | ✓ |
| e. Create a Central Retail Management entity, responsible for retail recruitment, retention, and the management of the downtown district. | ✓ |

**2. Create significant new housing opportunities within the downtown area.**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a. Expand the existing High Density Overlay Zone to include all areas of the downtown east of Cedar Street.   | ✓ |
| b. Permit/encourage housing as a principal upper-level use throughout the downtown.   | ✓ |
| c. Encourage redevelopment of the riverfront between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street for mixed-use development, with required upper-level residential uses. | ✓ |
| d. Encourage future redevelopment of the Long's-Zanotto's site for mixed-use development, with required upper-level residential uses.                       | ✓ |
| e. Consider reuse of portions of City parking lots for residential redevelopment as replacement parking is provided in new structures.                      | ✓ |
| f. Encourage replacement of SRO units throughout downtown. Limit size of SRO developments to 60 units.  | ✓ |

	Immediate Action (0-5 Years)	Medium to Long Term (More than 5 Years)
g. Encourage future redevelopment of south of Laurel area as mixed-use residential neighborhood.	✓	✓
h. Establish a comprehensive housing implementation strategy for the delivery of market-rate and affordable housing in the downtown.	✓	
<b>3. Concentrate and intensify office development within the downtown.</b>		
a. Permit/encourage office use as a principal upper-level use, except in the designated areas where residential is required.	✓	
b. Allow for additional height and intensity at the core of downtown (north of Cathcart along Pacific Avenue) to attract office development.	✓	
c. Discourage major speculative office development in other parts of the city that would most appropriately locate in downtown.	✓	
d. Coordinate with office developers for the provision of office parking that reinforces the overall objective of the Parking District.	✓	
<b>4. Preserve and enhance the distinctive scale and character of downtown Santa Cruz.</b>		
a. Maintain the predominantly two- to three-story form and character of downtown through height limits of 35 feet west of Cedar Street and north of Water Street, and 45 feet in the remainder of the downtown.	✓	
b. Allow additional height to 75 feet in the downtown core, under specific conditions that ensure appropriate transitions to architecturally significant buildings and maintain solar access.	✓	
c. Allow additional height in the North Pacific area to 45 feet, subject to urban design considerations and maintenance of views to Mission Hill.	✓	
d. Adopt urban design guidelines that reinforce: the unique townscape character of Santa Cruz; the incremental pattern of development; the pedestrian environment; and the human scale and quality of buildings.	✓	

- |   | Immediate<br>Action<br>(0-5 Years) | Medium to<br>Long Term<br>(More than<br>5 Years) |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| e. Require that new development strive to achieve an "optimum state" of accessibility, beginning with compliance with both the State of California's <i>Title 24 Accessibility Requirements</i> and the <i>Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS)</i> . | ✓                                  |  |
| f. Preserve historic structures to the maximum extent possible.   | ✓                                  |  |

## CIRCULATION AND PARKING

### 1. Improve vehicular circulation patterns in a way that conveys a feeling of convenience and orientation, and that reinforces the pedestrian character of the downtown.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| a. Design Pacific Avenue to allow for traffic to enter the downtown from both Water Street at the north and Cathcart Street on the south.  | ✓ |   |
| b. Design Pacific Avenue between Water and Cathcart to allow for maximum operational flexibility, as described in the Circulation Plan.  | ✓ |   |
| c. Reconfigure intersections at River and South River Streets and at River and Front Streets to promote the Front Street/River Street corridor as a principal north-south collector in the downtown. | ✓ |   |
| d. Consider creation of an east-west local roadway between Front and South River streets in conjunction with future redevelopment of the Long's-Zanotto's property.                                  |   | ✓ |
| e. Consider creation of an east-west local roadway between Cedar and Center Streets in conjunction with future redevelopment of the City parking lot between Lincoln and Cathcart Streets.           |   | ✓ |
| f. Maintain and enhance existing service alleys to promote rear service and to create attractive pedestrian ways.  | ✓ |   |
| g. Extend the system of secure alleys as part of redevelopment, to the maximum extent possible.  |   | ✓ |
| h. Coordinate with existing property owners to resolve the problems of exposed garbage areas through centralized garbage facilities.   | ✓ |   |
| i. Control service and loading from Pacific Avenue by limiting to non-peak business hours.   | ✓ |   |

	Immediate Action (0-5 Years)	Medium to Long Term (More than 5 Years)
<b>2. Provide convenient and accessible parking in the downtown.</b>		
a. Maintain the Parking District as the principal method of providing parking in the downtown (south of Water Street).	✓	
b. Maximize curbside parallel parking along Pacific Avenue to reinforce the feeling of a convenient and accessible downtown.	✓	
c. Maintain, to the maximum extent possible, on-street parking on other streets within the downtown.	✓	
d. Consolidate public and private properties to reinforce and expand the existing system of off-street parking along Cedar and Front Streets.	✓	✓
e. Provide ample and secure bike parking along Pacific Avenue and within existing and planned parking structures.	✓	✓
<b>3. Provide for the efficient operation of transit in the downtown to reduce the impacts of the automobile and reinforce the pedestrian environment.</b>		
a. Provide for continued safe and efficient bus access to the Metro Center from Pacific Avenue.	✓	
b. Introduce a rubber-tired "trolley" service to provide a transit linkage between downtown and the beach.	✓	
c. Design Pacific Avenue to be able to accommodate a future fixed-rail trolley or light-rail vehicle within the roadway.	✓	
d. Consider and explore strategies for inter-city rail service to downtown Santa Cruz.	✓	✓
e. Maintain inter-city (e.g., Greyhound) bus service in the downtown, either in the existing facility or as part of a consolidated facility within the Metro Center.	✓	
<b>4. Maintain and enhance the existing system of bike routes within the downtown.</b>		
a. Improve the San Lorenzo River as an exclusive Class 1 bike route.		✓
b. Add Cooper, Church and Locust Streets to the system of posted bike routes in the downtown.	✓	

- |  | Immediate<br>Action<br>(0-5 Years) | Medium to<br>Long Term<br>(More than<br>5 Years) |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| c. Design Soquel and Walnut Avenues, and Lincoln and Cathcart Streets, to have dedicated bike lanes installed. | ✓                                  |  |

**5. Strengthen pedestrian access to and movement within the downtown.**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| a. Improve Pacific Avenue as the primary pedestrian corridor in the downtown, with minimum sidewalk widths of 12 feet.   | ✓ |   |
| b. Improve the San Lorenzo Riverfront as an exclusive pedestrian corridor between the Beach and the downtown.  |   | ✓ |
| c. Improve Cathcart Street as an east-west pedestrian linkage between the river, Pacific Avenue, and downtown neighborhoods.   | ✓ | ✓ |
| d. Strengthen the pedestrian linkage between downtown and San Lorenzo Park with short-term streetscape improvements at the Galleria and the western landing of the pedestrian bridge; and longer-term improvements, including an east-west roadway through Long's-Zanotto's and an expanded pedestrian bridge. | ✓ | ✓ |
| e. Strengthen the pedestrian linkage to neighborhoods east of the river through a new pedestrian bridge between Soquel and Laurel Street connecting to the Metro Center.   |   | ✓ |
| f. Improve pedestrian linkages between downtown and Mission Hill through an expanded Scope Park and stair linkage.   |   | ✓ |
| g. Enhance pedestrian linkages to Beach Hill and the Beach through streetscape improvements along Cliff Street and the stairways leading to Pacific Avenue (at Third Street) and the riverfront (at Cliff Street).   |   | ✓ |

**STREETSCAPE AND OPEN SPACE**

**1. Improve Pacific Avenue as the downtown's major public gathering place, and as a viable retailing street.**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| a. Introduce, north of Cathcart, an asymmetrical cross section that provides for a wider (20 to 25 feet) sidewalk on the sunnier, west-facing side of the street to support a diversity of activities, and a comfortable promenading sidewalk (12 to 15 feet) on the east-facing side. | ✓ |  |
|--|---|--|

	Immediate Action (0-5 Years)	Medium to Long Term (More than 5 Years)
b. Introduce, south of Cathcart, a landscaped median to reinforce the continuity and sense of place in this area.	✓	
c. Maintain a strong sense of visual and pedestrian continuity along the entire length of the street.	✓	
d. Provide unobstructed access to all citizens, in compliance with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and State Title 24 Accessibility requirements.	✓	
e. Introduce a consistent treatment of boulevard trees along the length of the street that is high-branching, light in appearance, and suitable to urban environments.	✓	
f. Provide decorative pedestrian-scaled lighting that can support banners and holiday decorations.	✓	
g. Introduce public seating in conjunction with other activities (e.g., retail kiosks) at the key "T" intersections along Pacific Avenue.	✓	
h. Introduce ground-level planting at the "T" intersections and on the median south of Cathcart.	✓	
i. Allow for the extension of cafe and retail uses within the public right-of-way, subject to design standards and management guidelines.	✓	
<b>2. Create additional open space opportunities in the downtown that have meaning and significance.</b>		
a. Create a riverfront park at the foot of Cathcart Street to reinforce public access to, and use of, the river.		✓
b. Enhance open space opportunities at the northern tip of Pacific Avenue to accentuate the gateway role of this area and reinforce the significance of the post office and town clock.	✓	
c. Create a new park on the existing parking lot north of the planned Locust Street garage and along Plaza Lane.	✓	
d. Consider the creation of a more active public gathering space within the Civic Center area.		✓

Immediate Action (0-5 Years)	Medium to Long Term (More than 5 Years)
------------------------------------	--

**3. Introduce streetscape improvements on other downtown streets to improve one's sense of arrival and the cohesiveness of the district.**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| a. Maintain and expand, to the maximum extent practical, sidewalks along east-west streets in the downtown.                          | ✓ | ✓ |
| b. Create distinctive landscape/streetscape along major east-west gateway streets/avenues and bridges (e.g., Water, Soquel, Laurel). |   | ✓ |
| c. Enhance the Front Street/River Street corridor with consistent streetscape treatment from the highway to the Beach.               |   | ✓ |





The Downtown Plan calls for a balanced mixture of uses that will reinforce downtown Santa Cruz as a place of commerce, culture, and recreation: a place that people choose to go to meet friends; a place that naturally and spontaneously accommodates civic events; and a place where people live and work. Because of the desire to retain a mixed-use environment that includes a vertical as well as a horizontal mix of uses, there are no distinct land use zones within the downtown. Rather, the Downtown Plan identifies four subareas, each with its own distinct characteristics. These include:

- a. ***The Pacific Avenue Retail District***, including a one-half block depth for all parcels fronting onto Pacific Avenue between Water and Laurel Streets;
- b. ***The Front Street/Riverfront Corridor***, including the one-half block depth of property on the west side of Front Street, and all parcels adjacent to the riverfront between Water and Laurel Streets;
- c. ***The Cedar Street "Village" District***, generally situated between the Pacific Avenue Retail District on the east and Center Street on the west; and
- d. ***The North Pacific Area***, situated between Water Street, River Street, and the Mission Hill escarpment.

This chapter describes the proposed land uses for each of these four subareas and highlights the key development standards pertaining to height, bulk, and design treatment. In addition, specific policies and land use regulations are presented for retail, housing, and office uses in the downtown. The following chapter provides a more comprehensive description of development standards (including permitted uses) and urban design guidelines.

### Pacific Avenue Retail District

Pacific Avenue is the historic main street of Santa Cruz, serving as the principal focus of commercial activity in the region and recognized as the main center of public life in the community. It is the place that people naturally congregate for civic events, the place where people can expect to meet others on a more spontaneous basis, and a place that is uniquely suited to the needs of the Santa Cruz consumer.

The most devastating effect of the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 was within the Pacific Avenue Retail District; in 15 seconds, the earthquake destroyed the commercial and social heart of the community, a place that had evolved over more than a century. In guiding the redevelopment of private properties along Pacific Avenue, it was important to preserve the unique qualities that occur within the district: its human scale; the incremental and rich pattern of development; the architectural diversity and interest of many of the buildings; and the continuity of active public-oriented uses along the street. While many historic buildings were destroyed or damaged beyond repair, historic structures should be preserved to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate.

It is not the intent of the Downtown Plan and the development standards and guidelines presented in the following chapter to merely cause the past to be replicated. Rather, the Downtown Plan recognizes the opportunities to improve the Pacific Avenue Retail District: to intensify and diversify the type of activities; to make the street more comfortable to a wider range of people; and to encourage development that is sensitive to the past but that is appropriate to the future, both in terms of retailing and the public life of the community.

The Downtown Plan calls for the intensification of Pacific Avenue as a mixed-use district. Active public-oriented retail, restaurant, entertainment, and cultural uses are considered the primary activity at street level; other uses will be permitted on a conditional basis, if they meet the principal criteria of supporting the active pedestrian environment that is desired. Upper-level office and residential uses are encouraged along Pacific Avenue as a primary support to the ground-level retail uses. As described below, housing is encouraged as a permitted use throughout the downtown. It is recommended that residential projects be dispersed throughout the downtown district. For projects on sites smaller than 20,000 square feet, on-site parking is discouraged within this subarea in favor of centralized and shared parking provided by the Parking District.

The development standards and design guidelines for the Pacific Avenue Retail District call for maintaining the form and character of the existing downtown. Specific criteria are established to allow development to be intensified up to 85 feet, within the area located along Pacific Avenue from Water Street to Laurel Street. The intent of the criteria is to encourage an intensification of activity and population within the core of the downtown but, at the same time, to ensure that a sensitive transition or design integration is made between taller development and existing buildings of historic or architectural value; a principal intent of the criteria is also to maximize solar access to the sidewalks to ensure an active and comfortable pedestrian environment throughout the year.

The standards and guidelines also focus to a great extent upon the effect of private development on the pedestrian's experience. In addition to the types of ground-level land uses, the treatment of ground-level storefronts is also of critical importance to ensure that the pedestrian's experience along the street is reinforced and that new private development extends and enhances the streetscape improvements within the public realm.

## The Front Street/Riverfront Corridor

The Front Street/Riverfront Corridor forms an eastern edge to the Pacific Avenue Retail District and creates a transition between the more intensive commercial district and the riverfront. The role of Front Street as an important arterial distributing traffic to, through, and around the downtown has caused it to evolve as a destination retail district, with a major supermarket, drug store, and a specialty retail center backing up to the river. This role is one that is complementary to the more intensive, specialized, and pedestrian-oriented nature of Pacific Avenue, and its maintenance and enhancement is encouraged. Ground-level commercial uses, including destination retail uses, personal service, financial, and office-related uses, are permitted uses along the street. Permitted upper-level uses include office and residential, as well as river-oriented commercial uses connecting to the Riverwalk. This mix of uses serves to reinforce the downtown as a place to live, shop and work; as well as enhances the pedestrian environment and feeling of security along the river.

The pattern of development that has occurred along the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor is one that has largely "turned its back" on the San Lorenzo River. Major recommendations of the City's 1988 San Lorenzo River Design Plan, the 2003 San Lorenzo Urban River Plan, and the 2010 River/Front and Lower Pacific Design Guidelines and Development Incentives study, all promote enhancing the recreational resource of the river within the downtown and to orient Front Street development in a more positive way to the river. This Downtown Plan includes development standards that promote better access and incentives to redevelop the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor properties.

The Downtown Plan reinforces this objective by encouraging active ground-level uses, including retail shops and restaurants adjacent to Front Street and the Riverwalk. In addition, the Downtown Plan calls for residential, office, or restaurants as upper-level uses east of Front Street between Soquel and Laurel, to take advantage of the riverfront amenity, to reinforce the downtown as a place to live as well as shop and work, and to enhance the pedestrian environment and feeling of security along the river. The Downtown Plan requires at least 60 percent of the square footage of development within these areas (not including parking) to be provided in residential uses. . The guidelines for riverfront development, however, recognize the need to maintain the public nature of the riverfront corridor and include provisions for public access from Front Street, reasonable solar access to the Riverwalk, the articulation of the building mass, and the provision of active ground-level uses.

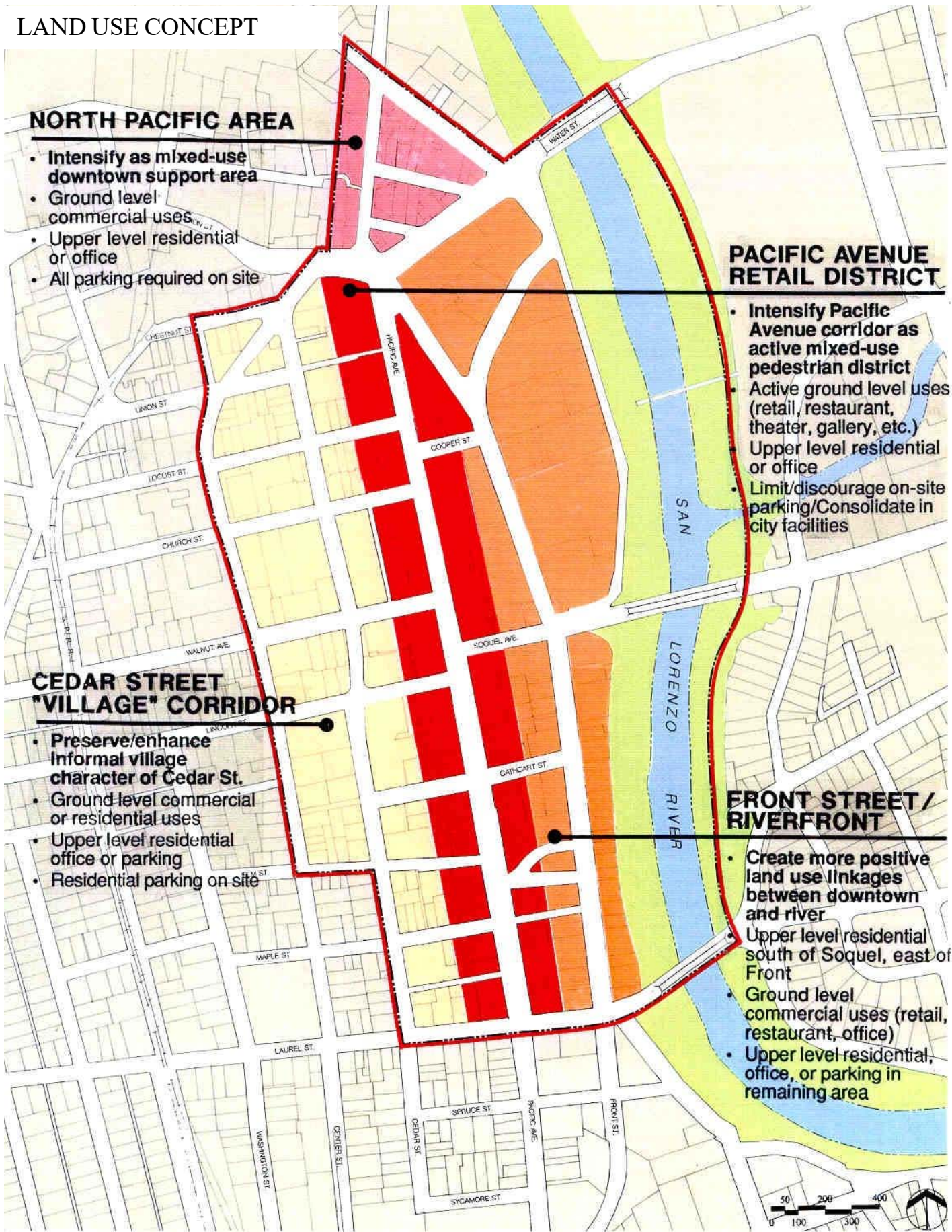
The flood improvements completed per the previously adopted river plans allowed for the removal of the floodplain designation and National Flood Insurance requirements from the properties that abut the east and west sides of Front Street. Prior to the FEMA certification of the completed improvements, new development must comply with FEMA Flood Zone A-99 standards for development within the floodplain, as well as the guidelines provided for below. New projects constructed along this portion of the FEMA floodplain shall be designed to create a positive connection with the San Lorenzo Riverwalk. The FEMA guidelines define construction treatments for various uses within the floodplain.

In addition to the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor between Laurel and Soquel, the Downtown Plan also designates the parking lot and adjacent commercial properties on the north east corner of Soquel Avenue and Front Street for future potential mixed-use residential development. Such a development could maintain ground-level retail and convenience uses, integrated with up to 3 levels of upper-level residential development (to a maximum height of 45 feet), highly articulated to create an attractive edge to the riverfront and an interesting and varied silhouette.

Parking for both the commercial and residential components of the development would be encapsulated on two levels within the podium base of the project and screened from public view by the ground-level retail uses. Development would be required to meet the provision for at least 60 percent of the square footage (not including parking) to be provided in residential uses.

Along the western edge of Front Street, key opportunities need to be preserved for public downtown parking. Specific standards and guidelines for the treatment of surface parking lots and for the development of parking garages are outlined in the following chapter.

**LAND USE CONCEPT**



## The Cedar Street Village Corridor

The Cedar Street Corridor is immediately west of the Pacific Avenue Retail District. The area provides an appropriate transition in scale and use between the downtown and the adjacent residential neighborhoods and the civic center. In contrast to Front Street, which plays a destination retail role, Cedar Street serves as a more local-serving street with a mixture of professional offices, support and convenience retail, and restaurant uses. Unlike Pacific Avenue, which developed in a relatively consistent manner with a strong "street wall" of buildings, Cedar Street is more diverse in nature, with a mixture of one and two-story structures of varied setbacks. Many of the buildings are wood frame structures with a strong residential character.

The land use plan and the standards and guidelines strive to preserve and enhance the informal "village" qualities of the Cedar Street Corridor. Unlike the Pacific Avenue district, permitted ground-level uses include office in addition to retail, and residential uses are allowed at the ground level along the east-west streets and Center Street. No strict "build-to" lines are established, and the height of development is purposely stepped down to a maximum of 35 feet, or three floors.

Like the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor, the Cedar Street Village Corridor plays an important role in providing parking facilities for Pacific Avenue. It is particularly important to ensure that if future parking structures are constructed in this area, that they -be designed in a way that is supportive of the village character of the district and at a scale compatible with the adjacent neighborhoods. To this end, all parking structures in this subarea are required to step down to 35 feet adjacent to public streets.

Upper-level residential uses are particularly encouraged within the Cedar Street subarea to intensify the resident population of the downtown and to create an appropriate land use transition to the adjacent neighborhoods.

## The North Pacific Area

The area of the downtown north of Water Street is unique from the remainder of the district to the south. Situated at the foot of Mission Hill and between River Street and Water Streets, this subarea plays an important gateway role for motorists entering the area from the north and the east. The Town Clock and Scope Park at North Pacific and Water Street intensifies this gateway role and creates a visual and activity linkage with the downtown core to the south.

North Pacific Avenue also plays an important gateway function to the downtown, providing a linkage from River Street to the Town Clock and the Pacific Avenue Retail District to the south. North Pacific itself has evolved as a unique street; its narrow right-of-way and small-scale retail buildings nestled against the escarpment of Mission Hill create an intimate village-like quality.

As the downtown area intensifies, the light industrial uses in the North Pacific area will naturally evolve to more urbanized uses. The Downtown Plan calls for a mixture of office, residential, and retail uses that can support the primary commercial uses of the Pacific Avenue area to the south

A maximum height of 35 feet (2 floors of commercial, or 1 floor of commercial with 2 floors of residential above) is proposed for the North Pacific area. Additional height up to 45 feet (3 floors of commercial, or 1 floor of commercial with 3 floors of residential above) is allowed for properties

east of North Pacific Avenue, if visual analyses indicate that views to Mission Hill from the Water Street Bridge are preserved and if additional height is highly articulated.

Portions of -the North Pacific Area are not located within the City's parking district and, as such, parking must meet overall City standards and be provided on site.

## **Retail**

A critical objective of the Downtown Planes the revitalization and intensification of downtown Santa Cruz as the principal retail and commercial district of the city and region. Retail is the land use component most critical to the success of the downtown. Without a strong and diverse retail base, the downtown cannot function as a viable center for the community. Clearly, a major strength of the downtown is its unique retailing personality, which has evolved as a result of strong local merchants and a loyal customer base. The Downtown Plan proposes that this base be built upon further, by means of the following policies:

### **Downtown Plan Retail Policies**

- a. Retail uses that generate pedestrian interest and activity shall be the predominant permitted use for the street level of development throughout the downtown as outlined in the Central Business District Use Allowances tables in Chapter 4 of the Plan.
- b. The design of Pacific Avenue, and the development standards and design guidelines, should maximize opportunities for outdoor eating (e.g., cafes) to reinforce the downtown's image and identity as a vital food and entertainment district.
- c. The design of Pacific Avenue, and the development standards and design guidelines, should be aimed at creating a distinctive and active pedestrian environment that supports the downtown as a unique retail destination, comfortable to a complete range of users.

The Downtown Management Corporation should be retained to continue to improve public perception of downtown Santa Cruz by enhancing safety and security; provide information and direction to shoppers and visitors in downtown Santa Cruz; and provide a visible presence in downtown Santa Cruz to observe and report street disorder.

## **Housing**

A major objective of the "First Principles" is the creation of significant new housing opportunities within the downtown. It is recognized that while the downtown must function as a viable commercial center, it should also be an attractive place to live. The combination of retail and office

uses with a wide range of residential units will extend and enrich the life of the downtown and serve to make it a more attractive place for residents, employees, and visitors alike. Toward this objective, the following housing policies were established by Vision Santa Cruz in its "First Principles" document and are supported by the Plan:

- a. A mix of housing should be developed, including development of new housing areas and a variety of types (apartments, condominiums, SRO's) serving a range of needs and income groups. No one housing type should predominate.
- b. The City's current 15 percent affordability requirement should be maintained.
- c. Numeric goals for housing should be established for types, market served, and locations which are achievable and take into account costs and feasibility. Specific locations should be evaluated for housing potential including Pacific Avenue, South of Laurel and along the San Lorenzo River, adjacent to the parking lots at the north east corner of Soquel Avenue and Front Street.
- d. Housing in the downtown should be well designed, well maintained, and well managed in order to fit well in the new downtown fabric.
- e. Reconstructed post-Loma Prieta earthquake SRO housing should be retained.

## **General Plan 2030**

In November of 1990, the City Council adopted a High Density Overlay Zone (HDO) for the Pacific Avenue corridor between Water and Elm Streets, which provided density bonuses for residential development within commercial mixed-use projects. This overlay district became obsolete with the adoption of the General Plan 2030 in 2012. The Regional Visitor Commercial land use designation (applicable to downtown) includes new floor area ratio (FAR) ranges that supersede the HDO district.

### **Downtown Plan Housing Policies**

- a. The Downtown Plan reconfirms housing as a permitted upper-level use throughout the downtown and introduces the potential for ground-level residential (e.g., townhouses) on the east-west streets west of Cedar Street and along Center Street.
- b. The Plan reconfirms the density provisions of the ordinance, and provides for more detailed height and massing criteria and design guidelines for housing within each subdistrict of the downtown.
- c. The Downtown Plan identifies the area along the San Lorenzo River, east of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street, and the properties at the

north east corner of Soquel Avenue and Front Street as areas where upper-level housing is encouraged as the primary use of any redevelopment project that occurs. This provision recommends that at least 60 percent of the square footage within these projects (not including parking) be devoted to housing.

- d. The Downtown Plan supports the retention of all SRO housing units reconstructed after the Loma Prieta earthquake. The Downtown Plan further recommends that additional SRO projects dispersed throughout the downtown and that individual development not exceed 60 units without City Council approval, to avoid the creation of a single district that will dominate other critical activities within the area.
- e. Although the area south of Laurel Street is beyond the boundaries of the Downtown Plan, the Beach/South of Laurel Plan recognizes the great potential for this area to be redeveloped as an in-town neighborhood that: supports the downtown as a mixed-use district; extends the existing pattern of residential uses from Beach Hill and the downtown neighborhoods; takes advantage of the amenity of the river; and creates a more positive activity linkage between the downtown and the Beach.
- f. All residential projects within the downtown must meet off-street parking requirements of the zoning ordinance, unless they are situated within the parking district, in which case they shall adhere to the requirements of the district.
- g. Beyond regulatory requirements, a comprehensive housing implementation strategy should be established to develop a feasible program for the delivery of market-rate and affordable housing units in the downtown. Measures could include developer incentives such as land write-downs, public participation in financing, parking reductions and direct subsidies, as appropriate. Exactions on commercial developers for the provision of residential units are not recommended.

## **Office**

Historically, downtown Santa Cruz has served as the principal government, business, and service center for North County. This role has reinforced the significance of the downtown as an important destination and has provided direct support for retailing uses. The Downtown Plan strongly encourages the concentration and intensification of office uses within the downtown, where employees can best take advantage of existing and future transit service, where broader environmental objectives related to the improvement of air quality and transportation can be best served, where additional employees can contribute to the creation of an active and viable urban center, and where they can be best served by downtown retail activities.

## **Office Policies**

The Downtown Plan recommends the following land use policies as a means of reinforcing the downtown as the principal office and employment center in the city and region:



- a. Office use should be a permitted upper-level use throughout the downtown, except in the designated areas where residential is a required upper-level use.
- b. Major speculative office development projects (e.g., greater than 10,000 square feet) that would be an appropriate downtown use should be discouraged in other parts of the City.
- c. The City and Parking District No. 1 should coordinate with office developers for the provision of convenient off-site parking that can meet private requirements as well as public objectives for well-designed centralized parking facilities.



**A. ALL CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS  
LAND USES**

All new construction shall require approval of a Design Permit, regardless of type of use.

1. Prohibited Uses

The uses described in subsection (a) below, are deemed inconsistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the Downtown Plan and are, therefore, prohibited within the Downtown Plan (Plan) portion of the Central Business District as either a stand-alone use or an accessory or temporary use. Such uses that lawfully existed within the Plan area prior to the adoption of this provision are deemed non-conforming and may continue only at the same location at the same intensity or less for a period of no more than 20 years from the effective date of the Zoning Ordinance amendment (October 10, 2000), after which time the use shall be completely removed or converted to a conforming use. The uses described in subsection (b) below shall be deemed a public nuisance and shall be immediately abated according to the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance or other applicable City Codes or Ordinances.

Uses that are prohibited within any of the Downtown Plan subdistricts.

- a. Uses not permitted include, but are not limited to, the following: medical and recreational cannabis provider dispensaries, Tattoo parlors; rent, sales or service of automobiles, trucks, recreational vehicles, motorcycles or trailers; sale of firearms; general advertising signs; sale of alcoholic beverages for off-site consumption requiring ABC liquor license Numbers 20 or 21 (liquor stores), except that code provisions will be developed to allow sale of alcohol for off-site consumption that is clearly incidental to other principally permitted uses, that represents a small percentage (to be determined) of the total shelf space in the business, and that establishes operational criteria to limit the impact of the alcohol sales, including but not limited to, hours of operation, security, and limitations on single-serve containers and locations of alcohol within the store; drive-up facility; or drive-through facility.
- b. Nuisance Activities. No use, even though listed as a permitted use or otherwise allowed, shall be permitted which, by reason of its nature or manner of operation, is deemed by the Zoning Administrator to be creating a condition that is hazardous, noxious, or offensive through the emission of odor, fumes, smoke, cinder, dust, gas, vibration, glare, refuse, water-carried waste, or excessive noise. Such use shall be subject to violation abatement procedures, which may result in revocation of the use permit.

2. Accessory Uses

Accessory uses, as defined in Section 24.22.013 of the Zoning Ordinance, shall be limited to the use of no more than one quarter (1/4) of the total floor area occupied by the permitted use.

### 3. Temporary Uses

Temporary uses, as defined in Section 24.22.879 of the Zoning Ordinance, shall be limited to the following activities and standards:

- a. The following activities if they are sponsored by a government entity or an organized group of businesses, property owners or residents of the CBD:
  - i. Neighborhood, District or Citywide-oriented carnival, circus, street fair, exhibition, celebration or festival;
  - ii. Booth for educational, charitable, patriotic or welfare purposes;
  - iii. Open air sale of agricultural products, including seasonal decorations.
  - iv. Open air sporting event;
  - v. Arts or crafts sale or artistic performance event; or
  - vi. Surface parking open to the public.
  
- b. The following activities if they secure the proper permits, if applicable, from City agencies: Parades, civic events, and advertised citizen gatherings.

<b>TABLE 4-1: Central Business Districts Use Allowances — Ground Floor (Street Level)</b>					
P = Principally Permitted A = Administrative Use Permit S = Special Use Permit “—” = Not Permitted					
<i>Use Categories</i>	<i>Pacific Avenue Retail</i>	<i>Front Street Riverfront</i>	<i>Cedar Street Village</i>	<i>North Pacific</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<i>Residential</i>					
Community Care Residential Facility	—	—	P/A	—	(1)
Dwellings, Multiple and Townhouse	A	A	A	A	(2)
Dwellings, One-Family & Two-Family	—	—	P	—	(2)
Dwellings, Small Ownership Housing	A	A	A	A	(2)
Dwellings, SRO Single Room Occupancy Housing	A	A	A	A	(2)
Family Day Care Homes, Small	—	P	P	P	(1)
Family Day Care Homes, Large	A	A	A	A	(1)
Supportive and Transitional Housing	A	A	A	A	(1)

**TABLE 4-1: Central Business Districts Use Allowances — Ground Floor (Street Level)**

P = Principally Permitted  
 A = Administrative Use Permit  
 S = Special Use Permit  
 “—” = Not Permitted

<i>Use Categories</i>	<i>Pacific Avenue Retail</i>	<i>Front Street Riverfront</i>	<i>Cedar Street Village</i>	<i>North Pacific</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<i>Commercial</i> (3)					
Banks and Financial Institutions	A	P	A	P	(4)
Business Support Services	A	P	P	P	
Eating and Drinking Establishments					
- Bar, Tavern	A	A	S	A	(5)
- Brewpubs	A	A	A	A	(5)
- Bona Fide Restaurant	P	P	P	P	(5)
- Tasting Rooms	A	A	A	A	
- Breweries, Distilleries and Wineries	A	A	A	A	(6)
General Market	P	P	P	P	
Hotels / Motels	A	P	A	P	(7)
Instructional Services - Schools, Business and Technical	A	A	A	A	(8)
Live/Work Quarters	A	A	A	A	(9)
Nightclubs and Live Entertainment	S	S	S	S	(10)
Offices, Professional	A	A	A	P	(11)
Parking Facilities, Surface and Structured	A	A	A	A	(12)
Personal Services					
- General Personal Services	A	A	A	P	(13)
- Health/Fitness Studio	A	A	A	A	(14)
Retail Sales	P	P	P	P	(15)
Theaters/Commercial Entertainment	P	P	S	P	
Thrift Stores/Pawn Shops	S	S	S	S	(16)
<i>Institutional and Community Facilities</i> (3)					
Community/Religious Assembly	A	A	A	A	
Day Care Centers	A	A	A	A	
Government Buildings	P	P	P	P	
Medical Centers and Clinics	A	A	A	A	(11)
Museums/Galleries/Cultural Institutions	A	A	A	A	(17)
Social Service Centers	A	A	A	A	
Other Similar Uses as Determined by the Zoning Administrator to be consistent with the purpose of the subdistrict	P/A/S	P/A/S	P/A/S	P/A/S	

## **Additional Regulations – Ground Floor Uses.**

(1) Community Care Residential Facilities. Facilities with fewer than 7 persons are principally permitted uses in the Cedar Street Village District. Facilities with 7 or more persons require approval of an Administrative Use Permit (AUP). Supportive and Transitional Housing facilities are allowed with only those restrictions that apply to similar residential uses.

(2) Multi-Family Housing. (Including Single-Room Occupancy projects subject to standards set forth in 24.12.) In all districts where multi-family housing requires an AUP, common residential lobbies for upper-level residences are allowed at ground level with active ground level common spaces publicly visible. Within the Cedar Street Village, ground-level residential uses are permitted on the side streets west of Cedar Street and along Center Street. Direct access between individual townhouse units and the street are strongly encouraged through the use of porches and front "stoops". In the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor and North Pacific Area, the first floor of units shall be elevated above the sidewalk level 5 feet. For Front Street/Riverfront Corridor, allow for ground level residential uses provided that such uses are internal to a block and do not face Front Street, Laurel Street, Cathcart Street, Soquel Avenue, River Street, North Pacific, or any public pedestrian paseo or lane. Individual housing unit entrances with direct access to Front Street are prohibited within 60 feet of Front Street from Soquel Avenue and Laurel Streets and along the frontages of public passageways between Front Street and the Riverwalk.

(3) Commercial and Non-Residential Uses. These uses adjacent to public passageways in the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor shall be accessible from Front Street and the Riverwalk.

Large Non-Residential Ground-Level Uses. These uses exceeding sixteen thousand (16,000) gross square feet per single-tenant/establishment require approval of a Special Use Permit (SUP) by the City Council after review and recommendation by the Planning Commission. In addition to the findings for SUP issuance required under Section 24.08.050, a SUP required by this subsection shall not be issued unless the following additional criteria, findings and conditions related to the public benefits provided by the proposed project are made by the City Council.

- a. The use adds a desired, “targeted” business to the Downtown, which would serve to diversify the Downtown Plan area ground-level business base;
- b. The use provides a public benefit and contributes to an appropriate balance of local or non-local businesses. For the purposes of this finding, it shall be presumed that local businesses serve to sustain the authenticity and unique retail character of the downtown business mix. However, non-local businesses may add to retail draw and contribute to overall downtown vitality in certain circumstances;
- c. The use contributes to an appropriate balance of small, medium and large-sized businesses in the downtown area to diversify the ground-level business mix; to insure the maintenance of the “Santa Cruz” identity, unique character and authenticity; to seek to reduce economic “leakage” of sales out of the City and County; and to induce local investment and employment to the downtown area;

- d. The design of the façade of the proposed use meets the design standards and guidelines of the Downtown Plan and is not restricted by corporate standardized or trademarked exterior design, signage, materials, color or other visual treatments;
- e. The proposed use would be a good neighbor and contribute to the community life of the downtown by participating in such community activities as: (1) Membership in downtown merchant, resident, neighborhood improvement organizations and/or assessment districts; (2) to the greatest extent feasible, hiring local residents; and (3) hosting or participating in downtown festivals, fairs, benefit events and similar neighborhood activities; and
- f. If applicable, all food and/or beverage service activities shall be conducted in accordance with the following “good neighbor operating procedures” for such uses.
  - i. Sufficient trash and recycling receptacles shall be provided and shall be regularly maintained;
  - ii. All debris boxes shall be screened and kept on the premises in a designated or approved location;
  - iii. The operator shall be responsible for cleaning the sidewalk within fifty (50) feet horizontal distance from the premises during the hours of operation to maintain the sidewalk free of paper, spillage or other litter; and
  - iv. Noise, glare and odors shall be contained within the premises so as not to be a nuisance to neighbors. Under no circumstance shall the ventilation outlets or motors cause emission of objectionable odors or noise directed toward neighbors.

