

Students Focus Group

1. *When you think about Santa Cruz's character and what makes Santa Cruz Santa Cruz, what comes to mind?*
 - Spread out, hard to get around without a car
 - distance between Safeway/Mission and Trader Joe's downtown
 - Think of Redwoods
 - Environmentally conscious, unique to Santa Cruz,
 - How to incorporate that into standards for buildings?
 - Small town with Big City problems
 - Has out-grown existing housing stock
 - Housing affordability
 - Traffic congestion
 - Displacement
 - Pressure from the university
 - Historic Structures, Victorian and Craftsman – Nature as a priority
 - Streetcar history and walkability
 - City of Santa Barbara-type standards to maintain aesthetic
 - Sprawl-style development has been detrimental to aesthetic
 - Make it more walkable – foot traffic for small businesses
 - Santa Cruz is about uniqueness – being different

2. *Which of these 7 styles do you prefer? Why?*
 - #6 looks like Rachel Carson College, exterior looks more like wood siding – all preferred
 - Looks like it belongs in Santa Cruz
 - Homey and modern
 - #2 could work in industrial areas – off Delaware, Swift Street, Harvey West
 - Building in San Carlos Right next to CalTrain station – nobody likes it.
 - #3 add mosaic features
 - #4 does not fit Santa Cruz at all, more urban and no character
 - #5 looks like Southern CA.
 - #1 (left side) looks very friendly, like the building material and variation in the building face.
 - #7 left side is like a strip mall, #7B is nicer, eclectic.
 - Many liked mix of styles in #7
 - #3 right side would work in the right neighborhood – downtown, not in a more residential place
 - #3 left side is too much, too many things going on. Looks like a building in San Carlos no one likes.

- #3 left side looks like a McMansion.
- #3 gives off Yosemite/NorCal vibes – like the Ahwahnee/craftsman style but not a bungalow
 - In Santa Cruz, could work with lighter colors, different decoration features. Scale could work in the right place here.
- #2 left side reminds me of 555 Pacific.
 - 555 Pacific doesn't add to the feeling of Santa Cruz.
- #7 is the best, need mix of styles, especially like Victorian elements
 - Need more density, 5-6 stories, to make walkable neighborhoods.
 - Increase population/ square mile to increase efficiency of land use and create opportunities for small units – related to rents and homelessness.
- Landscaping/greenspace, encourage native plants
- Building at corner of High St and Highland [ed. Note: Piedmont Court, 260 High St]
 - Spanish Revival architecture – should not be predominant style but nice mixed in.
- #6 – like how the balconies break up the face of the building
- Want to see more mixed use on ground floor.
- Dark-sky lighting is important
- 1st floors should have storefronts

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

- Not a fan of lobby space – wasted space
 - Like shops and restaurants, things people living in the buildings can use
 - Grocery stores
 - Making the area walkable
- Lobby is wasted, residential amenities are great if that's what developers want to do... but putting it on the ground floor doesn't really make sense
 - Facing the street should be shops and restaurants, public interaction
 - Offices with not a lot of foot traffic don't need to be on the street “Oh an architect! Yes I need to get my house redesigned!” Could be included, but doesn't need to be on the street
- Victorian buildings have really tall glass and doors – that scale is really nice
 - Groceries, Netherlands type of community – just walk there in 5 min
 - Pop/square mile is something im very concerned about with SC – Paris doesn't have any skyscrapers, and their pop/square mile is 50,000 – that is about the whole population of SC. So if you took that same pop/square mile and applied it to SC, you could fit the whole pop of the Monterey bay peninsula
 - Census map:
 - <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/sanfranciscocitycalifornia,santacruzcitycalifornia,US/PST045219>

- Downtown is welcoming, scale – 4-6 stories, interesting design on the street as you are walking through – European cities, nice to walk through
- Also greenery
- Most associated with Santa Cruz is Pacific Ave – would like to see conserving our old architectural history

