

Workshop Summaries

Design Advisory Committee Workshop #1 Santa Cruz Mission Street Corridor Urban Design Study March 30, 2000

In this workshop, results of the prior public workshop were discussed. The comments were categorized into the major issue areas and discussion was conducted on each category.

Below is a summary of some of the key comments from the Advisory Committee:

Gateways:

- Incorporate a gateway transition zone between Western and Swift.
- Gateway at Swift should be a statement about what kind of town we are arriving in.
- The gateway is not an “open invitation” it is a statement that this is a real place where people live, work, walk, bicycle.
- Bicycle and pedestrian circulation between Western and Swift should be formalized.
- No gateway is needed at King. This is not an entrance to anything significant. It is part of the corridor leading to and from downtown.
- The larger context needs to be considered at the Chestnut intersection. Pedestrian circulation needs to be emphasized.

Major / Minor Intersection:

- “Wonderful, good quality paving” materials should be used on crosswalks (Mountain View, Los Gatos examples sited).
- Intersection areas should be pedestrian friendly and should encourage neighborhood commerce.
- Pedestrian “rights” should be promoted in intersection design.
- Neck-downs on neighborhood side streets should be studied.

- Very rough warning textures preceding pedestrian crosswalks should be considered (Laguna Beach and Watsonville examples were sited).
- Pedestrians should be directed to signalized intersections.
- Opportunities exist at Mission Street “bends” because of high visibility from approaches in both directions.
- Light standards should be sized to appropriate pedestrian scale.

Linkages and Connections:

Entire pedestrian network should be looked at as a system including side streets, cut-throughs and alleys.

Pedestrian routes should be marked clearly.

Neighborhood Character:

- The Laurel Street intersection area was identified as a zone with particular neighborhood character because of a number of elements including: La Esperanza Market mural, Food Bin & Herb Room, Emily’s, Laurel Creek crossing.
- Other areas were noted as having significant contributions to neighborhood character:
- Santa Cruz Pottery
- Historic homes district on east end
- Diversity of architecture
- Small zone at Baldwin and Mission with historic buildings

Opportunity Sites:

- Strip Malls represent opportunity sites because all could benefit from renovation / beautification of building and site.
- Parcels terminating vistas at Mission street bends also represent opportunity sites because of their visual importance.

- The west end of Mission Street has many vacant or underutilized sites which represent opportunity sites.

Development Standards:

- Standards should be revised so that the streetscape reflects the character of the districts.
- Double pane glass should be required for Mission Street frontage.
- Parking consolidation should be looked at in a number of different conditions: At nodes it could be consolidated behind uses; in the west end, it could occur on the sides or in front (limited) of uses.
- 3 or 4 different scenarios for consolidated parking should be looked at.

Pedestrian Environment:

- Appropriate street furnishings should be looked at. Perhaps this corridor is not the place for traditional street furnishings treatments. Or maybe they just happen in key areas.
- Bus stops should be “extremely friendly street architecture”.
- Bike parking should be provided in key areas.
- Street trees may need to go on private property.

***Design Advisory Committee Workshop #2
Santa Cruz Mission Street Corridor Urban Design Study
May 15, 2000***

In this workshop, the consultants presented to the Advisory Committee, conceptual ideas for the first group of issues categories based upon the desires expressed in the previous committee meeting.

Below is a summary of the key comments from the Advisory Committee on those conceptual ideas:

Gateways:

- The Gateway designs were generally well-received.
- The “illusion” of an arch or implied arch may be appropriate for the Swift & Mission gateway.
- The “funky” image created at the Swift and Mission gateway by Hollywood Junipers was appreciated by some although it was sighted as a non-native.
- Native plants: Coast Live Oak and Western Redbud were suggested for use in the gateway areas.
- Signage was thought to be an appropriate element to make some sort of announcement to the City.
- A “bougainvillea arbor” was suggested as a possible aesthetic.
- A strengthening of the corridor evergreens is needed between Western and Swift.
- The segment between western and Swift might be looked at as a gateway passageway. The element at Swift could be more of a pre-gateway with a more formal statement occurring at the narrowing of Mission just after the King turnoff.

Major / Minor Intersection:

- It is important to keep existing mature specimens at intersections to keep the identity of these areas.
- Palms should be used in a limited way. Perhaps just at Bay and Almar / Younglove.
- Perhaps pedestrian-scale light should be used throughout rather than only at intersections.
- Some concern was expressed about using London Planetrees. Perhaps a mix should be employed.
- The Laurel / Walnut intersection needs to be different in character from the Bay intersection.

- Traffic control / calming is needed at Laurel and Walnut.
- Benches are needed at the intersections where they can be incorporated.
- There does not have to be an abrupt distinction between major and minor intersections. There can be “shades of major / minor”.
- Successful examples of crossings in other cities should be studied.

Pedestrian Environment:

- Special pedestrian safety features are needed at the Bayview Elementary School crossings.
- If the ROW widths permit, the sidewalk can “meander” or move from side to side offering some variation. (Next to curb in some cases - planter separating walkway from road in other cases.)
- If street trees are planted in a landscape easement within private property, a street tree assessment district may be needed.
- Advantages were seen to both the random planting scheme and regular street tree scheme for the historic east end of the corridor.
- Not only should we look at sidewalk and streetscape configurations for current conditions along Mission Street, we should also look at a more ideal situation for sidewalk width / building setbacks through design guidelines.
- Bulb-outs should be considered for side streets off of Mission so that traffic into the neighborhoods can be better regulated.