(4) Banks and Financial Institutions. These uses may be allowed when there is no other bank within the contiguous block.

(5) Eating and Drinking Establishments. All uses within this category shall be subject to City and State alcohol regulations. When applicable, all fast food and/or beverage establishments (defined in the Zoning Ordinance) shall be conducted in accordance with the “good neighbor” operating procedures listed in Section 3.f.

(6) Breweries, Distilleries and Wineries. These manufacturing uses are allowed in these districts only when they contain at least 25% of floor area devoted to retail and/or tasting of the product manufactured on the premises. Street-oriented active store frontage is required.

(7) Hotels/Motels. These uses are allowed as principally permitted uses along the east side of Front Street. No hotel rooms are allowed along the ground level frontages or along the Riverwalk level frontage.

(8) Instructional Services - Schools, Business and Technical. Schools and studios for arts and crafts, photography, music and dance provided that such establishments are not located along Pacific Avenue frontage or east-west street frontage. A Special Use Permit is required (1) when located along Pacific Avenue frontage or (2) if located along east-west street frontage, provided the following conditions are met:

- a. Any such establishment will not occupy more than 50 linear feet of frontage space;
- b. Such establishment is compatible with nearby residential uses;

- c. Such space is in compliance with the storefront and façade design and development standards; and
- d. Such space is capable of being converted into retail use in the future.

(9) Live/Work Quarters. The residential component of a Live/Work space shall not be located on the ground level, unless the residence is located in the interior of the lot; i.e., the non-residential component of the space must have frontage on the public right-of-way or publicly accessible passageway. The non-residential component of the space must have a minimum frontage depth of 30 feet.

(10) Nightclubs, Establishments Providing Live Entertainment. These uses with stage/performance areas greater than 80 square feet or permitting dancing, and establishments serving alcoholic beverages not ancillary to food service will be considered for the ground level, subject to the following operating conditions:

- a. Acoustical studies indicating that such uses can achieve the City's existing noise abatement standards;
- b. The provisions of Part 12 of the Zoning Ordinance (for High Risk or Low Risk Alcohol Outlets) are met;
- c. The establishments shall be conduct business in accordance with the following “good neighbor operating procedures” as described in Section 3.f above.
- d. The storefront adjacent to the street is designed in compliance with the storefront and building façade standards and guidelines and includes active people-oriented activities of visual interest to the pedestrian (e.g., food service/restaurant seating, retail frontage, queuing areas or art work) and in no case shall the storefront occupy more than 50 linear feet of street frontage;
- e. Such establishments are compatible with adjacent residential uses; and
- f. Such space is capable of being transformed into retail use in the future.

(11) Medical Centers/Clinics and Professional Offices. Professional, editorial, real estate, insurance and other general business offices including space for non-profit organizations; medical and dental offices; and medical, optical and dental clinics will be considered for the ground level subject to the following criteria. These uses:

- a. Are prohibited along Pacific Avenue frontage (75 feet perpendicular to Pacific frontage property line and within 40 feet perpendicular to the east-west street property line), except when limited to interior ground floor space not fronting the street.
- b. Must be compatible with existing and planned ground-level and upper-level permitted uses; and
- c. Must be in compliance with the storefront and building façade guidelines and standards, and capable of being transformed into retail use in the future.



(12) Parking, Surface or Structured. Allow for the use of parking lifts within the required envelope of any parking garage. See subdistrict development standards for other specific parking criteria.

(13) Personal Services. Uses such as barber shops, laundry and clothes cleaning establishments; administrative, executive and financial services; and technology-related services are allowed with an AUP for the ground level, if it can be demonstrated that:

- a. Such establishments are not located along Pacific Avenue frontage or along east-west street frontage (75 feet perpendicular to Pacific frontage property line and within 40 feet perpendicular to the east-west street property line) from Water Street to Laurel Street and are, therefore, limited to the interior ground floor space;
- b. Such establishments are compatible with existing and planned ground-level and upper-level permitted uses; and
- c. Such establishments are in compliance with the storefront and building façade guidelines and standards, and capable of being transformed into retail use in the future.

(14) Health and Fitness Studios. These uses will be considered for ground-level use, provided that:

- a. The storefront adjacent to the street is designed in compliance with the storefront and building façade standards and guidelines and active people-oriented uses are located adjacent to the street (e.g., retailing component);
- b. In no case shall the storefront occupy more than 50 linear feet of street frontage;
- c. Such establishments are compatible with adjacent residential uses; and
- d. Such space is capable of being transformed into retail use in the future.

(15) Retail. The store space along the frontage of North Pacific Avenue, River Street and Water Street shall have the minimum perpendicular depth of forty (40) feet; however, such use may vary in depth along these streets provided that each street maintains an average retail depth of twenty five (25) feet.

(16) Thrift Stores or pawn shops. These uses are prohibited along Pacific Avenue frontage (75 feet perpendicular to Pacific frontage property line and within 40 feet perpendicular to the east-west street property line).

(17) Art galleries and Museums. These uses shall be open to the public.

**TABLE 4-2: Central Business Districts Use Allowances — Upper Floors (Includes Riverwalk Level)**

P = Principally Permitted A = Administrative Use Permit S = Special Use Permit “—” = Not Permitted					
<i>Use Categories</i>	<i>Pacific Avenue Retail</i>	<i>Front Street Riverfront</i>	<i>Cedar Street Village</i>	<i>North Pacific</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<i>Residential</i>					
Community Care Residential Facility	—	—	P/A	—	(1)
Dwellings, Multiple and Townhouse	A	A	A	A	(2)
Dwellings, One-Family & Two-Family	—	—	P	—	(2)
Dwellings, Small Ownership Housing	A	A	A	A	(2)
Dwellings, SRO Single Room Occupancy Housing	A	A	A	A	(2)
Family Day Care Homes, Small	—	P	P	P	(1)
Family Day Care Homes, Large	A	A	A	A	(1)
Supportive and Transitional Housing	A	A	A	A	(1)
<i>Commercial</i>					
Banks and Financial Institutions	A	P	A	P	
Business Support Services	A	P	P	P	
<i>Eating and Drinking Establishments</i>					
- Bar, Tavern	A	A	S	A	(3)
- Brewpubs	A	A	A	A	(3)
- Bona Fide Restaurant	P	P	P	P	(3)
- Tasting Rooms	A	A	A	A	(3)
- Breweries, Distilleries and Wineries	A	A	A	A	(6)
General Market	P	P	P	P	
Hotels/Motels	A	P	A	P	(4)
Instructional Services - Schools, Business and Technical	A	A	A	A	(5)
Live/Work Quarters	A	A	A	A	
Nightclubs and Live Entertainment	S	S	S	S	(7)
Offices, Professional	P	P	P	P	(8)
Parking Facilities, Surface and Structured	A	A	A	A	(9)
<i>Personal Services</i>					
- General Personal Services	A	A	A	P	
- Health/Fitness Studio	A	A	A	A	(10)
Retail Sales	P	P	P	P	(11)
Theaters/Commercial Entertainment	P	P	S	P	
Thrift Stores/Pawn Shops	S	S	S	S	

**TABLE 4-2: Central Business Districts Use Allowances — Upper Floors (Includes Riverwalk Level)**

P = Principally Permitted A = Administrative Use Permit S = Special Use Permit “—” = Not Permitted					
<i>Use Categories</i>	<i>Pacific Avenue Retail</i>	<i>Front Street Riverfront</i>	<i>Cedar Street Village</i>	<i>North Pacific</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
Institutional and Community Facilities					(3)
Community/Religious Assembly	A	A	A	A	
Day Care Centers	A	A	A	A	
Government Buildings	P	P	P	P	
Medical Centers and Clinics	A	A	A	A	(8)
Museums/Galleries/Cultural Institutions	A	A	A	A	(12)
Communication Facilities	P	P	P	P	(13)
Industrial and Other					
Artist Studio	A	A	A	A	
Bakery, microbrewery, handicrafts or similar light manufacturing and assembly use associated with retail sales/services	A	A	A	A	
Other Similar Uses as Determined by the Zoning Administrator to be consistent with the purpose of the subdistrict	P/A/S	P/A/S	P/A/S	P/A/S	

### **Additional Regulations – Upper Floor Uses.**

(1) Community Care Residential Facilities. Facilities with fewer than 7 persons are principally permitted uses in the Cedar Street Village District. Community Care Residential Facilities with 7 or more persons require approval of an AUP. Supportive and Transitional Housing facilities are allowed with only those restrictions that apply to similar residential uses.

(2) Multi-family Housing. Development projects containing up to 60 units in size are principally permitted uses. Residential uses shall incorporate sound attenuation space planning designs and construction materials and methods such that noise from nearby commercial activities do not unduly disturb occupants of new dwelling units. Residential development exceeding 60 units will be considered with a Special Use Permit if it can be demonstrated that such a development includes a mixture of unit types (e.g., variety of unit sizes) that will be attractive to a wide range of potential residents. Single-Room Occupancy projects require approval of an AUP and are subject to 24.12.1000 et seq. Single-Room Occupancy projects exceeding 60 units require approval of City Council. For properties east of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street, housing is a priority use and shall be at least 60% of the total floor area of the project. This requirement does not apply to properties within 75 feet of Laurel Street or Soquel Avenue.

(3) Eating and Drinking Establishments. All uses within this category shall be subject to City and State alcohol regulations. When applicable, all fast food and/or beverage establishments (defined in the Zoning Ordinance) shall be conducted in accordance with the previously described “good neighbor operating procedures” previously described in section 3.f. of the Ground Floor Uses. Eating and drinking establishments are encouraged on the Riverwalk level to publicly activate the Riverwalk and connections to the Riverwalk and east/west publicly accessible spaces in the Pacific Avenue Retail District. Outdoor rooftop dining is allowed when associated with an upper level restaurant/eating and drinking establishment.

(4) Hotels/Motels. These uses are allowed as principally permitted uses along the east side of Front Street. No hotel rooms are allowed along the ground level frontages or along the Riverwalk level frontage.

(5) Instructional Services - Schools, Business and Technical. Schools and studios for arts and crafts, photography, music and dance provided that such establishments are compatible with nearby residential uses.

(6) Breweries, Distilleries and Wineries. These manufacturing uses are allowed in these districts only when they contain at least 25% of floor area devoted to retail and/or tasting of the product manufactured on the premises.

(7) Nightclubs, Establishments Providing Live Entertainment. These uses with stage/performance areas greater than 80 square feet or permitting dancing, and establishments serving alcoholic beverages not ancillary to food service, are subject to the following operating conditions:

- a. Acoustical studies indicating that such uses can achieve the City's existing noise abatement standards;
- b. The provisions Part 12 of the Zoning Ordinance (for High Risk or Low Risk Alcohol Outlets) are met;
- c. All such establishments are conducted in accordance with the previously described “good neighbor operating procedures”; and
- d. Such establishments are compatible with nearby residential uses.

(8) Medical Centers/Clinics and Professional Offices. Professional, editorial, real estate, insurance and other general business offices including space for non-profit organizations; medical and dental offices; and medical, optical and dental clinics will be considered for upper levels subject to the following criteria. These uses must be compatible with existing and planned ground-level and upper-level permitted uses.

(9) Parking, Surface or Structured. Allow for the use of parking lifts within the required envelope of any parking garage. See subdistrict development standards for other specific parking criteria.

(10) Health and Fitness Studios. These uses will be considered for upper level use, provided that such establishments are compatible with adjacent residential uses.

(11) Retail Sales. In the Pacific Avenue Retail District, second level retail sales are allowed subject to the approval an Administrative Use Permit when the second level is connected to the same business on the ground floor, subject to being compatible with and minimizing impacts to nearby residents. Riverwalk retail is allowed subject to the approval of an Administrative Use Permit to publicly activate the Riverwalk. Retail space should be evaluated in the context of adjacent projects to ensure uses are compatible, active and enhance the Riverwalk.

(12) Art Galleries and Museums. These uses shall be open to the public.

(13) Communication Facilities. Uses are subject to the regulations in Part 15 of Chapter 24.12.

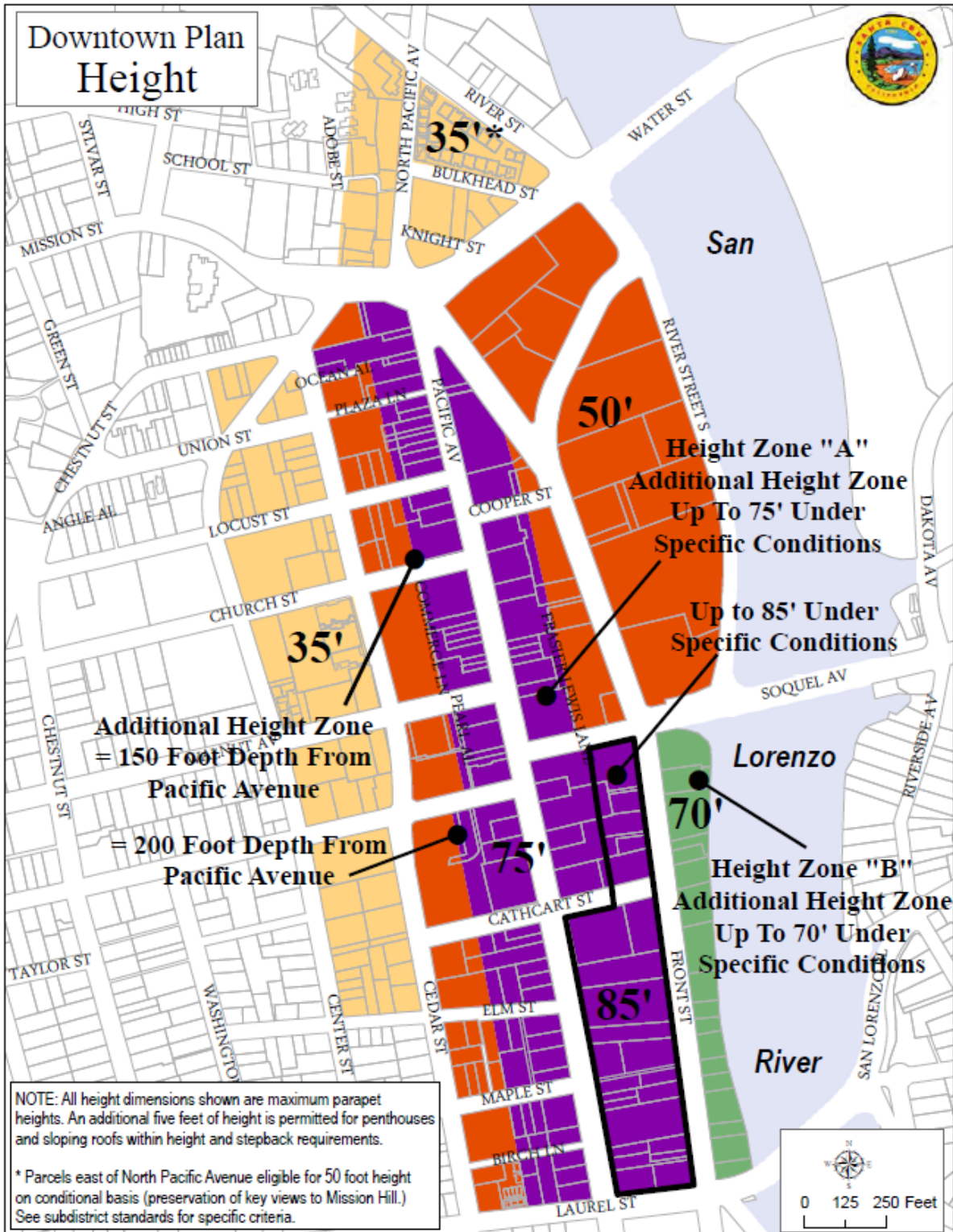


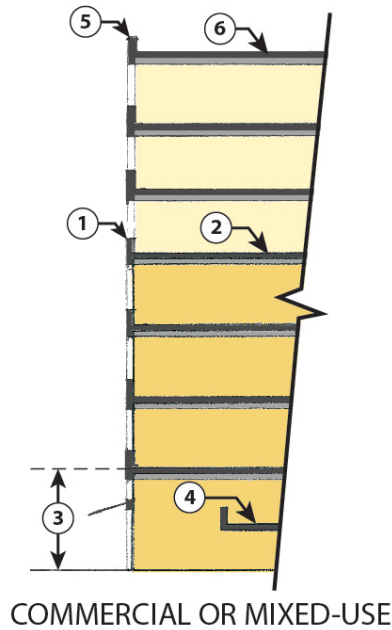
Figure A-1: Downtown Plan Height

## B. PACIFIC AVENUE RETAIL DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

### 1. Building Height

The following height standards shall apply to all development within the Pacific Avenue Retail District, including frontage along Pacific Avenue and the east-west streets within the subarea. All buildings must conform to the Base Height requirements, except for provisions for additional height within the “Additional Height Zone A”. The intent of the standards is not to create a five-story downtown, but rather to preserve the overall character and scale of the historic core while allowing some intensification and increased height on larger parcels.

- a. Floors. No new building shall be less than two stories in height. The second story shall be at least 50 percent of the first floor area and shall be located toward the street frontage. An exception may be made for building recessed breaks as described for the Additional Height Zones.
- b. Floor-to-Floor Height. The first floor uses must have a minimum floor-to-floor height of 18 feet for properties north of Cathcart Street and 15 feet minimum south of Cathcart Street. Any mezzanine shall be set back at least 30 feet from the building line on the street and shall occupy no more than one-third of the area of the first floor.
- c. Base Height and Floors. No new development shall exceed a Base Height of 55 feet (measured to the top of parapet or eaves), except as provided for in the “Additional Height Zone A”. Within this Base Height, no more than 3 floors of upper-level uses above the ground-level retail use will be permitted within the maximum 55 feet Base Height. (See Figure B-1.)



**BASE HEIGHT**

- ① Maximum 55' to top of parapet
- ② Maximum 3 floors of commercial or residential above 1 level of commercial
- ③ Minimum 15' ground level floor-to-floor dimension (South of Cathcart)  
Minimum 18' ground level floor-to-floor dimension (North of Cathcart)
- ④ Maximum mezzanine area = 33% of ground level floor area

**ADDITIONAL HEIGHT ZONE A**

- ⑤ Maximum 75' to top of parapet for 60% of site area on sites 15,000 to 50,000 sf;  
Maximum 85' to top of parapet for 20% of site area for sites >50,000 sf
- ⑥ Maximum 6 floors of commercial or residential above 1 level of commercial \*

*\*Within the massing and stepback requirements for additional height.*

*Figure B-1: Maximum Building Heights and Floors.*



- d. Mechanical Penthouses. Uninhabitable mechanical penthouses will be permitted above the Base Height to a maximum height of 65 feet, provided that such penthouses are set back a minimum of 15 feet from any exposed face of the buildings, unless such penthouses are architecturally integrated into the building façade design.
- e. Sloping Roofs. (45 degrees/1:1 pitch or flatter) shall be permitted up to a maximum height of 60 feet, measured to the top of the sloping roof. For projects not eligible for the Additional Height, street wall heights shall not exceed the base height limit of 55 feet.
- f. Visual Impact Study. Any site that is located where the east-west street does not cross Pacific Avenue (sites with frontage on Locust, Church, Walnut, Lincoln, Soquel, Elm and Maple Streets) must prepare a visual impact study to determine how the proposed building would be viewed from the east-west street from a pedestrian eye-level.

## 2. Build-to Lines and Setbacks

To ensure that Pacific Avenue and the east-west streets are spatially well defined, all development shall be built to the property line of the street. The following exceptions to this condition are noted:

- a. Active Outdoor Uses. Setbacks of up to 12 feet in depth are permitted along the northern property line of Cathcart Street, if such setbacks are intended to provide active outdoor uses (e.g., outdoor dining or public seating) oriented to the street.
- b. Laurel Street Sidewalk. Require any development along Laurel Street between Pacific Avenue and Front Street to dedicate sufficient property to result in a sidewalk depth of at least 12 feet. The precise dedication shall be consistent with the final Laurel Street design and shall be established with a build-to line.
- c. Front Street Sidewalk. Require any development along the west side of Front Street between Cathcart Street and Laurel Street to dedicate sufficient property to result in a sidewalk depth of at least 12 feet.
- d. Recessed Storefronts. Minor ground-level storefront setbacks are permitted within the provisions of the storefront and building façade standards and guidelines. Recessed storefronts up to six feet in depth and twenty-five feet in length may occur where a designated outdoor use, such as an outdoor café, is an integral part of the retail business.

## 3. Public and Private Parking Facilities

The Pacific Avenue Retail District is within the Downtown Parking District #1 and, as such, shall comply with all parking requirements set forth within that district. On-site parking will not be permitted unless it meets one or more of the following conditions:

- a. Below Grade Parking and Access Driveways. Parking is provided completely below grade, and access driveways to the parking facility do not conflict with the

movement of pedestrians or vehicles within the area. No driveways shall be permitted along Pacific Avenue.

- b. Visual Screening. Surface or above-grade structured parking can be provided if the parking is visually screened and separated from Pacific Avenue and east-west streets by retail development and if such parking can be accessed from an east-west street or rear service lane.
- c. West Side Front Street. Allow parking facilities along the west side of Front Street south of Soquel Avenue where only one driveway curb cut shall be permitted per facility per street frontage; the parking facility shall not extend to street corners; and the parking facility shall be architecturally integrated within the overall building composition.

#### 4. Driveways and Curb Cuts

Limit on-site driveways along Front Street to a maximum of one driveway per property or at a spacing of at least 200 feet; driveways should be no more than 24 feet in width and to the extent practicable should be spaced from an adjacent driveway by at least 200 feet. Wider driveways may be considered based on a demonstrated need to accommodate specific vehicle operations of a proposed development..

#### 5. Special Conditions for Maple Street Fronting Parcels 005-152-08, 005-152-17, 005-152-18, and 005-152-22.

Buildings fronting the 10-foot Maple Street alley between Pacific Avenue and Front Street shall be set back 20 feet to provide for a 50-foot wide public paseo, lane or street. If the above aggregated parcels are redeveloped together, the aggregated parcel size prior to the dedication exceeds the 15,000 square feet threshold to qualify for heights above the 55 foot base height, and shall be developed in conformance with the Additional Height Zone A performance standards. As a result of the required dedication, development on these aggregated parcels shall not be required to provide on-site parking. Developers of the aggregated parcels may pay parking fees to the Downtown Parking District in lieu of meeting the on-site parking requirements. A parking credit shall be applied to the project based on the amount of land dedicated to the City to expand the alley.

#### 6. Special Conditions for Elm Street Pedestrian Connection (Parcel 005-152-31, 005-152-30, 005-152-05, 005-152-32, and 005-152-33).

Development of the above parcels shall include a 30-foot wide publicly accessible pedestrian connection between Pacific Avenue and Front Street. The public passageway shall be located in the vicinity of Elm Street (within approximately 50 feet of Elm Street extension). The passageway shall be integrated into the design of the development.

## C. PACIFIC AVENUE RETAIL DISTRICT

### BUILDING FAÇADE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The intent of the urban design standards and guidelines for the Pacific Avenue Retail District is to reinforce the unique townscape qualities of the downtown, to introduce diversity and variety that will enhance the visual interest and comfort of the pedestrian, and to extend the landscape qualities of the streetscape into the private realm. The building facades of the downtown have a significant effect on the public identity and character of the downtown and, as such, need to be carefully considered.

#### 1. Building Facades.

Building facades shall respond to the character and composition of existing commercial buildings along Pacific Avenue. More specifically, facades shall be composed with 3 clearly distinct zones: the storefront, up to 18 feet in height or 15 feet south of Cathcart Street; the upper two to three stories of the facade to the established parapet height (e.g., 55 feet); and the roof and cornice treatment, which includes the visible portions of any additional height permitted above the Base Height of 55 feet. This compositional approach is consistent with the existing building facades along Pacific Avenue, as well as the desire to reinforce the pedestrian realm and avoid the creation of monolithic vertical walls along the street edge. A separation of treatment shall be clearly established between the ground-level storefront and the upper building levels, utilizing a strong belt course or architectural line, and through the specific storefront treatment described below. Similarly, a strong cornice line or roof treatment is encouraged to promote variety and a distinctive silhouette along the street.

#### 2. Adjacent Buildings.

The composition of building facades shall also be considered in relation to adjacent buildings of historic or architectural value. While it is not the intent to maintain a consistent treatment along the street edge, the composition of new development shall seek to be harmonious and compatible with elements of adjacent structures, such as window proportions, the design of horizontal belt courses and cornice treatments, building materials and architectural elements.

#### 3. Upper-Level Facades. (i.e., the two to three levels of building wall up to the 55-foot Base Height)

Upper-level facades shall provide a counterpoint to the storefronts below, and provide a visually interesting and varied edge to the public space of the street. In general, the upper-level façade shall be built to the property line and consist of carefully composed “punctured openings” within a richly detailed wall. A variety of treatments shall be introduced to create richness in both the horizontal and vertical planes, including:

- balconies
- bay windows
- flower boxes
- awnings
- cornice and belt courses, etc.

#### 4. Streetwall.

To create a visually interesting “streetwall” with a rhythm and cadence that is reflective of the pattern of development along Pacific Avenue, building facades shall introduce variation at general intervals of 25 to 50 feet with the use of:

- fenestration,
- architectural elements,
- building materials, and/or
- building planes.

Large, uninterrupted expanses of horizontal or vertical wall surface shall be avoided. Regardless of property lines, the appearance shall be of a street with varying architectural treatments at intervals of no more than 50 to 75 feet. The multiple rhythms shall be created through the careful design of building elements and three-dimensional articulation of building elements sufficient to mitigate the presence of long, blank walls along Pacific Avenue, Front Street and Cedar Street the east-west streets, and the alleys. Elements that make up the rhythmic variation may include, but are not limited to:

- recessed windows;
- projecting windows;
- bay windows;
- structural elements;
- surface textures, patterns and colors;
- trim elements;
- balconies;
- belt-cornices;
- cornices;
- awnings and shutters; and
- landscape elements.

#### 5. Cornices and Belt Courses.

Overhead horizontal projections (providing at least 8 feet of clearance above grade) of a purely architectural or decorative character such as cornices, eaves, sills and belt courses shall define the building elements (base, middle and top) and create three-dimensional interest in the façade, provided that they do not project more than:

- a. At roof level, 3feet into the public right-of-way or a designated setback area.
- b. At every other level, 1 foot into the public right-of-way or designated setback area.

#### 6. Windows.

Building walls shall be punctured by well-proportioned openings that provide three dimensional relief, detail, interest and rhythmic variation on the facade. Variation in rhythm shall be provided both horizontally and vertically. Large expanses of glass on the upper levels shall be considered only where activities of interest to the pedestrian can be highlighted, and in such cases, the design of these openings shall be carefully integrated

within the overall facade composition. Windows shall be recessed a minimum of six inches from the face of the wall to emphasize the thickness of the wall consistent with the historical, traditional and newer buildings on Pacific Avenue; or windows other than bay windows may project from the wall six inches maximum into the public right-of-way. Windows shall be of high quality and shall be operable at the upper level and composed of elements that emulate the size and detail of the windows on Pacific Avenue. Window moldings and/or shutters with projections up to six inches are encouraged to provide detail, shade and articulation to building facades.

7. Upper Level Bay Windows and Balconies.

Bay or projecting windows and balconies are encouraged and may be permitted on upper levels of buildings, provided that a minimum of 10 feet of clearance is provided to grade and that the following provisions are met:

- a. The projection into the public right-of-way or designated setback area is no more than 3 feet; where sidewalks are less than 10 feet in depth, this projection shall be limited to 2 feet; along alleys, no projection shall be closer than 8 feet to the centerline of any alley.
- b. The glass area of the bay window, and the open portions of each balcony, shall not be less than 50 percent of the total area of the vertical surfaces of the projection.
- c. Bay windows and balconies shall "punctuate" rather than dominate the facade; to this end, the maximum length of bay windows shall be 15 feet at the property line or setback line; this width shall be reduced to a maximum width of 9 feet at the full projection of 3 feet, by means of 45 degree angles at the sides of all projecting bay windows. Perpendicular bay windows and balconies (or projections at a different angle) may be permitted, provided that they remain within the outside dimensions described above. Unless balconies are used as a means of distinguishing the storefront area from the upper-level facades, they shall be generally 15 feet in width or less.
- d. The minimum horizontal separation between bay windows, between balconies, and between bay windows and balconies shall be three feet as measured from the face of the building wall along the property line or setback line. A bay window or balcony shall not occur within two feet of the building edge. The intent of this guideline is to ensure that bay windows and balconies do not visually dominate the building wall.

8. Skyline Architectural Variations.

Special attention shall be paid to the articulation of the top portion of buildings such as variation in height, massing, materials, horizontal bands, cornices and parapets. Rooflines shall be broken at intervals no greater than 50 to 60 feet by roof elements or step backs to reinforce the predominant building increment along Pacific Avenue. Interesting and varied roof forms are encouraged. Rooftop equipment shall be completely concealed from view and integrated within the architectural vocabulary of the building. The use of landscaped roof terraces and gardens is also recommended.

## 9. Building Materials.

To extend the character of the existing downtown, building materials shall evoke honesty and solidity. Stone, brick and stucco, richly detailed to provide visual interest and variation, are encouraged as the predominant building materials. While wood and metal are desirable materials for window casings and trim, large expanses of wood or metal siding are discouraged as the predominant building materials. Such materials are considered appropriate for ornamental elements on the facade. Applied brick tiles that attempt to give the appearance of genuine masonry are also discouraged as the predominant building material. Decorative ceramic tiles are encouraged, however, as accent features. Reflective glass is prohibited.

## 10. Colors.

Materials shall be relatively light in color. To create a lively visual environment, earth tones, terra-cotta, pastels or whites, accented with dark or bright colors, are recommended. Roofing materials and accenting features such as canopies, cornices, tile accents, etc. shall also offer color variation. The color scheme for the building shall be compatible in color and value with the adjacent structures and shall be compatible with and sympathetic to the overall color palette of the buildings in the block and the downtown.

## 11. Landscape Provisions.

To promote a unique image and identity of downtown in its coastal setting, buildings shall incorporate provisions for planting, including flower boxes, topiary planting, and climbing vines. Plant materials within the planters, planting beds, flower boxes and flower pots shall provide color and variety throughout the year. The use of artificial plants shall not be permitted.

At least two of the following landscape concepts shall be incorporated into each Pacific Avenue or East-West Streets façade design (or 30 feet of retail frontage). In general, the landscape shall aggregately cover a minimum of 25 percent of the length of the storefront:

- a. Landscape setbacks up to 18 inches in depth.
- b. Landscape planters recessed into Pacific Avenue sidewalk, up to 18 inches into the public right-of-way.
- c. Planter boxes no more than 24 inches in height may be permitted to project into the public right-of-way up to 18 inches. Window boxes also may be permitted to project from bay windows and balconies by 18 inches. Planter and window boxes shall provide internal and concealed drains connected to roof drains to avoid overflow to the street; they shall also be designed with high quality durable materials that are compatible and integral with the building façade.

- d. Hanging flower pots may project into the public right-of-way up to 18 inches and shall have a minimum 8-foot clearance within the public right-of-way unless hanging directly above planter boxes.
- e. Trellis structures supporting climbing vines that may project up to six inches into the public right-of-way or, where more than eight feet above the sidewalk, may project up to 18 inches into the public right-of-way.

12. Rear Service Alleys.

Upper-level facade treatments adjacent to the rear service lanes shall be consistent in quality and design with treatments adjacent to public streets and rights-of-way. The use of planting (e.g., planter and window boxes, trellises, topiary) on building facades adjacent to the service lanes is particularly encouraged to enhance the visual and pedestrian character of the alley.

13. Exterior Lighting.

Buildings shall provide warm (color temperature equal to incandescent), low-level lighting from sundown to 10:00 PM nightly as an integral part of the facade design to add to the nighttime ambient light level in the downtown and to add nighttime visual interest to the buildings. Accent lighting using warm, low-level energy efficient light sources is encouraged as an integral part of the facade design.

14. Property Line Walls.

Where a building shares a property line with an adjacent property or building, mitigate the potential for large blank walls as follows:

- a. Where the adjacent building is lower than the proposed building, the property line wall shall be set back from the property line sufficient to allow windows in the new wall; or
- b. The applicant shall seek an easement from the adjacent property owner to allow windows (subject to the future redevelopment of the adjacent property). Mitigation measures shall be incorporated to allow windows under the Building Code.
- c. This provision may be modified by the Planning Director, subject to the preparation of a visual computer simulation of the building in context of the building viewed from key points at pedestrian eye level down Pacific Avenue and key intersecting streets.

## D. PACIFIC AVENUE RETAIL DISTRICT STOREFRONT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

All storefront improvements with an improvement cost of more than \$10,000 require a Design Permit. All storefronts in a new building or re-developed building shall conform to the following storefront design standards:

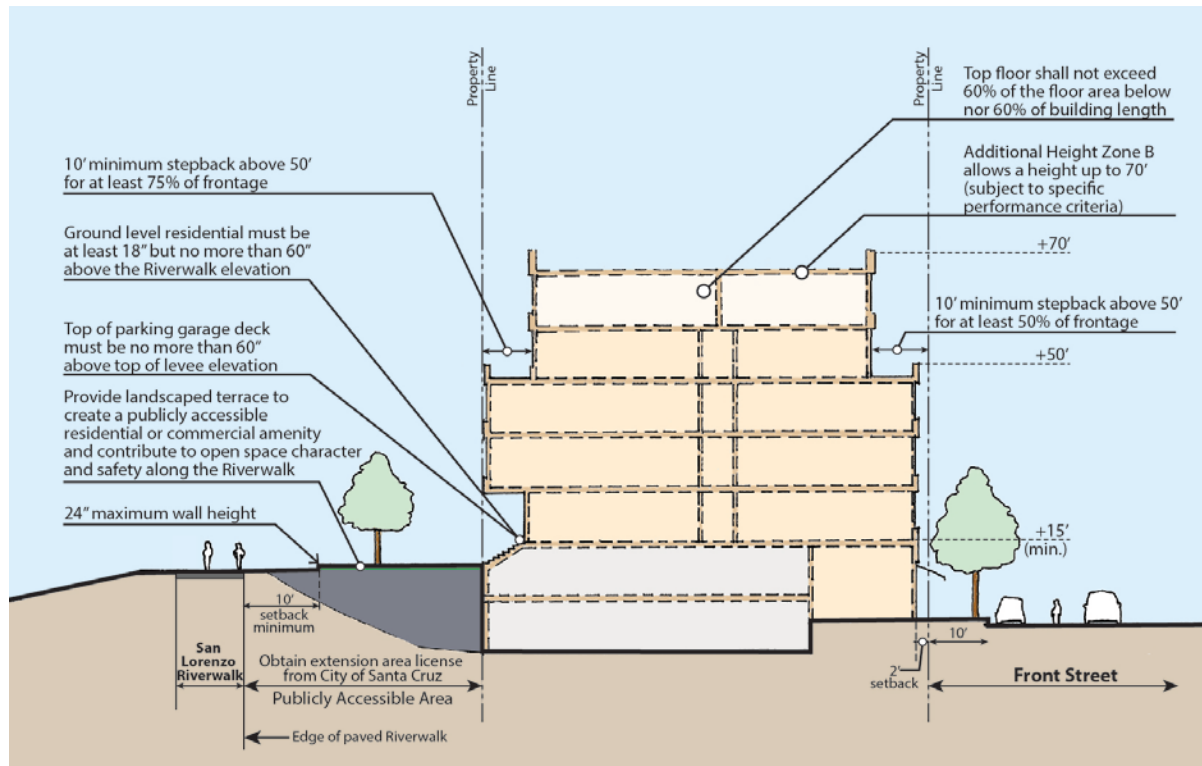
1. Primary Entrance. All buildings with frontage along Pacific Avenue shall have a primary entrance on Pacific Avenue.
2. Blank Walls. All buildings with frontage on Pacific Avenue or the East-West streets shall not have blank walls exceeding ten (10) feet in length. Blank walls shall be mitigated with trellises and/or climbing plants or other architectural or landscape elements.
3. Door Entry Frequency. Establishments with frontage along Pacific Avenue shall provide door entries no further distant than 50 feet along the Pacific Avenue or east-west street frontage.
4. Open Entries to Street. Street front entries shall remain unlocked and unblocked and shall remain in use during store hours.
5. Unique Entrances. The ground floor frontage along Pacific Avenue shall be modulated, articulated, textured, colored and given such other architectural treatment to provide a visually differentiated store "front" every 25 feet.
6. Entrance Design. Storefronts shall incorporate at least two of the following design concepts into the storefront designs.
  - a. Bay Windows. Provide bay windows up to 12 feet in length that may project up to 12 inches into the public ROW - where the bay window has glazing on all projecting faces.
  - b. Porticos. Provide porticos around the entry door that may project up to 12 inches into the public ROW.
  - c. Awnings. Provide awnings that may overhang the sidewalk a maximum of 6 feet with a vertical clearance above the sidewalk between 8 feet and 14 feet.
  - d. Marquis. Provide permanent marquis structures or canopies that project from the building at entries (maximum 10 feet in length, minimum height 8 feet above the sidewalk and maximum projection of 6 feet into the ROW).
  - e. Signs. Provide decorative signs that project into the ROW per Central Business District sign ordinance.
  - f. Glazing. The use of reflective or tinted glass in ground level show windows is prohibited.



- g. Store Displays. Store displays shall be configured in such a way as to allow pedestrians to see into the store from the sidewalk. Goods, posters, photos or other visual images shall be placed a sufficient distance from the store windows to enable pedestrians to see clearly into the store.

