

Eastside Focus Group

1. *When you think about Santa Cruz's character and what makes Santa Cruz Santa Cruz, what comes to mind?*
 - Beauty
 - Trees
 - Beach
 - Knowing your neighbors
 - Quirky
 - Friendly people
 - Unique
 - Fresh air
 - Clean environment
 - Neighborhoods
 - Understanding people
 - Walkable
 - Smart people
 - College town
 - Historical
 - Pedestrian friendly
 - Historical
 - Rapidly changing
 - Best place to live in the world, very inviting
 - Best climate in the world.
 - Walkable (compact)
 - Lots of times there's no sidewalks.
 - Next to large buildings, need wider sidewalk
 - Easy to walk to downtown
 - Not pedestrian friendly the whole way,
 - But compact
 - There are challenges to sidewalks and missing sidewalks
 - Lots of people have their doors open, people talk about their gardens, there's green space,
 - Friendly town
 - Over half front yards don't have lawns
 - More gardens
 - Lack of water means lack of lawn.
 - Trees
 - People say hello, it's a fantastic feeling
 - Facing pressure.
 - Trees are memorable and special, they create peace.
 - Nature, there's a lot of access to nature, lot of biodiversity, a lot of birds.
 - Will plan a walk around trees.
 - Should make more trees
 - Walkability

- Commend City for making more pedestrian cross walks, more bike lanes. Need more
 - Crosswalks are a concern - traffic is very fast.
- Heart of the town - moved here in 1975, think of it as a small town, we used to go to concerts in the park, walked to bookshop, didn't have traffic, didn't have 7-story buildings,
 - It's very different than my concept of Santa Cruz, the current walkability, it's changed a lot, and doesn't feel like the Santa Cruz that was here when she moved here-
 - Not a cute little small town, big town with lots of problems
- [responding to above] Density of the people or density of traffic?
 - Maybe both.
- So many families are leaving
 - We say we need more housing We are building things that doesn't work for existing families,
 - Neighborhood was very diverse, now homes are \$1mil+ families that live here can't afford it.
 - We're attracting people from over the hill,
 - We're losing what makes Santa Cruz special.
 - Want people who live here can stay here.
- Lots of people have left because it's cheaper somewhere else.
 - Not limited to Santa Cruz, all of CA
 - Gets to me.
 - They can buy somewhere else much cheaper

2. *Which of these 7 styles do you prefer? Why?*

- Seattle neighborhoods look like Seattle neighborhoods that are turning over, no grace, no trees, too urbanized for SC
- Prefer the mix with breaks (#7) mix with the style of #5, different heights.
 - Setbacks, breaks, lots of trees
 - Trees really make a difference, 5 and 3 feel more residential rather than commercial.
- Like #1, variety of the facade
 - #3 felt homogenous
 - #7, don't mind the height of taller buildings
- Choose a #8 - a lot of setback with trees, conserving water.
 - Variety in architecture.
- #5 has Neo Spanish, but has some variety and interest and style
 - #4 is opposite, unpleasant (like a person warehouse)
 - #2 and #4 are horrible
- Liked #5 the best, trees are really important, should get bigger than that. Bigger trees are really important
 - Keep Heritage trees as much as possible
- Like a variety of uses
- Most of us care more about what the back of the building looks like than the front
 - We see the backs of the buildings as neighbors,

