

Renters Focus Group

1. *When you think about Santa Cruz's character and what makes Santa Cruz Santa Cruz, what comes to mind?*
 - Eclectic
 - History of Missions/pioneering spirit, mixing with more contemporary development and change, the clash can be hard but also be great.
 - Lived here since 1984, "hypocrisy" Santa Cruz thinks it's a lot of things that it's not.
 - Thinks its very cultural, it's actually an eddy (no bands,
 - Thinks it's very progressive, but actually, never really totally been the case.
 - Harassment and abuse of homeless,
 - Eclectic. From out of state, never seen this type of area - was homeless before getting housing, got to know it really well.
 - Being homeless is not pretty, but it's real, and eye opening.
 - Santa Cruz is a tolerant place to be homeless.
 - Traditional place, very conservative (not party central as advertised) progressive on some levels, conservative on others.
 - Big clash between development community as opportunity for high-end development, city style traditionally, Santa Cruz has always been under attack by the development community.
 - Light house field,
 - 16-story towers in Arana Gulch
 - Clash between development community and long-time community
 - We don't want Santa Cruz to be that intense, but it's also inevitable. It's a conundrum.
 - Always been a clash.
 - Shadows our town
 - Moved to Santa Cruz in '86 from SoCAL - unique character and people from all walks of life. The beauty of the place and the reverence people had who live here for the beauty. Atmosphere of respect. The beauty draws tourists in, because it's not a typical urban experience.
 - You can walk anywhere, there are open spaces, it's getting crowded, traffic is getting bad. Lack of infrastructure - try to visualize more housing with existing framework, we have an island-style framework for water.
 - Starting to feel unbalanced.
 - The environment and long-term, how we define healthy living in this place, not getting to the core of how we're going to support all of this.
 - Developers have a platform with current state laws to build big buildings, one or two stories of commercial on the bottom, with as many as can be allowed of res on top.
 - Set 2 stories as our guideline in our neighborhoods and see that in context of what's coming down with state laws.
 - Very concerning, a lot being fast-tracked.
 - Santa Cruz character is fading, need to go to them
2. *Which of these 7 styles do you prefer? Why?*

- Heading to a commercialized view of Santa Cruz
 - Tourists come for a small-town experience - eclectic but keeps it's character - #2, #4, #6, don't belong here.
 - Feels more like San Jose, we don't live in San Jose
 - #7 and #5 are best for SC.
 - City has a way of giving people a voice and then ignoring them.
 - They voice concerns, and then development happens anyway. Doesn't feel like they want people's true opinions, we'll pretend to listen but still go ahead.
 - Clash coming. This is a big concern.
- #2, #4, #6, are gentrification buildings from Bay Area.
 - 7 is best, not moving toward unaffordable buildings.
- Looking like everywhere else is not right for SC,
 - We see these developments planned and they look just like other places anywhere, not unique.
 - #5 having a historic reference is more appealing.
- More articulation, more space between structures, need to let light in. Windows shouldn't face windows
 - Keep heritage trees, allow for more ambient light, break up structures more.
 - Places for gardens, private yard area, even small patio.
 - Balance in living situations, to connect with nature and neighbors.
 - Don't like the industrial-looking buildings.
 - Doesn't feel long-term solutions to balance and well-being.
- Architecture like #2, #6, #1 looks profit driven. #7 enhances the neighborhood.
 - People come for nature and trees.
 - 555 pacific, don't like, destroyed the character of the neighborhood. Destroyed a lot of trees.
 - Save the trees with the building.
 - Over develop, money-grab. People who come in will be higher-income., becoming a gentrified place.
 - We're a beach town and need nature. Keep the trees.
 - People don't have a voice - trees take decades to reach maturity.
 - Wiped away by profit, doesn't make the place more livable, but creates other problems.
- Santa Cruz reality is we need high-density housing, something that has been ignored for decades and fought against for decades.
 - We have 3000 homeless people, everybody agrees that our housing is not affordable, so we need high-density housing.
 - It doesn't have to look like high-density housing.
 - #7 has no housing in it. Those are businesses
 - #3 is a favorite because it doesn't look like high density housing. Looks warm.
 - Industrial buildings stick out in SC, don't belong
 - 555 pacific doesn't fit in and is expensive
 - People resist things that are too big and too tall.

- Not against housing for homeless people, it takes care of part of the problem, not everybody can be housed.

3. *What types of uses would you like to see along Ocean, Soquel, Mission, and Water on the ground-floor?*

- Commercial makes sense - all these uses make sense.
- Mission isn't really a walking street, sidewalks are narrow.
- The walkability is hard on all of those corridors
- Not every single block or parcel needs to have commercial development, mix of res and commercial uses.
- Mission St is also a highway corridor, and a national monument opening near Davenport next summer.
 - National Parks get millions of visitors a year.
 - What's Mission St going to look like?
 - Don't look at traffic improvement. We have traffic improvement fees, but they don't get connected to the real needs.
 - How do people who live and work and recreate here - how do we move all of that traffic through? Additional exposure on the corridors - the highway connections need to be looked at.
- [cutting in] It's an unsolvable problem. (Traffic)
- Need Grocery Stores and restaurants
- Need Corner Stores for neighborhoods

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?*

- Favor A, anything with more trees
 - More greenery is better.
- No palm trees
- Don't like the architecture on C and D
- A and E, B with outdoor dining.
 - Articulated facade, trees and greenery
- A also has warm lighting, materials, building wall at the rear,
- Bike parking availability is preferred.

Closing Comments

- Expand creative green fun - vertical gardening on sides of buildings to soften and naturalize.
 - Vertical Gardening
- Murals can be a mitigating effect for large blank walls
- Bus stops and public transit need space.