## E. FRONT STREET/RIVERFRONT CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1. Height and Stepback Requirements



*Figure E-1: Proposed base and additional height and stepback requirements along the Front Street/ Riverfront Corridor.*

- a. Base Height and Floors. No new development shall exceed a base height of 50 feet (measured to the top of parapet or eaves on the highest floor). Within this base height, no more than 3 floors with a mix of uses above the ground-level retail use will be permitted within the maximum base height of 50 feet.
- b. Mechanical Penthouses. Uninhabitable mechanical penthouses will be permitted above the base height to a maximum height of 60 feet, provided that such penthouses are set back from the face of buildings by a minimum of 15 feet and that sloping roofs meet the provisions of c. below, unless the penthouse is architecturally integrated into the building facade.
- c. Upper Level Stepbacks from Streets and Public Passageways. In order to promote a pedestrian scale, to increase light to the street, and to reduce overall building mass and scale, development above 50 feet in height shall be required to step back from the Front Street façade a minimum of 10 feet. At least 50% of building frontage along Front Street and Soquel Avenue shall step back 10 feet above the height of 50 feet. Buildings adjacent to River Street, east-west streets, and publicly accessible

passageways shall step back at least 10 feet from the street for any height above 35 feet.

- d. Upper Level Stepback from River. Along the west side of the Riverwalk, development shall step back 10 feet from the exterior wall face above the 50 foot height level as measured from Front Street sidewalk elevation. Allow up to 25% of the Riverwalk building frontage to encroach into the required 10-foot stepback area to provide for massing variation. (See Figure E-1).

## 2. Build-to Lines and Setbacks.

In order to promote well-defined streets, development shall generally be required to be built to the property line adjacent to public streets. The following exceptions to this condition are noted:

- a. Sidewalk Width. In locations where the sidewalk is less than 12 feet wide, development shall be set back from the property line to create a 12-foot sidewalk. Development along Laurel Street and Front Street shall dedicate sufficient property to result in a sidewalk depth of at least 12 feet. The precise dedication shall be consistent with the final Laurel Street design and shall be established with a build-to line.
- b. Gateway Landscaping. New development along Water Street (south side), Laurel Street (north side), and Soquel Avenue shall be set back from the sidewalk by 10 feet to allow for generous gateway landscaping treatment.
- c. Building Length. Between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street, limit the length of individual buildings along Front Street to a maximum of 300 feet of lineal street frontage, subject to the performance criteria for improved public access to the Riverwalk from Front Street at the key connection points of Cathcart Street, near Elm Street and Maple Street. (See Figure E-2)
- d. Riverwalk Property Line. No setback from the Riverwalk property line is required.
- e. Encroachments. Development along the Riverwalk shall not encroach beyond the property line of the parcel, except in cases where levee-facing “people-oriented” commercial activities incorporate public access points to the Riverwalk. Top floor cantilevered portions of the building are allowed to encroach over the property line a maximum of 5 feet in order to provide architectural interest to the façade. Such cantilevered encroachment over the property line shall not exceed 25 percent of the total building frontage along the riverfront.

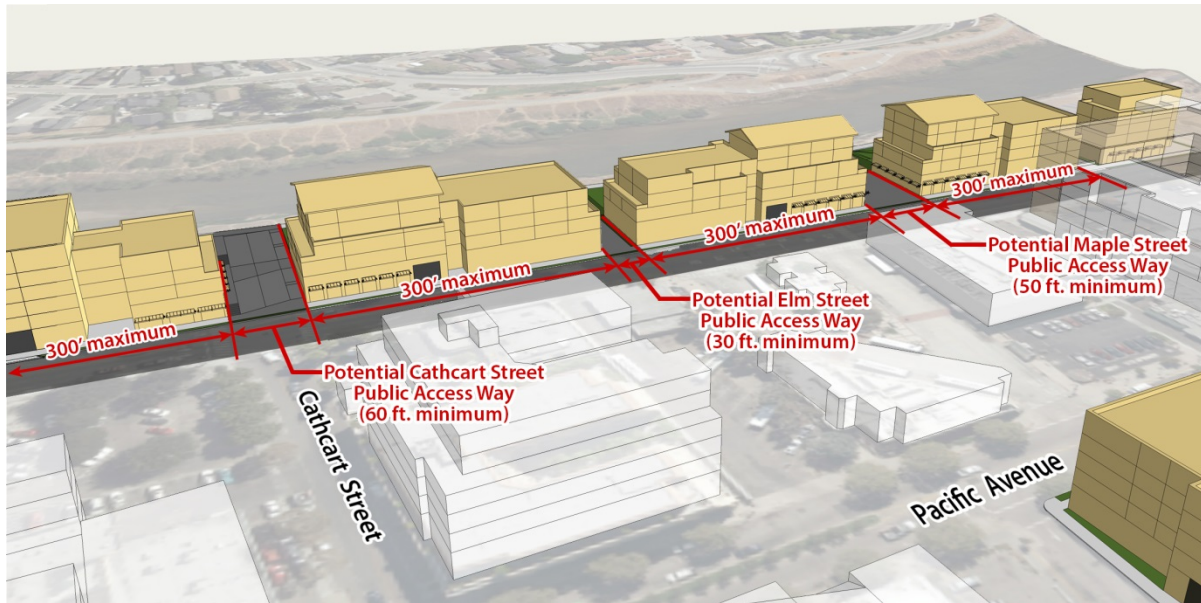


Figure E-2: Proposed building massing and public access requirements along Front Street and the riverfront.

### 3. Storefront Treatment.

While it is recognized that the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor is less pedestrian intensive than the Pacific Avenue District, the ground-level treatment of commercial buildings and parking structures within the area shall generally comply with those for the Pacific Avenue Retail District in terms of: storefront access, transparency and variation; and the use of awnings and canopies. Special attention shall be given to the treatment of intersections, to reinforce their gateway role to Pacific Avenue and to create a high level of interest and activity along the street.

### 4. Riverwalk Promenade.

The Riverwalk Promenade is the paved bicycle and pedestrian path on top of the river levee. The interface between the public Riverwalk and the adjacent private development is a vitally important element of the Downtown Plan. As such, all development along the Riverwalk will involve some form of public/private partnership and cooperation. Key performance criteria include:

- a. Riverwalk Setback. Residential or outdoor commercial uses adjacent to the Riverwalk shall be no closer than 10 feet from the western edge of the physical walkway, except where “people-oriented” commercial uses incorporate public access points to the Riverwalk.
- b. Levee Fill. All development shall fill the western slope of the levee (which may include both public and private property) as directed by the City of Santa Cruz and Army Corps of Engineers to create a level condition between the Riverwalk and the adjacent building. The filled area may terrace up from the maximum 24-inch wall to the finished floor of the development in a way that allows for the outdoor spaces to be publicly accessible. (See Figure E-1.)

- c. Retaining Wall at Property Line. Design the wall of the ground level of the building to structurally support fill material, and to provide appropriate under-drainage.
- d. Landscaping. Landscaping this private and public space shall incorporate trees and vegetation appropriate to the river environment. Walls along the Riverwalk shall not exceed 24 inches in height and shall be set back from the promenade by at least 10 feet. Other than trees, landscaping shall not exceed 42 inches in height above grade. Trees planted as part of the San Lorenzo Flood Control Improvement Project should be maintained and incorporated into new development where feasible and where not in conflict with the required fill or publicly accessible amenities.
- e. Extension Area License Agreement for Public Space. The City shall consider negotiated Extension Area license agreements on the publicly owned land on the west side of the Riverwalk for open space purposes that promote activity and overlook the Riverwalk and river. The publically accessible open space area shall be visually open and accessible from the Riverwalk, but may be delineated with a low fence or hedge no more than 42 inches in height.
- f. Commercial Criteria. In the case of commercial development, the area subject to the license agreement may be terraced and shall be designed to accommodate outdoor eating or public seating, and shall be within 24 inches of the Riverwalk elevation.
- g. Public/Private Interface. In the case of residential development, the area subject to the license agreement and associated private yard shall be designed as a visually accessible garden space that provides a transition to the public Riverwalk. Residential entrances facing the river shall be elevated at least 18 inches, but no more than 5 feet above the Riverwalk to create privacy and differentiation of public and private spaces.
- h. Entrances Along Riverfront. Entries, either to individual residential units or common entrances, or to commercial establishments, shall be provided along the riverfront promenade at intervals no greater than 75 feet.
- i. Fencing. Fencing shall be decorative, visually open rail material, creating a visual connection between the private and public spaces.
- j. Visually Open Development. Solid vegetation in the form of a visual screen or hedge is prohibited and views to the Riverwalk from private open spaces are required. Line of sight views between the development and the Riverwalk are intended to ensure a safe and interesting environment to joggers, walkers and cyclists.

5. Access to the Riverwalk.

Between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Streets along Front Street, new development shall provide east-west public access between the Riverwalk and the Front Street sidewalk at or near the extension of Cathcart Street, Elm Street and Maple Street. Developers of riverfront properties shall be required to physically and/or financially contribute their fair share through conditions of approval, an Improvement District, Development Agreement, or similar

mechanisms to the improvement of these publicly accessible connections. Development shall be consistent with the following performance standards:

- a. Publicly Open Passageways. Such access shall be open to the public during daylight hours.
- b. Pedestrian Focus. Such publicly accessible connections shall be predominantly pedestrian in nature and located within 50 feet of the Front Street intersections at the terminus of Cathcart Street and the extensions of Maple and Elm Streets. In addition to the pedestrian access, bicycle access shall be provided at the extension of Elm Street, which will serve as the primary bicycle access to the Riverwalk between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street.
- c. Passageway Widths. The width of these publicly accessible pedestrian connections shall be no less than the following: 60 feet at or near the terminus of Cathcart Street; 50 feet at or near the terminus of Maple Street; and 30 feet at or near the extension of Elm Street.
- d. Vertically Open Passageways. These passageways shall be open to the sky, provide a high quality accessible path of travel between the Front Street sidewalk and the Riverwalk, and provide clear building breaks that avoid the walling off of the river from downtown.
- e. Pedestrian Oriented Uses. The pedestrian passageways shall be lined with active pedestrian-oriented uses that create a safe and interesting environment, including commercial uses, outdoor cafes, resident-serving amenities, building entries and/or lobbies. Such uses, particularly restaurants and outdoor cafes, are strongly encouraged to provide direct frontage and active outdoor areas along both the pedestrian passageway and the Riverwalk.

6. Upper-Level Facade Treatment.

The treatment of upper-level facades shall generally comply with the guidelines for the Pacific Avenue Retail District in terms of building rhythm, corner treatment, windows, roof treatment, building materials, colors and planting, and rear service lanes.

7. Gateway Treatments.

New development that occurs at key gateway intersections to the downtown (e.g., River-Water; Pacific-Front; Cooper-Front; Soquel-Front; Cathcart-Front; Laurel-Front) shall be articulated to accentuate this condition. Treatments could include corner towers or turrets, setbacks, distinctive changes in fenestration and materials, etc.

8. Riverfront Residential.

Residential development occurring along the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor, or future residential development that may occur as part of a mixed-use development on the northeast corner of the Front/Soquel intersection, shall be highly articulated and expressive of the individual units within the complex. The use of sloping roofs, recessed loggias

and balconies, bay windows, dormers and chimneys shall be carefully composed to create an intricate composition that expresses individual unit modules to the maximum extent practicable. A variety of building materials is encouraged, including the building materials recommended for the Pacific Avenue district above (e.g., stucco, brick, and stone). To avoid the creation of a "wall" of development along the riverfront between Soquel and Laurel Streets, development shall be highly articulated with variation in height. The required 10-foot sideyard setbacks shall also serve to break up the mass of development along this important edge.

9. Public and Private Parking Facilities.

The Front Street/Riverfront Corridor is within the Downtown Parking District #1 and development shall comply with all parking requirements set forth within that district.

- a. Surface Lot Landscaping. Existing and/or expanded surface parking lots within the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor shall be well landscaped. In addition to the landscaped area requirements for surface parking provided in the zoning ordinance, surface lots shall provide at least one tree for every four parking spaces, distributed throughout the lot. Surface lots shall be screened from the public sidewalk with low walls, planters, or hedges.
- b. West Side of Front Street. Allow parking facilities along the west side of Front Street south of Soquel Avenue, where only one driveway curb cut shall be permitted per parking facility per street frontage; the parking facility shall not extend to street corners; and the parking facility shall be architecturally integrated within the overall building composition.
- c. Structured Parking Design. Above-grade structured parking should be visually separated at the ground level from all public sidewalks and streets by means of active storefront uses as described above. Such parking should be accessed, to the maximum extent possible, from east-west streets or rear service lanes.
- d. Structured Parking Facades. Parking structure facades shall be designed as compatible visual extensions of other multi-story buildings.
- e. Structured Parking Rear Façade. Special attention shall also be given to the design of parking structure facades adjacent to rear service lanes, to reinforce their attractiveness for pedestrian use. The use of integrated trellis structures and planters along the service lanes is recommended.
- f. Screens and Trellises. Decorative screen and trellis elements of durable, high-quality materials are also encouraged to provide variation and interest on the facade.
- g. Garage Ramp Visibility. Sloping floor elevations shall not occur within 10 feet of the adjacent public street.
- h. Wrap Garage with Commercial. Where parcel depth permits, the face of the parking structure shall be set back from ground floor commercial uses.

- i. Garage Openings. Openings shall be carefully composed within the building wall to appear as well-proportioned windows, rather than continuous strips; variation in the dimension and proportion of openings and in the horizontal and vertical planes of the facade shall be provided to create visual interest and to reduce the massiveness of the parking structure.
- j. Entrances and Stairways. Entryways and stairways shall be located along the street edge; they shall be well lit and visible from the street to promote security and a feeling of comfort.
- k. Top Deck Elevation. The top deck of all structured and encapsulated parking shall be constructed to an elevation no greater than 5 feet above that of the Riverwalk promenade and shall be screened from public view. Parking garages may exceed the maximum building length of 250 feet if they are lower than 5 feet above the adjacent levee elevation.

10. Driveways and Curb Cuts.

Limit on-site driveways along Front Street to a maximum of one driveway per property or at a spacing of at least 200 feet; driveways should be no more than 24 feet in width and to the extent practicable should be spaced from an adjacent driveway by at least 200 feet. Wider driveways may be considered based on a demonstrated need to accommodate specific vehicle operations of a proposed development.

11. Guidance for Bird Safe Structures Along the San Lorenzo River.

The following measures shall be incorporated into all development projects that are located between Front Street and the San Lorenzo River.

- Minimize the overall amount of glass on building exteriors facing the San Lorenzo River.
- Avoid mirrors and large areas of reflective glass.
- Avoid transparent glass skyways, walkways, or entryways, free-standing glass walls, and transparent building corners.
- Utilize glass/window treatments that create a visual signal or barrier to help alert birds to presence of glass. Avoid funneling open space to a building façade.
- Strategically place landscaping to reduce reflection and views of foliage inside or through glass.
- Avoid up-lighting and spotlights. Turn non-emergency lighting off (such as by automatic shutoff), or shield it, at night to minimize light from buildings that is visible to birds, especially during bird migration season (February-May and August-November).



## F. CEDAR STREET VILLAGE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1. Height and Stepback Requirements.

- a. Base Height and Floors. The maximum height of all development within the Cedar Street Village Corridor shall be 35 feet (3 floors maximum). East of Cedar Street, development may be allowed to exceed 35 feet on a discretionary basis to a maximum height of 50 feet (4 floors maximum). The granting of additional height above thirty-five (35) feet is discretionary and requires a Design Permit with the recommendation of the Planning Director to the City Council, which must approve the additional height.

### 2. Storefront Treatment.

The ground-level treatment of buildings and parking structures within the Cedar Street subarea shall generally comply with guidelines for the Pacific Avenue retail subarea, in terms of storefront access, transparency and variation, and the use of landscaping, awnings and canopies. However, it is recognized that Cedar Street has a more informal character than Pacific Avenue and, as such, more variation of ground-level treatment is envisioned and encouraged. The use of porches and terraced gardens as an intermediate space between the ground floor use and the sidewalk is permitted, as long as the finished floor elevation of the ground floor use is no more than four feet above or below the sidewalk level, and accessibility requirements are met.

### 3. Upper-Level Facade Treatment.

The treatment of upper-level facades shall generally comply with the guidelines for the Pacific Avenue Retail District in terms of building rhythm, corner treatment, windows, roof treatment, building materials, colors and planting. In recognition, however, of the area's village character, several special conditions are noted:

- a. Architectural Elements. The use of architectural elements that promote the village character of the street is encouraged. Such elements could include sloping roofs, chimneys, bay windows, dormers, recessed loggias, balconies, and porches.
- b. Articulation. Facades shall be highly articulated and varied; the introduction of moldings and trims, and changes in horizontal and vertical planes are strongly encouraged to create visual interest and variation in light and shadow. Residential development shall be highly articulated and expressive of the individual units within the complex.
- c. Building Materials. Building materials can be more diverse and residential in character than those recommended for the Pacific Avenue Retail District. The use of wood as a siding material is encouraged.

- d. Flowers and Landscaping. The use of planters, trellises and topiary treatment of buildings is encouraged to further enliven the area and to promote its unique village qualities.

4. Public and Private Parking Facilities.

Parking structure facades shall be designed as compatible visual extensions of other multi-story buildings. Sloping floor elevations shall not occur adjacent to public streets. Where parcel depth permits, the face of the parking structure shall be set back from ground floor commercial uses. Openings shall be carefully composed within the building wall to appear as well-proportioned windows, rather than continuous strips; variation in the dimension and proportion of openings and in the horizontal and vertical planes of the facade shall be provided to create visual interest and to reduce the mass of the parking structure. Decorative screen and trellis elements of durable, high-quality materials are also encouraged to provide variation and interest on the facade. Special attention shall also be given to the design of parking structure facades adjacent to rear service lanes, to reinforce their attractiveness for pedestrian use. The use of integrated trellis structures and planters along the service lanes is recommended. Entries and stairwells within parking structures shall be located adjacent to public streets and designed to be visually open, to promote a feeling of security and comfort.

## G. NORTH PACIFIC AREA DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1. Height and Stepback Requirements

- a. Base Height and Floors. The maximum height of all development within the North Pacific subarea shall be 35 feet (3 floors maximum). However, within this 35 foot Base Height, east of North Pacific Avenue, development may be allowed on a discretionary basis to a maximum height of 50 feet (4 floors maximum). The granting of additional height above 35 feet is discretionary and requires a Design Permit with the recommendation of the Director of Planning to the City Council, which must approve the additional height.
- b. Minimum Floor Height. The first floor uses must have a minimum floor-to-floor height of 14 feet.
- c. Visual Analysis and Criteria for Exceeding Base Height. Proposed development above 35 feet, up to 50 feet, must prepare a detailed visual analysis of the building to determine the visual impact. The visual impact analysis must consider the views from the mid-point of the Water Street Bridge looking toward the Mission Hill, from Mission Hill and other key locations within the City. The additional building height shall not obstruct views of the profile of the top of the grade of Mission Hill as viewed from the crest of the Water Street Bridge;
  - i. Additional height above 45 feet, up to a maximum of 50 feet, must demonstrate that the building creates a superior gateway entrance to Pacific Avenue and the Downtown; and
  - ii. The building height above 35 feet shall be stepped back a minimum of ten (10) feet from the 35 foot Base Height. The additional height shall be highly articulated and the upper level shall gently transition to surrounding development.
  - iii. Uninhabitable mechanical penthouses will be permitted above the Base Height to a maximum height of 5 feet above the permitted building height, provided that such penthouses are set back a minimum of 15 feet from any exposed face of the buildings and are out of the pedestrian's view, unless such penthouses are architecturally integrated into the building façade design.

### 2. Build-to Lines and Setbacks.

To promote well-defined streets, development shall generally be required to be built to the property line adjacent to public streets. The following exceptions to this condition are noted:

- a. Sidewalk Width. In locations where the sidewalk is less than 12 feet, development shall be set back from the property line to create a 12-foot sidewalk.
- b. Gateway Landscaping. Within this subarea, new development along Water Street (north side) and River Street (west side) shall be set back from the property line by 10 feet to allow for generous gateway landscaping treatment. Buildings along River Street may project into this setback with approval of a landscape plan provided that the average setback along that street remains 10 feet.

- c. Non-Residential Elevation. Along Pacific Avenue and Water Street, ground level uses shall not be located more than one foot above the elevation of the adjacent curb.
- d. Residential Elevation. Along River Street, the first occupied residential floor level shall not be higher than five feet above the adjacent curb. For each one foot above the adjacent curb, an additional one foot of landscape setback shall be required.

### 3. Gateway Intersections.

The intersections of Water and River Streets, and River Street and North Pacific Avenue, are important gateways to the downtown. New development that occurs at these key gateway intersections shall be designed to accentuate this condition. Treatments shall include corner towers or turrets, setbacks, distinctive changes in fenestration and materials. The design of the ground level of the buildings at these intersections shall be articulated to reinforce the gateway significance utilizing corner setbacks, small plazas, large display windows, distinctive entrance features and canopies.

### 4. Building Facades.

The treatment of upper-level facades shall generally comply with the guidelines and standards for the Pacific Avenue Retail District in terms of building rhythm, articulation, corner treatment, windows, roof treatment, building materials, colors and planting.

### 5. Ground-Level Storefronts.

The design of the ground-level of buildings facing North Pacific Avenue, River Street and Water Street shall generally follow the guidelines and standards described for the Pacific Avenue Retail District to the south (e.g., access and transparency, storefront variation and treatment, awnings, canopies).

### 6. River Street.

The setback area described above for River Street shall include a well-designed landscape concept to enhance the gateway role and appearance of River Street and to create a transition between private development and the street. This landscaped area shall be broken at intervals to provide entrances to adjacent ground-level uses.

### 7. River Street Residential.

If residential development occurs along the River Street Corridor, it shall be highly articulated and expressive of the individual units within the complex. The use of sloping roofs, recessed loggias and balconies, bay windows, dormers, and chimneys shall be carefully composed to create an intricate and pleasing composition. Clapboard wood siding is encouraged, in addition to the building materials recommended for the Pacific Avenue Retail District above (e.g., stucco, brick, and stone).

## 8. Town Clock Park/Scope Park.

New development occurring adjacent to Town Clock Park (Knight Street right-of-way) or Scope Park shall have a strong ground-level orientation to these public open spaces. Buildings along Knight Street shall be built to the property line to maintain the spatial quality of Town Clock Park and to reinforce the civic importance of the Water-Pacific-Front intersection. Ground-level uses shall be pedestrian-oriented, and the treatment of storefront facades shall correspond with the guidelines described for the Pacific Avenue Retail District.

## 9. Public and Private Parking Facilities.

For properties in the North Pacific subarea which are not within the downtown Parking District #1, new development must comply with the City's general standards related to parking.

- a. Surface Parking Lots. Existing and/or expanded surface parking lots within the North Pacific area shall be well landscaped, with at least one tree for every four parking spaces, and screened from the public sidewalk with low walls, planters or hedges.
- b. Structured Parking. Parking structures in the North Pacific Area shall be an integral part of the development that it serves, either in below-grade structures or above-grade structures that are sensitively encapsulated within the overall building form.
- c. Location of Structured Parking. Exposed parking structures shall be limited to the interior of the block or to Bulkhead Street.
- d. Parking Structure Façade. Where parking is exposed as a facade, such facades shall be designed as an integral extension of the overall building facade.
- e. Garage Ramps. Sloping floor elevations shall not occur within 10 feet of the adjacent public street.
- f. Garage Openings. Openings shall be carefully composed within the building wall to appear as well-proportioned windows, rather than continuous strips; variation in the dimension and proportion of openings and in the horizontal and vertical planes of the facade shall be provided to create visual interest and to reduce the mass of the parking structure.
- g. Screens and Trellises. Decorative screen and trellis elements of durable, high-quality materials are also encouraged to provide variation and interest on the facade.
- h. Wrap Garage with Commercial. Above-grade structured parking facing River Street, Water Street or North Pacific Avenue shall be visually separated from all public sidewalks at the ground level by means of active ground-level uses as described above. Such parking shall be accessed, to the maximum extent possible, from east-west streets (e.g., Bulkhead Street). New access driveways along North Pacific Avenue, River and Water Streets shall be avoided.

## H. ADDITIONAL HEIGHT ZONES

In 1991 when the original Downtown Recovery Plan was being developed, the community was concerned about the impact of four and five-story buildings on the predominantly one and two-story downtown. Since 1991, there has been significant infill development that has diversified the mix and intensity of downtown uses, with upper level office and residential uses. No longer is Downtown Santa Cruz and Pacific Avenue a one- and two-story downtown; it has evolved into a vibrant three to seven story district.

As such, the Additional Height Zone A is extended to eligible sites south of Cathcart Street and along the west side of Front Street; and Additional Height Zone B is established along the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor south of Soquel Avenue to Laurel Street. (See Downtown Plan Height diagram) The City also wishes to promote uses that foster activity and a sense of stewardship, allowing the area to evolve from a service district to an integral part of the overall downtown. In order to achieve this goal, residential uses are considered highly desirable upper-level uses, with active commercial and people-oriented uses at street level. It is recognized that smaller parcels may need to be assembled and consolidated to create viable areas for redevelopment, but development of assembled properties shall be done in a way that maintains the town scale and character of the downtown, with its diverse mix of small- and medium-sized buildings, its pedestrian orientation and, its block pattern that provides multiple street and walkway connections.

The scale of blocks and parcels is a critical component, contributing to the town scale and pedestrian orientation of downtown Santa Cruz. In the areas south of Cathcart Street and Soquel Avenue, the larger block sizes make it particularly important to create additional pedestrian connections between Pacific Avenue and Front Street, and between Front Street and the Riverwalk. This has been a community vision, dating back to the original Downtown Recovery Plan and reinforced with the 2010 River/Front and Lower Pacific Design Guidelines and Development Standards. However, regulations alone cannot be expected to accomplish such transformational change, which will involve public improvements and strong public/private partnerships. Financing tools for the implementation of enhanced pedestrian linkages to the river, and for improved bicycle and pedestrian amenities along Front Street, shall be considered to leverage increased land values in the area and to provide for equitable contributions from the private sector.

In establishing the development standards for the Additional Height Zones, it is important to make sure that the standards reflect the unique conditions and opportunities of the area. It is necessary to avoid the creation of large, monolithic buildings that are out of scale with the finer-grained development pattern of the downtown.

Buildings of additional height above the Downtown's dominant three to four-stories may depart from the tri-partite facades of the historic downtown, but shall be designed in a manner that creates a positive relationship and an appropriate scale transition to the existing fabric. In addition to the volumetric standards set forth as a basis for additional height in Additional Height Zone A, building stepbacks, belt courses, material, plane and/or fenestration changes are design strategies that should be employed to create compatible architectural and scale relationships with adjacent buildings of lower height. A strong and well detailed storefront and building base is

critical to the continuity of the retail and pedestrian environment of the Downtown; intermediate floors should be composed with window openings, balconies or projections that provide visual interest and a scale relationship with adjacent buildings; and the top most floor(s) should contribute to the overall silhouette and spatial form of the street with reduced floor plates, cornices, projecting canopies or other special architectural elements.

Rather than relying on building stepbacks and terracing to achieve an appropriate scale transition to smaller buildings, the standards call for horizontal and vertical variation to create the appearance of multiple buildings that are more in keeping with the surrounding area. Additional height – even up to 85 feet in the Additional Height Zone A – can be absorbed appropriately if it is confined to a portion of a property, rather than as a massive block, terraced back from the street.

1. Additional Height Zone A.

Properties on Pacific Avenue and within 150 feet of Pacific Avenue between Water and Lincoln Streets, and within 200 feet of Pacific Avenue between Lincoln and Laurel Streets (as measured perpendicular from the property line along Pacific Avenue), certain properties located on the east side of Cedar Street between Mission Street and Ocean Alley, and the west side of Front Street between Cathcart and Laurel Streets shall be considered within the “Additional Height Zone A”, within which additional height above the 55 foot Base Height limit may be requested for buildings meeting certain criteria (See Figure A-1: Downtown Plan Heights). The intent of the Additional Height Zone A is to preserve the overall character of the existing development pattern, while allowing a discretionary intensification of use and increased height to maintain a compact urban core. For eligible development projects that overlap the Base Height and Additional Height Zone boundary, all portions of the project exceeding the 55 foot base height shall be located within to the Additional Height Zone as shown in Figure A-1.

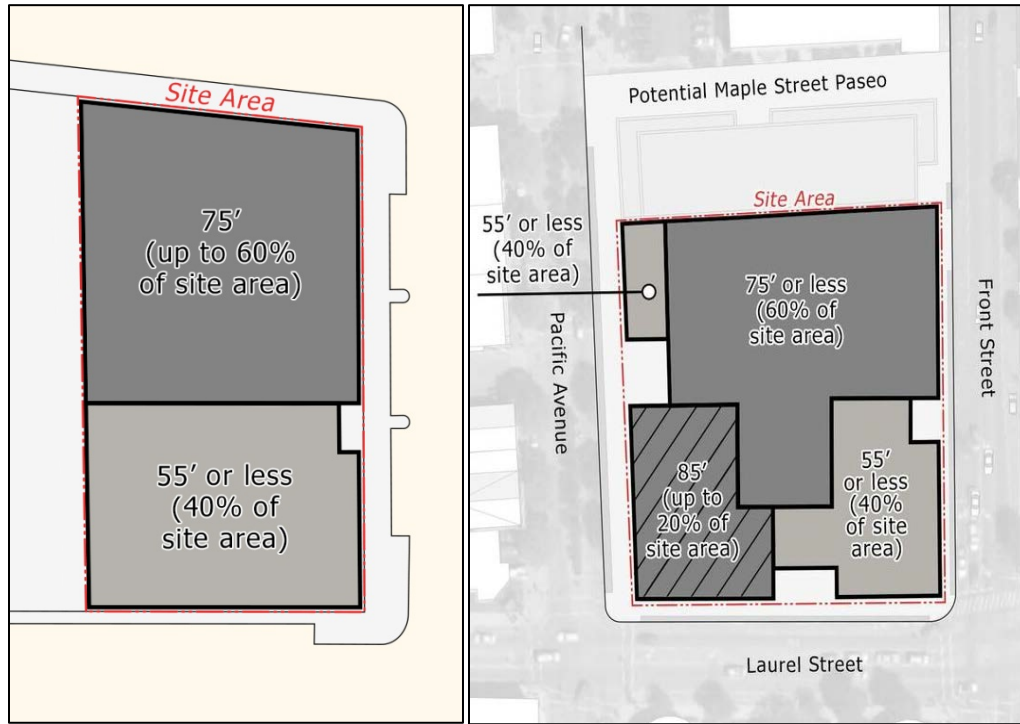
- a. Eligible Development Projects. The granting of building height above the 55 foot Base Height limit is discretionary and requires a Design Permit with the recommendation of the Director of Planning to the City Council, which must approve the additional height. To achieve approval, the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed project meets the criteria described below. Applicants for development within the Additional Height Zone A may request additional height as indicated below, if one of the following conditions is met:
  - i. The aggregate parcel size is greater than 15,000 square feet, which may include land not located within the Additional Height Zone;
  - ii. The frontage along Pacific Avenue is greater than 150 feet, or at least 100 feet with 150 feet of frontage along an east-west street;
  - iii. The parcel is located between adjacent structures of four or more floors in height; or
  - iv. The project qualifies for a density bonus as allowed under either State law or City adopted density bonus ordinance.
- b. Additional Height Criteria for Project Approval. The development project shall be found consistent with the following overarching City objectives:
  - i. The additional height will help to achieve the First Principles of the Downtown

- Plan (e.g. form, housing, accessibility and open space).
- ii. The additional height will contribute to an improved social and economic environment by including new housing.
  - iii. The form of the development promotes the appearance of a grouping of buildings rather than large, monolithic building masses.
  - iv. The development receiving additional height will physically and/or financially contribute its fair share (through an Improvement District, Development Agreement or similar mechanisms) to the implementation of internal pedestrian connections between Pacific Avenue and Front Street.
  - v. The additional height will help to meaningfully achieve one or more of the following key community objectives, including but not limited to: Affordable Housing, Day Care Center, exceed Green Building minimums, Incubator Space for Small Business, Public Access Easements, Public Right-of-way Improvements, Publicly Accessible Open Space, Structured or Shared Parking, and Transportation Demand Management concepts.
- c. Zone A Maximum Height and Floors. The buildings shall conform to the adopted building codes in effect at the time of building permit application to achieve the following height limits.
- i. For development projects on aggregated parcels between 15,000 square feet and 50,000 square feet, the maximum height shall be 75 feet and the maximum number of floors shall be 5 floors above the required ground floor commercial use.
  - ii. For development projects on aggregated parcels larger than 50,000 square feet, the maximum height shall be 85 feet and the maximum number of floors shall be 6 floors above the required ground floor commercial use.
  - iii. Uninhabitable mechanical penthouses will be permitted to project 5 feet above the approved additional height of building, provided that such penthouses are set back a minimum of 15 feet from any exposed face of the building, unless architecturally integrated into the building façade design.
  - iv. Architectural features at prominent gateway corners may exceed the maximum heights above when required findings are made.
- d. Performance Criteria. The following criteria are intended to promote the appearance of multiple buildings of varying heights, and to avoid the development of monolithic buildings:
- i. Maximum Height and Footprints. For sites which are eligible for additional height, the footprint of portions of the building at or below 55 feet shall be at least 40% of the total site area; portions of the building footprint above 55 feet to a height of 75 feet may comprise up to 60% of the site area. For assembled sites greater than 50,000 square feet in area, buildings may achieve an 85-foot height for up to 20% of the total site area. (See Figure H-1)
  - ii. Architectural Features. Taller building masses shall be located on portions of the site that are adjacent to street corners or in areas that will result in minimal shading of adjacent streets and sidewalks.
  - iii. Pacific Avenue Building Length. Along Pacific Avenue, portions of buildings that exceed the maximum base height of 55 feet may occupy up to 55% of the length of the property line along the street or 200 feet, whichever is less. Any



additional height above the base height must be set back from the building wall by at least 15 feet. (See Figures H-2 and H-4)

- iv. Front Street Building Length. Along Front Street, portions of buildings that exceed the maximum base height of 55 feet may occupy up to 60% of the length of the property line along the street or 180 feet, whichever is less. Any additional height above the base height must be set back from the building wall by at least 15 feet. (See Figure H-3)



*Figure H-1: Distribution percentage of additional height for sites 15,000–50,000 sq. ft.*

*Distribution percentage of additional height for sites larger than 50,000 sq. ft.*

- v. Laurel, Cathcart and Soquel Building Lengths. Along Laurel Street, Cathcart Street and Soquel Avenue, portions of buildings that exceed the maximum base height of 55 feet may occupy up to 60% of the length of the property line or 150 feet, whichever is less. Any additional height above the base height must be set back from the building wall by at least 15 feet. (See Figure H-2)
- vi. Maple Street Stepbacks. Along the Maple Street extension, the building frontage shall step back by 10 feet above a height of 50 feet; In addition to the ‘build to’ line The Maple Street building face shall incorporate at least one recessed break, open to the sky, no less than 25 feet wide and no less than 10 feet in depth from Maple Street . (See Figure H-3)

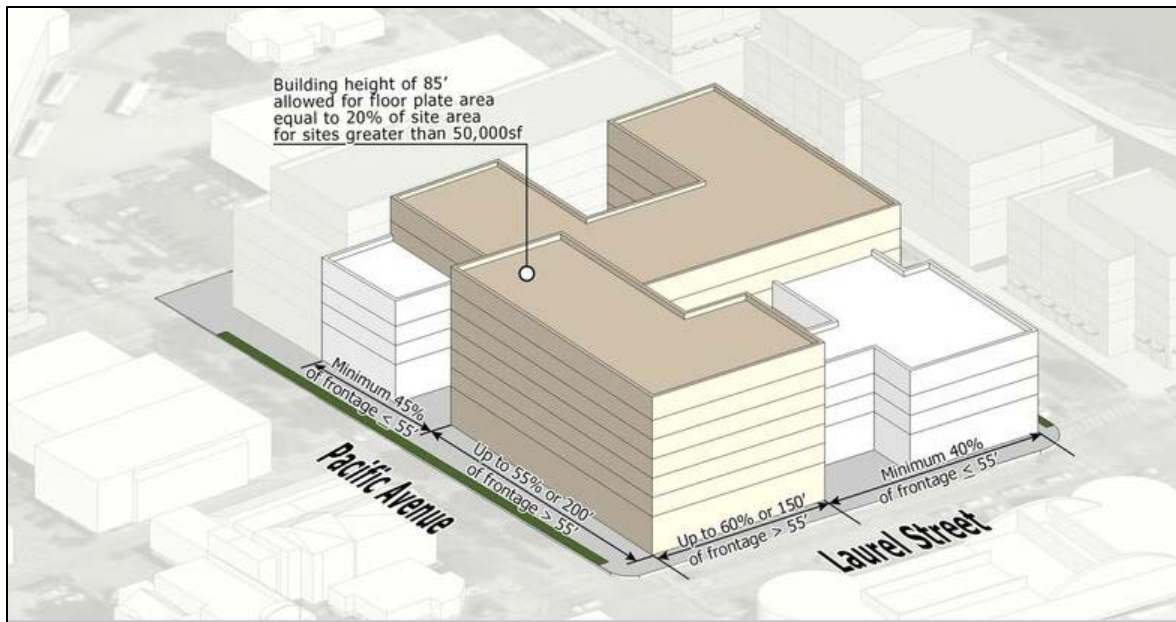


Figure H-2: Example of possible distribution of frontage heights along Pacific Avenue and Laurel Street.