- Show the backs of the buildings, that's what we're going to see!
 - Santa Cruz generally looks the same, context is very important
 - Area plans reference specific architectural style
 - Look at the various neighborhoods in town
 - Seabright, Beach area, Western Drive
 - All have different styles
 - Like #5, diverse plane on roof.
 - Most of the time you're looking at the sidewalk level, like the curved arches
 - See stores or cafes hiding behind, it's more appealing and warm.
 - #4 has no street presence, I wouldn't want to go into it, not warm
 - Trees and green spaces
 - #5, like because the tallest part of the building doesn't take up the whole floor,
 - Doesn't come all the way to the street, flush to the front of the building, that's very important
 - Not having the tallest part occupy the whole floor
 - Prefer #5 - roofline, setback, greenery, arches, has a soft look,
 - #2 and #4 are stark and unfriendly, look like brutalist architecture
 - Modern is cold and uninviting these would detract from what Santa Cruz is and wants to be
 - Like #7, the taller buildings, not the shorter ones.
 - Thinking about who is going to live here - in a MF structure, you can't get right out to the street, so setbacks, green space, balconies are key - not be right ON the street making living spaces feel like SFDs, has advantage of a nicely designed building.
 - Designed well for people inside
 - Agree with above – Environmental responsibility, greenspace related to that.
 - Vertical gardening could help with air scrubbing, there's way to have rainwater catch system,
 - Native plants and xeriscaping.
 - Vertical Greenspace
 - Avoid the dynamic change between big building and neighborhood - manage transitions. Privacy for neighbors
 - One thing I like about Santa Cruz - on left pic (in #7), two buildings are connected by an alley with an arch way – something charming and unexpected and makes Santa Cruz unique.
 - What makes me depressed about new projects, no unexpected, no charm,
 - 5 (right side) appeals to everyone but it feels like a bunch of different buildings, [which is what we like] not necessary to emulate Spanish style everywhere. The massing is what works on that one
 - The trees are also a big deal.
 - 5 prefer right over left.
 - 5 Left could be a hospital
3. *What types of uses would you like to see along Ocean, Soquel, Mission, and Water on the ground-floor?*
- On a busy street, most wouldn't want to have a res unit,

- Facing the back, a neighborhood or greenspace on the ground floor
- Look at the depth of the lot for the CC zoned area,
 - In the OSAP, most places, there is residential right next door,
 - Should be taken into account
 - More important than the uses are the impacts of the uses.
 - Offices are closed at night,
 - Restaurants have a lot of noise
 - Near habit burger, you smell the grill all the time.
 - Criteria for the uses, with a small com corridor next to neighborhood, ones that are only open during the day with no smells,
 - On deeper corridors, allow any commercial uses,
 - Adjacent to houses, put residential and low impact uses
- All of mission is adjacent to residential uses
 - Mission st would have nothing by above comment criteria
 - Same on water and Soquel
- Would rather have a variation, rather than going to 5 stories, allow residential on ground floor, to keep the building shorter.
 - Eliminate commercial uses to keep buildings shorter.
 - We don't need stores on the bottom with online shopping
- Think about what would the people in the building and neighborhood want in those buildings?
 - Small businesses that a lot of people went to right near by
 - Cafe, book store, personal services
 - Not night club, no big lobby for building, not welcoming'
 - Want things that serve the neighborhood.
- It's really important to have vibrancy that will serve people in those spaces.
 - I hope more building will keep young people in SC, younger people who are leaving.
 - Create new neighborhoods with these uses for new residents.

4. *What types of features do you prefer and why? To make space for these types of features, would you support a bigger front setback or inset ground floor?*

- Parklets are wonderful with dining, but only without the street noise. Consider closing the streets to create fewer places for cars
- Closing streets during covid was great, should be continued and expanded.
 - Works well commercially in Europe
- Inset ground floor can work well
 - A shows ground floor dining
- Are we talking about closing Soquel? That would be a nightmare.
- Would support a bigger front setback like A, more green elements.
 - Like that the cars are away from where people are sitting
 - B has no setback between street and diners
- Variability, at Habit Burger and Ikes (recent commercial development on Ocean Street), they wanted to save a tree, so they pushed the buildings forward, and then there's space behind.

- Variety among buildings.
 - Making space for bed amenities makes it alive and not sterile.
- We're connected to San Jose, no matter what we're going to have more people living here, that's fine, the added density will add more cars and more people, we can't control that.
 - Place exits and entrances to not affect traffic safety.
 - Protect people walking around the city, keep pedestrians. Safe

Closing comments:

- The developers have to work with the Community, each neighborhood is different.
- It's important that they respond - 708 Water Street was very responsive [*Staff explained changes in state laws that limit local discretion*]