***Design Advisory Committee Workshop #3
Santa Cruz Mission Street Corridor Urban Design Study
June 05, 2000***

In this workshop, the consultants presented to the Advisory Committee, conceptual ideas for the second group of issues categories based upon the desires expressed in the previous committee meeting. Below is a summary of the key comments from the Advisory Committee on those conceptual ideas:

Linkages and Connections:

- Community Gardens should not be too inviting to so that they do not become gathering places for unwanted activity. These are meant to be for gardening activity for the local neighborhood.
- Delivery trucks should be restricted from residential neighborhoods. Bulb-outs should be studied in combination with signage. *No trucks should be allowed on residential streets.*
- Signage control should be looked at. Putting all City signs on one standard may be a good solution rather than a number of different signs on separate standards.
- A change to the creek setback may want to be negotiated with the adjacent property owners so that an easement can be secured for pedestrian access.
- Bike crossings proposed for King and Swift should have activated signals.

Neighborhood Character:

- A mural guide would be helpful to highlight the locations of the murals within the district.
- There should not be too much emphasis placed on protecting murals as some of the buildings that house them are substandard and might benefit from replacement.
- Better treatments should be studied for the Bayview Elementary interface with Mission Street.

Acoustical isolation is still important.

- Older homes are the strongest contributor towards neighborhood character.
- Small businesses are also important to providing neighborhood character.

- Incentives are needed to encourage and preserve those elements which are important contributors to neighborhood character.

Opportunity Sites:

- Parking is a critical issue towards making opportunity sites feasible.
- “Choke-downs” are needed for minor streets off Mission.
- Walls are needed in key locations for sound buffering.

Development Standards:

- As a general principle, wider walkways (maybe 10') should be planned for as a future development standard. An immediate solution could be built but could be adaptable to a wider future configuration.

Community Workshop #2
Santa Cruz Mission Street Corridor Urban Design Study
June 21, 2000

Design concepts that had been presented to the Advisory Committee over the previous two workshops were summarized and presented to the public for wider comment.

Below is a summary of key comments from the public:

Gateways:

- Bike paths should be provided on Highway 1 from Swift westward towards Natural Bridges.
- Redwoods should be figured in to the mix of evergreens proposed along Highway 1 west of Swift.
- “Fossils” proposed in crosswalk paving should be viewed as potential art opportunities.

Major / Minor Intersection:

- Service traffic is a major consideration. Left and right turning movements are a big problem. This should be studied.
- Neck-downs should be looked at in conjunction with the service traffic issue with the goal of limiting circulation through the neighborhoods.
- Palm plantings could be further informalized.

Linkages and Connections:

- Natural features should be looked at in conjunction with the linkages proposed including: other creeks, Arroyo Seco, artesian spring on Bay and Laurel Creek.

Pedestrian Environment:

- Banners may not be appropriate for this corridor.
- Variation along the corridor was seen as positive. Species could vary from one segment to another.

- Blinking lights may want to be considered to enhance pedestrian safety in some crossings.
- Noise abatement should be considered in other places besides the high school.
- Blinking lights should be considered at key school intersections.
- Neighborhood Character / Development Standards:
- Exits from aggregated parking zones should encourage car movements back to Mission rather than into neighborhoods.

***Design Advisory Committee Workshop #4
Santa Cruz Mission Street Corridor Urban Design Study
September 25, 2000***

In this workshop, results of the preceding public workshop were discussed. In that public workshop, ideas had been presented to the community that had been developed through the previous three Design Advisory Committee Workshops. The purpose of this fourth Advisory Committee Workshop was to discuss design ideas that had been subsequently developed in response to the community's input.

Below is a summary of the key comments from the Advisory Committee on those conceptual ideas:

Gateways

- Bikeway opportunities should be maximized. Bike lanes should be provided on both sides of the street, with an additional off-street path in the available right-of-way on the south side of the street. Old Mission should provide a parallel, alternative on-street route.
- The gateways should be artistic icons, incorporating a monument notion, with vegetation.
- Landscape materials should favor natives where feasible with the "controlled use of exotics" at key locations.

Major/Minor Intersections

- The findings should be amended to include reference to planting large trees with full canopies.
- The findings should be clarified regarding traffic calming measures called for at Laurel and Walnut.
- The findings should be clarified regarding site furnishings – they should be installed throughout the entire corridor, not just at intersections.
- Neckdowns should be incorporated only at neighborhood intersections, such as Laurel and Walnut, but not Bay.

Linkages and Connections:

- The creek that has been referred to as "Laurel Creek" is actually called "Majors Creek" and is an

important historic creek.

- The easements along Laurel (Majors) Creek are not implementable and the concept should be eliminated from the plan.

Pedestrian Environment

- More benches should be provided.
- The “fossil imprints” in the crosswalks should be scaled and selected so that pedestrian safety is not impeded.
- Clarification is needed regarding the addition of pedestrian-scaled streetlights to the planned cobra head fixtures that Caltrans will install.

Neighborhood Character:

- The segmentation concept for the corridor planting is generally good, but should incorporate more of the “Santa Cruz Garden Informal Plantings” within the overall more “formal” structure.
- WRT should provide a recommended plant list that is compatible with the City’s recommended tree list.

Development Standards / Opportunity Sites:

- Incentives should be provided for business owners to make these improvements. They should not become a deterrent to other development improvements. Consider tying requirements for improvements to use permits.
- Provide an indication of how change will occur over time. Differentiate between existing businesses/incremental changes and total changes.
- Awnings should be optional improvements.
- Numbers of “insignia” or “trademark” signs should be controlled.
- Heavy incentives should be considered to consolidate parking.
- Provide for mixed-use office or residential above retail, including affordable housing.



Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC
657 Mission Street, Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94105
www.wrtdesign.com