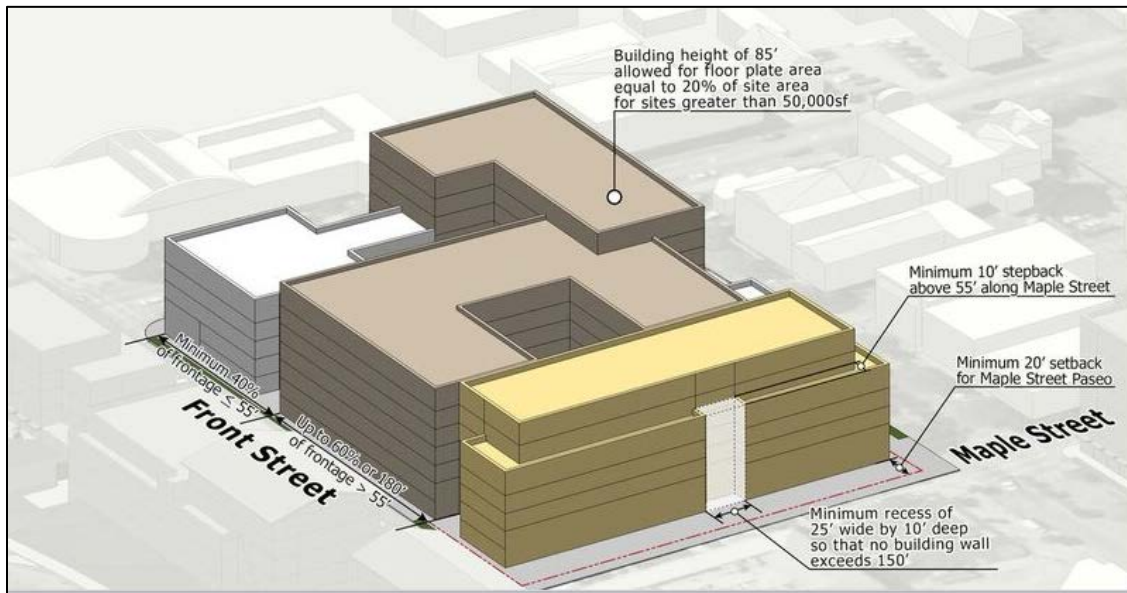
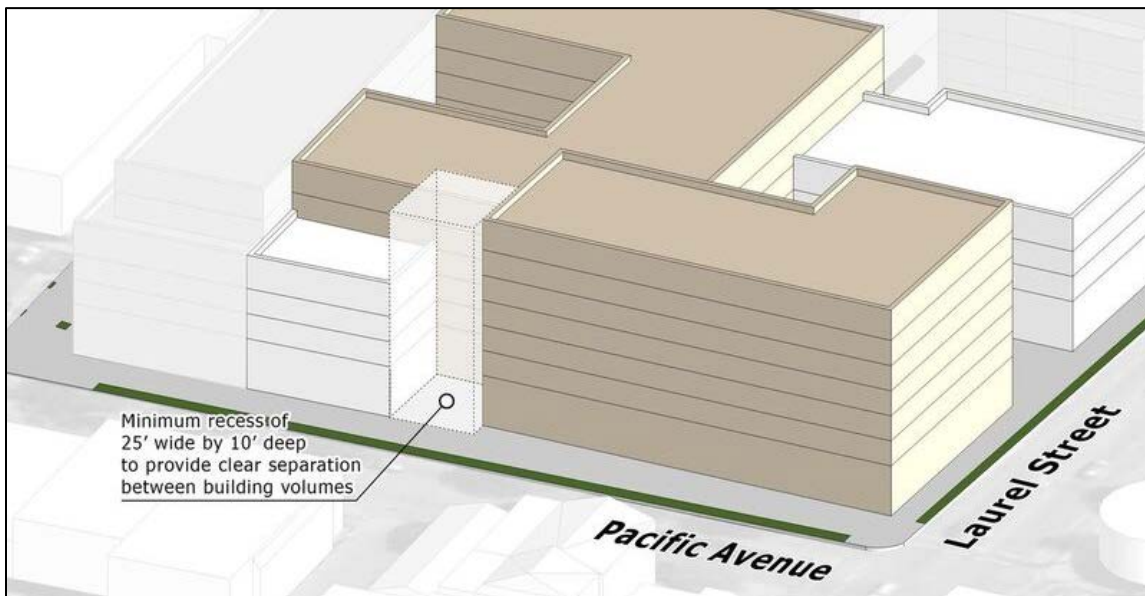


Figure H-3: Example of possible distribution of frontage heights along Front Street and the Maple Street Paseo.

- vii. **Building Recessed Breaks.** Any building mass that exceeds the maximum base height of 55 feet must establish a separation or break that is open to the sky, measuring at least 25 feet along the streetfront property line, with a depth no less than 15 feet as measured perpendicular from the streetfront property line. For

buildings along Maple Street, the recessed break shall be a minimum of 10 feet in depth. (See Figures H-3 and H-4)

- (1) The recessed breaks must provide a clear visual break between building volumes, but at the same time contribute to a positive streetscape environment.
- (2) The recessed spaces shall be open to the sky above the ground level. A light-weight sheltering structure, distinct from the architecture of the principal building (e.g., steel and glass trellis, awning, canopy, or single-level storefront) may be incorporated within the recessed space to provide activity along the street and protection to the ground level activity. This structure may encroach into the public right-of-way by at least 1 foot and no more than 2 feet and shall extend horizontally on either side of the recessed space by two feet to interlock with the principal building. The structure may include sliding doors or gates that can be secured at night, provided that they are accessible and visible during daytime business hours. (See Figure H-5)
- (3) These recessed spaces along the streetfront shall be considered as an opportunity for creative solutions that enhance the streetscape environment. They must be designed and programmed to be purposeful and meaningful places that support positive activity and preclude anti-social behavior. They could include building entries, cafes or retail extension areas. Courtyards and paseos are particularly encouraged as a way of separating building volumes and in creating unique public spaces that connect to Pacific Avenue. The recessed spaces may be gated. (See Figure H-5)



*Figure H-4: Example of horizontal massing variation and recessed break in building.*

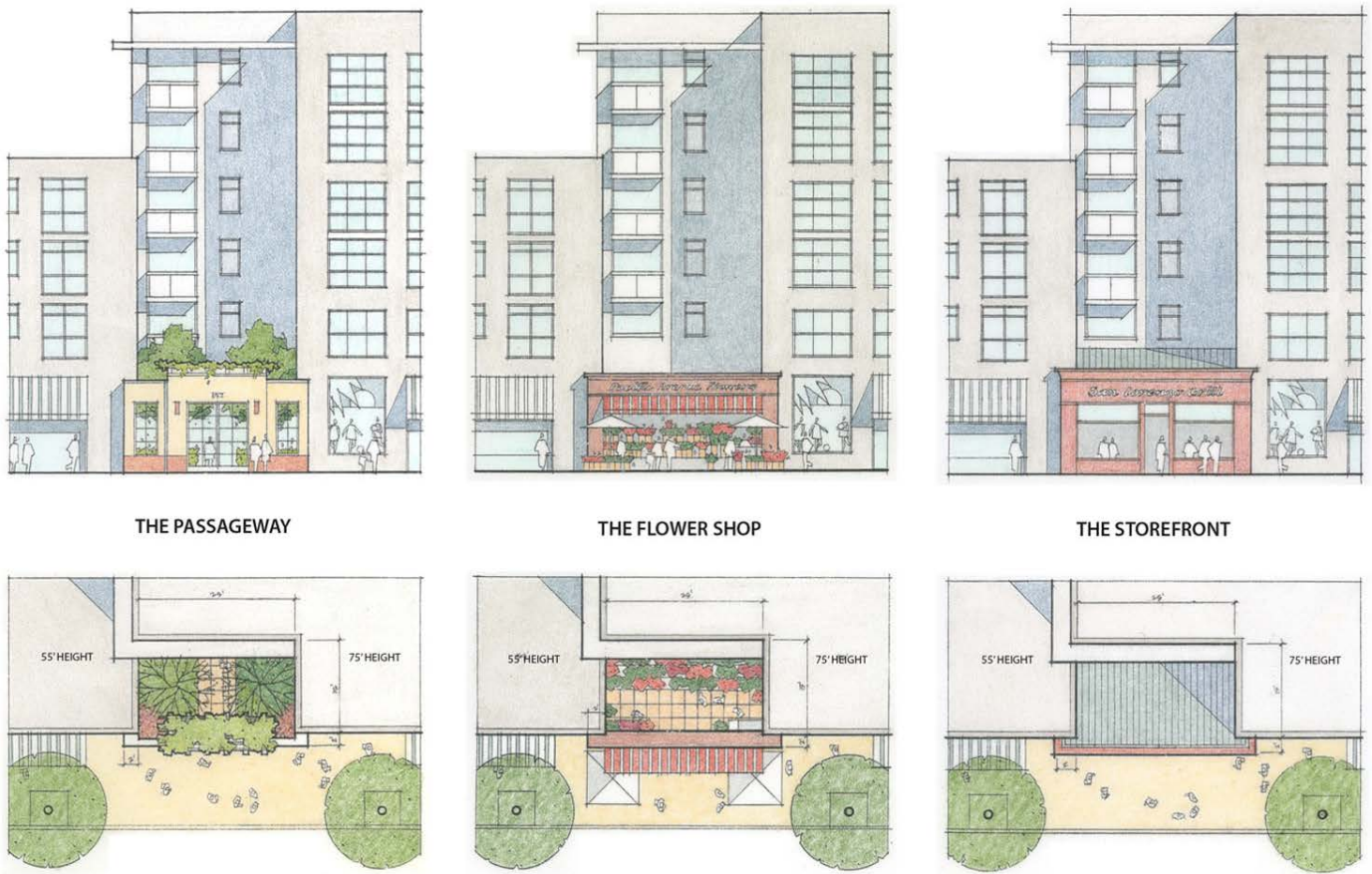


Figure H-5: Recessed spaces along the streetfront must provide a clear visual break between building volumes, while creating a positive streetscape environment. Three examples of potential treatments.

- ix. Two-Story Variation. To establish the appearance of a distinct grouping of buildings, a minimum two-story variation shall be provided between building masses along each of the street fronts. (See Figure H-6)

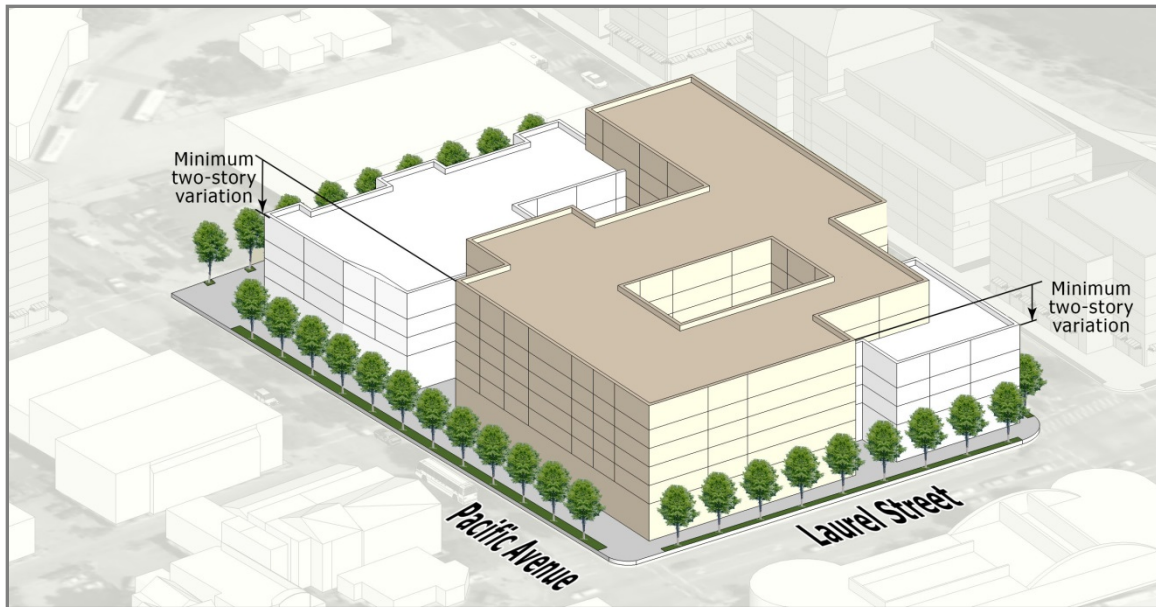


Figure H-6: Example of vertical massing variation.

- e. Application Requirements. The following materials shall be submitted with all applications for proposed buildings taller than 55 feet.
  - i. Visual Analysis. A detailed visual analysis of the proposed buildings to determine the visual impact of the development shall be submitted. The visual impact analysis must consider the views from key locations within the City and the views from Pacific Avenue and from the east-west streets.
  - ii. Program Statement. A Program Statement shall be submitted indicating details of public amenities to be included in the project. The Program Statement shall specify the participation either through funding and/or land contribution, construction, and/or maintenance of the Maple Street paseo or lane. The Program Statement shall include the private funding mechanism for on-going management and maintenance of the exterior common areas, including public and private spaces along the Maple Street paseo or lane between Pacific Avenue and Front Street. The Program Statement shall specify the method of participation in the City's affordable housing program, if applicable. The Program Statement items will be the basis of conditions of project approval.

2. Additional Height Zone B.

The Additional Height Zone B includes properties located on the east side of Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street.

- a. Eligible Development Projects. The granting of building height above the 50-foot Base Height limit is discretionary and requires a Design Permit with the recommendation of the Director of Planning to the City Council, which must approve the additional height. To achieve approval, the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed project meets the criteria described below. Applicants for development within the Additional Height Zone B may request additional height as indicated below if one of the following conditions is met:
  - i. The aggregate parcel size is greater than 15,000 square feet;
  - ii. The frontage along Front Street is greater than 100 feet;
  - iii. The parcel is located between adjacent structures of three or more floors in height;  
or
  - iv. The project qualifies for a density bonus as allowed under either State law or City adopted density bonus ordinance.
- b. Additional Height Criteria for Project Approval. The development project shall be found consistent with the following overarching City objectives:
  - i. The additional height will help to achieve the First Principles of the Downtown Plan (e.g. form, scale, housing, accessibility and open space);
  - ii. The additional height will contribute to an improved social and economic environment by including a concentration of new housing;
  - iii. The form of the development promotes the appearance of a grouping of buildings rather than large monolithic building masses;

- iv. The development receiving additional height will physically and/or financially contribute its fair share (through an Improvement District, Development Agreement or similar mechanisms) to the implementation of internal pedestrian connections between Front Street and the Riverwalk;
  - v. The additional height will help to meaningfully achieve one or more of the following key community objectives, including but not limited to: Affordable Housing, Day Care Center, exceed Green Building minimums, Incubator Space for Small Business, Public Access Easements, Public Right-of-way Improvements, Publicly Accessible Open Space, Structured or Shared Parking, and Transportation Demand Management concepts.
  - vi. Clear demonstration of the public benefit relating to two principal objectives: high quality public access between Front Street and the river, and the appropriate treatment of the riverfront edge along the Riverwalk.
- c. Zone B Maximum Height and Floors. The buildings shall conform to the adopted building codes in effect at the time of building permit application to achieve the following height limits.
- i. For development projects on aggregated parcels larger than 15,000 square feet, the maximum height shall be 70 feet and the maximum number of floors shall be 5 floors above the required ground floor commercial use.
  - ii. Uninhabitable mechanical penthouses will be permitted to project 5 feet above the approved additional height of building, provided that such penthouses are set back a minimum of 15 feet from any exposed face of the building, unless architecturally integrated into the building façade.
  - iii. Uninhabitable architectural features at prominent gateway corners may exceed the maximum heights above for a total of no more than 15 percent of the building footprint.
- d. Performance Criteria. In addition to meeting the Front Street/Riverfront Corridor Development Standards and Design Guidelines, the project shall meet the following criteria, which are intended to promote the appearance of multiple buildings of varying heights, and to avoid the development of monolithic buildings:
- i. Building Recessed Breaks. In order to break down the mass of buildings along Front Street and to promote the appearance of multiple buildings, require any portion of the building mass that exceeds the maximum base height of 50 feet to establish a separation or break that is open to the sky, measuring at least 15 feet along the streetfront property line, with a depth no less than 10 feet as measured perpendicular from the streetfront property line. (See Figures H-5 and H-7)

The recessed breaks must provide a clear separation between building volumes, but at the same time contribute to a positive streetscape environment. The recessed space should be open to the sky above the ground level. A light-weight sheltering structure, distinct from the architecture of the principal building (e.g., steel and glass trellis, awning, canopy, or single-level storefront) may be incorporated within the recessed space to provide activity along the street and protection to the ground level activity. This structure may encroach into the setback zone by up to two feet and should extend horizontally on either side of the recessed space by at least 1

foot, but not more than 2 feet to interlock with the principal building. The structure may include sliding doors or gates that can be secured at night, provided that they are accessible and visible during daytime business hours.

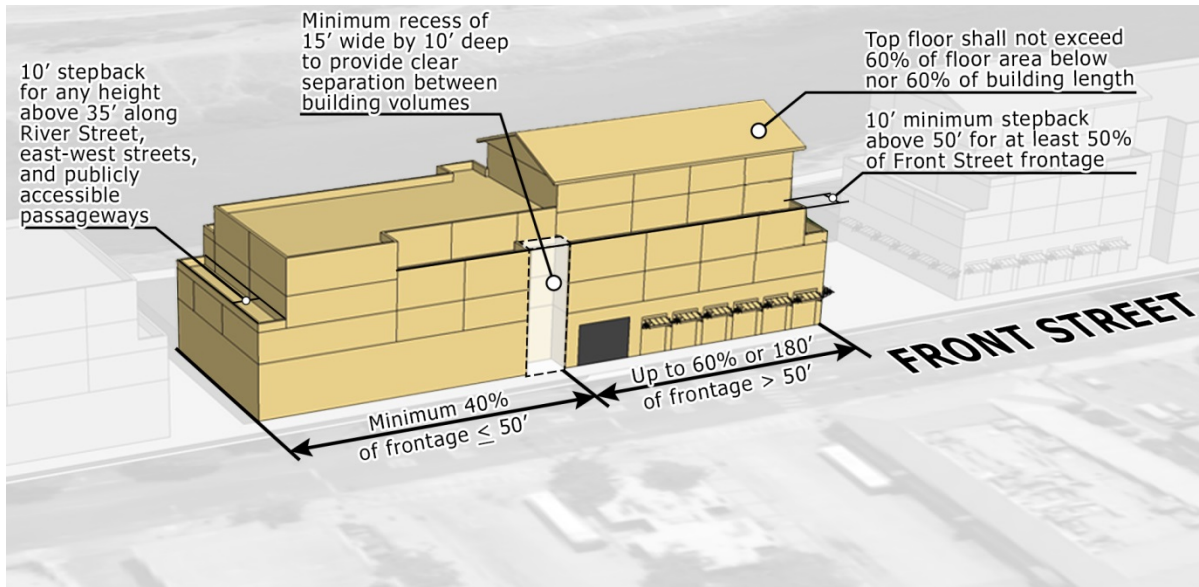


Figure H-7: Example of distribution of frontage heights and horizontal massing variation along Front Street.

- ii. Skyline Architectural Variation. To promote skyline variation, the top floor of any building shall not exceed 60% of the floor area below or 60% of the building length as measured along Front Street or the Riverwalk. Variation to the 60% floor area standard can be considered for projects that incorporate publicly accessible pedestrian connections to the Riverwalk.
  - iii. Integrated Rooftop Design. Rooftops shall be fully designed and creatively integrated into the function of the building. Rooftops provide opportunities including, but not limited to, usable residential or commercial open spaces, community gardens, rainwater retention facilities, green-roof landscaping, solar panel facilities as shade structures, building mechanical equipment and other uses. These spaces shall be thoughtfully and creatively designed as part of the initial project application.
- e. Application Requirements. The following materials shall be submitted with all applications for proposed buildings taller than 50 feet.
- i. Visual Analysis. A detailed visual analysis of the proposed building including three-dimensional perspectives to determine the visual impact of the development shall be submitted. The visual impact analysis must consider the views from key locations within the City, the views from Front Street and from the Soquel and Laurel bridges and the levee opposite the project site from a pedestrian level view.
  - ii. Roof Design Plan. A detailed and fully integrated roof design plan that includes details of open space uses, landscaping, solar facilities, drainage, and mechanical equipment.

- iii. Grading and Landscape Plan. A comprehensive grading and landscape plan for the filled area of the river levee.
- iv. Passageway Plan. For projects adjacent to the proposed publicly accessible passageways between Front Street and the Riverwalk (in the proximity of the extensions of Cathcart Street, Maple Street and Elm Street), a scaled plan shall be provided with adequate details, section drawings and other drawings that describe how the project will achieve high quality public access to the riverfront from Front Street and how the riverfront edge will be designed to reinforce the amenity value and safety of the Riverwalk. Drawings shall describe the relationship of publicly accessible spaces with adjacent proposed development activities, grading, landscape and paving materials and treatments.
- iii. Program Statement. A Program Statement shall be submitted indicating details of public amenities to be included in the project. The Program Statement shall specify the private funding mechanism for on-going management and maintenance of the exterior common areas, including public and private spaces between the Riverwalk and the development and any adjacent paseo or passageway from Front Street to the Riverwalk. The Program Statement shall specify the method of participation in the City's affordable housing program, if applicable.



## I. ALL CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS STOREFRONT STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The intention of the storefront guidelines is to promote variety and individuality along the street while complementing the scale and design character of the streetscape, reinforce the pedestrian environment, and allow for the landscape character of the downtown to extend into the private realm. The storefront guidelines encourage both setbacks from, and encroachments into, the public right-of-way, where such measures will serve to enrich the visual diversity and life of the street.

1. Storefront Projections and Setbacks. In addition to landscape elements, storefronts are encouraged to introduce architectural variation at the pedestrian level in order to create a diverse building edge between the public and private realms. More specifically:

- a. Bay Windows. Storefront bay windows may project up to 12 inches into the public right-of-way, if such windows maintain glazing on all projecting faces, and if the windows do not exceed 15 feet in width. A clearance of at least 12 inches between the bottom of the projecting bay and the sidewalk is recommended.
- b. Porticos. Entry porticos may project up to 12 inches into the public right-of-way.
- c. Entry Setbacks. Entry setbacks may be permitted up to 48 inches from the property line.
- d. Marquis and Canopies. Permanent marquis structures or canopies that project from the buildings are encouraged, but shall be confined to entry lobbies leading to upper-level residential or office uses, or to public-oriented passages that provide for pedestrian access through the block. They shall be designed as an attractive and integral part of the overall facade design, shall project no more than 6 feet from the face of the building, take up no more than 10 feet of frontage, and maintain a clearance of at least 8 feet above the sidewalk surface. No column supports shall be permitted within the public right-of-way.
- e. Projecting Signs. Projecting signs are encouraged on storefronts consistent with the sign regulations for the Central Business District in the Zoning Code.
- f. Awnings. Awnings overhanging the sidewalk are also encouraged to further enhance the life and variety of the street. The preferred material for awnings is canvas, but other materials will be considered if they are light in character and can be architecturally integrated with the building facade. Awnings shall be maintained at least 8 feet above the sidewalk surface, and shall be carefully designed to complement the overall facade design. Under standard conditions (e.g., not within retail extension zones), storefront awnings shall not project more than 6 feet into the public right-of-way, and generally shall not be higher than 14 feet above the sidewalk. Awnings above 14 feet in height shall not project more than 3 feet into the public right-of-way.

2. Storefront Variation and Craftsmanship. The visual experience of moving along the street shall be enjoyable and varied. Changes in treatment (e.g., the use of porticos, setbacks, architectural elements, landscape treatments, etc.), within the standards and guidelines are

outlined above and below. Particular attention shall be given to the craftsmanship and detailing within the pedestrian's range of touch and view. The use of special materials (e.g., stone, brass, bronze, terra cotta, ceramic, wood) for storefront ornamentation is strongly encouraged, particularly around windows and entries and at the base of building walls.

3. Retractable Storefronts. Where appropriate, the use of retractable storefronts is encouraged to create a direct relationship between sidewalk activity and the commercial establishment; this treatment is particularly encouraged for restaurants where outdoor seating is proposed, or for retail establishments that include an extension area within the public right-of-way.

4. Storefront Landscape Elements. The introduction of plant materials on the building face and storefront is strongly encouraged to reinforce and extend the landscape identity of Pacific Avenue and the downtown. More specifically:

- a. Storefront Setbacks. Storefront setbacks of up to 18 inches may be permitted for the introduction of low planters of up to 12 inches in height below storefront windows.
- b. Sidewalk Planting. The sidewalk paving along Pacific Avenue may be designed to allow for planting beds at sidewalk level to encroach into the public right-of-way up to 18 inches. Such planting beds shall include durable curbing (up to 3 inches in height) to provide a clear visual separation.
- c. Planter and Window Boxes. Planter and window boxes may be allowed to project into the public right-of-way up to 18 inches, with a maximum height of 24 inches above the sidewalk level. It is recommended that window boxes maintain a clearance of 12 inches above the sidewalk, not including decorative support braces. Window boxes shall be designed as a compatible and integral extension of the storefront window casing; materials shall be durable and of high quality. Planter and window boxes shall also provide for internal drainage connecting to roof drain lines.
- d. Hanging Flower Pots. Hanging flower pots may project into the public right-of-way up to 12 inches and shall have a minimum 8-foot clearance within the public right-of-way unless hanging directly above planter boxes.
- e. Trellises. Trellis structures supporting climbing vines are encouraged against blank building walls, both at the storefront and upper levels. At the storefront level, trellises shall be allowed to project into the public right-of-way up to 6 inches; above 8 feet in height, overhanging arbor or trellis structures shall be allowed to project up to 18 inches into the right-of-way.
- f. Plant Types. Plant materials within planters, planting beds, flower boxes and flower pots shall provide color and variety throughout the year. The use of non-flowering shrubs or plant materials is discouraged, unless they are part of a planned pattern of landscape to that creates interest on the street.

## J. ALL CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS OTHER DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Design Variation. The Downtown Plan contains development standards, which when implemented, are intended to achieve the First Principles of the Plan and public objectives for the downtown. While every effort has been made to thoughtfully produce clear and concise standards for the community, the Plan can never address or respond to all development scenarios and circumstances. Therefore, projects that closely conform to the development standards, but with slight variations may be considered upon demonstration that the resulting project will better achieve stated Plan and community objectives. Such variations shall be minor in nature and must receive a positive recommendation from the Planning Director, with final approval by the City Council.
2. Storefront Setbacks. Minor ground-level storefront setbacks are permitted within the provisions of the storefront and building façade standards and guidelines discussed below. Recessed storefronts up to six feet in depth and twenty-five feet in length may occur where a designated outdoor use, such as an outdoor café, is an integral part of the retail business.
3. Roof Top Mechanical Equipment. The design of roof top mechanical equipment and related structures is an important aesthetic consideration when viewing the downtown skyline. The arrangement of roof top equipment, elevator penthouses, mechanical penthouses and enclosures, safety rails, inside faces of parapets, roofing surfaces, architectural elements, and other mechanical or electrical equipment, including telecommunications equipment, shall be designed, installed and painted to be visually unobtrusive and to create a unified, coherent whole. These roof top features shall be incorporated into the building design at the Planning approval stage of the project. Additional visual simulations may be required to demonstrate that the project provides for architecturally interesting and varied skyline views, with specific attention given to integrating these rooftop features into the overall building design.
4. Permanent Projections into the Public Right-of-Way. It is not the intent of the Plan to create a hard edge between the public and private realms. Rather, building facades and storefronts that are varied and that promote activity and interest are encouraged.
5. Retail Extension Zones. Pacific Avenue and some of the east-west streets (e.g., Church Street, Walnut Avenue, Cathcart Street and pedestrian paseo or lane) will include opportunities for the extension of retail and restaurant activities into the public right-of-way. These extension areas will be managed by the City and its designated agent through revocable licenses [See Extension Area requirements in section 24.10 of the Zoning Ordinance]. The following guidelines shall govern the physical design of these extension areas:
  - a. Types of Uses. Designated extension areas shall be confined to uses that add activity and color to the street. Permitted uses shall be limited to outdoor cafes, food kiosks or carts, or the selling of flowers, produce, and newspapers/magazines, unless otherwise approved by the City Council or its designated agent.
  - b. Outdoor Cafes. The extension area for cafes shall project no more than 12 feet from the property line into the public right-of-way, and in no case shall a cafe extension

area result in a public walk way of less than 12 feet. The elevation of the extension area shall be the same as the public sidewalk, and shall meet ADA accessibility standards. No permanent structures will be allowed within the public right-of-way, with the exception of ADA-complaint barriers. If a separation between the cafe and the promenade is desired, this shall be achieved through low planters that could contain colorful flowers or a low hedge not permanently affixed to the sidewalk; the maximum height of such planters (including the planting) shall be no more than four feet. Planters shall consist of high-quality, durable materials of a weight and mass that will discourage theft, vandalism or easy movement. A canvas awning will be permitted to extend over the full depth of the cafe extension area; no columns or supporting poles will be permitted within the public right-of-way. Awnings shall comply with the design and height guidelines prescribed below. The use of removable umbrellas within sidewalk extension areas is also encouraged, provided that seven feet of clearance is provided from the sidewalk. Removable wind screens that are of a transparent material and that are an integral part of the planter will be permitted to extend the seasonal use of the cafe area. Such screens shall not exceed a height of six feet and shall be separated from the awning to provide for air movement.

- c. Retailing Uses. Retailing uses within extension zones shall be limited to the sale of newspapers and magazines, flowers and produce, unless otherwise approved by City Council or its designated agent. Such extension areas shall not exceed 6 feet in depth, unless it is determined that such depth is necessary to achieve the desired pedestrian objectives for the street, and in no case shall an extension area result in a public promenade that is less than 12 feet in depth on Pacific Avenue and no less than 8 feet in depth on Front Street and Laurel Street. Merchandise shall be displayed against the shop front and be oriented toward the street on tables or stands that do not exceed four feet in height. No separation (e.g., planters or low walls) between the merchandise and the street shall be permitted.
- d. Furniture. All furniture (e.g., tables, chairs, retailing stands) shall be durable, well-maintained, and of a high quality, suitable for outdoor use; such furniture shall be light, not heavy or massive in nature, to ensure that it does not visually dominate the street. All furniture shall be approved by City Council or its designated agent.
- e. Design Materials. The design materials and colors used for chairs, tables, display stands, lighting, and other fixtures (including umbrellas and awnings) shall be generally consistent with both the architectural style and colors used on the building facade and the quality of fixtures along Pacific Avenue.
- f. Lighting. Lighting shall be incorporated into the facade of the building and shall complement the style of the building. Lights on buildings shall not be glaring to pedestrians and shall illuminate only the extension area and the activities within. General illumination shall be at 5 foot-candles, with a maximum of 10 foot-candles. Table lamps or candles are encouraged in cafe areas. Wired electrical fixtures will be allowed outside the face of the building, if contained within the semi-permanent barrier allowed for cafe extension areas and if installed by a licensed electrician. A lighting plan must be approved by the City Council or its designated agent.

- g. Sidewalk Cleaning. The sidewalk area within the Retail Extension Zone shall be cleaned and maintained by the licensee. The area shall be cleaned, at a minimum, daily and shall be steam cleaned as needed and appropriate, to maintain a clean, sanitary and attractive environment.
6. Distinctive Architectural Elements. Towers, cupolas, chimneys, dormers, spires, flag poles and other architectural elements will be allowed on a conditional basis, if they can meet the following criteria:
- a. Key Locations. Such elements occur at significant locations within the downtown (e.g. key corners, street termini, downtown gateways), and provide landmarks that will reinforce the overall sense of place;
  - b. Architectural Integration. Such elements have been architecturally integrated within the building design and contribute positively to the overall harmony, composition and articulation of the facade and building mass;
  - c. Solar Access. Such elements do not significantly affect solar access objectives for the west-facing sidewalk of Pacific Avenue or the south-facing sidewalks of east-west streets; and
  - d. No Habitable Space. Such elements do not add habitable space above the prescribed height limits set forth above.
7. Accessibility. The Plan recognizes that accessibility permeates all elements of urban design, and requires that access be aesthetically integrated within all public and private development in the downtown. The *Americans with Disability Act*, passed by Congress in 1990, confirms that accessibility is a civil right and not a luxury or option. The Plan endorses this position, and requires that new development strive to achieve an "optimum state" of accessibility, beginning with compliance with both the State of California's *Title 24 Accessibility Requirements* and the *Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS)*. This requirement shall govern all subdistricts within the downtown.
8. Pedestrian Passages. While sideyard spaces are discouraged in favor of contiguous building facades, public-oriented passages that provide pedestrian access through a development parcel to parking facilities, interior courtyards, and/or other developments are encouraged. These passages shall comply with Californian Building Code, et seq., dimensional requirements, and include provision of natural (as well as electrical) light and active uses along their length. To the maximum extent practicable, adjacent development shall establish a relationship to these passages with entries and storefronts, to promote a secure and interesting environment.
9. Interior Courtyards. Santa Cruz has a tradition of interior courtyards and gardens that provide attractive places to sit and relax, and a spatial counterpoint to the street experience. If provided, courtyards or interior gardens shall be designed to include: direct publicly-oriented linkages to Pacific Avenue and/or to other public streets or lanes; activities that do not reduce the principal objective of activating Pacific Avenue; and generous solar access throughout the year.

10. Intersection Treatment. High activity-generating uses are especially encouraged at the Pacific Avenue intersections. Minor corner setbacks in conjunction with storefront entries are also encouraged at these locations.

11. Corner Treatment. Corner parcels are encouraged to incorporate special features such as rounded or cut corners, articulated corner entrances, display windows, corner roof features, etc.

12. "T" Intersections. New development that occurs at the "T" intersections along Pacific Avenue (Cooper-Church-Locust; Soquel-Walnut-Lincoln; Elm-Maple-Pacific) are encouraged to accentuate the unique spatial characteristics of this condition, through corner treatments as described above, and through special facade treatments at the visual terminus of the east-west streets (e.g., towers, distinctive change in fenestration, roof profile, building material, etc.). Buildings located at the "T" intersections are required to prepare a visual impact analysis to determine the visual impact from the east-west street.

13. Ground Level Treatment. Along rear parking lots and service lanes, rear alleys are envisioned as attractive pedestrian places as well as service spaces. Where the back of development is adjacent to a public alley or surface parking lot, the ground level shall be designed to include architectural interest and detail on the rear façade. At a minimum, a usable and operable rear entrance shall be provided and, to the maximum extent practicable, views into the retailing activity shall be provided from the rear of the building.

14. Off-site Parking and Parking Structures. Required residential and commercial parking may be provided off-site, provided that such parking is located within the parking District No. 1. Publicly available parking structures shall conform to height limits of this Plan, but are not required to adhere to a maximum floor-area-ratio limit.

15. Service Access. Parcels adjacent to rear alleys must maintain service access from the rear and provide attractive rear entrances. Trash storage areas shall be internal to the building or completely enclosed and screened from view, as required by City ordinance. Trash or loading areas shall not, to the maximum extent practicable, be located adjacent to Pacific Avenue, North Pacific Avenue, Front Street or Water Street. Required grease trap interceptors shall be maintained within the property. On a conditional basis, the City will consider their location within public alleys or within the street right-of-way, if there is no feasible alternative within the property.

This chapter has not been modified from the original 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan.

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## **Circulation and Parking Plan 5**

As the center of the community, the downtown should be easily accessible by a complete range of transportation modes, including automobiles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians. Movement to and through the downtown should be understandable and comfortable, recognizing that a principal public objective is to create a predominantly pedestrian district. The pattern and operation of roadways should direct motorists to parking areas in a way that conveys a feeling of convenience and a clear understanding of the range of activities and destinations along the way. Transit service should function efficiently within the downtown, and provision should be made for future systems including light rail and historic trolleys. Bicycle routes should link the downtown core with outlying neighborhoods and districts, and adequate and secure provision for bicycle parking should be made.

### ***Vehicular Circulation and Access***

Vehicular access to downtown Santa Cruz is constrained by the natural landforms of the San Lorenzo River on the east and Mission Hill and Beach Hill on the north and south, respectively. The structure of the roadway system is reflective of these natural conditions, and has resulted in a pattern that is somewhat eccentric and unique. This eccentricity helps to give structure and a sense of place to the downtown; one can be oriented by the relationship with the river, the hills, or one of the many visual termini that occur along the curvilinear system of roadways leading to the downtown.

The following provides a generalized description of traffic movement around and within the downtown and the recommendations proposed by the Recovery Plan. These recommendations have been reviewed by a traffic engineer, and will be refined further as part of the streetscape design effort.

### **North-South Collector Streets**

The north-south street system generally traverses the downtown from Highway 1 on the north to the Beach Area on the south. Principal north-south street systems include the North River-Front Street corridor, Cedar Street, and Center Street, which are all operated as two-way streets and which provide an important distribution function to and around the downtown. The Plan proposes no substantive changes to Cedar or Center Streets, which are recommended to remain as local-serving two-way streets. Minor modifications to the River-Front Street corridor are proposed to improve the flow of traffic and to improve access to the downtown. These include:

- a. The reconfiguration of the intersection of South River and North River Streets to clearly give North River the predominant through-movement. The confusing system of islands at this intersection should be removed in favor of a more straightforward "Y" signalized intersection with a stop sign for northbound traffic on South River Street. The ultimate role and configuration of South River Street should be that of a pedestrian-oriented local access roadway leading to parking facilities, future mixed-use development, and riverfront amenities.

- b. The reconfiguration of the River and Front Street intersection to clearly give the predominant through-movement to traffic along the River-Front corridor, and to avoid conflicts at the Cooper-Front Street intersection and with proposed parking garage driveways to the St. George Hotel and County Bank developments. Front Street between River and Water Streets should be operated as a one-way southbound street, with a "T" signalized intersection at River Street with a stop sign. (Note: This configuration will preclude the potential for a one-way couplet on Front and River Streets; it could also require the removal of on-street parking on River Street between South River and Front Streets, which is not viewed as a problem because of the surplus of adjacent off-street surface and structured parking.) To facilitate northbound bicycle traffic, bike lanes should be striped on both sides of River Street from Water Street to Front Street.
  
- c. The restriping of Front Street to provide for three to four travel lanes north of Soquel and two travel lanes south of Soquel. The need for expanded capacity north of Soquel will reduce opportunities for on-street parking and bike lanes in this area; south of Soquel, the street can accommodate curbside parking and bike lanes. The Plan recommends that Front Street be designed in a way that will allow for operational flexibility in the future.