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?*

- like the high ground floor of C
 - Courtyards of A – part of Santa Cruz
 - Blocked off part of Pacific for people walking through – want that to stay! Don't want it to be a street again – was confusing to drive through, now we
 - E feels like where SC is at now... sidewalks are kinda wide, but not wide enough to do something with... A or B would make the City much more enjoyable to use
 - D – nothing to do... no reason to walk past...
 - C but without the big modern looking architecture would be nice
 - You never look up – everyone focuses on the first story – what could be done to invite your eye upwards? Everything feels very short
- Balconies would help people look up more
- Like A and B, like Pacific closed off, human scale,
 - B: street seems too close... only works if street is closed off
 - Better bike infrastructure – recently got hit by a bike downtown (!!)
 - Need more bike lockers: <https://www.bikelink.org/> -- don't need to bring a bike lock
 - SC has commercial bike parking minimums – this would be the one time that I support a form of parking minimums
 - A and B make it a good destination where you could spend time, C is good if you want to maximize housing (that is the primary goal) – still have a storefront, visible
 - I don't like the closure of Pacific – makes it feel too much like a different type of street. Want a more cohesive downtown, not focused on one street
 - Cathcart – make it one-way, Front Street, not that fun to be on
- Bike rooms inside feel safer, don't have to worry about it getting rained on
 - Haven't really been to cities where they treat bikers well
 - Just being able to bring your bike with you (inside)
 - Micromobility spaces
- Key small business locals love is penny's ice creamery – often overlooked by tourists or anyone coming through.
 - Right now, one and two stories, cruzio building is three stories high – everything else is low to the ground. More development on that street would make the city more cohesive. Not just one strip of a street – expand to the next one over to have more of a downtown

- Expand on diversity and eclectic-ness of buildings on Pacific – foot traffic more of a rectangle rather than a straight line

General Discussion:

- Brand new units have the parking included in them (Park Pacific, 555, 1010) – parking that is offered isn't as efficient as it could be
 - Cedar street: vines on the front of it... the problem with SC parking is less to do with no space for parking and more to do with the rules around parking
 - Feels like there is enough parking, but some are empty because you can only use them by the hour, and can't get a resi permit to park there
- A lot of people don't need parking. The largest source of new residents is UCSC students who don't need parking
 - If the developer wants to put in parking, that's a tradeoff they can make – attract different kinds of customers – they should have that option
 - If someone is mad a new building is being built without parking, they shouldn't rent in that building - they can go somewhere else.
- Keep current block of Pacific closed – road was already confusing, now it's worse but it's also a nice place to spend time.
- Need more and better bike infrastructure – make space for bike parking and for jump bikes/other micromobility features.
- Residential Parking downtown – public garages not available to residents of downtown
- No parking for micro units ok – save \$ on housing
- Environmental standards for new construction
 - Passiv Haus or LEED requirements for energy efficiency and materials use
 - Exchange for higher rent/lower maintenance and utility costs
 - Sustainability in construction is a Santa Cruz value
- Micro mobility – want jump bikes back
- Green space/community space scattered within/among blocks and buildings. Each building doesn't necessarily need it's own if there are amenities within a block or two.
- Dark Sky/Light pollution Streets and parking lots need cut-offs.
 - Look at Kelvin rating, need better downward facing lighting
 - 2700K or below for less blue light
 - Lighting at wharf parking lots - one with LED, one with sodium vapor, can see difference and increased glare.
- Want to see more unique architecture in SC
- Facilitate tiny homes/ADUs/Micro Units
 - Develop now for what we need in the future
- On Metro, Campus to downtown is 40 minutes

- Santa Cruz is defined by Seabright beach area, West Cliff, and the Beach/Boardwalk
- Need for density – average homeowner is older than elsewhere in CA, maybe? That’s the reputation.
- Need to make it livable for students, student body is growing.
- People don’t understand different zones and what can be built there. A visual brochure could help explain standards for each zone and limit “fear mongering on Next Door”
- Make planning info more accessible on City website.