#### Beach Access

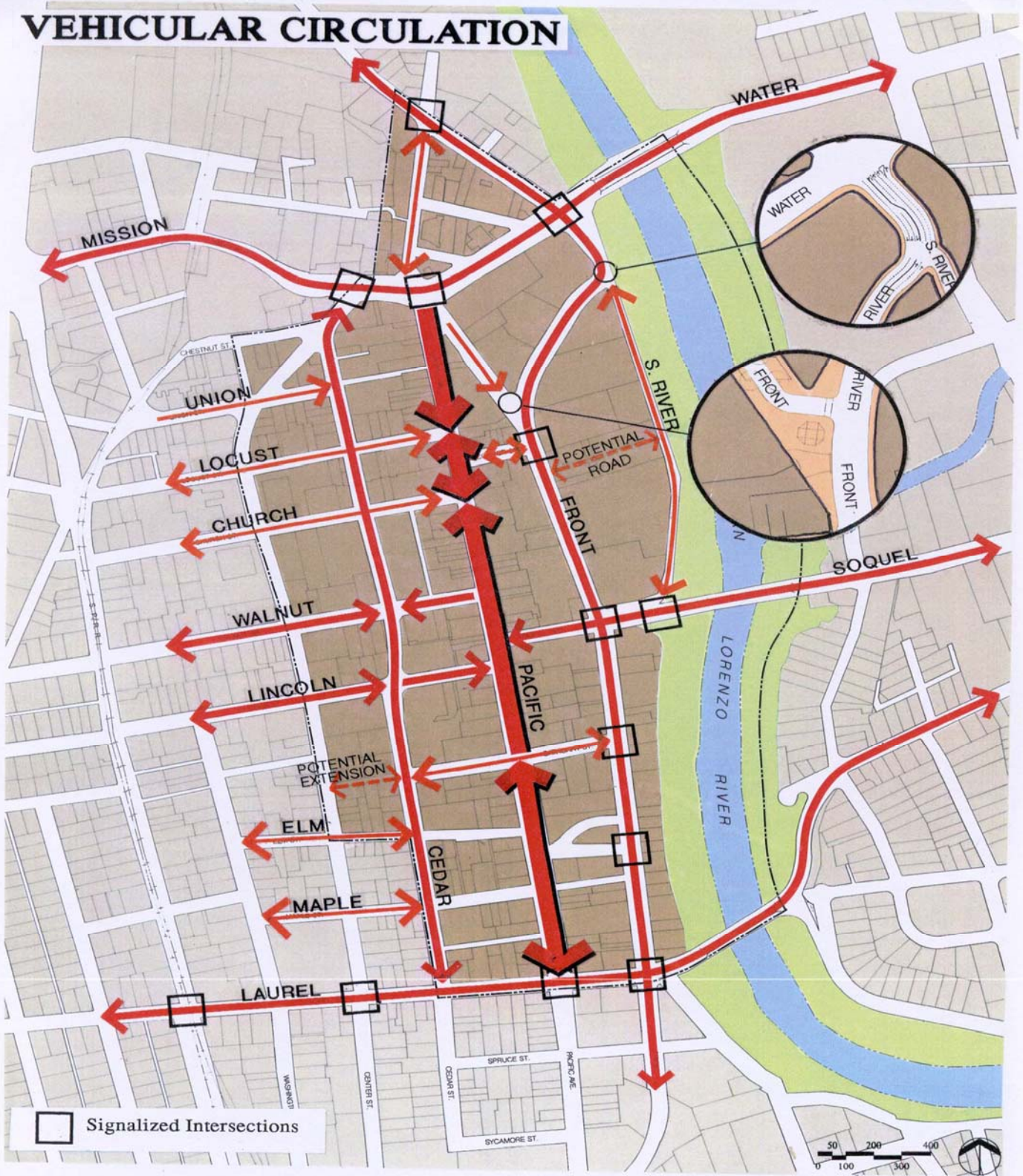
The majority of traffic coming to and from the beach is directed along the Ocean Street corridor to the Riverside Bridge. Secondly, beach traffic can circulate through the downtown along the River-Front Street corridor, either from Highway 1 on the north or from any of the east-west river crossings connecting to Ocean Avenue (Water Street, Soquel Avenue, Broadway and Laurel Streets). To a lesser extent, Center and Cedar Streets, which border the West End residential neighborhood, are also used for beach access and egress. No significant changes to overall beach access are proposed. However, the traffic and streetscape improvements suggested for the Front-River Street corridor will enhance the role of Front Street as the main downtown link to the beach.

#### East-West Crosstown Streets

Principal east-west movement to and through the downtown occurs at the three river crossings including: the Water-Mission Street corridor along the northern edge of the downtown; the Soquel-Walnut-Lincoln corridor through its heart; and the Broadway-Laurel Street corridor at the southern edge of the downtown. These streets are critical to crosstown access as well as access to the downtown itself. No substantive changes are proposed to any of these roadway systems, except for the addition of striped bike lanes on Soquel Avenue from Front to Pacific and on Lincoln Street and Walnut Avenue from Pacific to Cedar.



# VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



## East-West Local Streets

Cooper, Church and Locust Streets provide local east-west access to, and across, the northern portion of the downtown core; similarly, Cathcart Street provides two-way access between Cedar and Front Street. These local streets provide access to Pacific Avenue from the major north-south collectors; they also provide residents in the West End neighborhoods with convenient access to shops and services along Pacific Avenue as well as the supermarket and drug store along Front Street. To maintain this convenience, the Plan proposes that all of these streets be maintained as two-way streets. The following extensions of the local east-west street system are recommended to improve local access:

- a. In conjunction with future redevelopment that may occur on the Long's-Zanotto's property, a two-way roadway along the northern edge of the property through the existing parking lot could be provided to connect Front Street with South River Street. This linkage would also accommodate generous pedestrian circulation and bike access to the river and to a potentially enlarged pedestrian bridge that could be constructed across the river to San Lorenzo Park in the future.
- b. In conjunction with future development that may occur on the City-leased parking lot on the west side of Cedar Street between Lincoln and Cathcart Street, consideration should be given to the extension of Cathcart Street as a public way (not necessarily as a street) west to Center Street through existing private parcels.

## Pacific Avenue

As the principal spine of downtown commercial and public activity, Pacific Avenue is the major destination of many people coming to the downtown. Unfortunately, access to Pacific Avenue is currently disorienting; this is particularly true for motorists arriving from the north, who are forced to circulate around the downtown on Front or Cedar Streets to reach the one-way northbound Pacific Avenue. In light of the difficult and circuitous turning movements, and the lack of strong visual cues (e.g., landmarks, signage), this movement is confusing, particularly to the infrequent visitor to the downtown. Traffic operations for Pacific Avenue are proposed as follows:

- a. Allow automobiles to enter Pacific Avenue from Water Street and Cathcart Street to create attractive and recognizable "gateways" from both the north and the south, and in order to maximize convenient access to the downtown.
- b. Design Pacific Avenue to allow for maximum operational flexibility in the future, within constraints related to the creation of an active pedestrian environment and traffic operations. More specifically:
  - The segment of Pacific Avenue between Water and Locust Streets will be designed as a one-way southbound street, approximately 20 feet in width.
  - In order to accommodate local cross-town traffic as well as Pacific Avenue traffic, the segment of Pacific Avenue between Locust and Church Streets

will be designed with a curb-to-curb dimension of approximately 30 feet, to operate as a one-way southbound or northbound street, or as a two-way street with curbside loading on the west side of the street.

- The segment of the street between Church Street and Walnut Avenue will be designed with a curb-to-curb dimension of 34 feet to allow for one-way south or northbound traffic with parking on both sides, or two-way traffic with parking on one side of the street.
  - The segment of the street from Walnut Avenue to Lincoln Street will be designed with a curb-to-curb dimension of approximately 24 feet, to operate as a one-way northbound street or as a two-way street. Because of conflicts with east-west traffic on the Soquel-Walnut-Lincoln corridor, the preferred operation of this segment is one-way northbound.
  - The segment of the street from Lincoln to Cathcart Street will be generally designed with a curb-to-curb dimension of approximately 40 feet to allow for one-way northbound or two-way traffic, with curbside parking on both sides of the street.
  - The segment of the street from Cathcart to Laurel Street will be designed as a two-way street with curbside parking on both sides to take advantage of the wider right-of-way, to allow for efficient north-south movement of transit vehicles, and to provide convenient access to the local-serving retail establishments.
- c. North Pacific Avenue between River and Water Streets will remain as a two-way street.
- d. The operation of Pacific Avenue will permit periodic closure of street segments for special events. Segments that can be closed without significantly affecting downtown or crosstown circulation include the segments from: Water to Locust; Church to Walnut; and Lincoln to Cathcart Streets. The remainder of Pacific Avenue, Cooper Street, Cathcart Street, and Front Street between Water and River Streets can also be closed for special events (e.g., downtown festivals and parades), but east-west traffic will need to be rerouted around the downtown.
- e. All intersections along Pacific Avenue will be controlled by stop signs; signals are not recommended.

While it is recommended that flexibility of operations be designed into Pacific Avenue, the initial circulation concept calls for: a one-way southbound street between Water and Locust; a two-way segment between Locust and Church; one-way northbound operation between Cathcart and Church; and two-way operations south of Cathcart. North Pacific Avenue will remain as a two-way street. Concern has been expressed that the two-way portion between Locust and Church Streets will cause congestion and impact the pedestrian environment. The Plan recommends that this operation be introduced, and if problems occur for the segment of the street, it can revert to a one-way northbound or southbound movement. Concern has also been expressed that the one-way southbound designation of Pacific Avenue from Water Street to Locust Street, coupled with one-way southbound traffic on Front Street from Water Street to River Street, will create difficulties for

northbound bicyclists. The Plan recommends that this area be monitored and other means of providing for northbound cycling be investigated, if problems emerge. In addition, because the implementation of the Plan for Front Street between the Post Office and River Street will not occur in the first phase of the reconstruction of downtown, the Plan recommends that a northbound contra-flow bicycle facility be investigated for this area.

### ***Service Access***

All existing rear service lanes will be maintained to encourage off-street servicing of retail and commercial establishments along Pacific Avenue. The extension of existing service alleys or the creation of new lanes will be encouraged as an integral part of redevelopment (e.g., the construction of new parking garages). The design of the service lanes will also promote pedestrian movement and rear access to Pacific Avenue shops as applicable. The use of a consistent paving (e.g., stamped concrete) and street planting treatment on all service lanes would reinforce this objective. Since continuous rear service will not be possible, and since front door loading is becoming increasingly commonplace for modern retailers, the design of Pacific Avenue will also need to accommodate short-term loading by means of "yellow" curbside loading zones. However, this activity should be limited to nonpeak business periods such as the early morning. No loading docks or curb cuts will be allowed along Pacific Avenue or the east-west streets.

Garbage service should be provided from the rear to the maximum extent possible. While all future development is required by city ordinance to provide screened garbage facilities internal to the development, a system of centralized garbage facilities (including recycling stations and compactors) is recommended to avoid existing problems of unsightly exposed garbage bins and dumpsters. Such centralized facilities could be incorporated within public parking facilities or on private properties, and managed locally by the property owners and merchants. Specific recommendations and solutions to existing problems have been identified by the planning team with the individual property owners; further coordination should be undertaken by the Public Works Department with the property owners to establish the mechanisms for implementing these and other proposals.

### ***Parking***

Convenient and accessible parking is a key ingredient to a successful retailing district. An adequate combination of convenient short-term parking on the streets and longer-term off-street facilities is essential to the viability of the commercial uses. The Plan proposes no changes to the City's Downtown Parking District, which allows businesses to pay fees in-lieu of on-site parking. This policy is highly effective in a mixed-use downtown environment, where the potential for shared parking is most pronounced. In the evolution of the downtown area, the City has made a conscious decision to provide for off-street surface parking along Front and Cedar Streets to serve Pacific Avenue. This perimeter parking in conjunction with the provisions of the Parking District have created a strong strategy for parking in the downtown.

## **On-Street Parking**

Although limited in quantity, on-street curbside parking is very important in creating the feeling of a convenient and accessible downtown. Curbside parking can also serve to slow down through-traffic, thereby contributing to the pedestrian nature of the downtown. The Plan recommends that on-street parallel parking be maximized along Pacific Avenue between Laurel and Water Streets, and maintained along the east-west streets, Front, Cedar, and Center Streets. Diagonal parking should be avoided, because of the potential for conflicts with bicyclists and other vehicles. Curbside parking should only be removed if essential due to critical needs related to bicycle or vehicular movement, or the need to enlarge the sidewalk to promote pedestrian safety. In such cases, removal of on-street parking should be considered as additional public off-street parking is established, particularly in the period of implementation of the Plan. On Front Street, pedestrian safety and closing gaps in the existing system of bicycle lanes are the first priorities for use of the roadway space gained from shifting curbside parking to public off-street parking.

## **Off-Street Parking**

The City's system of off-street parking facilities include surface lots and two parking structures along Cedar and Front Streets. A third parking structure in excess of 400 spaces is planned for the public lot at Cedar and Locust Streets. The City is currently preparing a detailed parking supply and demand study to determine parking needs and opportunities; the City is also in the process of restructuring its overall fee system for parking in the downtown. While the Recovery Plan defers to the recommendations of these studies, several opportunities are identified for the improvement of off-street parking, and for the creation of a better distribution of parking throughout the downtown. Opportunities include:

- a. The consolidation of properties at the northwestern corner of Soquel and Front Streets to create a contiguous surface parking area, that could ultimately be developed as a multi-level parking garage.
- b. The consolidation of properties at the northwestern corner of Cathcart and Front Streets to create a contiguous surface parking area, that could ultimately be developed as a multi-level parking garage.
- c. The consolidation of private properties south of the Metro Center along Front Street to create surface parking for the South of Cathcart area, which currently has no major off-street parking facilities. This could occur in several stages: the acquisition of the Putney and Perry property for the creation of a small surface lot to allow for the infill development of the surface lot at Pacific Avenue and the Metro Center; followed by the acquisition of one or more parcels (eastern half of Haber Furniture and the Muffler Shop) as resources become available. Ultimately, these properties could accommodate a parking structure.
- d. To further mitigate the shortage of off-street parking facilities in the South of Cathcart area, the Plan identifies the opportunity to consolidate private parking lots

west of Pacific Avenue between Maple and Laurel Streets to create more efficient and contiguous parking that could serve multiple rather than singular uses. (e.g., Planned Parenthood, Cedar Square, parking behind Pacific Avenue and in conjunction with single and multi-family housing projects). This project would require cooperation between the Parking District and individual property owners.

- e. The construction of a parking structure on the Cedar Street public parking lot between Cathcart and Lincoln Streets, in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Ford's Department Store/Plaza Books site as a major anchor.

While the Plan identifies these opportunities, it must be acknowledged that parking structures are expensive and that their ultimate realization will depend upon available resources and the Parking District's establishment of a financially feasible approach for their implementation.

Parking structures are, by nature, difficult to fit into a fine-grained urban fabric like downtown Santa Cruz. Care will need to be taken to ensure that their design is appropriately scaled and compatible to the context, and that they are safe and comfortable for pedestrians to use. All structures shall comply with the development standards and guidelines described in the previous chapter of this document. Ample and secure bicycle parking should be an integral part of all parking structures and surface parking.

## ***Transit***

With much of California and the country facing deteriorating air quality, increased traffic congestion, and depleting energy resources, enhanced public transit has become a critical objective. The voters of California recognized this in June of 1990 with the passage of two key rail bonds, and the State is now developing an expanded system of inter-city rail. As more public funds become available, municipalities are improving and expanding their transit systems to attract patrons and to reduce vehicle trips.

### **Inter-City/Light Rail**

Although Santa Cruz is not situated within the proposed inter-city rail corridor that will link San Jose and the Bay Area with Sacramento, it is linked by rail to the nearby cities of Capitola and Watsonville, which are connected to San Jose. As commuter traffic congestion increases on Highway 1, the potential for light rail service along this rail corridor will become more attractive. Provision for a link to the downtown from the existing Southern Pacific right-of-way should be pursued; two potential alignments are identified for further study:

- a. The extension of the Southern Pacific right-of-way north and east through the Prolo Chevrolet property in the South of Laurel area to Pacific Avenue, to create a loop system north along Pacific Avenue to Church Street and south along Cedar Street to Cathcart, where it would rejoin Pacific.

- b. As an alternative to looping a light rail line system south on Cedar Street, consideration could also be given to extending the line west along Church Street to Chestnut Street and the existing railroad right-of-way.

The design of Pacific Avenue should maintain future opportunities to introduce light rail within the roadway right-of-way.

### **Downtown-Beach Link**

A looped light rail line through the downtown could also accommodate historic or recreational trolleys offering a strong link to the Beach. Vehicles of this type would be an attractive alternative to conventional (and hermetically sealed) city buses, and would significantly enhance cross patronage between the Beach and the downtown. In advance of constructing a light rail or recreational rail line, a rubber-tire trolley that could operate on the existing roadways is recommended as a beach-downtown link, connecting key parking resources and destinations in both areas. The recommended route for such a trolley would commence at the Metro Center, proceed north along Pacific Avenue to Church Street, west to Cedar Street, south to Cathcart, east to Pacific, south to the Washington extension to the Wharf, east along Beach to Riverside Avenue, north to Second Street, west to Front Street, and north on Pacific Avenue to the Metro Center. Headways for such a system should be no more than 15 minutes to promote convenience and to maximize ridership.

### **City Bus System**

The downtown is served by approximately 20 bus routes that radiate out from the Metro Center to all parts of the city and to the University. Buses must be able to continue to circulate north and south on Pacific Avenue between Cathcart and Laurel Streets, and along Front Street. No city buses will travel on Pacific Avenue north of Cathcart Street.

### **Inter-City Bus**

Currently, Greyhound Bus Lines operate from a facility immediately north of the Metro Center. This interface is important and should be maintained either in the existing facility, or as part of a consolidated facility within the Metro Center.

### ***Bicycle Movement***

As a university town, the use of bicycles in Santa Cruz is a significant mode of travel, and one that needs to be accommodated in the downtown. A system of exclusive bikeways, dedicated bike lanes, and posted bike routes should be maintained and enhanced to allow bicyclists convenient and safe access to the downtown. Much of this system is already in place: the levees along the San Lorenzo River offer an exclusive bikeway linking the adjacent neighborhoods with the downtown; dedicated bike lanes radiate out from the downtown along Laurel Street on the south, Soquel Avenue on the

east, Walnut Avenue on the west, and Water, River, and Mission Streets on the north. This system provides good bike access to the downtown. Within the downtown area, dedicated bike lanes exist along Cedar Street and portions of Front Street.

The nature of the downtown as a pedestrian-intensive district with slow-moving traffic makes it highly hospitable to bicyclists. The Plan calls for the principal downtown streets to be designated minimally as Class 3 bike routes. This would add Cooper, Church, and Locust Streets to the system of posted bike routes in the downtown, which includes Pacific Avenue and the non-dedicated portions of Front Street. Motorists should be reminded that cyclists have the use of the travel lane. This message should be included in any signage at entry points to the downtown core; a bicycle symbol could also be stenciled in the roadway. Traffic signals at intersections surrounding the core should be modified to include bike-sensitive detectors, located and identified as to where cyclists can trigger them. Push buttons are less preferable, and should be installed only where cyclists can use them without hazard.

In general, new dedicated bike lanes are not recommended for the downtown core between Front and Cedar Streets because of the significant demands for pedestrian spaces and for convenient on-street parking, and because Pacific Avenue and the downtown core are envisioned more as a destination for bicyclists than a through-route. However, the Plan calls for Cathcart, Soquel, Lincoln, and Walnut Avenues to have dedicated bike lanes installed to facilitate east-west bike movement. Also, the Plan recommends extending bike lanes along River Street from Water Street to Front Street and eliminating all gaps in the bike lanes along Front Street, except for immediately opposite the Transit Center, through restriping traffic lanes and/or shifting on-street parking to newly established off-street parking. The Plan recognizes that both bike lanes and curbside parking serve to slow auto movement and insulate pedestrians from heavy traffic.

The Plan also calls for Pacific Avenue to be designed as a bike-friendly street. A 15 mph speed limit is recommended for Pacific Avenue from Water to Laurel Streets. The elimination of diagonal parking is recommended to reduce potential conflicts between bicycles and automobiles.

To make the San Lorenzo River levee bikeways fully functional, the Plan recommends addition or improvement of access points to the west bank at Soquel Avenue, Laurel Street and the pedestrian bridge eastbound, Laurel Street westbound, and to the east bank at Water Street eastbound. As called for in the San Lorenzo River Design Concept Plan, closing the gaps in the east bank levee pathway at Soquel Avenue and Branciforte Creek is also recommended. Proper surfacing and maintenance, and adequate width, are also necessary for the levee bike path to serve as a reliable link in the bicycle circulation system.

## ***Bicycle Parking***

The Plan also calls for the provision of ample and secure bicycle parking facilities, including short-term bike racks along Pacific Avenue, as well as bike racks and longer-term bike lockers within existing and future parking lots and structures along Cedar and Front Streets. To facilitate shopper convenience, bike racks should be as available as auto parking spaces along Pacific Avenue, dispersed appropriately to serve storefront locations, and highly visible for security. Initially, an average of 20 racks should be placed per block, with room for expansion as demand warrants. The



recommended type of rack is the inverted "U," fabricated in a size to accommodate the variety of child and adult bicycles. A bicycle rental and route information kiosk is also recommended within the downtown (e.g., at Front and River Streets) to promote the recreational and transportation use of bicycles.

The plan calls for additional bicycle parking at significant destinations in the downtown; these include the Post Office, Civic Center and main library. The existing bicycle parking area at the Transit Center should be repaired and the number of racks expanded; some form of cover should be installed to add protection for all-day parking by commuters.

### ***Pedestrian Circulation***

Pedestrian access to, and movement within, downtown Santa Cruz must be direct, secure and comfortable. The predominant means for pedestrians to move about the downtown is by way of the street system, which need to be designed to be attractive and interesting. Development adjacent to the public street will be carefully controlled to ensure that the pedestrian environment is reinforced, and that active uses are introduced to create interest and a high level of security. The streetscape design will also reinforce the pedestrian environment by ensuring adequate sidewalk area, continuous and easy access, landscaping that is visually attractive and that offers shade and color, and adequate levels of lighting to promote a feeling of security. The following key pedestrian facilities and linkages are identified:

#### **Pacific Avenue**

Pacific Avenue will serve as the primary pedestrian corridor within the downtown. Automobile traffic will be slowed down to the point where pedestrian movement is clearly the dominant mode of travel. Continuous sidewalks of at least 12 feet in width will be provided along Pacific Avenue; the unobstructed portion of these sidewalks (e.g., free of trees, lights, parking meters, etc.) will be at least 8 feet to provide for two couples to pass each other comfortably. Additional activities beyond this walkway and within the public right-of-way (outdoor cafes, seating, planting, art, sculpture, kiosks, etc.) will be incorporated to strengthen the pedestrian environment. Ground-level activities within adjacent development will be carefully regulated to reinforce the pedestrian orientation, a continuity of activity, and storefront design that promotes interest and variation. At intersections, the sidewalk level will be flush with the crosswalk zones of the street to provide for unobstructed and uninterrupted access.

#### **San Lorenzo Riverfront**

The San Lorenzo River offers continuous and exclusive pedestrian movement between the Beach, the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods to the south and north. With the completion of riverfront recreational and flood control improvements, this route will be significantly enhanced and linkages between the river and the downtown will become more critical. The improvement of the Riverfront is a high priority that is expected to occur over the next 5 to 10 years.

## **Cathcart-Riverfront Linkage**

Cathcart Street provides an important east-west pedestrian linkage between the West End neighborhoods and the proposed riverfront park. The Plan calls for sidewalks along Cathcart Street to be no less than 12 feet in width; adjacent uses are allowed to set back from the edge of the sidewalk an additional 12 feet to create active and sunny outdoor eating areas. The improvement of Cathcart Street should be a high priority as part of the Pacific Avenue streetscape improvements.

## **Metro Center-Riverfront Linkage**

The San Lorenzo Riverfront Plan identified the opportunity to create a strong pedestrian and visual linkage between the Metro Center and the river, including the creation of a terraced plaza that would allow pedestrians direct access to the river. While the Recovery Plan suggests that the riverfront open space should be provided at the foot of Cathcart Street to create a stronger pedestrian and visual link to Pacific Avenue, a linkage to the river from the Metro Center is still recommended; in addition, a new footbridge across the river, as recommended in the Riverfront Plan, would provide strong pedestrian linkages to the neighborhoods on the east side of the river.

## **Church-Cooper Linkage**

Church Street and Cooper Street provide a convenient and direct pedestrian linkage between the West End neighborhoods, the Civic Center, downtown, and the San Lorenzo River and Park. The Plan proposes that this linkage be strengthened in the following ways:

- a. In the immediate term: by means of landscape and lighting improvements within the Galleria complex that will give pedestrians a more direct and visually attractive path to the river; by improvements at the western landing of the pedestrian bridge that will create a more direct and distinctive gateway to the river; and by the creation of wider sidewalks along the north side of Church Street to accommodate outdoor cafes and activities.
- b. In the longer term, consideration should also be given to the construction of an expanded pedestrian bridge across the San Lorenzo River that could include shops and bicycle access and provide a more active linkage to San Lorenzo Park. (This is particularly important if the proposed Performing Arts facility is located there.) As part of this concept, consideration should also be given to the creation of a plaza on the east side of Front Street at Cooper Street leading to a new pedestrian connection along the northern edge of the Long's-Zanotto's property.

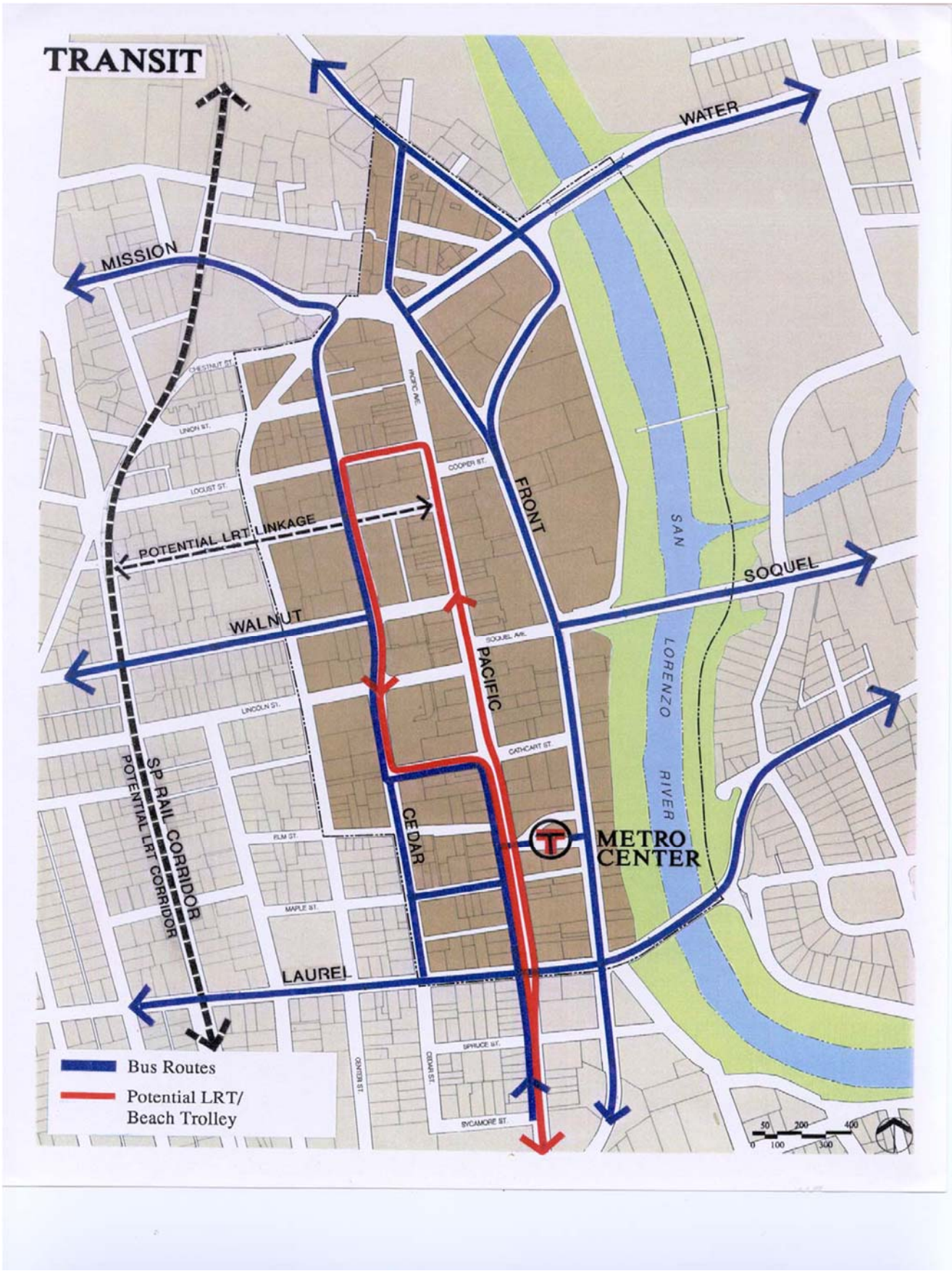
## **Mission Hill Linkage**

As a longer-term action, the Plan recommends the creation of stronger pedestrian linkages to Mission Hill, through the construction of a new stair linking Pacific Avenue and Scope Park to an

upper park that, in turn, would allow pedestrians a direct connection to Adobe Park and Mission Plaza by way of School Street.

### **Beach Hill Linkage**

Similarly, the extension of pedestrian improvements south along Pacific Avenue from Laurel Street to the foot of Beach Hill is recommended as a linkage to that neighborhood. Improvements to the stair at the foot of Pacific Avenue leading to Third Street within Beach Hill should also be considered. Pedestrian and streetscape improvements within Beach Hill along Cliff Street would also create a direct linkage between the beach boardwalk and the San Lorenzo River by means of the historic stairway at South Laurel Street. These improvements should be considered as part of future redevelopment in the South of Laurel area.



This chapter has not been modified from the original 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan.

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## **Streetscape and Open Space Plan 6**

Nestled at the foot of the Santa Cruz Mountains, on the coast of Monterey Bay, and at the mouth of the San Lorenzo River, the City of Santa Cruz has a powerful relationship with its physical environment. The downtown itself is defined by natural features, including Mission and Beach Hills on the north and south, and the river on the east. The Streetscape and Open Space Plan is aimed at creating a strong and varied network of active and meaningful urban spaces that link the downtown with its natural setting.

Within the downtown, the street system provides the most significant system of open spaces, providing greenery, light, air, and direct connections to the surrounding community. The function of the streets goes well beyond movement and circulation; streets serve as places for social gathering and civic events; they provide orientation and structure to the downtown; and they are the principal public space that forms much of the pedestrian's experience.

Unlike some cities that developed around a town square or plaza, downtown Santa Cruz has grown along its irregular street system, which responds to the natural landforms of the surrounding hills and adjacent river. Rather than resulting in a single center of focus, the differentiated pattern of downtown streets has given Santa Cruz a rich and varied system of open spaces and spatial experiences. Each of the downtown streets is terminated by the curvilinear pattern of the roadway (e.g., Water-Mission Street), "T" intersections (Cooper-Locust-Church Streets), or by views to the adjacent hills (e.g., Cedar Street) or river levee (e.g., Cathcart Street). In this way, the streets have strong spatial definition and are effective orienting devices.

The downtown streets can be seen as an extension of the city's larger open space system, linking the San Lorenzo River, San Lorenzo Park, Mission Plaza, the Beach Boardwalk, and the Civic Center with one another. In effect, they serve as the "bridge" between ground-level activities within individual buildings and the broader open space system of the city. As such, they are the principal organizing and orienting component that gives memory and structure to the downtown.

The streetscape concept for downtown is aimed at reinforcing the unique role and characteristics of each street, and at creating a more understandable and visually cohesive downtown district. The treatment of streets should reinforce the visual and pedestrian linkages between outlying areas and the retail and pedestrian spine along Pacific Avenue. The improvements should also heighten the spatial experience of moving through the downtown and the sense of place within each subdistrict.

In addition to the enhancement of the principal streets, the Plan also calls for the creation of additional open spaces in the downtown that will have meaning and significance to the community. The most meaningful open spaces within cities have emerged out of natural features and from places that have a historic, cultural, and/or civic significance. In Santa Cruz, the San Lorenzo River offers the greatest potential for the creation of a major downtown open space amenity with strong connections to the natural setting of the city and region. The Plan calls for integrating the river more directly with the open space and streetscape system of the downtown, through streetscape improvements along Cathcart Street leading to a new riverfront park at the foot of that street. In addition to a riverfront park, the Plan also calls for the creation of a series of small parks and plazas

that will link the Post Office, Town Clock, and Scope Park with Adobe Park and Mission Park. This linkage will connect the most significant civic landmarks of the downtown with the historic origins of the City on Mission Hill, and by so doing, enrich the open space network of the downtown. The Plan also proposes the creation of a new park along Cedar Street at Plaza Lane, immediately north of the planned Locust Street garage. This park, which will enjoy sun throughout most of the day, would gain significance because of the heritage walnut tree on the site and its linkage to Pacific Avenue by way of Plaza Lane. Finally, the Plan identifies the opportunity of creating a stronger civic gathering space within the Civic Center area.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Overall Recommendations***

Pacific Avenue is the "main street" of Santa Cruz, serving as the principal retail spine of the city as well as its central public gathering space. The fact that the street is not a through-road or arterial provides the opportunity to create a place that goes well beyond the traditional main street. The street can be a "stage" upon which a diversity of activities takes place; people and activities, rather than objects, design elements, or even trees, should be the major theme. Pacific Avenue should be designed as a place to be, not just a place to look at. It should be a place that is comfortable and welcoming to students, parents with children, senior citizens, tourists, and to many others. The street must also reinforce the viability of retail activity within the downtown.

The cross section of Pacific Avenue changes significantly from the north end of downtown to the south. Between Water and Walnut Street, it varies from 65 to 70 feet in width; between Walnut and Cathcart, it ranges from 75 to 80 feet; and south of Cathcart, it is approximately 85 feet in width. This variation creates different opportunities and constraints for the design of the street, and suggests application of a range of conditions and treatments along its length.

In general, the Streetscape Concept for Pacific Avenue recommends an asymmetrical sidewalk treatment north of Cathcart Street, to allow for an intensity of sidewalk activities (e.g., public seating, cafe extensions, etc.) along the sunny side of the street. Given the roadway requirements for a 20 to 24-foot wide street and the objective for curbside parking on both sides of Pacific Avenue (approximately 7 feet per curb), approximately 35 to 40 feet of the right-of-way can be reserved for sidewalk areas north of Cathcart. If divided equally, sidewalks would generally be between 15 and 20 feet; in an asymmetrical configuration, a wider sidewalk on the sunny side of the street can be created (e.g., 20 to 25 feet) to support a greater diversity of activities; at the same time, a comfortable promenading sidewalk can be maintained on the east-facing side (e.g., 12 to 15 feet).

South of Cathcart, a landscaped median of approximately eight feet in width is recommended to take advantage of the wider right-of-way and to create a distinctive sense of place for the area. Continuous sidewalks of 10 to 12 feet would be provided along each side of the street. The following provides a generalized framework of common streetscape recommendations for the overall avenue from Water to Laurel Streets:

***Continuity.*** The street should have a strong sense of continuity, that leads pedestrians comfortably from one destination to the next along the avenue and that allows for ceremonial events such as parades. Views down the length of the street should be maintained to reinforce the spatial continuity of Pacific Avenue.

**Promenading.** A minimum sidewalk depth of 10 feet and a minimum clear promenading width of at least 6 feet shall be provided along the length of the street. Street trees, planting areas, public seating, bike racks, parking meters and other elements should not protrude into the promenading area.

**Accessibility.** Unobstructed access shall be provided along the length of Pacific Avenue to comply with the provisions of both the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and State Title 24 Accessibility Requirements. To this end, if feasible, the full width of all crosswalks shall be flush with the sidewalk curb to provide continuous unobstructed pedestrian access.

**Tree Species.** The street tree concept establishes a strong sense of diversity within a larger order and brings together a number of different trees, each with its own unique characteristics. The concept builds on the asymmetrical qualities of the street, emphasizing a double staggered row of "boulevard" trees on the east side of the street with a flowering tree on the west. It also establishes a sense of progression along the street, with a focus on a planting of special trees at the "T" intersections and within the median south of Cathcart Street. On the wider west-facing side of the street, the Plan proposes London plane trees, a relatively fast-growing deciduous tree that can grow to an 80-foot height with a 30 to 40-foot spread. On the narrower east-facing side, the Plan calls for a flowering fruit tree (e.g., cherry), which would grow to a mature height of 25 feet. South of Cathcart Street, where the street will be symmetrically configured with a central median, the Plan proposes the extension of the London plane trees along both sidewalks, with a Jacquemontii Birch tree placed in the median. With bark of the most brilliant white, this tree is tall and narrow, growing to a mature height of 60 feet. At the four "T" intersections, the Plan calls for a special landscape treatment, through the use of large and impressive specimen trees that punctuate the street through contrast with the boulevard and flowering trees in form, color and character.

**Tree Spacing and Height.** In order to maintain a signature landscape along Pacific Avenue, it is critical that the spacing of trees promote strong visual continuity. To this end, the Plan calls for the boulevard tree to be planted on a staggered row at 25 feet on center. The typical configuration would place the outbound tree within a planter in the curbside parking area of the street and the inbound tree on the sidewalk. The Plan calls for the flowering tree on the west side of the street to be planted in a single row at approximately 25 feet on center. South of Cathcart Street, where the sidewalks are considerably narrower, the boulevard tree would be planted in a single row at 50 feet on center, with the median tree at a denser 25-foot spacing. When planted, the boulevard trees should have at least a 10-foot clearance between the lowest branches and the sidewalk; the flowering tree should provide a minimum 7-foot clearance to maintain views to retailing establishments. At full maturity, the branching of all trees should be maintained no less than 14 feet from the sidewalk surface.

**Lighting.** Decorative pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided as another consistent vertical element along the street. Single-headed ornamental fixtures are proposed as the predominant fixture along the length of the street, interrupted only by taller double-headed fixtures at key intersections. Light standards shall be approximately 50 feet on center, spaced centrally between the street trees. The same single-headed fixture as proposed for Pacific Avenue is recommended for the east-west streets between Cedar and Front Streets, to reinforce the identity of the downtown as a district as well as a street.

**Activity Nodes and Key Intersections.** Key intersections and activity nodes along Pacific Avenue (Cooper-Church-Locust; Soquel-Walnut-Lincoln) should be highlighted by a change in landscape treatment to reinforce the spatial and gateway qualities of the intersections and to support the specific activities programmed for the area. Artistically designed kiosk structures (of less than 60 square feet in size) that sell coffee, ice cream, newspapers, flowers, tickets and/or public art are suggested for the sunny west-facing side of Pacific Avenue at the terminus of Locust and Lincoln Streets. These kiosks would be located on the widest depths of sidewalk along the street (e.g., 30 to 40 feet), where no curbside parking is desirable or feasible because of the intersection movements. The structures are seen as key activity generators as well as key visual landmarks along the street. The activity nodes at the "T" intersections should allow for a variety of additional uses including carts, vendors, informal street performances and free speech tables.

**Public Seating.** Public seating should be situated as an integral part of the activity nodes at the key intersections listed above, to ensure active and comfortable use by a wide diversity of people and oversight by the nearby kiosk vendor. Public seating should also be distributed along the length of the street, but in a configuration that avoids the monopolization of the sidewalk by groups or individuals (e.g., perpendicular to the promenading area).

**Ground-Level Planting.** Ground-level planting should be maintained in low beds that will not obstruct pedestrian movement and that will maintain views and a general sense of openness along the avenue. Colorful planting beds for annuals, with low curbs and decorative metal fences no higher than 18 inches, are recommended. Potential locations could include: the base of street trees; the activity nodes at the key intersections; and the median proposed for the South of Cathcart area. In addition, private planting adjacent to individual storefronts is encouraged within the design guidelines outlined in the Plan.

**Retail/Cafe Extension Areas.** In addition to the promenading area and activity nodes, opportunities for outdoor cafes and the extension of limited types of retailing uses (e.g., flowers, produce, newspapers) should be permitted within the public right-of-way. Specific standards for such extension areas are outlined in the design guidelines.

**On-Street Parking.** As discussed above, curbside parallel parking is included along the length of Pacific Avenue to maximize access and convenience, and to create strong support for adjacent retail uses. Diagonal parking is not recommended because of potential conflicts with other vehicles and bicycles.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Block-by-Block Recommendations***

As part of the planning process, the consultant team and City staff undertook a series of block-by-block working sessions with individual property owners and merchants along Pacific Avenue. These sessions were aimed at involving owners and tenants in the programming of street activities and in guiding the overall streetscape design concept. The input from property owners and merchants has been integrated with overall community objectives and design principles for the downtown, and became an important criteria in the final design concept for the street.



### ***Pacific Avenue: South of Cathcart***

The South of Cathcart area is characterized by a wider right-of-way (approximately 85 feet) than the segments of the street to the north, and a deficiency of parking because of the lack of any significant off-street parking facilities. The area is also characterized by a discontinuity of ground-level retail uses because of the vacant parcels at the southeast corner of Pacific and Cathcart, and the small City parking lot at the Metro Center. The key objectives for this area are to increase opportunities for parking and to enhance the overall image and identity of the area as an integral part of the overall downtown.

To this end, the Plan calls for a central planting median of approximately 8 feet, with 10-foot sidewalks along each side of the two-way street. The purpose of the median is to reinforce a sense of continuity and identity, and to enhance the pedestrian scale and amenity of the area. The Plan envisions distinctive tree planting on the median and the opportunity for colorful ground planting at the key intersections of Laurel and Cathcart to create attractive gateway statements. The median would also be designed to allow for pedestrian cross-movement at various points along the street, and for convenient disabled access at the key crosswalks within the district (e.g., Cathcart, Elm, Maple, Birch). The Plan proposes continuous on-street parallel parking, which will generally replace the quantity of existing on-street parking spaces (approximately 40 spaces) in the area. A continuous planting of boulevard trees is proposed within the parking zone.

The redevelopment of the vacant parcels along Pacific Avenue with active ground-level retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses will be important in achieving the desired pedestrian and streetscape environment in the South of Cathcart area.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Cathcart to Lincoln***

The segment of Pacific Avenue between Cathcart and Lincoln Streets has a right-of-way width of approximately 80 feet. The area is characterized by a significant number of vacant parcels resulting from the earthquake. These sites include the Ford's Department Store property at Cathcart and Pacific, Plaza and Logos Books, and the Good Times and Gularte properties on the east side of Pacific Avenue. In spite of this devastation, the area is also characterized by several strong destinations including the Del Mar Theater, the Plaza Books Annex, the Cat 'n' Canary clothing store, and the weekly farmer's market on the Ford's property. Redevelopment efforts are fairly advanced in the area, with three approved projects: two retail/residential developments on the Gularte and Good Times sites, and a retail/office development that will replace Logos Books.

The principal objective in this area is to create a vital pedestrian and retailing environment. This is achieved through the creation of an asymmetrical cross section, with sidewalks on the sunnier east side of the street ranging from 25 to 35 feet to support retail extension areas, and sidewalks on the west side approximately 20 feet to accommodate comfortable promenading and more limited extension opportunities. The curb-to-curb dimension of the street is proposed at approximately 35 feet to accommodate two curbside lanes of parallel parking and a wide one-way northbound traffic lane with sufficient room for bicycle circulation. With the removal of the curbside parking lane on the west side of the street (i.e., where the single row of flowering trees is confined to the sidewalk), the street could be changed to provide for two-way traffic, an additional vehicular lane or a designated bicycle lane.

As in the South of Cathcart area, the boulevard tree is proposed to be located within the parking zone to visually reduce the roadway width.

The redevelopment of the Ford's and Plaza Books site will be critical to the achievement of a strong pedestrian environment in this area. The Plan recommends the consolidation of these two properties for the creation of a major retail anchor that could reinforce this portion of the downtown as a strong retailing destination. At the corner of Cathcart and Pacific, a setback of approximately 800 square feet is proposed as an entry plaza and cafe for this anchor use, to activate the street and to create a strong gateway to the downtown. Major storefront displays within the retail development would also serve to enliven the street and build off the creative windows across the street at Cat 'n Canary. The Plan also recommends that this segment of the street be closed on a weekly basis to accommodate the farmer's market.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Lincoln to Walnut***

The segment of Pacific Avenue between Lincoln Street and Walnut Avenue plays an important east-west traffic function with Soquel Avenue. As a result, the favored traffic movement within this particular segment is for a one-way northbound operation to avoid left-turn conflicts at Lincoln and Walnut. This segment is also characterized by the three distinctive "T" intersections at Lincoln, Soquel and Walnut, which provide strong visual entry points to the downtown.

The Plan for this portion of the street results in a more symmetrical treatment within the 75-foot right-of-way; sidewalks on both sides of the street are approximately 20 feet in depth; however, the elimination of parking along the east side of the street at the "T" intersections of Lincoln and Walnut results in a plaza area of 35 feet in depth at the foot of Lincoln and 25 feet at Walnut Street. On the wider sidewalk at the Lincoln-Pacific intersection, the Plan calls for two landmark retailing kiosks (coffee, ice cream, flowers, newspapers) to activate the street and to define a plaza area adjacent to the Del Mar Theatre. At the foot of Walnut Street, the Plan proposes an open plaza with public seating. In addition to these activity nodes, cafe and retail extension areas are proposed along the east side of Pacific Avenue immediately north of Soquel Avenue, adjacent to the Trust and Ferrari Buildings.

The roadway width of Pacific Avenue within this segment is proposed at approximately 27 feet to allow flexibility of operation. Curbside parallel parking is proposed on both sides of the street north of Soquel Avenue. As discussed above, the boulevard tree would be located on the sidewalk and within the parking zone. Street trees of a different species and spacing from the boulevard tree are proposed for each of the intersection activity nodes to reinforce the spatial quality and significance of the areas and to offer variation along the length of the street.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Walnut to Church***

This segment of the street has a predominant right-of-way width of 70 feet; it includes the Palomar Hotel and a range of "in-line" jewelry, apparel, and food-related businesses. Two significant development opportunities occur along this segment of the street: one at the southwestern corner of Church and Pacific Avenue; and a second at the site of the old Cooper House and Odd Fellow's Lodge at Cooper and Pacific Avenue.

The basic asymmetrical cross section is continued in this portion of the street, with the promenading sidewalk on the west side of the street at approximately 12 feet, and the sidewalk on the east side at 20 feet to allow for extension zones adjacent to the Palomar Hotel, the Neary Building, and the new Cooper House. The curb-to-curb dimension of the roadway is proposed at 34 feet to allow for one lane of traffic and two curbside parking lanes, or if it is desired in the future: two lanes of traffic and one curbside parking/loading lane on the east side of the street.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Church to Locust***

This segment of Pacific Avenue between Church and Locust Streets includes the distinctive "T" intersection with Cooper Street, creating a unique spatial condition along the avenue. A significant amount of redevelopment will occur within this segment, including a mixed-use theater complex on the former Gottchalk's site, a major office building with ground-level retail on the site of the former Cooper House and Odd Fellow's Lodge, and the reconstruction and expansion of the County Bank Building as a mixed-use commercial project on the northeast corner of Cooper and Pacific. As a result, this portion of Pacific Avenue will be highly active and intensive, appropriate to its role as a major east-west crossing linking the Civic Center with San Lorenzo River and Park.

The basic cross section of this portion of the street is similar to that between Walnut and Church Streets, with a promenading sidewalk of approximately 12 feet on the west side of the avenue adjacent to the theatre complex, and a wider sidewalk of approximately 27 feet on the sunny eastern side adjacent to the Cooper House and the County Bank Building. A roadway of approximately 27 feet is provided to allow for one-way or two-way traffic movement; no on-street parking is proposed in this section of the street because of the east-west cross traffic and turning movements.

The Plan strives to accentuate the significance of this segment of Pacific Avenue through a number of means. Activity nodes on the sunny eastern side of the avenue and at the terminus of Church and Locust Streets are proposed. These would include retailing kiosks as visual landmarks at Pacific and Locust Streets, and sculpture gardens adjacent to the proposed Cooper House at Pacific and Church Streets. Each of these areas will include colorful planting and public seating. A setback plaza of approximately 800 square feet at the corner of Pacific Avenue and Cooper Streets is proposed for the creation of an active outdoor cafe in the spirit of the original Cooper House plaza.

### ***Pacific Avenue: Locust to Water***

The segment of Pacific Avenue between Locust and Water Streets has the narrowest right-of-way width, approximately 65 feet. This portion of the street contains two major approved redevelopment projects: the St. George Hotel development, which will include retail uses with residential above; and the Ron Lau development, which is planned to include Bookshop Santa Cruz on the first two levels and a bed and breakfast inn on three upper floors. The "flatiron" building at the northern tip of Pacific Avenue at Front Street is also planned for reconstruction; together with the Bookshop Santa Cruz, these two projects will create a strong northern gateway to the downtown.

The Plan proposes a one-way southbound street of approximately 20 feet in width for this segment, to create a strong gateway to the downtown from the north. Two curbside lanes of parallel parking/loading are proposed on either side of the avenue. A major element of the Plan is the

creation of a small plaza (3,000 square feet) at the northern tip of Pacific Avenue that will serve as an active extension area for the "flatiron" building, a strong visual gateway to Pacific Avenue...and with the closure of Front Street and/or Pacific Avenue, a major civic gathering space in close conjunction with the Post Office and the Town Clock to the north. The paving treatment of this plaza and the dimensions and paving of the adjacent roadways (Pacific Avenue and Front Street) will be carefully planned to signal motorists that they are entering a pedestrian-dominant zone. The placement of the existing Veteran's Memorial within the space will provide a strong visual element, reinforcing its gateway role. The dimension of sidewalks along this segment of the street will vary from 14 feet to 20 feet to allow extension zones adjacent to the St. George Hotel complex and the Bookshop Santa Cruz.

### ***East-West Streets Between Cedar and Front Streets***

In order to reinforce the downtown as a district, the Plan emphasizes the importance of improving the east-west streets in a manner that will provide for continuity and clarity. While the first phase of the downtown streetscape improvements are generally confined to Pacific Avenue between Laurel and Water Streets, the streetscape master plan also includes the east-west streets between Cedar and Front Streets. These will be improved in subsequent phases and/or as redevelopment along these streets occurs.

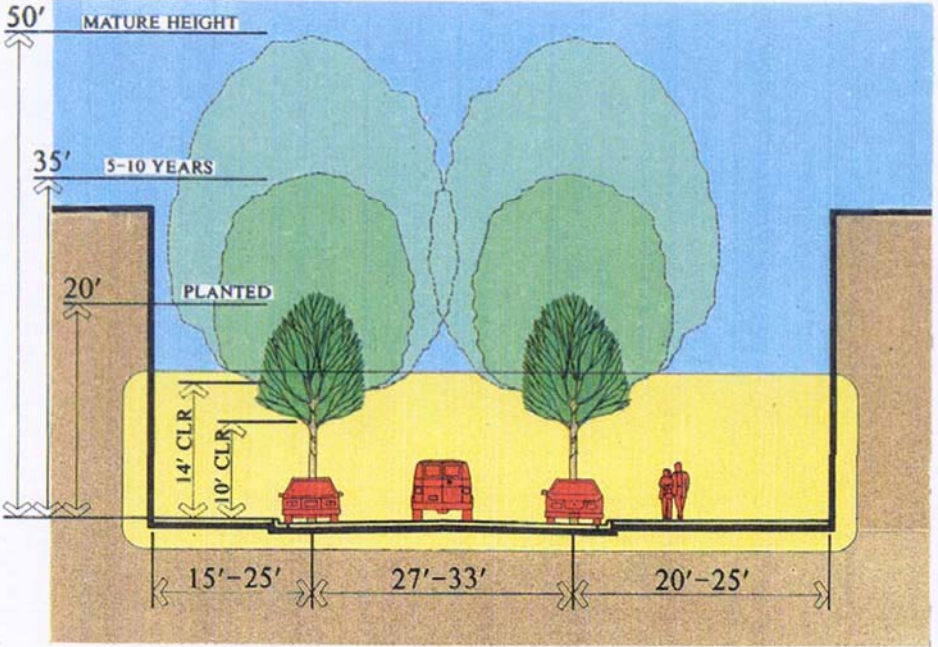
The east-west streets provide important linkages between Pacific Avenue and the adjacent areas; they also provide a continuation of the downtown activities and, as such, must offer a comfortable pedestrian environment. In general, the rights-of-way are considerably narrower than Pacific Avenue, ranging from 55 feet (e.g., Locust) to 70 feet (Cathcart, Walnut). Each of the streets has a unique character and role within the downtown. For instance, Soquel Avenue, Walnut Avenue and Lincoln Street are the principal east-west vehicular routes through the center of the downtown. Cooper, Church and Locust Streets provide for local access and pedestrian movement between the San Lorenzo River, Civic Center and the West End neighborhood. Cathcart Street is the only downtown street that is continuous between Cedar and Front Streets and, as such, provides another pedestrian linkage between the downtown neighborhoods and the river. The Plan calls for these streets to be landscaped in a manner that will promote continuity along their length and result in a diversity of planting in the downtown.

More specifically, along Soquel, Walnut and Lincoln Streets, between Cedar and Front Streets, the Plan recommends a fine-scaled and lacy tree (e.g., ash) to provide a distinctive gateway effect and a contrast to the London planes proposed along Pacific Avenue. Along Cooper, Church and Locust Streets, the Plan recommends the extension of the London plane from Pacific Avenue to emphasize the continuity of the pedestrian environment and to ensure a broad canopy over the street. Similarly, along Cathcart Street, the London plane is recommended to reinforce pedestrian linkages between the river, downtown and the neighborhoods. Along the side streets south of Cathcart Street, including Elm and Maple Streets and Birch Alley, a flowering ornamental fruit tree (e.g., pear) is recommended to introduce color to this part of the downtown, and to respond to the narrower sidewalk widths.

The following provides a more detailed discussion of recommendations for the east-west streets between Cedar, Front, Laurel and Water Streets.



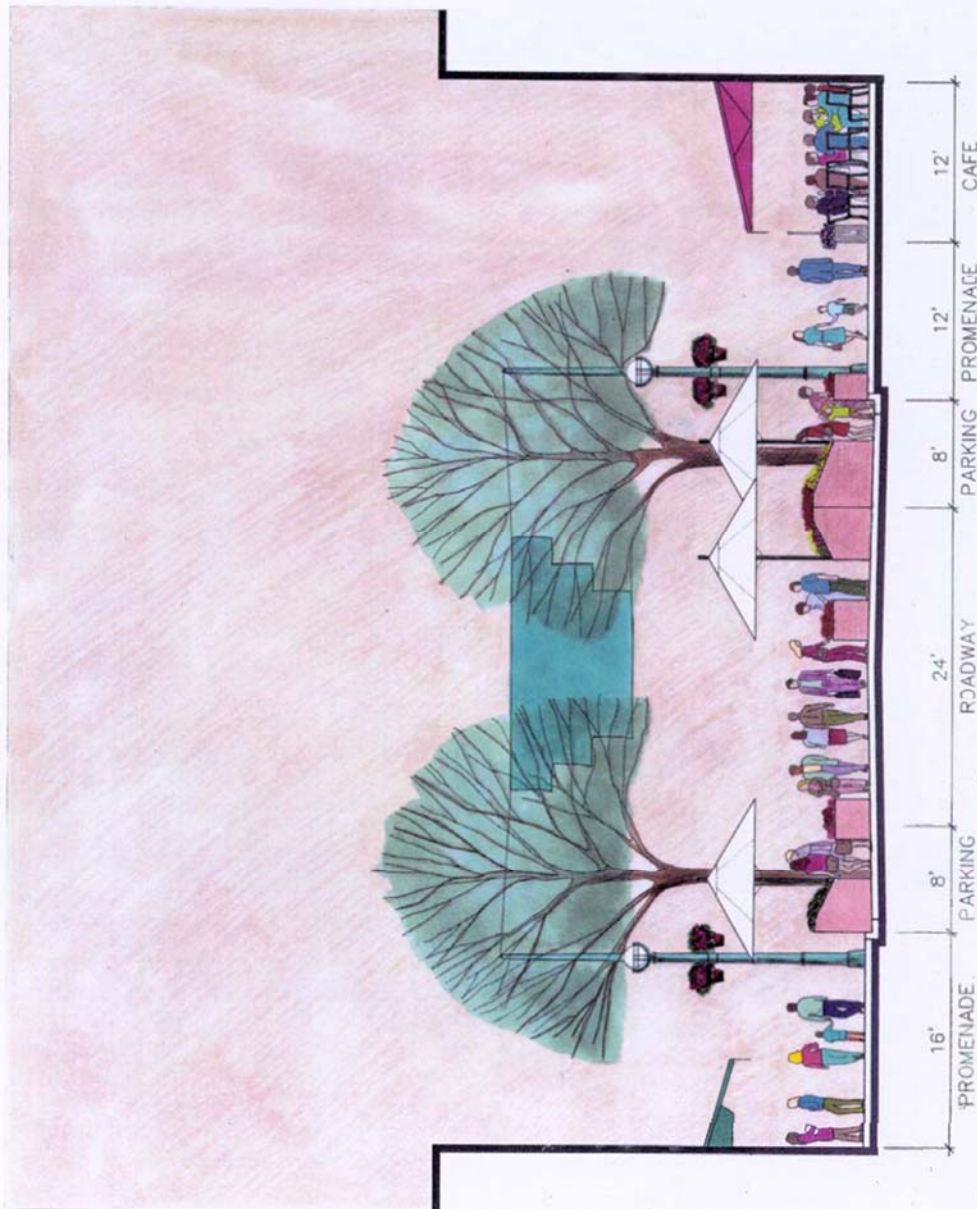
**PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT**



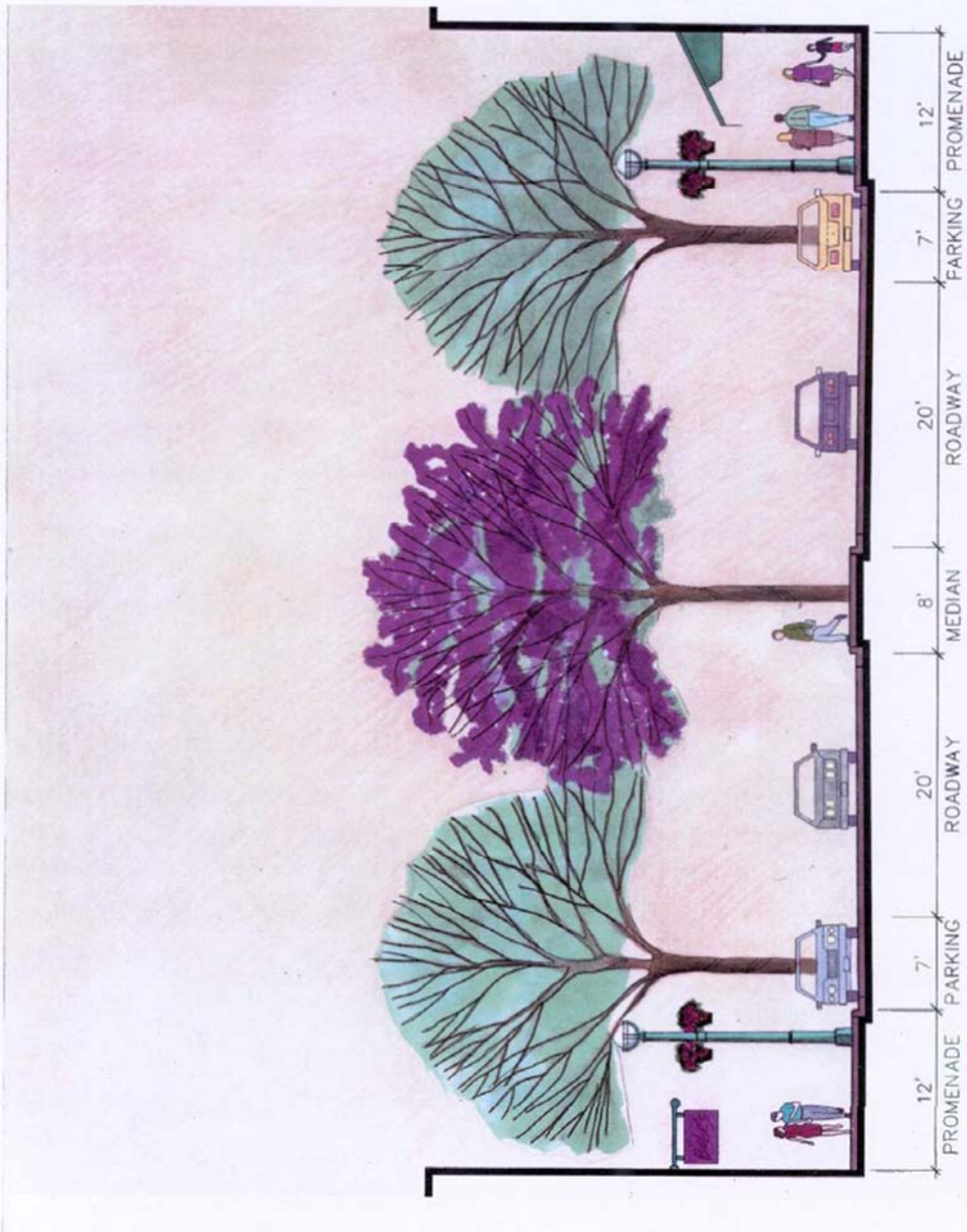
**BOULEVARD TREES**



**VEHICULAR MOVEMENT**



**PACIFIC AVENUE "FARMERS MARKET"  
BETWEEN CATHCART STREET AND LINCOLN STREET**

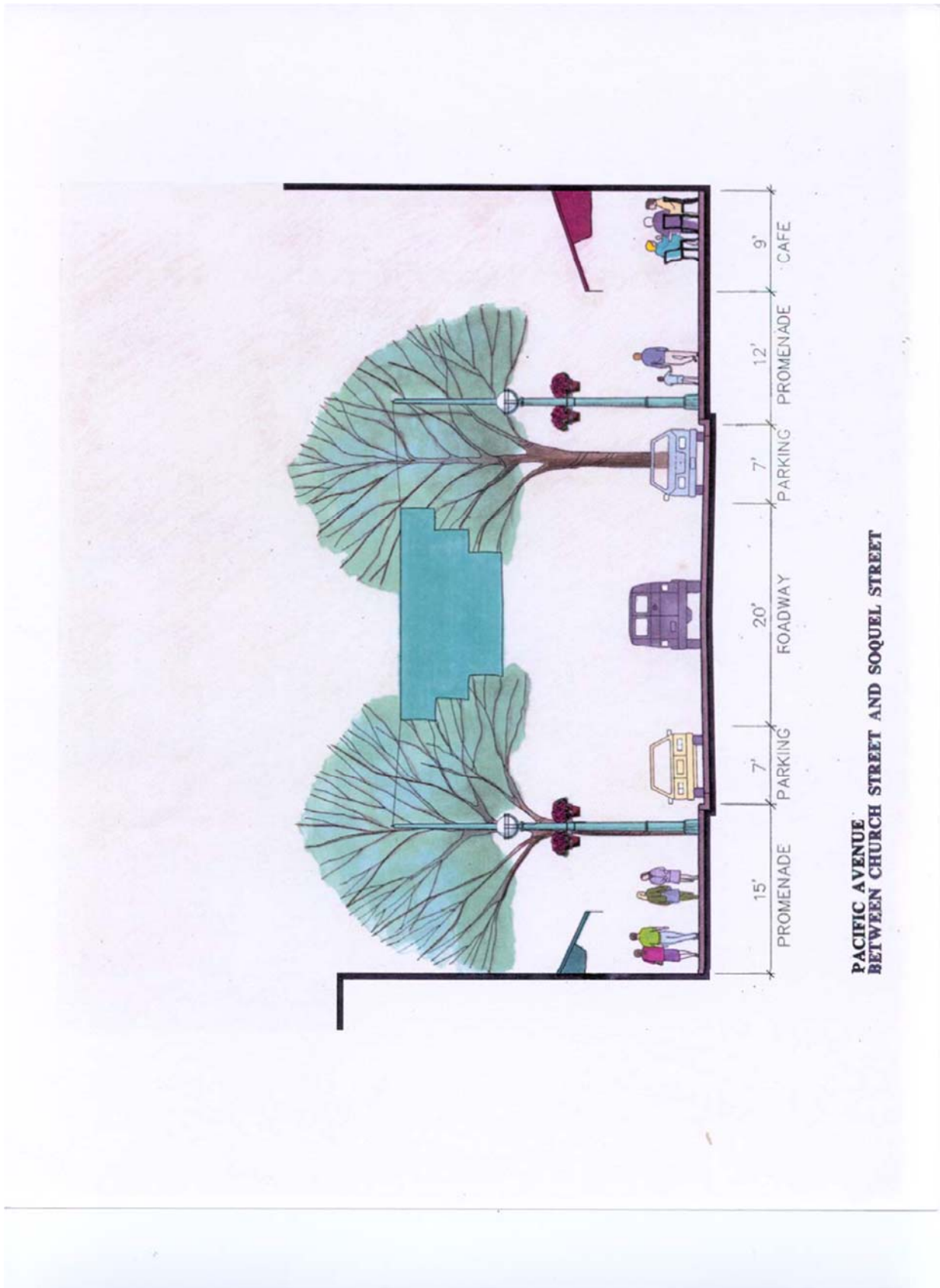


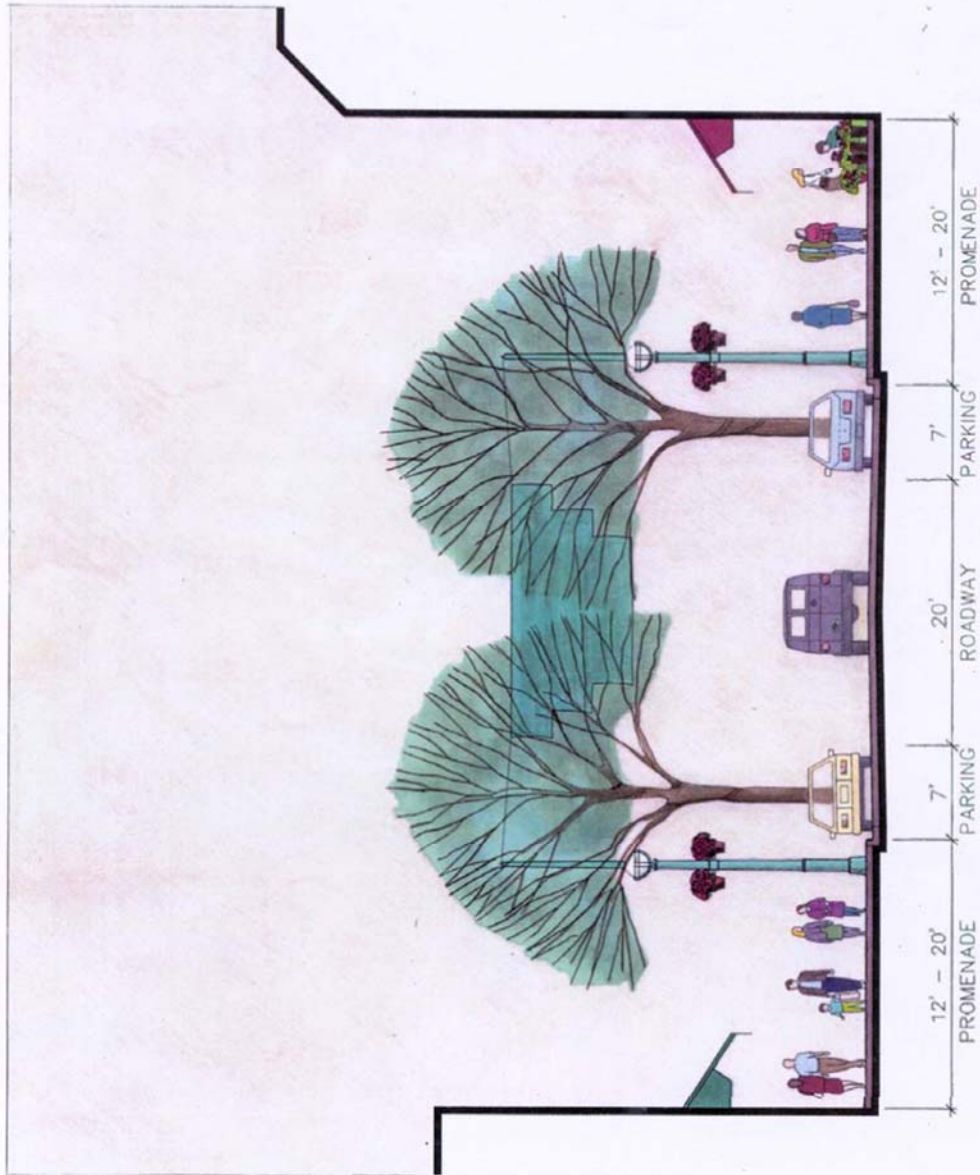
**PACIFIC AVENUE  
ETWEEN CATHCART STREET AND LAUREL STREET**





**PACIFIC AVENUE "ACTIVITY AREA" & KIOSK  
BETWEEN LINCOLN STREET AND SOQUEL STREET**





**PACIFIC AVENUE  
BETWEEN WATER STREET AND LOCUST STREET**

### ***Cooper Street***

Cooper Street plays a unique role in downtown Santa Cruz. As a vehicular street, it provides, with Church and Locust Streets, local east-west access between the West End neighborhoods and Front Street. In the same way, it provides an important pedestrian linkage between the Civic Center, Pacific Avenue, and the San Lorenzo River and park. As a public space, it is uniquely distinctive because of its architectural heritage, reinforced by the historic Octagon building, the Leonard Building, and the County Bank Building. The loss of the historic Cooper House was significant in this regard. Abbott Square, a 5,000 square foot pocket park between the Octagon building and the Cooper House site, reinforces the open space role of the street.

Historically, Cooper Street has been closed on occasions to accommodate special events and festivals. With the completion of the Art and History Museum at Cooper and Front Streets, this potential will be enhanced further. The Plan calls for the street to be maintained as a slow-moving, two-lane roadway with a curbside loading lane (e.g., yellow and white zone) on the south side of the street, and parallel parking and limited loading on the north side. The parking and loading lane on the south side of the street will begin 50 feet east of Pacific Avenue to respond to the proposed Cooper House plaza. In areas where there is parking, sidewalks will measure approximately 8 to 10 feet in width. Along the north side of the street, trees will be planted within the parking lane to promote a narrower pedestrian-oriented street; along the south side of the street, trees will be planted at the same 50-foot spacing, but on the sidewalk to provide for an uninterrupted loading lane that can accommodate long trucks.

### ***Church Street***

Like Cooper Street, Church Street is important for local east-west vehicular access and pedestrian movement between the West End neighborhoods, the downtown, and the riverfront. The Plan proposes that it be maintained as a slow-moving, two-lane street of approximately 24 feet in width. To enhance the pedestrian linkage, and to take advantage of cafe extension opportunities adjacent to the proposed theater complex, the Plan proposes the elimination of on-street parking along both sides of the street, with the exception of the north face of the street on the western half of the block. In this way, sidewalks can be maintained at 10 to 12 feet in width, with a wider sidewalk (approximately 20 feet) provided on the sunny north side of the street adjacent to the cinema. The Plan proposes the planting of London plane trees at 25 feet on center within the sidewalks on both sides of the street, interrupted only by the proposed cinema marquis on the north side of the street.

### ***Locust Street***

Like Cooper and Church Streets, Locust Street must be maintained as a slow-moving local access street. The narrow right-of-way of approximately 50 feet limits the potential for wide sidewalks. The two-lane carriageway with a lane of parking of approximately 37 feet is recommended to be maintained, with parking confined on the south side of the street. The resulting dimension of the sidewalks will be approximately eight feet. The Plan calls for London plane trees to be planted within the sidewalk at spacing of 50 feet.

### ***Soquel Avenue***

The Plan calls for Soquel Avenue to be reinforced as an important gateway street to the downtown. The street must continue to function as a major east-west vehicular route, with two lanes of two-way traffic and an eastbound right turn lane at Front Street. In addition, the Plan recommends that exclusive bike lanes be provided in both directions to accommodate east-west bicycle movement across the downtown. In order to accommodate the movement requirements and to create an attractive pedestrian environment, the Plan recommends that curbside parking be eliminated from this segment of the street. In addition, the Plan calls for a building setback of seven feet on the eastern half of the block, in order to allow for generous gateway landscaping and promenading sidewalks. A large, distinctive, lacy open tree, such as an ash, is recommended within the sidewalk areas (which will range from 10 to 15 feet in width) at spaces of 25 feet on center.

### ***Walnut Avenue***

Walnut Avenue will continue to function as a two-lane one-way westbound street between Pacific and Cedar Streets. The Plan proposes that the convenient diagonal parking on the south side of the street be maintained because of the wider right-of-way and the compatibility with bicycle and pedestrian movement. The Plan also calls for the removal of parking on the north side of the street, in favor of an exclusive bike lane that will be part of the Soquel-Lincoln Street system of east-west bicycle lanes. The same tree utilized on Soquel Avenue (e.g., the ash) is recommended to be planted in the sidewalks at a spacing of 50 feet on center. The width of the sidewalks on this street will be approximately 8 to 10 feet.

### ***Lincoln Street***

Lincoln Street, between Cedar and Pacific, is planned as a two-lane one-way eastbound street with parallel parking on the north side and an exclusive bike lane along the southern curb. Ash trees, or an open lacy tree to correspond to those selected for Soquel and Walnut Streets, are proposed on both sides of the street at 50 feet on center. The northern line of trees is proposed in planters within the parking zone, while the southern line of trees would be in the sidewalk to allow for a continuous bike lane.

### ***Cathcart Street***

As discussed, Cathcart Street is the only local street within the downtown that connects Front and Cedar Streets across Pacific Avenue. As a result, it is an important visual and pedestrian linkage between the West End neighborhood and the San Lorenzo River. It also plays an important role as a local east-west vehicular linkage within the downtown.

West of Pacific, the Plan proposes a 48-foot wide curb-to-curb dimension for Cathcart Street, allowing two lanes of traffic, bike lanes, and curbside parallel parking/loading on the north and south sides of the street.

East of Pacific Avenue, where the right-of-way is narrower and where a strong pedestrian linkage to the river is desired, the Plan calls for a sidewalk of approximately 11 feet on the north side, with parking eliminated to accommodate bicycle lanes and a promenade-width sidewalk. On the south

side of the street, a sidewalk of approximately 7 feet is established in order to retain parking and bike lines. West of Pacific Avenue, sidewalks will be approximately eight feet within the existing right-of-way. A staggered double row of London plane trees, spaced at 25 feet, is recommended along both sides of the street, with the outbound tree placed within a planter in the parking zone to reduce the visual width of the street.

### ***Maple Street***

The Plan calls for Maple Street to be maintained as a two-lane, two-way local street between Cedar and Pacific, with parallel parking on both sides of the street. Flowering street trees planted at 50 feet on center in planters within the parking zone are recommended, because of the narrow dimension of the sidewalks (approximately 6 feet).

### ***Elm Street***

Elm Street will be maintained as a one-way service alley, with a curb-to-curb dimension of approximately 28 feet and parallel parking on the north side of the street. Because of the narrow sidewalks that result (approximately six feet), and the frequent driveway curb-cuts, flowering street trees are recommended only along the north side of the street in planters within the parking zone.

### ***Birch Lane***

Within the South of Cathcart area, the inactivity of the service alleys has created social and visual problems. Birch Lane, between Laurel and Maple Streets, offers a unique opportunity to establish an attractive and active pedestrian way between Cedar Street and Pacific Avenue. The lane already contains a range of entertainment and food-related uses, including: a jazz club, a bagelry, an Irish pub, and a health food store. The Plan proposes that this alley be converted into a pedestrian way that would allow limited access for service vehicles, and for adjacent restaurant and entertainment uses to extend into the right-of-way. Parking at Cedar Square is proposed to be shifted to the south within the public right-of-way to allow the pedestrian way to remain adjacent with the active uses of the pub, jazz club, and bagelry.

In order to enhance the image of Birch Lane as a "club alley," a special paving, lighting, and street planting approach should be developed. Flowering trees, similar to those selected for Maple and Elm Streets, are recommended. Access to surface parking lots (e.g., Planned Parenthood and the residential apartment building) should be reconfigured from Laurel Street and Maple Avenue by aggregating the separate lots. In addition, a program of centralized garbage storage will be critical to improve the visual image of the lane. A key action that will be necessary to make this concept successful will be the replacement of Pip Print and its surface parking at the corner of Birch and Pacific with a more active and street-oriented use.

### ***Service Alleys***

Downtown Santa Cruz has numerous service alleys that provide loading access to individual properties as well as pedestrian access from off-street parking facilities. The Plan proposes that a consistent treatment of lighting and paving (e.g., stamped concrete) be developed for all of these lanes, to improve their visual appearance and the pedestrian environment. For each lane, a strategy

for centralized garbage should be developed to alleviate existing problems of exposed dumpsters and recycling bins.

### ***The East-West Gateway Streets: Water, Soquel, and Laurel***

Three east-west street corridors bring traffic directly to Pacific Avenue: Water and Mission Streets at the northern edge of the downtown; Soquel Avenue, Lincoln, and Walnut Streets in the center of downtown; and Laurel Street at the southern edge. These streets serve as distinctive gateways to the downtown district, which should be heightened and enhanced. More specifically:

***Water-Mission Streets:*** This street corridor links Ocean Street on the east with Highway 1 on the west, and is a key entry to the downtown. The existing visual experience is a rich one that should be preserved. From the Water Street Bridge, one can see the varied skyline of Santa Cruz framed by the escarpments of Mission and Beach Hills and the San Lorenzo River. The median treatment of tall redwood trees along Water Street creates a distinctive gateway, and the Town Clock provides a strong suggestion of arrival and center. From Mission Street, the downtown is more slowly revealed as one proceeds down Mission Hill to the Town Clock and Scope Park. Specific streetscape recommendations for the Water-Mission Street corridor include:

- a. Treatment of the Water Street Bridge with banners and special lighting that creates a stronger feeling of entry, and that highlights the importance of the San Lorenzo River. A common theme could be established with both the Soquel Avenue and Broadway Bridges.
- b. New development that occurs at River and Water Streets should be carefully designed to accentuate this intersection as a northern gateway to the downtown (e.g., use of distinctive architectural elements at corner).
- c. The planting of street trees along the north and south curbs of Water and Mission Streets to strengthen the sense of greenery, and to enhance the gateway sequence leading to the Town Clock. The existing stand of redwoods in the median should be maintained.
- d. Redesign Town Clock Square and Scope Park to create a stronger visual linkage and civic statement in relation to the post office and the proposed entry plaza at the northern tip of Pacific Avenue. This linkage should be achieved with special paving that will also assist pedestrians in negotiating the wide intersection, and with common tree planting that reinforces the spatial integrity of the intersection. Paving at the entry to Pacific Avenue and Front Street should also be designed to give the motorist a strong sense of arrival and a signal that the downtown is a pedestrian district where traffic must move slowly. The treatment of new buildings adjacent to the space should be carefully considered to reinforce the spatial integrity of the intersection and to be compatible with the Italianate post office (e.g., similar materials and color, visual extension of key horizontal lines including pediment and parapet). Activities (e.g., cafe, outdoor market) on the new Pacific Avenue plaza, Scope Park, and Town Clock Plaza will also reinforce the civic significance of the space and the sense of entry to the downtown.

- e. Introduce signage that clearly directs traffic destined for the downtown shopping district to Pacific Avenue, and other traffic to Front, Cedar, and Center Streets.

***Soquel-Walnut-Lincoln:*** As discussed above, these three streets provide a major east-west corridor through the downtown; their gateway significance is enhanced by the way that they visually terminate at Pacific Avenue. Specific recommendations related to their improvement include:

- a. Treat the Soquel Avenue Bridge with banners and special lighting to create a stronger feeling of entry, and to highlight the importance of the San Lorenzo River.
- b. Introduce a consistent landscape treatment along Soquel, Walnut and Lincoln Streets (e.g., an open lacy street tree such as an ash), on the north and south sides of Soquel Avenue and around the Soquel-Front intersection.
- c. Design the corner treatment of new buildings at Soquel and Front Streets to accentuate the role of this intersection as a principal gateway to the downtown (e.g., tower or turret treatments, corner setbacks, major display window, etc.).
- d. Reinforce the significance of the Lincoln, Soquel and Walnut intersections with Pacific Avenue. Streetscape treatment of Pacific Avenue between Lincoln and Walnut Streets should reinforce the significance of the three intersections as a major "crossing" and principal activity center in the downtown. Taller specimen trees at the "T" intersections are recommended.

***Laurel Street:*** The southern gateway to the downtown district is by way of Laurel Street and the Broadway Bridge, which form a major east-west arterial through the city. Apart from signage, the motorist is not given many visual "signals" that the downtown is immediately to the north. Specific streetscape recommendations for this corridor include:

- a. Treat the Broadway Bridge with banners and special lighting to create a stronger feeling of entry, and to highlight the importance of the San Lorenzo River.
- b. Introduce continuous curbside street trees at a spacing of 50 feet along the north and south side of Laurel Street.
- c. Mark the intersection at Front and Cedar Streets through the use of distinctive landscaping (taller trees, planting beds) to signify an entrance to motorists.
- d. Highlight Pacific Avenue at Laurel as the southern "gateway" to the downtown, by making streetscape improvements on Pacific Avenue (e.g., median treatment, paving, street trees) highly visible. Extending paving and landscaping treatment across the Laurel Street intersection should be considered.
- e. Incorporate design guidelines that encourage distinctive architectural treatment of new development at Front and Laurel Streets to accentuate this intersection as a major gateway to the downtown. Because of its visual prominence from the



Broadway Bridge, the Toyota property provides a particular opportunity in this regard.

### ***The Front/River Street Corridor***

Although Ocean Street to the Riverside Bridge is (and will continue to be) the predominant way for regional traffic to reach the Beach, the Front/River Street corridor provides the most direct downtown route between Highway 1 and the Beach. This corridor also plays an important visual role as a "seam" between the downtown and the San Lorenzo River. Its role as an automobile route needs to be carefully balanced with both its visual role and the need for pedestrians to move along it and to cross it safely and conveniently to the river.

Front and River Streets are currently under study to determine the appropriate operations for the corridor. Options under consideration include: four through-lanes of traffic; three through-lanes with exclusive northbound and southbound bike lanes along each curb; and two through-lanes with curbside parking and exclusive bike lanes. All options would accommodate left and right turn lanes as necessary at key intersections (e.g., Soquel). While from an urban design standpoint, it would be most desirable to maintain curbside parking with a bicycle lane to create a comfortable buffer between pedestrians and traffic, the City has determined that traffic movement requires more than two lanes of through-movement. Therefore, a tradeoff between the desire for bicycle movement and curbside parking will need to be made.

Regardless of the ultimate operation of the corridor, the Plan recommends a strong and consistent streetscape treatment along River Street from Highway 1 to Front Street, south along Front Street to the Washington Extension, and then south to the Wharf and Boardwalk. This treatment would help to direct through-traffic around the downtown, and to create an attractive riverfront boulevard leading to the Beach. Palm trees would create a visually strong statement and would be evocative of the Beach; they would also be at an appropriate scale with the relatively wide street, and provide an interesting visual counterpoint to the more intimate streetscape of Pacific Avenue and the riparian landscape along the river. A consistent lighting treatment along the length of the corridor should also be considered. As discussed above, each of the major east-west vehicular intersections with Front Street should be marked by an interruption in the landscaping to signify entries to the downtown.

The segment of Front Street between Water and River Streets will continue to function as a one-way southbound street, and is envisioned as a more intimate pedestrian-oriented street with limited through-traffic. The streetscape treatment should reflect this role. The paving treatment of Pacific Avenue should extend along the west side of the street adjacent to the St. George Hotel, where continuous retail commercial uses are planned. The street tree along this portion of Front Street should be similar in scale and type to the boulevard tree selected for Pacific Avenue (i.e., London plane) to extend the pedestrian character of the downtown to Front Street.

### ***Cedar Street***

Although Cedar Street plays a similar role as Front Street, in terms of providing local access and parking for Pacific Avenue, it is markedly different in function and image. Unlike Front Street,

Cedar does not lead directly to any major arterials. It functions as a local route and, particularly since the earthquake, has become a more retail-intensive and pedestrian-oriented street. Its image is that of a village street; the buildings are varied in height, form and setback; the streetscape is informal and random. While the pedestrian environment of Cedar Street needs to be improved (in some cases, sidewalks are narrow and in bad repair), the informal and "organic" character of the street should remain in place. A consistent street planting approach is not recommended, as this would obscure the unique and diverse character of the buildings and activities along the street.

Rather, it is recommended that street planting continue to occur on an incremental basis, by individual property owners within setback areas, at the edge of the city parking lots and within the street right-of-way, where there is sufficient space to allow for promenading (e.g., at least 10 feet). Existing street trees should be evaluated for their appropriateness and their condition. There are examples of street trees that are not thriving (e.g., Pittosporum or Victorian Box) and ones that are inappropriate for sidewalk installation (e.g., Ligustrum or Privet). Care should be taken to plant trees that are appropriate to the particular constraints of a location.

### ***Park and Plaza Improvements***

While streets provide the major opportunity for public open space within the downtown, the Plan identifies several opportunities for the introduction of parks and plazas that can serve as places for gathering and recreation.

#### ***Plaza Lane/Cedar Street Park***

Once the Locust Street parking garage is completed, there is an opportunity to create a park/public space of approximately 15,000 square feet on the existing city parking lot to the north. This park could include as a major element the preservation of the landmark walnut tree, and could serve as an attractive counterpoint to the more active and urban spaces along Pacific Avenue. The park, which would enjoy sun throughout most of the day, would be directly connected to Pacific Avenue by Plaza Lane.

#### ***A New Civic Center Plaza***

Although not strictly within the boundaries of the Downtown Recovery Plan, the Civic Center at Church and Center Streets offers an appropriate opportunity to create a meaningful civic gathering space for the downtown. Immediately following the earthquake, citizens naturally gravitated toward City Hall to gain information. Despite its significance as the seat of local government and a center of cultural exchange (e.g., Civic Auditorium and the main library), the Civic Center does not include an open space specifically designed for public gatherings. The Plan recommends that consideration be given in the future to the creation of such a place at the Civic Center; this could include a redesigned plaza and garden space in front of City Hall and/or an open space flanking Church Street and visually connecting the City Hall, Civic Auditorium and Library.

#### ***A Riverfront Park***

The City's 1988 San Lorenzo River Design Plan called for the creation of a riverfront plaza/park along the levee promenade between Soquel and Laurel Streets. The Plan located this open space

opposite the Metro Center to create a strong activity linkage with the downtown, and to offer pedestrians the opportunity to get to the water's edge. Based upon further evaluation of open space opportunities in the downtown, the Recovery Plan strongly reconfirms the importance of creating such a riverfront park as a public gathering space and as an open space resource that connects the downtown with its major natural feature. However, the Plan recommends that it be sited at the foot of Cathcart Street to provide a more direct visual and pedestrian linkage with Pacific Avenue, and to take advantage of opportunities to expand Cathcart Street as a stronger pedestrian street.

The precise design of the riverfront park needs to be studied in detail. Its size should be approximately one-half acre in size (no more than 150 feet square) to promote a strong sense of intimacy and enclosure. Its design should be closely coordinated with adjacent commercial and residential development to maximize ground-level activity (e.g., convenience retail uses, residential stoops and entries, etc.) and a sense of security. The design should lead pedestrians comfortably from the Cathcart Street crosswalk at Front Street to the top of the levee in a gradual series of terraces that also provide disabled access. A terraced amphitheater stepping down to the river's edge should provide pedestrians with access to the water's edge and serve as a performing space or as a place for brown-bag lunches and informal seating. In addition to hardscape elements that accommodate public gathering, the park should include generous softscape including turf areas, natural riparian vegetation, and colorful planting.



This chapter has not been modified from the original 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan.

## **Implementation and Management Strategy 7**

### **Implementation**

The Downtown Recovery Plan will be implemented through a range of actions, some to be carried out by the Redevelopment Agency, others through other City departments, including Planning, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Water and Finance. Implementation of the Plan includes construction projects such as public and private development, the replacement of infrastructure and streetscape, as well as statutory and regulatory actions such as changes in zoning, parcel configuration, and planning documents.

The Plan itself, when adopted, will supersede those sections of the 1984 Downtown Area Plan dealing with the planning area of the Downtown Recovery Plan. The Downtown Recovery Plan thus amends and becomes part of the City's General Plan. (Some sections of the 1984 Downtown Area Plan dealing with other parts of the downtown remain relevant and will combine with the Recovery Plan to comprise the area plan for the greater downtown.)

Aspects of the Plan also amend parts of the San Lorenzo River Design Plan as the Downtown Recovery Plan implementation strategy seeks integration with the River Plan.

Implementation of the land use recommendations and design guidelines may require amendments to the Municipal Code, including the zoning ordinance. Portions or all of the Plan may be adopted as a Specific Plan for the downtown.

Implementation of the streetscape recommendations and replacement/reconstruction of water, sewer, street, storm drainage and other utility infrastructure will involve construction activity on Pacific Avenue or other downtown locations. Construction impact mitigations will be proposed as part of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Plan.

The long range implementation of the Plan anticipates eventual construction of parking structures and/or the combination, reconfiguration, purchase or lease of areas for public and private parking. Changes in traffic circulation and signalization, bikeways, and arrangements necessary to operate a beach shuttle and/or a fixed rail trolley are also anticipated. Acquisition and/or development of park and open space areas as outlined in the Plan are also anticipated as an implementation activity. Actions necessary to implement accessibility standards identified in the Plan in both private and public development will be undertaken. In short, a variety of operational policies and construction activities are anticipated in order to implement specific recommendations in the Plan.

A number of redevelopment actions are contemplated as part of the implementation strategy. These include: property acquisition (including eminent domain proceedings); entering into disposition and development agreements (e.g., selling of land, stipulating public and private responsibilities associated with new development); subdivision, resubdivision or combining of properties, changing property boundaries; demolition of nonhistoric buildings; issuance of bonds, certificates of participation or other financial instruments; and passage of specific resolutions or ordinances as

necessary and appropriate to implement particular aspects of the Downtown Recovery Plan. A number of potential actions will be implemented as part of the retail management strategy to be undertaken jointly between the City and the private sector.

Environmental review will address these activities as well as the general levels of development and building identified as part of the "project called out in the Plan.

### **Specific Implementation Policies for Circulation**

In order to promote a bicycle-friendly downtown, the following specific implementation policies for circulation are recommended:

1. Elimination of Diagonal Parking. The elimination of diagonal parking is recommended for the entire downtown core area, except on the left side of one-way streets (e.g., Walnut Avenue between Pacific and Cedar), where there will be no conflict with safe bicycle movement.
2. Avoid Decorative Bricking in Streets. Decorative bricking in the street can cause hazards to cyclists as well as pedestrians and persons utilizing mobility aids and devices, and should not be used.
3. Smoothness Standards. For safety as well as aesthetic reasons, all roadway surfaces in the downtown should be built and maintained to a high standard of smoothness.
4. Construction Hazards. During the coming period of public and private reconstruction of the downtown, all construction sites should be monitored for compliance with safety standards regarding road cuts, debris, temporary signs and scaffolds, and other potential hazards. Steel plates placed over roadway excavations should have edges tapered or buried, and should have nonslip treatments.
5. Standards for Gratings. As the Downtown Recovery Plan is implemented, all gratings and utility service cover plates should conform to CalTrans standards for bicycle safety; existing substandard gratings should be upgraded.
6. Mixed-Use Pathways. Sufficient space on mixed-use paths, such as the river levee, should be ensured as both bicycle and pedestrian use increases.

### **Downtown Management Strategy**

The previous chapters of the Recovery Plan have dealt with the physical design standards, regulations, and proposals for public and private improvements. This chapter outlines recommended management strategies for the ongoing administration and maintenance of the downtown area.

Clearly, physical improvements alone will not create an active and economically viable retail street. The nature of downtown retail has changed due to highly competitive pressures created by

outlying shopping centers, which have the advantage of central management and controlled environments. Downtown merchants and property owners can no longer afford to ignore the advantage of working together to create a competitive destination. In addition, the magnitude of Santa Cruz' specific problems related to rebuilding a major portion of its downtown warrants an active and aggressive centralized management approach.

The following management strategies and systems are proposed as a means of both guiding and supporting the redevelopment of the downtown and the redesign of Pacific Avenue. While many of the activities are within the traditional responsibility of the City, and will remain so, this approach is comprehensive and includes activities of downtown-oriented nonprofit entities. For instance, the City Council, through its various agencies, will continue to administer all health, safety and land use regulations. The Downtown Commission, appointed by the Council, will continue to advise the Council on overall issues affecting the downtown, including parking and public improvements.

Augmenting these activities is the proposed Cooperative Retail Management (CRM) organization, which would be established to manage and administer specific programs related to the revitalization of the downtown's retail and public spaces. The CRM organization would assist retailers, property owners, and the City in coordinating and actively managing programs which directly affect the overall street and economic environment of the downtown, including retail recruitment and retention, property management, leasing and management of special uses in public spaces, and maintenance and security.

A key to all of the recommendations is the concept of a public-private partnership. In order to effectuate that partnership, a commitment to the program must be demonstrated by the private sector as well as the City in terms of financing the organization, having representation in the organization, and adhering to the programs established by the organization. That commitment should be made at the outset.

## **Cooperative Retail Management**

The following section discusses potential responsibility phases and management issues associated with implementation of the Downtown Recovery Plan, including the element of a Cooperative Retail Management (CRM) program. It is included as resource material to inform future discussions on the issue, and should not be construed as adopted policy.

The Plan recommends that a Cooperative Retail Management (CRM) entity, structured as a nonprofit (501-3-c) corporation, be formed as soon as possible. The immediate objective of this entity would be to coordinate the property owner and tenant improvements and activities with the City's reconstruction program, and to administer a retail retention and recruitment program for the downtown.

The entity should be established as a joint effort of the City and the Downtown Association. Its board of directors should include members of both entities and representative retailers, property owners, developers, and property managers. Downtown legal, accounting, and design professionals would also be appropriate as board members. Budget estimates could be as much as \$250,000 to \$300,000 per year in the initial three to five years, depending on the level of staffing required.

## **Phase One CRM Responsibilities**

The CRM's primary responsibilities prior to completion of the construction phase would be assisting retailers in getting back into old and newly constructed buildings in a timely and coordinated manner and initiating a retail recruitment effort. The primary tasks for the first two years include the following:

### **Retail Recruitment**

- Execute a retail recruitment program designed to identify and recruit Bay Area, regional and national chains into the Downtown and areas contiguous to the Downtown.
- Administer a retail recruitment program designed to identify and recruit additional independent retailers into the Downtown.
- Assist property owners and retailers in finding appropriate locations which match the needs of both parties as well as the overall marketing strategy for the Downtown.

### **Retail Assistance**

- Coordinate developers' and property owners' construction with the City's construction and development schedules to facilitate the process of moving tenants into permanent commercial space.
- Administer a retail retention program designed to help prepare existing local retailers for the demands of relocation and potentially higher rents.
- Oversee displaced retailers relocations, advise retailers and administer any retailer relocation funds that might become available through State grants or low-interest loans from other sources, as may be appropriate.
- Assist small retailers and property owners in negotiating fair and equitable leases for commercial space in the Downtown.
- Initiate the development and enforcement of retail standards and coordination such as common hours of operation, joint marketing, advertising, and promotions; cluster merchandising concepts; innovative pedestrian-oriented signage; and customer service training for store employees.
- Coordinate with the City on issues involving parking, traffic, movements, street lighting, security, maintenance, and special events during reconstruction.
- Formulate a management plan for administration of kiosks and extension areas or other related matters.

## **Phase Two CRM Responsibilities**

Upon completion of the street improvements and the initial stages of the retail recruitment program, the CRM would implement the management plan for the downtown retail district. The emphasis on retail recruitment and retention should shift from active solicitation and marketing for tenants to coordination of, and assistance to, real estate brokers, property owners, and developers; in addition, the emphasis of the CRM should be on the active management of the street on a day-to-day basis.



The primary focus of Phase Two would be to: coordinate overall promotions and marketing; assist with individual retail recruitment; control and coordinate downtown business hours; and coordinate with the Downtown Association on seasonal events and promotions. However, in addition, and in light of the foregoing considerations, it is recommended that the City Council enter into a management contract with the CRM to undertake the following responsibilities (to the extent allowed by the law):

- Coordinating with the City in the permitting of retail and cafe extension areas.
- Permitting and licensing of vendors, carts and street performers.
- Permitting and coordination of weekly farmer's market.
- Tenant recruitment and leasing of kiosks.
- Coordination with the City, property owners and tenants on security and maintenance issues.
- Coordination with the City, property owners and tenants on all temporary street closures.
- Maintenance and updating of all public information kiosks and directories within the downtown.
- Maintenance and administration of a Pacific Avenue banner program; and coordination with the City and arts community in a program of public art within the downtown.

## **Management Issues**

The City Attorney must provide the City with an opinion on the manner in which the CRM could manage activities normally managed by the City. Dependent upon that opinion, the management contract between the City and the CRM would include some or all of the following activities:

### **Retail and Cafe Extension Areas**

- The City would issue licenses to property owners for merchants or restaurant operators wishing to extend into the public right-of-way, consistent with the retailing objectives of the CRM.
- The City would review all design proposals and enforce compliance with established standards for the use of retail and cafe extension areas, consistent with the objectives of the CRM.
- Licenses would be fully revocable for noncompliance with the standards, at any time and without recourse.
- A monthly or semi-annual license fee from all permittees based on the amount of square feet of public right-of-way utilized as an extension area would be established.

### **Carts and Vendors**

- The CRM would issue permits for carts and vendors. These permits would clearly establish the proposed location for the cart on the street, allowable hours of operation, and the type of merchandise or food to be sold under the terms of the contract.
- For the issuance of a permit, approval would be required of the adjacent property owner(s).
- Permits would be on a month-to-month basis and fully revocable for noncompliance with standards established by the City and the CRM.
- The CRM would collect a standard monthly permit fee from all cart and vendor operations.

### **Street Performers**

- The CRM would establish a Downtown Public Space Arts and Performance committee with responsibility for developing guidelines for street performers and public art. The committee would review all permit submittals and retain a right to refuse anyone a permit.
- The CRM would establish zones within the Downtown which have the approval of adjacent property owners and the City. Street performances would be restricted to these areas.
- The CRM would issue permits for street performers. Permits would clearly establish permitted location for street performers and allowable times for performances.
- The CRM would not collect fees for these permits.
- Note: This provision should be reviewed by the City Attorney, as an underlying "time, place, and manner ordinance" may be required to be adopted by City Council.

### **Free Speech Tables/Demonstrations**

- The CRM would also assist groups wishing to set up free speech tables or undertake demonstrations, in coordinating with the Police Department and in gaining appropriate permits.
- The CRM would establish zones within the Downtown where free speech tables could be set up.

### **Farmer's Market**

- The CRM would assist in the coordination and administration of the weekly farmer's market, including issuance of permits, control over individual vendors, and logistics related to setup, trash control, storage of stalls and vehicles, and street cleanup.
- The CRM would also coordinate with adjacent property owners and retailers to ensure that the farmer's market continues to be compatible with their merchandising.

### **Retail Kiosks**

- The CRM would be responsible for recruiting tenants and leasing kiosks to appropriate tenants who will help activate the street.
- Prospective tenants would obtain written approval from adjacent property owners.
- All leases for kiosk space would be of a short-term duration, subject to renewal, and fully revocable for noncompliance with standards established by the City.
- The CRM would be responsible for assisting tenants in improvements to the kiosk and collecting monthly rents.

### **Street Closures**

- The CRM could be responsible for coordination of all street closures with the City, police, property owners and tenants, including the preparation of all necessary applications, requests for such closures, and posting of public notices for street closures in accordance with City ordinances.

## **Security**

- The City Police Department would maintain primary responsibility for downtown security. The CRM would act as a liaison between individual tenants, property owners, and the police.
- The current assignment of police to the downtown is five full-time patrol officers. The CRM would review the assignment with the City on an ongoing basis to maximize security effectiveness.
- A budget should be established for private security guards to augment police surveillance during the Christmas shopping season and special events, and for parking lot/structure patrol and for traffic control as required.
- The CRM could administer the "Neighborhood Watch" program for the downtown; all shops and businesses could be connected to the CRM by phone; the CRM could alert police and other merchants as required. The CRM could also conduct bimonthly meetings with merchants and the police to resolve issues and to refine security strategies.

## **Maintenance**

- The City would retain responsibility for maintenance of the downtown area; CRM will act as an advisory to the City regarding tenant and property owner concerns.
- It is recognized that the overall streetscape maintenance will be at a higher level than other areas of the City, but staffing levels should not exceed the current levels.
- Once the Streetscape Design has been completed, it is critical that the Design Consultant, along with input from the Streetscape Task Force, property owners and tenants, develop a detailed maintenance impact report, which shall include:
  - definition of the work area and area priorities for level of maintenance;
  - frequency for wash down and sweeping of public walkways;
  - specifications for tree pruning;
  - specific locations of planting areas/beds and planting schedule;
  - schedule for repairs and responses to vandalism;
  - frequency of trash pickup;
  - maintenance of kiosks;
  - maintenance of banners and holiday decorations; and
  - consideration of water-saving alternatives.
- An automatic irrigation system should be installed throughout the area, including all tree wells and planting beds. Hose bibs should be located at appropriate intervals throughout the area.

## **Project Financing**

A key element in the implementation of the Downtown Recovery Plan is the development of a funding strategy. This strategy needs to be both flexible and sufficient to cover the anticipated costs of the Recovery Plan and various post-earthquake recovery programs. Issues of importance include capital expenditure and long-term maintenance.

## **Financial Resources**

Funding for capital expenditures is available from federal, state, and local sources. The strategy developed for the Recovery Plan is to use the most efficient mix of these resources to provide the

maximum leveraging of local funds. The funding strategy is also dependent on project phasing and must be flexible to respond as costs and schedules change. The sources for financing downtown recovery are diverse and will be brought together in different combinations at different times to implement the Recovery Plan.

## **Federal Resources**

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency Assistance – Disaster Assistance**

This program provides assistance to local governments to reconstruct public improvements damaged by a natural disaster. The program is based on an assessment by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) of local damage and the cost of replacement. Funding from this program will be used to pay for portions of the cost of reconstruction of Pacific Avenue and other City infrastructure in the downtown area.

### **Economic Development Administration – Sudden and Severe Impact Assistance Program**

This program is designed to provide economic development assistance to cities damaged by natural disasters. Assistance provided to the City of Santa Cruz through this program is part of the financing for the Cedar/Locust parking/commercial structure.

### **FEMA– 403 Housing Assistance**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency established a fund for the nine-county Bay Area to assist in construction of damaged single-room occupancy and other low and moderate-income housing. Six million dollars in funds from this were received by the County of Santa Cruz, which in turn dispersed two million dollars to three projects in the City of Santa Cruz.

## **State Sources**

### **California Department of Commerce**

The California Department of Commerce, through its earthquake recovery infrastructure match program, has provided the City with financial assistance to construct the Cedar/Locust parking structure. This program provides a direct grant to the City.

## **Local Sources**

### **Measure E**

This six-year, one-half cent sales tax increase is applied throughout the County of Santa Cruz. Measure E provides that the City of Santa Cruz will receive 39 percent of the revenue of this measure, and it is estimated that this will be \$13,000,000 over the term of the tax.

### **Tax Increment Financing**

The City of Santa Cruz, through the merger and expansion of its existing redevelopment project areas, created the Merged Earthquake Recovery and Reconstruction Project. Detailed tax increment projections for the Merged Project will be made to determine the amount of tax

increment revenues to be generated over the term of the project. Initial revenues range in the area of \$800,000 per year and increase thereafter.

### **Parking District**

The Downtown Santa Cruz Parking District was created in 1955 and has provided the financial basis for the reconstruction of the City's existing Off-Street Parking District. Revenues for the Off-Street Parking District are derived from parking meter and parking deficiency taxes. Revenues from the parking district have been severely diminished as a result of the earthquake, which created a large drop in revenue from the parking deficiency tax. The parking district has contracted for a study to develop a long-term financial strategy to assist in increased parking management and development in the downtown area. The report will recommend increases in the parking deficiency fee, sufficient to implement the proposed program.

### **Downtown Promotion District**

The City and the business community have joined to create a Downtown Promotion district. This District is presently involved in developing an overall strategy for the improved marketing and promotion of the downtown area. This District, in 1990, increased its Promotion District fees and now has reached a funding level of \$110,000. As the downtown area continues to develop, it will continue to study these fees to ensure that they are sufficient to meet downtown promotion needs.

### **Private Sources**

#### **Private Foundation Assistance**

The Redevelopment Agency and the City have been very aggressive in seeking private foundation assistance. Today, this assistance has taken the form of several grants to assist the Vision Santa Cruz nonprofit corporation in its work on preparing the Downtown Recovery Plan. Additional grants will be sought from other groups as part of an overall promotion program for the City of Santa Cruz.

#### **Private Financing – Financial Institutions**

The credit market nationally has experienced severe contractions as a result of both a downturn in the national economy and the costs of the savings and loan bailout. Banks now required large equity positions and other forms of securities as part of financing packages for private, commercial, and residential construction. The Redevelopment Agency recognizes this financial state and has attempted to serve as a catalyst in identifying financial institutions which have an active interest in loaning in the downtown area of Santa Cruz. To this end, the Redevelopment Agency has sponsored both a forum and individual meetings between lending institutions and potential developers in the downtown area. While this effort has not changed lending terms, it has helped identify the market potential of downtown Santa Cruz and overcome a certain degree of reluctance to loan as part of a rebuilding project.

#### **Red Cross Housing Funds**

The American Red Cross has granted the City of Santa Cruz \$1.5 million to assist in reconstruction of low and moderate-income housing destroyed as a result of the October 17, 1989 earthquake. In response to a Request for Proposals for use of these funds, the City received 24 proposals. A

selection committee screened the proposals and the City Council awarded grants to assist in the reconstruction of the St. George Hotel, the Colonial Hotel, and the Neary Lagoon project. This assistance is in the form of long-term loans and will be recycled in subsequent years as loan repayments are received.

### **Mello-Roos Financing**

The State Legislature, in its post-earthquake emergency session, passed SB27X, which allows for the use of Mello-Roos bonds for post-earthquake commercial reconstruction and retrofitting projects. These bonds would provide long-term financing at fixed rates to private owners to utilize for rebuilding projects. The bonds would be secured by a tax on land and bond proceeds loaned to private land owners to assist in reconstruction. These loans would be repaid similarly to a bank loan. Conditions for bond issuance are similar to those for bank loans, and therefore projects must meet vigorous financial standards. To assist in making this financing mechanism more attractive, the City has actively pursued passage of HR/3560 in the United States Congress. This House bill, introduced by Congressman Fournety Stark, would allow for the issuance of Mello-Roos bonds with a tax exempt status. This status would allow for a bond rate at approximately two percent less than those issued on a taxable basis through former Mello-Roos legislation. Passage of HR/3560 could be an important element in speeding reconstruction in the City's downtown area. The City is actively supporting passage.

# Appendices





This Appendix has not been modified from the original 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan.

## **Appendix 1: The Community Vision Statement**

### ***Introduction***

Vibrant, vital and active, the central business district constitutes the primary retail, commercial, professional and employment center for the City of Santa Cruz. This compact, high-density area is home to unique businesses, offering residents and visitors a diverse and wholesome environment for commercial, cultural, civic and social pursuits. Local, regional and national businesses combine in a potent blend, making the downtown a major destination for the entire region.

The pedestrian-oriented environment is characterized by convenient access, a garden-like setting, and human-scale buildings. The visual and physical relationships to the San Lorenzo River, the surrounding natural landscape, and Monterey Bay make downtown Santa Cruz among the most beautiful urban places in California. The architecture captures the best of the City's past while integrating new buildings into a coherent and visually appealing downtown. As a result, the area strikes a balance between a successful modern business center and an environmentally attractive and active public place.

This effective combination is the focus of Santa Cruz public life and is a central element in the community's identity. Downtown is safe and clean. It is a multicultural place, attracting all sectors of the community and serving as a meeting place for children, students, elderly, office workers, retailers, shoppers and visitors, as well as those living in the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. Restaurants, cultural events and entertainment bring additional life to the area during the evening and nighttime hours.

A range of housing types is integrated into the downtown. This urban-density housing provides both market-rate and affordable units, and expands the immediate market for downtown goods, services and public transportation.

The economic and social vitality of the downtown has a positive effect on the surrounding areas and the entire community. It has restored the heart and soul to an earthquake-shaken town, and once again provides a significant source of tax revenue for the City's general fund.

### ***Activities***

As the "living room" of the entire City, downtown offers something for everyone, attracting people of all ages and diverse backgrounds.

Downtown is a vibrant place where merchants thrive because of their ingenuity and enterprise. Each successful business adds to the commercial vitality of the downtown area as a whole and contributes to a setting where other businesses prosper.

Within this center and in the immediately surrounding neighborhoods, there are offices for

government, finance, education and professional services.

Selected areas of the public space are designed to support temporary retail activities such as outdoor cafes, a farmers' market, sidewalk sales, and arts and crafts fairs, as well as community, cultural and entertainment events such as parades, art shows and concerts.

The community is noted for creative cuisine and fine wines. The design of buildings and public spaces takes advantage of the mild climate to encourage outdoor eating places. Restaurants are varied in character and bustling with activity. Restaurants and retail shops that are open in the evening, as well as the wide variety of entertainment and cultural events offered, encourage people to remain downtown into the evening hours.

People who live downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods help activate the areas as they meet their daily shopping and entertainment needs. The pedestrian environment fosters a warm social climate and nourishes relationships between people. Friends stop and talk. People watch and interact with each other.

Santa Cruz is known as a center for the arts and entertainment. It has an extensive and impressive array of facilities, both public and private, that support creative expression, including art, music, cabaret, concert, theater, film and literature. The downtown area now serves as a focal point for this cultural milieu: the library, a new performing arts center, new theaters and cinema, galleries, museums, lecture halls, as well as offices, studios, and housing provide a cornerstone for the artistic community and many sources of entertainment, enhancing both the commercial and public life of the city.

The intellectual and cultural resources of Cabrillo College, UC Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz High School and other educational institutions are an important presence in the social and public life of the downtown. Community education programs for people of all ages have an expression in the immediate downtown, adding to the vitality of the area.

The dynamic nature of downtown activities and the quality and mix of the merchandise offered attracts people not only from the surrounding neighborhoods, but from the width and breadth of the county and from regions beyond.

## *Uses*

The central business district mixes commercial, civic and residential uses. Their interplay produces a vital, active environment that makes the area a productive and attractive community asset. Residential uses complement the importance of commercial use.

To create a vital, retail environment, there is an effective mix of anchor tenants, specialty shops and eating places. Street-level frontage in the central business district is primarily designated for retail use.

Offices and professional services, located above retail shops and in areas surrounding the central business district, provide a component critical to the success of the retail environment. Employees and clients comprise a large portion of the weekday pedestrian traffic on the street and contribute

to the market for retail businesses. Office space designed to meet the needs of larger businesses is available.

Residential uses in the downtown area provide housing for a range of occupants, including customers and employees of downtown businesses. This presence in the area improves the security of the streets. A mix of housing types is available, including studio and efficiency units; one, two and three-bedroom apartments or condominiums; and units that combine living and working space. Housing is of high quality, well managed and designed to be compatible with the surrounding commercial uses. Housing is dispersed throughout the downtown area, not concentrated in one place.

Housing prices range from low-income to market rate and include both rental and for sale units. Housing is available for senior citizens, first time buyers, university students, faculty and staff, service, retail and professional workers, and other people who seek a high quality urban living environment.

Housing supports and complements commercial activity. Street-level frontage is designed and reserved for commercial uses. Residential projects provide for their own parking needs – either on site, or by buying into the City's parking district. Potential mixed-use conflicts are avoided through careful site planning and design.

Public and Quasi-Public Uses and facilities are carefully integrated into the fabric of the downtown. City and County government centers are conveniently located for pedestrian access from the central business district.

Public-serving facilities such as the Civic Auditorium, the Public Library, the Center for Art and History, and the Performance Arts Center provide important destinations for residents and visitors and contribute to the vitality of the downtown. These uses also serve to reinforce retail uses such as bookstores, music stores, art suppliers and galleries.

Community-serving social services located in the downtown are clustered in small nodes away from the commercial center, with easy access to public transportation.

### ***Parking, Access & Transportation***

Clear and effective circulation patterns, convenient parking and public transportation make downtown readily accessible. Rights-of-way have been preserved to allow for future development of mass transit and now support energy-conserving alternative transportation modes. Parking and transportation facilities accommodate disabled access.

Shuttles play a key role, linking remote parking with the major areas in the greater downtown, Pacific Avenue, visitor accommodations on Ocean Street, the Boardwalk and the beach, County and City government centers, as well as the downtown metro center. Although space is available for long-term employee parking, the community has succeeded in providing alternative transportation for downtown employees to free up more space for commercial, retail and short-term parking.

## *Urban Design*

The image of downtown Santa Cruz is rich and complex, distinctive and memorable. Within the central city, new and rehabilitated buildings have developed individual character while retaining the qualities of the historic townscape. The underlying cadence and structure of the built environment continues to express the scale and texture of a pedestrian-oriented main street.

Viewed from the surrounding hills, the downtown area is interesting and picturesque; the predominance of two- and three-story buildings, punctuated by distinctive taller buildings, is enhanced by a generous, but not overpowering, urban landscape. The urban structure is responsive to, and affords selective views from, downtown to the surrounding natural and urban landscape – Pogonip, Graham Hill, and Mission Hill to the north; the San Lorenzo River and Branciforte Bluffs to the east; Beach Hill to the south; and the California Street Bluffs to the west.

The activity center of the downtown occurs at the intersection of Pacific Avenue, the primary commercial shopping street, and Church Street/Locust Street/Cooper Street. These streets provide a civic axis, linking major downtown public facilities, City Hall, the Civic Auditorium and the Public Library to the west, the Center for Art and History, the Performing Arts Center, and the County Government to the east.

The hierarchical structure of the built environment is reflected in the overall composition of the downtown; principal streets and spaces are clearly evident, and the edges of the central commercial area clearly delineated. Transitions from the commercial and civic areas into the adjoining residential neighborhoods are natural, as changes in building heights and landscape character occur as a gradient rather than as abrupt changes.

Within the downtown, the building scale establishes a measure which feels intimate and personal. Building spacing, rhythm and articulation generally reflect the underlying historic patterns, thus reinforcing this human and pedestrian scale.

Although adjacent and neighboring buildings exhibit considerable diversity and variety in expression and character, their interrelationships form a unifying whole through sensitive combining of form, color and materials. Recent buildings respect the integrity of the complement of historically significant buildings.

Silhouettes of taller buildings are characterized by varied configurations, yet are united through scale. These buildings clarify the structure of downtown and define and emphasize important locations, such as entries into the central city, key streets and intersections, public facilities and spaces, without overwhelming or dominating adjacent buildings and outdoor spaces. The unique offset grid street pattern that meets along Pacific Avenue creates a series of focal points for additional, smaller-scale landmark buildings. Each of these landmark buildings adds distinctiveness and identity to the places they help create.

Streets and parking areas are designed to provide ease in pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle movement and circulation, and to achieve a high visual quality.

Attractive parking areas – structures and surface lots – are appropriately located and easily accessible in the downtown. Surface lots are characterized by a strong tree canopy that provides

summer shade, thus improving human comfort. Parking structures relate to the pedestrian scale and incorporate activity-generating uses at the street level. Similarly, the public transit center and other transit nodes are both functional and aesthetically appealing.

Street-level access, conveniently located handicapped parking spaces, and similar design features underscore the City's resolve to create barrier-free access for the disabled community.

## *Architecture*

Care and sensitivity in the design of individual building forms, proportions, materials, and colors contribute to a larger composition which gives the entire downtown a discernable and aesthetically appealing coherence. Massing, rhythm, articulation and other primary building design elements draw on important preexisting relationships and contexts established by the older, distinctive buildings.

Santa Cruz is an exemplar community with respect to resource-conserving architecture. Energy conservation has increasingly influenced the design and construction of buildings. Building forms and technologies, combined with the overall urban design, have made Santa Cruz notable for energy efficiency. The presence of awnings and other sun control devices suggests a community concerned about climate-responsive architecture. Window locations also reveal attention to the importance of natural light in building design.

No single architectural style predominates, although human scale is the common metric. The roofscape features aesthetically appealing treatments of utilitarian necessities such as vents, elevators, shafts and chimneys. The predominance of flat roofs juxtaposed to carefully located pitched roofs and vertical elements add variety, complexity and interest to the built environment. Large areas of undifferentiated facades (building faces), both solid and transparent, are notably absent. Buildings meet the sky with architectural treatments such as cornices, overhangs and trellises that create interest and definition.

Downtown buildings are characterized by high quality materials, good craftsmanship, and sensitive architectural detailing. This quality is also expressed through textures and finishes that give a sense of timelessness and solidity. The play of sunlight on the buildings adds interest and delight through shade and shadow patterns generated by massing, fenestration and decorative features, in addition to the street trees.

Buildings stepped back at upper stories permit additional sunlight to reach into the street and create roof decks and terraces. These outdoor spaces combine with second and third-story balconies, windows, and other human scale features to contribute to the friendly and inhabited feeling of the built environment.

## *Streetscape*

The landscape of downtown contributes to a strong sense of place for the commercial, cultural, and civic core of the city. The native trees that mark the urban reach of the San Lorenzo River complement the dignified, yet delightful, landscape of the city center. Street trees provide summer shade, yet let the winter sun reach into the public space. Flowers and low shrubs add color and

dynamism to the paved areas. In addition to its aesthetic appeal, the landscape enhances human comfort through micro-climate modification and purification of the air.

Building massing and setbacks provide strong boundaries to the public realm, and serve to establish appropriate character for the streets they adjoin. The strong building line and facade plane creates clear and usable public open space. Judicious use of setbacks creates private outdoor space suitable for various commercial activities.

A strong network of well-maintained and managed public and private open spaces provides a distinguishing character for downtown Santa Cruz as a special place for working, shopping, living, and visiting. This network – street space, generous building entries, strategically located courtyards, and a plaza space – is structured within a framework and sequence that is responsive to commercial, social, and civic needs. Public space and the contiguous street-level uses shape activity patterns that support a socially active downtown.

Consistent with a high quality retail environment, sidewalk cafes, street vending, outdoor sales areas, outdoor performance areas and similar human interaction enrich the pedestrian environment, adding excitement and vitality to the downtown experience. These high levels of pedestrian concentration and activity help create informal meeting and conversational places that truly make downtown public space the city's living room.

Larger community events such as outdoor markets, performances and civic celebrations take place in a plaza designed to accommodate such uses through a combination of building setbacks and temporary street closings.

Public amenities such as benches, planters, lighting, street name and traffic sign posts, trash receptacles, public restrooms, bicycle racks, public telephones and information kiosks are functionally and aesthetically integrated into the streetscape. They are central to pedestrian comfort, convenience, and safety. Public art adds to the sensory delight of the streetscape.

Well-designed directional signs and "you are here" maps, consistent with and contributing to the character and quality of building facades, enliven the streetscape and provide important information about goods and services, historical sites, retail and cultural activities, and public facilities. The image, character, form, legibility, and location of signs (pedestrian information, traffic and advertising signs) contribute to the overall aesthetic quality and scale of downtown.

### ***Relationship to Surrounding Areas***

The enhanced San Lorenzo River is bordered by a clean, attractive pedestrian promenade. People stroll along the levees enjoying shops, cafes, and outdoor performances. Recreational open space is convenient to downtown residents, employees, shoppers and visitors, further enhancing the Pacific Avenue downtown experience. The river promenade also serves as a key transportation link; walking and bike paths connect the governmental centers, downtown shops and offices, and the beach and Boardwalk. As an integral part of the downtown, the river itself provides an important amenity for restaurants, attractive new housing and open space uses.

The city's beaches and wharf are a major tourist destination. First-rate conference facilities and nearby hotels and motels provide a range of services and accommodations for overnight and

extended-stay visitors. Foot and bike paths, combined with frequent shuttles, link this vibrant tourist area to downtown retail, office, housing and cultural facilities, strengthening the economic health of both areas. Conference facilities serve to promote off-season visitors, further strengthening the local economy.

Downtown rebuilding has not undermined the integrity of the existing neighborhoods adjacent to the downtown. New construction has added to the housing stock of the area without overwhelming either the surrounding established neighborhoods (with their characteristic greenery) or downtown businesses and offices.

The downtown core is a delightful and convenient place for local residents and visitors to shop, recreate and pursue cultural activities. The surrounding neighborhoods bring life to the area and contribute to the vitality of downtown. An increased number of office and retail workers reside in the downtown, allowing them to contribute to a lively and pleasant urban environment.

UC Santa Cruz has become a fuller partner with the greater community. Downtown businesses recognize the important role University students, faculty and staff have in the marketplace, and many businesses cater specifically to the University population. The University, on the other hand, contributes directly to the downtown through faculty and student housing projects, and satellite classroom facilities. Collaboration between the University and the community has improved the availability of cultural and performance facilities. Downtown is increasingly a destination for students, staff and faculty.





This Appendix has not been modified from the original 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan.

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## **Appendix 2: The Downtown-Beach Link**

Each summer season, thousands of visitors come to Santa Cruz to enjoy the boardwalk amusements and the sandy beach facing Monterey Bay. Although less than one mile to the south, the beach is separated from the downtown by topography (Beach Hill) and a road pattern that is indirect and confusing. As a result, many beach visitors have little knowledge that downtown Santa Cruz exists and, when the sun subsides, look elsewhere for their after-beach entertainment.

While downtown Santa Cruz must continue to depend primarily on local residents for its economic health, increased patronage from beach visitors will only help to reinforce the commercial vitality of the area. The strong local character or "personality" of Pacific Avenue can be an attractive draw to visitors who, in a recreational mode, are looking for unfamiliar diversions that provide new experiences. Conversely, the revitalization of the Beach could introduce new activities that would be more attractive to the local resident or patron of the downtown. The creation of complementary activities in both the downtown and the beach area would provide the strongest linkages between the two areas. The following strategies are aimed at strengthening these linkages:

### ***Pacific Avenue as a Food and Entertainment District***

One of the most attractive opportunities for such an activity linkage is the enhancement of Pacific Avenue as a food and entertainment district. Most of the "raw ingredients" already exist to achieve this: a strong resident and student population; a benign climate ideal for outdoor dining throughout most of the year; and numerous clubs, restaurants and cafes that have already established a local and regional reputation. These attributes should be capitalized upon in the design of Pacific Avenue and in the recruitment of new businesses. Outdoor dining opportunities should be maximized to fulfill the great demand, and to reinforce the image and identity of downtown Santa Cruz as an active and bustling entertainment center.

### ***A Hotel-Conference Center at the Beach***

Just as visitors to the Beach could be given more reason to enjoy downtown Santa Cruz, residents and employees of the downtown could be attracted to the Beach more frequently if there were activities there that had a stronger local orientation. While the restaurants along the wharf provide an attractive destination and local hotels are used for meetings and social events, the beach area is still very much removed from the daily life of the downtown resident or employee. A landmark business-resort hotel and conference center at the beach could reinforce the downtown-beach activity linkage by providing the community with a new meeting place; at the same time, such a facility would be attractive as a regional beach-oriented destination and provide the beach area with a stronger "critical mass" and focus that would serve to enhance its overall image and identity.

## ***Improving Transit Linkages Between the Beach and Downtown***

Making the downtown and beach more accessible to one another is a critical factor in achieving a strong linkage. Because of limited parking facilities and streets that are congested during the peak summer season, a transit connection offers the best opportunity to improve the linkage between the two areas.

Ideally, a fixed rail trolley car with historic and recreational appeal is preferable to attract riders and to make the trip part of the enjoyable experience of coming to the beach. The car should be open in nature to maximize the outdoor experience; transit stops should be carefully planned in relation to major destinations (e.g., the wharf, parking facilities, the boardwalk, the future hotel/conference center, the Metro Center, etc.); and headways should be sufficiently frequent to promote a strong feeling of convenience.

Street design and traffic operations should be planned to allow the most direct fixed rail connection between the downtown and the beach; as discussed in the circulation element of this Plan, a route that loops within the Beach Area (along Beach, Riverside, Second and Front Streets) and within the downtown along Pacific Avenue and Cedar Streets is recommended.

In the more immediate term, a rubber-tired trolley vehicle that could circulate on the same route is recommended. While this vehicle would not have the same level of appeal as a fixed rail trolley, it would be a much more friendly and accessible alternative to the conventional (and hermetically sealed) city buses that currently provide shuttle service between the beach and the downtown. The implementation of a recreational transit shuttle could be undertaken by the private sector, the Downtown Association and/or the Transit District.

Consideration should also be given to the enhancement of recreational rail service along the existing Southern Pacific rail line between Felton and the Beach, passing immediately to the west of downtown along Chestnut Street. Pedestrian linkages between the downtown and a transit stop at Chestnut Street could be enhanced along Church Street, through the use of signage or a shuttle service.

## ***Improving Pedestrian and Visual Linkages***

Currently, the downtown and Beach are separated by a relatively unfriendly pedestrian environment. With the future redevelopment of the South of Laurel area and the implementation of proposed improvements along the San Lorenzo River, the pedestrian experience can be significantly enhanced through landscaped walkways and streets, and activities that promote a strong sense of interest and security.

Pedestrian linkages should provide the most direct and understandable routes between the beach and the downtown. Four specific linkages are recommended for enhancement. The riverfront promenade, as planned, will provide a strong linkage between the beach boardwalk, the Metro Center, and the proposed east-west pedestrian connections to Pacific Avenue along Cathcart and Cooper Streets.

Cliff Street visually terminates at the Coconut Grove, bisects the Beach Hill neighborhood, and connects by stair to the "River Bend" area at Laurel Street; it offers the pedestrian an interesting and attractive alternative to the riverfront promenade. This linkage could be significantly enhanced with a strong landscape treatment (e.g., palms) that visually emphasizes the axis to the beach and Coconut Grove, and that is more hospitable to the pedestrian; improvements to the historic stair, including a lookout and more provisions for public seating, could also be made. The stair linking Third Street on Beach Hill with the foot of Pacific Avenue also provides a major opportunity for enhanced pedestrian linkages.

Pacific Avenue, as it extends southward through the South of Laurel area, should also be enhanced as a strong pedestrian connection; the same landscape treatment as proposed for the downtown portions of Pacific Avenue should be extended to the Front Street intersection, to signal the entry to the downtown area and to strengthen Pacific Avenue as the central spine of the area; ground-level activities along Pacific Avenue should be public and pedestrian oriented. The pedestrian environment between the Pacific-Front intersection and the wharf should also be enhanced, with consistent street trees and generous sidewalk area for promenading. This linkage could be part of a larger visual system along Front Street, directing traffic and pedestrians to the beach. The use of palms along Front Street would be evocative of the beach, creating a strong visual route and an attractive edge to the downtown district.

Cedar and Center Streets should also be maintained as pedestrian linkages between the West End neighborhoods of downtown and the Beach.

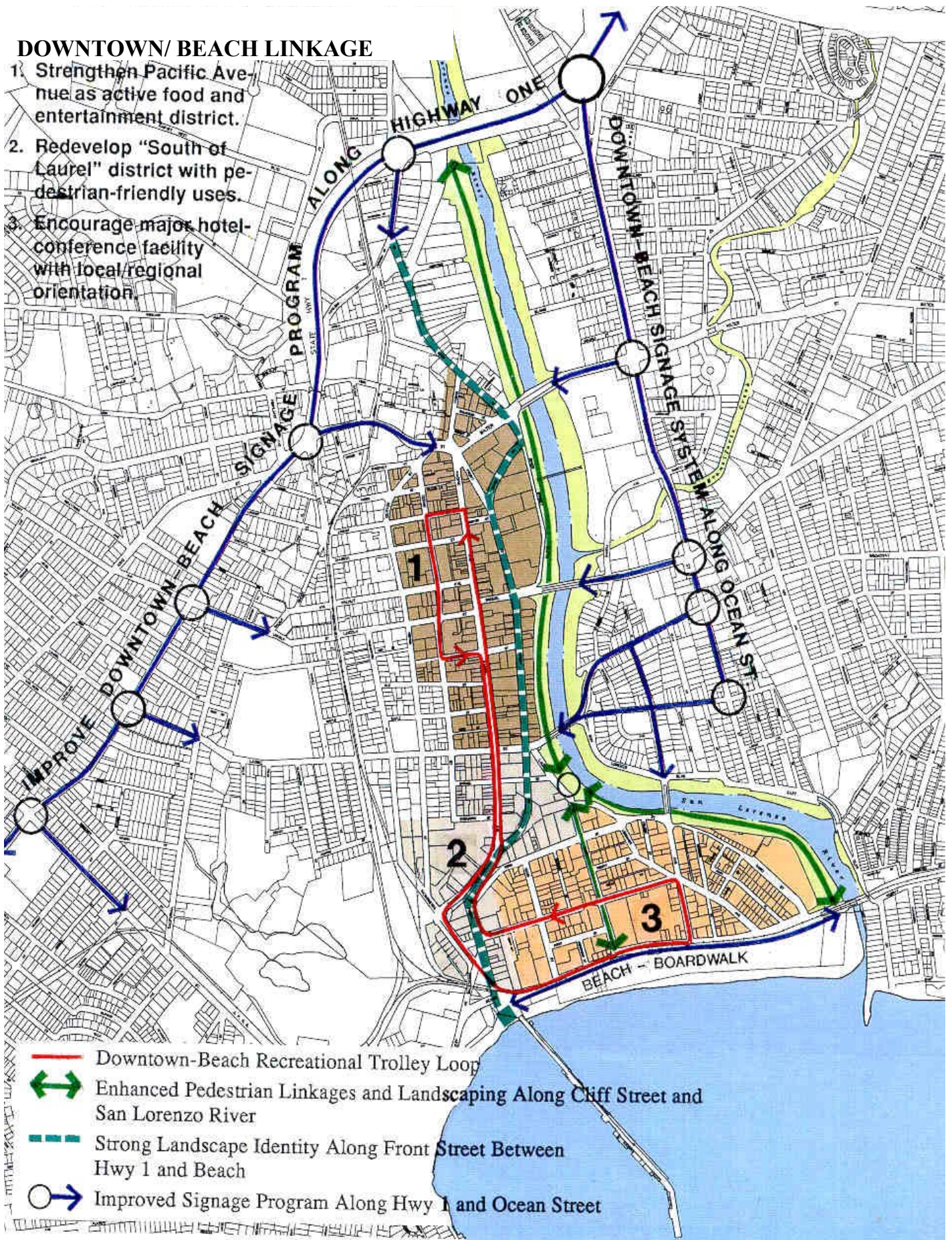
### ***Giving the Visitor a Stronger Sense of Orientation***





Vehicular and pedestrian access to the beach and downtown can be achieved in a multiplicity of ways. A strong system of signage should be established to better orient the motorist and the pedestrian arriving in the city or moving about it. A consistent and visually coordinated system of signs incorporating strong graphic symbols for the beach and the downtown will give the visitor a better geographical orientation and increase the likelihood of joint visitation. While beach traffic need not be routed through the downtown, the motorist can be given a clear idea of where the downtown is and how to get to it when the beach experience is completed.

Even more effective than signage is the preservation and enhancement of views to the downtown from key entry points (e.g., from River and Front Streets to Pacific Avenue or from the Broadway Bridge north to the downtown). The creation of a more intensive downtown core with the potential for some additional height will offer a stronger visual sense of the downtown; glimpses of activities along Pacific Avenue (e.g., from Mission and Water Streets at the Town Clock) will also give the passing motorist a quick and effective visual picture of the downtown and its attractions.

## DOWNTOWN/ BEACH LINKAGE

1. Strengthen Pacific Avenue as active food and entertainment district.
2. Redevelop "South of Laurel" district with pedestrian-friendly uses.
3. Encourage major hotel-conference facility with local/regional orientation.



-  Downtown-Beach Recreational Trolley Loop
-  Enhanced Pedestrian Linkages and Landscaping Along Cliff Street and San Lorenzo River
-  Strong Landscape Identity Along Front Street Between Hwy 1 and Beach
-  Improved Signage Program Along Hwy 1 and Ocean Street

### **Appendix 3: Sign Regulations**

Sign Regulations have been moved to Chapter 24 of the Zoning Ordinance.



This Appendix has not been modified from its adoption to the Downtown Recovery Plan on September 26, 2000.

**Appendix 4: Downtown Retail Strategic Plan**

RESOLUTION NO. NS-25,084

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ  
ADOPTING THE  
DOWNTOWN RETAIL STRATEGIC PLAN  
ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT A TO THIS RESOLUTION,  
AND DIRECTING CITY STAFF TO PREPARE AN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM FOR  
THE STRATEGIC PLAN  
WHICH WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE CITY COUNCIL  
FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION FOR ADOPTION  
AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE REVITALIZATION EFFORT  
FOR THE DOWNTOWN.

WHEREAS, in the wake of the October 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake which virtually decimated the City's Central Business District, the City of Santa Cruz, pursuant to a lengthy and inclusionary public participatory process, developed a Downtown Recovery Plan, the purpose of which was to provide a coherent framework for public and private actions related to the rebuilding of downtown Santa Cruz in the wake of the earthquake and to establish policies, standards and guidelines to direct the recovery process toward the rebuilding of a downtown that would meet multiple community objectives. The Plan was adopted in September 1991 and later amended in April 1993; and

WHEREAS, the "community vision" for the Central Business District (CBD), as articulated in the Downtown Recovery Plan, was a vibrant, vital and active CBD which would constitute the primary retail, commercial, professional and employment center for the City of Santa Cruz and would be developed as a high density area which was the home to "unique" businesses offering residents and visitors a diverse, authentic and welcoming environment for commercial, cultural, civic and social activities. As envisioned, these community-based objectives would be advanced by a blend of smaller, medium and larger-sized businesses and by a blend and balance of local, regional and national businesses in the CBD; and

WHEREAS, over the past ten years the CBD has developed incrementally and is currently a healthy, attractive and pleasant mixed use neighborhood that functions well as: A place of entertainment and culture; a local government center; a ceremonial gathering place; a daytime employment center; and a casual or informal gathering place. The Downtown reflects a scale and density, and features streetscape amenities that are pedestrian-friendly, while accommodating vehicular and bicycle parking, and providing a diverse set of shopping/entertainment and public gathering experiences. The Downtown is remarkable for reflecting a unique "Santa Cruz" style or "authenticity"—featuring many independent retailers and unique goods and services. The Downtown has a very strong base from which to further energize the district and enable it to fulfill the vision and goals of the Recovery Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown does experience “leakage” of income to other commercial areas of the City and County whereby residents of the City and workers of the Downtown cannot find the goods and services they desire in the Downtown District and seek out these goods and services elsewhere in the County or travel to Santa Clara County for their shopping needs; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown could benefit from the introduction of specific types of retailers to provide the critical mass needed for the Downtown to become a successful and stable shopping destination and to “round out” or balance the visitor’s, resident’s and worker’s shopping experience and fulfill some of their unmet shopping needs, thereby reducing the loss of tax dollars and other income to Downtown merchants (“economic leakage”) and reducing congestion and concomitant air quality and quality of life degradation associated with this travel outside of the City for shopping needs; and

WHEREAS, additional building and streetscape design standards are needed to insure an attractive physical environment to house those activities and to avoid some unintended consequences of the current regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown could benefit from additional market rate housing, both rental and ownership, to create a “24-hour” downtown, further supporting the retail sector and housing some Downtown workers, thereby reducing commute traffic and parking congestion; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown could benefit from a new, comprehensive revitalization strategy, called the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan, attached as Exhibit A to this Resolution, which would include four symbiotic elements: (1) Regulation, (2) Incentives for targeted business establishments, (3) Proactive Recruitment and (4) On-going Marketing and Maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the Regulation strategy of this Retail Strategic Plan includes a variety of zoning tools including: (1) identifying principal permitted uses, discretionary or conditional uses, limited or controlled uses and prohibited uses; (2) establishing special use review procedures and criteria for large-space ground floor retail establishments; (3) establishing “good neighbor” operating procedures for certain uses; (4) establishing building height and scale limits, setbacks, and architectural design and treatment standards; (5) establishing streetscape design treatments as standards and guidelines, including landscaping, lighting, signage, displays, and sidewalk furniture and which are included within a companion set of Zoning Ordinance amendments identified as Ordinance No. 2000-20; and

WHEREAS, an Incentive strategy of the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan includes a variety of zoning tools and City interdepartmental coordination strategies and financing which would be pursued; and

WHEREAS, The Strategic Plan recommends an aggressive, proactive Recruitment program to identify specific types of retail establishments that would contribute to an effective, efficient, balanced and authentic shopping district for residents, workers and visitors; and actively recruit such establishments to locate within the District; and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Plan recommends an on-going Marketing and Maintenance program for the District; and



WHEREAS, the Planning Commission on August 10, 2000 recommended to the City Council adoption of the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan as well as the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, in making these recommendations, the Planning Commission found the proposed Zoning text and map amendments and Strategic Plan to be consistent with the findings of the 1991 Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) on the Downtown Recovery Plan and with Section 15168 of the California Environmental Quality Act and determined that these actions would more effectively translate the FEIR-stated mitigation measures into more specific implementation measures; and

WHEREAS, in light of the foregoing considerations, the City Council has determined that the public necessity and general welfare and good zoning practice shall be served and furthered and the welfare of the City's residential and business community, as articulated by the principles upon which the Downtown Recovery Plan is premised, will be well-served and advanced by endorsing the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan and by directing staff to prepare an implementation program for the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan for Council's consideration for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the actions set forth in the proposed Downtown Retail Strategic Plan and any associated Downtown Recovery Plan or Zoning Ordinance amendments, do not alter the scope of development anticipated in the July 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan, will not foreseeably serve to alter impacts of that development which were fully analyzed in the Downtown Recovery Plan Program Environmental Impact Report certified by the City Council in July 1991, and the initial environmental analysis of the Strategic Plan and its findings of no significant impact is consistent with Section 15168 of the California Environmental Quality Act; and

WHEREAS, the Council has determined that the regulations in the proposed zoning amendments and the implementing actions of the Strategic Plan do not substantially change the Downtown Recovery Plan project and there have been no substantial changes in the environmental circumstances under which the Downtown Recovery Plan was adopted and which the Downtown Recovery Plan Program Environmental Impact Report analyzed that would require further environmental review for the regulations set forth in the proposed ordinance; and

WHEREAS, there is no new information of substantial importance which was not known, or could not have been known, as of the time the Downtown Recovery Plan Program Environmental Impact Report was certified that would require further environmental review for the regulations set forth in the proposed ordinance. Accordingly, no further environmental review over and above the review which was conducted in the certified Downtown Recovery Plan Program Environmental Impact Report is required as a prerequisite to endorsement of the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz that the City Council hereby adopts the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan, attached as Exhibit A to this Resolution, and directs City staff to prepare an implementation program for the Downtown Retail Strategic Plan which would be presented to Council for consideration for adoption as part of a comprehensive revitalization effort for the Downtown.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 26<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2000 by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers: Fitzmaurice, Beiers, Rotkin, Hernandez, Mathews, Krohn;  
Mayor Sugar.

NOES: Councilmembers:

ABSENT: Councilmembers:

DISQUALIFIED: Councilmembers:

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Attachment A to City Council Resolution No. NS-25,084

Resolution of the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz adopting this Downtown Retail Strategic Plan and directing City staff to prepare an implementation management and monitoring program for the Strategic Plan which would be presented to the City Council for their consideration for adoption and funding as part of a comprehensive revitalization effort of the Downtown.

# Santa Cruz Downtown Retail Strategic Plan

September 2000



## INTRODUCTION

The City of Santa Cruz's downtown area was severely damaged by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Following the earthquake, the City undertook a comprehensive "visioning" planning process involving numerous meetings of various stakeholders of the downtown. The results of this visioning planning process culminated in the development of a comprehensive program to rebuild and revitalize the downtown. It has been 9 years since the adoption of the Downtown Recovery Plan and the beginning of this redevelopment process and the City Council feels it is time to reassess the strategies presented in the Downtown Recovery Plan (DRP) to see how well they have done and what amendments, if any, may be needed to respond to current market trends and community values. One of the current concerns is the type and size of retail activity that has located, is locating, or should locate at the ground floor level of the downtown. This study focuses on the downtown retail activity and creates an updated retail strategy intended to strengthen the pedestrian-friendly environment therein.

The reassessment of the DRP is designed to reaffirm the community vision of the downtown as a vibrant, vital and active Central Business District (CBD), constituting the primary retail, professional and employment center for the City of Santa Cruz as well as its central gathering place and entertainment/cultural center. In addition, this process is intended to confirm existing strategies or create new ones to ensure the downtown's vitality.



Initial evaluation of downtown Santa Cruz indicates that the downtown is a healthy, attractive and pleasant mixed-use neighborhood that functions well as a place of entertainment and culture, a local government center, a gathering place, a daytime employment center, and a retail destination for residents, workers and visitors. The downtown reflects an appropriate scale and density, and features streetscape amenities that are pedestrian-friendly, accommodates adequate vehicular and bicycle parking, and provides diverse shopping, entertainment and public spaces. One of the challenges of the district is to create a "24 hour" neighborhood with more housing and more destination retail uses to create the kind of weekday and evening and weekend foot traffic needed to sustain local retailers.

Most importantly, the downtown is remarkable for reflecting a unique authenticity, a "Santa Cruz style", featuring many independent retailers and unique goods and services. The downtown has a very strong base from which to further energize the district and enable it to fulfill the community's goals and visions for the downtown.

If downtown Santa Cruz is to capitalize on its assets and address its challenges, the community must take strategic actions. Santa Cruz residents, downtown business leaders, elected officials, city representatives and community workers have worked together to produce a preliminary strategy for achieving the goal of a vital, diverse and unique downtown. This strategy for downtown includes design standards, regulations for retail uses, incentives to attract targeted businesses to the downtown and district-wide marketing and management strategies.

## PLANNING PROCESS

In January 2000, the City Council asked the Planning Department and Redevelopment Agency to undertake a Downtown Assessment to evaluate the status of retail activity in the downtown and review the effectiveness of the 1991 Downtown Recovery Plan's development standards and guidelines that have shaped the downtown for nearly ten years. The result of the Downtown Assessment is a recommended strategic plan for downtown retail activity.

This strategic plan was developed through a process of public forums and City Council work sessions, community and market surveys, and extensive research by City staff of strategies other similar-size cities have adopted. Steps in the planning process include:

- Urban design/physical assessment of the downtown Central Business District
- Retail development assessment
- Community surveys
- Two Council work sessions
- Downtown Symposium with retail and downtown revitalization experts
- Land use focus group
- Survey of comparable cities strategies for revitalization

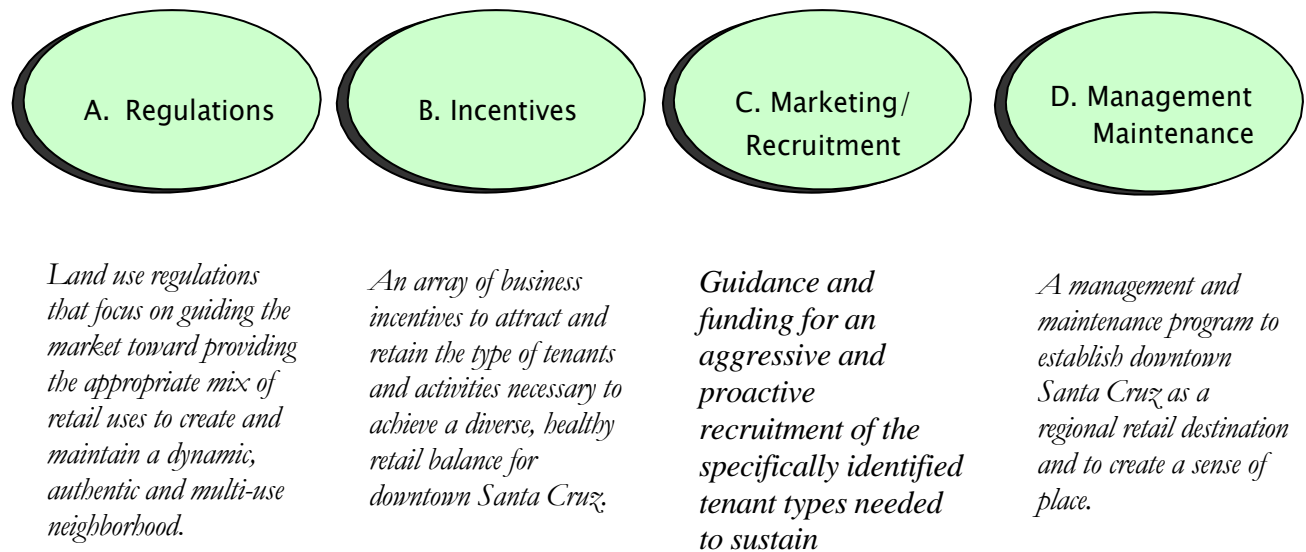
As a result of this planning process, several dominant themes for downtown Santa Cruz have emerged. Citizens of Santa Cruz have identified a vibrant, vital and active downtown with a strong and diverse retail presence and a unique "identity" as a priority for the City. Downtown Santa Cruz should include a mix of uses, including local, independent retail businesses that serve residents, workers and visitors to the district.

Additionally, a primary goal for the downtown is to create and maintain a unique sense of place, and to ensure that the downtown is a destination point for people to enjoy retail, entertainment and public uses. A vision for a successful downtown includes the following goals:

- Maintain Authenticity/ Uniqueness/ Vitality
- Create a Welcoming Sense of Place
- Strengthen Economic Health and Vitality
- Retail Local Control
- Create an Inclusive Environment
- Maintain Legal Defensibility and Equity with the Ability to Implement the Strategies

## STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Each strategy for creating a strong retail environment has been organized and included in a Strategy Framework. The Strategy Framework identifies the strategic tasks, which will be most instrumental in achieving the goals and vision for the downtown. These categories provide a structure for addressing issues and catalyzing implementation of the strategies for downtown Santa Cruz. (These overarching strategies are described as specific actions in the Strategic Action Table)



These strategies implemented in conjunction with each other can be used to create a proactive, four-pronged approach to downtown revitalization that will help achieve the goals and visions for the downtown and ensure continued vitality while maintaining its authenticity.

## SANTA CRUZ DOWNTOWN RETAIL STRATEGIC ACTION TASKS

### Regulation

Goal: Establish land use regulations for uses in downtown Santa Cruz (Central Business District—CBD) to ensure that the uses allowed contribute to a vital, diverse and unique downtown that reflects the retail preferences of the CBD residents, workers, and visitors and the citizens of Santa Cruz.

Strategy/Action	Time Frame Short = < 1 yr. Med = 1 – 3 yrs. Long = > 3 yrs.	Potential Funding Sources
A1. Require a Special Use Permit (SUP) for all ground floor uses over 16,000 SF.	S	Development fees
A2. Prohibit specific uses not desired in the downtown.	S	City
A3. Create a guideline for the balance between local, independent and national, regional stores in the downtown; this guideline to be used to measure the appropriateness of allowing ground floor uses of over 16,000 square feet during the SUP review process.	S	City
A4. Control the behavior of nightclubs and fast food establishments by requiring “good neighbor” operating procedures.	S	City
A4-1. Require all national and regional stores, which utilize “trademarked” architecture to meet the downtown design standards.	S	Development fees
A4-2. Ensure that the design for the exterior of the store and the signage are in conformance with established design criteria.	S	City, Development fees
A4-3. Encourage new store management to actively participate in programs and policies established for the downtown.	S	City, Development fees
A5. Require Design Permits for major façade improvements.	S	Development fees
A5-1. Revise the current ordinance requiring a Design Permit for façade improvements over \$50,000 to require a Design Permit for improvements over \$10,000.	S	City
A5-2. Convert certain storefront and building façade Design Guidelines to Design Standards, and create new ones, to assist in achieving higher quality design.	S	City
A5-3. Ensure that there is code enforcement for non-	S, Ongoing	City



<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Time Frame</b> Short = < 1 yr. Med = 1 – 3 yrs. Long = > 3 yrs.	<b>Potential Funding Sources</b>
conforming storefronts and façades.		
A6. Evaluate fees to reflect relative contributions to maintenance of infrastructure and amenities for new housing, retail and office uses.	M	City
A6-1. Prepare a “nexus” study to determine the demand for housing and impact on existing housing generated by new office development in the CBD.	M	City
A7. Provide permitting assistance upon submittal of a ground floor retail tenancy plan for new buildings.	M	City, private funds

**B. Incentives**

Goal: Utilize a range of incentives to entice desired uses to locate and remain in downtown Santa Cruz.

<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Time Frame</b> Short = < 1 yr. Med = 1 – 3 yrs. Long = > 3 yrs.	<b><u>Potential Funding Sources</u></b>
B1. Develop a list of targeted uses and specific business types for recruitment into the downtown, based on economic and market data.	S	City
B2. Provide assistance in parking district fees for targeted establishments for a period of up to three years.	M	RDA
B3. Provide storefront and façade grants to targeted new existing establishments.	M	RDA
B4. Provide low interest loans for façade improvements to targeted new establishments.	M	RDA, private financial institutions
B5. Provide marketing, retailing and businesses assistance to existing retail establishments and desired new retail uses.	M	RDA, private funds
B6. Provide permitting assistance for targeted businesses locating within CBD.	S	City

C. Targeted Marketing and Recruitment

Goal: Create a welcoming, attractive and diverse downtown environment which attracts quality local retail, dining and entertainment uses and establishes the downtown as a unique destination point for Santa Cruz residents, workers and visitors.

<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Time Frame</b> Short = < 1 yr. Med = 1 – 3 yrs. Long = > 3 yrs.	<b><u>Potential Funding Sources</u></b>
C1. Adopt a mission statement for the downtown retail, dining and entertainment recruitment/ retention programs.	S	N/A
C2-1. Confirm a palette of desired retail uses for the downtown to create the appropriate “critical mass” that will establish the downtown as a retail and entertainment destination.	S	N/A
C2-2. Conduct a search within the City and the County to identify potential types of retailers that would provide quality merchandising while maintaining the unique character of downtown.	Ongoing	RDA, Private funds
C2-3. Work with local property/building owners to match potential retail uses with available spaces in the CBD.	Ongoing	RDA
C2-4. Establish an outreach team of local officials, merchants and community members working with the brokerage community to entice prospective retailers to consider locating in downtown Santa Cruz.	S	N/A
C3. Create a “brand” or identifying logo/visual image and character statement for the downtown, and use it to advertise and promote the downtown as a destination point.	S/M	Private funds

D. Promotion and Management

Goal: Establish downtown as a well-identified and well-known district and a unique destination point and maintain the district’s amenities through coordinated management practices and regular maintenance of infrastructure.

<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Time Frame</b> Short = < 1 yr. Med = 1 – 3 yrs. Long = > 3 yrs.	<b><u>Potential Funding Sources</u></b>
D1. Create an enhanced signage program to identify where the downtown is located, and how to get there, from various key entry points to the City and from other destinations within the City (such as the Beach).	M	City, RDA
D2. Establish a visual identity for the downtown with gateway designators and banners.	S/M	RDA, City, private funds
D3. Create additional signage at the entries to the city that give direction of downtown and downtown parking resources.	S/M	RDA, City, private funds
D4. Enhance the public and private landscape quality within the downtown.	S/M	RDA, City, private funds
D5. Enhance maintenance in the downtown; invest in infrastructure.	S/M	RDA, City, private funds
D6. Coordinate common advertising and promotional fliers.	S	RDA, City, private funds
D7. Coordinate promotional events with the opening of the new garage.	S	City, private funds
D8. Promote additional events within the downtown.	Ongoing	City, private funds



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## **Appendix 5: Floor Area Ratio**

This Appendix has been deleted due to the Floor Area Ratio being incorporated into the Regional Visitor Commercial land use designation of the General Plan 2030.



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## **Appendix 6: Additional Height Zone C**

This Appendix has been deleted because the Additional Height Zone C is now part of the Additional Height Zone A.





## **Appendix 7: Live Entertainment**

This Appendix has been deleted because the Live Entertainment regulations are located in the Zoning Code and other references to allowed downtown uses are located in the beginning of Chapter 4 of this Downtown Plan